論文題目：

<u>網路口碑之說服效果：消費者懷疑之影響</u>

<u>The Persuasive Effects of Electronic Word-of-Mouth: The influence of Consumer Skepticism</u>

報名編號：　　<u>　　D0054　　　</u>

摘要

　　本研究檢驗了消費者的產品涉入和經驗，與發訊者的專業知識會如何導致消費者對於產品評論的懷疑，以及消費者懷疑如何影響說服效果。本研究進行了共有 307 個受訪樣本的兩個實證研究。研究一針對化妝品部落格評論作研究；而研究二則是針對美食部落格作研究。研究結果顯示，消費者的產品涉入與發訊者的專業知識對消費者懷疑有負面的影響；而消費者的產品經驗則對懷疑有正面的影響。一旦消費者起疑則會對電子口碑的說服效果有負面影響。

關鍵字: 電子口碑, 消費者懷疑, 涉入, 經驗, 說服效果

INTRODUCTION

Before consumers make their purchase decision, they may consult with word-of-mouth (WOM) from their friends and relatives. Today, due to the advances and popularity of Internet technology, people now can share their recommendation and critique about product on the Internet. There are abundant cyberspaces such as online forum, discussion board, blog and various virtual communities where people can share their thoughts to products with others. Among these cyberspaces for eWOMs, blog is a good place to share produce reviews to others. WOM on the Internet is also known as eWOM. Compared to traditional WOMs, eWOMs can diffuse rapidly and deeply. These eWOMs exist as one kind of product reviews from consumer, and usually contain detailed product information as well as personal experience and opinions to the product. People are attracted by these eWOM. They check the eWOMs before making purchase decision and write down their judgment and experience after purchasing as eWOMs. Due to the significant influence of eWOM to consumer purchase decision, marketers now use eWOM to promote their product. On the world of Internet, all people include marketers are qualified to post their product review. Marketers can hire or ask others especially famous bloggers to write eWOM to promote their products. Resulting that some product reviews in blogs are essential another kind of advertisement.

Celebrity spokespersons are paid to endorse product. In contrast, eWOMs from consumers are their personal experience to the products. People may trust eWOMs more than advertisements. Calfee & Ringold (1994) reported that people will doubt the credibility of a message if they refer the information source as an advertisement; Johnson & Kaye (2004) revealed that bloggers consider blogs as more credible than traditional media such as newspaper or cable television. From the point of credibility, eWOMs are more persuasive than advertisement. Although individuals may trust blog product reviews more than advertisements, an overstated blog product review may still provoke consumers' skepticism. When reading an overstated blog product review,

people may doubt the motivation of bloggers, and regard the exaggerated blog product review as the blog advertisement.

The exaggerated marketing messages may cause consumers' skepticism (Obermiller & Spangenberg, 1998). When a blog product review is overstated that foster consumers' skepticism, consumers are not inclined to buy the product and the blog product review is not persuasive.

The current research concentrated on the persuasive impact of blogs. No matter which vehicle is, consumer skepticism seems like an important factor for the persuasive communication of eWOM. When marketers applied blog marketing, they should focus on it. The study centred on the impact of bloggers' expertise, individual's product involvement and product experience. Consumer skepticism may be caused due to expertise of bloggers. And individuals' product involvement and product experience also may foster their skepticism towards the reviews. If people have lots of product experience or involvement, they can examine the message before making decision. However, if an individual has little product experience or involvement, they judge reliability of blog message based on peripheral cues.

Further, the research emphasized on the effect of skepticism on consumer's attitude like credibility, product attitude, purchase intention and WOM communication. If subjects review content as credible, they are persuaded by positive message and have a positive product attitude by message. Once consumers have a positive attitude about product, people's purchase intention and WOM communication were affected positively.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Skepticism

When blog emerges, it also gives rise to blog marketing. Blog marketing has been utilized as a new marketing tactic for the recent several years. It increases the opportunity of product exposure, and it may also improve the brand image and propagate eWOM successfully. Enterprises provided free sample or free trial sample to bloggers and ask them to write their using experience or product introduction as feedback. However, some companies or advertisers even give these bloggers money for their promotion. When bloggers benefit from free samples or pay from producers, consumer may consider the blog posted by bloggers as an advertisement.

According to previous research (Nelson, 1974; Ford, Smith, & Swasy, 1988), consumers generally trusted the specific information such as product store location, and were sceptical about personal experience, performance or quality. Therefore, when consumers read a eWOM blog about product quality or performance, they may easily wonder

whether the blogger take advantage from the company that makes the merchandise. Hence, comsumers may have skepticism emerging in their minds and they may don't know whether to believe the information or not. Even, they may consider that a blog product review may be a blog advertisement. And because consumers are generally sceptical about advertisement (Obermiller & Spangenberg, 2000), they may sceptical of blog product reviews that are like blog advertisement.

The definition of skepticism is consistent with the Obermiller and Spangenberg (1998), skepticism in this survey regard to the inclination to disbelieve a statement. According to Mohr, Eroglu, & Ellen, 1998, skepticism is a kind of cognitive response that varies based on the communication content and communication context. Except much product information, blogs also has the power of eWOM. However, once individuals have skepticism toward product reviews, the persuasive influence of blogs may also reduce.

Expertise

Expertise is an essential element in source credibility. As demonstrated by Hovland, Janis, and Kelley (1953), expertise was the extent of the communicator that was considered as effective message source. Ohainian (1990) also noted that expertise was the degree of the endorser's professional knowledge and capability. In the 1980s, Maddux and Rogers (1980) reported that perceived expertise of source has a positive impact on change of attitude. In addition, Belch and Belch (2004) finds that an endorsement from an expert source can have an effect on opinion, attitude, and/or behavior by a process called internalization. When consumer accepts message posted by others, the internalization was aroused at the same time. If the blogger was perceived as an expert by consumers, individuals will trust the information because of their perceived credibility and trustworthiness toward the source. And according to Woodside and William (1974), the expert salespeople draws more customers than non-expert salespeople in a given product activity. Kiecker & Cowles (2001) noted that if individuals perceived that source of eWOM has attractiveness or expertise, the message will induce more persuasion and credibility.

Perceived blog credibility based on the expertise of the blogger. An expert source was more convincing and persuasive than a non-expert source in the light of persuasion theory. In addition, once consumer thought the blogger is an expert on a product domain, they considered the posted blog product review as reliable information. Hence, consumers inclined to the product that backed by the professional blogger with high expertise and might move the product into their evoked set for buying decisions.

H1: Consumers are more sceptical of blog product reviews posted by ordinary bloggers than those posted by experts.

Product Involvement

As mentioned by Zaichkowsky (1985), the extent of product involvement is decided by the degree about which the product is considered to be cared individually. Previous research (Petty, Cacioppo & Schumann, 1983; Rothschild, 1977) proposed that low involvement is relevant to less interest about the specific message or goods, whereas high involvement is meant as more interest about the specific message or goods.

Product involvement with high level is noted that an individual is more cared about the product than anyone else. Previous empirical research (Dardis & Fuyuan, 2008) found that consumers are more easily prevailed upon to believe gain-framed message when they are under a condition that was a high product involvement scenario. Mostly, a lot of gain-framed messages can compose a blog product review with positive eWOM. Compared with people with low involvement, people with high involvement are usually more concerned about blog product reviews. Hence, if people are concern about the product, they are also concern a blog product review. In addition, individuals with high product involvement may read the product reviews in blog cautiously than those with low product involvement. Further, consumers with high involvement prefer to participate in immersion in blogs product review. Once the immersion time is longer and longer, consumers are more easily persuaded through blog product review. Therefore, they are less sceptical of eWOM contained in blog product reviews. For this reason, this study proposed the following hypothesis.

H2: People with a lot of product involvement are less sceptical about blog product reviews or advertisement than people with little product involvement.

Product Experience

According to Brucks (1985), there are three category of product knowledge: product experience, subjective knowledge, and objective knowledge. For marketers or managers, consumer's product experience is more easily available or measurable than consumer's subjective knowledge or objective knowledge. Besides, researchers want to investigate whether the common features of different product will cause different effect based on product type. Hence, product experience seems a more important and practical indicator than others. This article employed product experience as independent variables here.

Usually, people can learn a lot from previous product experience. It means that subjects accumulate their domain-know-how with purchasing or using product again and again. When consumers with a lot of experience read a message, they may assess its credibility based on their previous experience. If the message puts forth highly positive and exaggerated words about the product, consumers exert their skepticism to it on the basis

of their product experience. Further, consumers with a high level of product experience may doubt the blogger's motivation. Hence, this study proposed the following hypothesis.

H3: People with a lot of product experience are more sceptical about blog product reviews or advertisement than people with little product experience.

Source Credibility

In this research, source credibility was categorized as two parts, credibility toward bloggers and credibility toward the message content. In this part, the survey would focus on the credibility toward message contents. According to source credibility theory, when the source exhibits itself as credible, people are more probably persuaded (Hovland, Janis, and Kelley 1953; Ohanian 1991; Petty and Cacioppo 1986; Sternthal, Phillips and Dholakia 1978). Past research also presents that credibility is one of most important elements of persuasive message and play critical roles in influencing their attitude (Perloff, 1993; Choi & Rifon, 2002).

Many studies inspect the effect of source credibility on the receiver's attitude, indicating that highly credible sources yielded a more positive attitude than sources with less credible (Hovland and Weiss 1951; Ohanian 1991; Petty, Cacioppo, and Schumann 1983). When consumers read a positive message, if they consider this source credibility is high, they will be easily persuaded by statement and they will have a good attitude toward the product. Thus, the survey proposed the following hypothesis.

H4: When people think the content was credible, they have more positive product attitude.

Attitude

The definition of attitude was first proposed by Allport (1935), attitude is a kind of preparedness through learning that let people have a good response or a bad response with consistency towards particular object. Kotler (1997) defined attitudes as an individual enduringly like or dislike subjects or concepts with assessment, emotional feeling and behavior tendency.

Most scholars (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1981; Assael, 1992) proposed attitude included three components: cognition, emotion and conation. Cognitive component is a belief of individuals toward subject matter. Emotional component presents individuals' evaluations regarding subject. Conation means person's purchase intention or behavioral tendency for target object. This study assumes hierarchies of effects according to learning hierarchy. Because consumers don't know who the blogger really

is and never hear the information about the product based on experimental scenario. Thus, the proper sequence among attitudes was that cognition will influence affect and affect will influence behavior positively. Perceived blogger credibility and skepticism are cognitive component of attitudes. Product attitude can be seemed as an emotional part of attitude. Behavioral intention is regard as purchase intention and intention of WOM communication.

The definition of product attitude is the estimation of product, consumers judge whether value of product is benefit to them, further, individuals will produce their product attitude (Ying and Chung's, 2007). Purchase intention is the extent to consumers wants to buy (Inman, Peter, & Raghubir, 1997; Weinberger & Dillon, 1980). Based on Babin, Lee, Kim, & Griffin (2005), WOM communication is intention that WOM receivers will propagate some descriptions about product or recommend people to buy it again.

Free market implicitly encourages marketers to employed exaggerated words in persuasive messages, but the messages will easily cause consumers' skepticism (Obermiller & Spangenberg, 1998). Once persuasive message let individuals' are sceptical of message credibility, the persuasion communication will decrease relatively.

For this reason, the current study proposed the following hypothesis.
H5: Skepticism has an influence on persuasive communication.
H5a: People with skepticism about blog's content or advertisement will reduce perceived credibility relatively.
H5b: People have more negative product attitude when they are sceptical of content.
H5c: People with more positive product attitude will affect purchase intention positively.
H5d: People with more positive product attitude will affect intention of WOM communication positively.

EMPIRICAL STUDIES

Study 1

Experimental Product: BB cream

Due to popularity of Blemish Balm Cream (BB cream) attracts the attention of many young women, it was chosen as the experimental product. BB cream is an innovative cosmetic product immerging in recent years. Therefore, no single brand has a substantial market share. Many blogs include articles referring BB cream, though some of them are apparently blog advertisements. BB cream is usually showed as a make-up base and a better alternative including some capability such as moisturizer, sunscreen, base, and foundation, and is generally connected with the function to whiten skin,

lighten blemish scars, and reduce wrinkles. Product reviews of make-up product were generally associated with the usage experience or quality of a cosmetic; both of them are claim types that consumers may be sceptical of (Nelson, 1974; Ford, Smith, & Swasy, 1988).

Participants

The research announced a call-for-volunteers information on a discussion board in a biggest online community in Taiwan. The study offered fifteen whitening masks and a lottery of fifteen convenience store gift coupons worth US$10 as stimulus for encouraging participation.

Four hundred thirty-three individuals took part voluntarily in the research. Among them, 334 (77.14%) were female. Male answers were excluded since the experimental product was a make-up product. Because of duplication of participation, manipulation checks, and missing data, 139 responses were deleted. The residual 195 (45.03%) were took in data analysis. Among them, the average age was 26.10 years old with a standard deviation of 6.05 years. Most (76.41%) subjects were college students. About make-up use frequency, 122 (62.56%) participants reported that they always or often make-up.

Experiment Design

Before researchers started to design the experiment, ten blogs regarding BB cream with eWOM were gathered. These blogs were full of judgement about BB cream and advices to other people. After thirteen voluntary participants read these blogs, they were asked to select the one that can exert her highest skepticism. Hence, the survey created an experimental scenario according to the selected blog.

The current research developed two pseudo-bloggers for the experiment for examining the blogger's expertise on credibility. The first one was a professional cosmetologist with a lot of make-up experience and relevant expert knowledge. Comparatively, the other one was an ordinary blogger who posted her usage experience about BB Cream on blog. The personal profiles of these two bloggers were included in the experimental blogs. A pseudo-brand was made for experimental goals for the sake of avoiding the interventions of a brand name. Besides, the study also created the factitious advertisement to examine the difference of persuasive effect between eWOM and advertisement..

Based on previous research (Lee, Youn, & Lee, 2007), it represented people were inclined to share positive eWOM articles. Hence, a positive eWOM was employed in the experiment. Further, the survey utilized positive-framed advertisement either.

| (a) Expert Group | (b) Novice Group | (c) Advertisement |

Figure 1 Experimental Group

Measurement

Firstly, subjects responded to two items that evaluated the individuals' degree of product experience. The items were "how many times did you use BB Cream?" and "how many times did you purchase BB Cream?" The second part measured the degree of respondents' involvement. The current research utilized the 10-item RPII (revised personal involvement inventory) scale from Zaichkowsky (1994) to assess involvement.

Further, participants were designated randomly to read an advertisement or one of blog product reviews. After subjects read the content, the individuals were asked about one specifics referred in the content to ascertain they had cautiously read it. The manipulation check was used to examine the extent of positive eWOM by two items in the fourth part of questionnaire. And the fifth part of the questionnaire measured the extent to which the subjects think the degree of sender's expertise. The scale for expertise adopted from Ohanian (1990) was five-item semantic scale.

After that, the research estimated the skepticism of subjects about the message. Six items was employed from Tan (2002) who proposed the consumer skepticism construct indicators scale. Due to the consideration of skepticism definition in the research, two construct of the scale was adopted: disbelief and mistrust. Furthermore, only factor loading larger than 0.65 was adopted. The seventh part was utilized to assess the extent of perceived credibility of message. Subjects were estimated by four items bipolar scale adopted from Johnson and Kaye (2004). Finally, the study measured indicators of eWOM's effect: product attitude, purchase intention and WOM communication. Ying and Chung's (2007) scale was used for measurement of product Attitude. This study used two items to assess purchase intention based on previous research (Inman, Peter, & Raghubir, 1997; Weinberger & Dillon, 1980). WOM communication was estimated with three items developed by Babin, Lee, Kim, & Griffin (2005). And a seven-point Likert scale was used in the survey, with '1' describing 'strongly disagree', '3'

describing 'neutral', and '7' describing 'strongly agree'.

Reliability and Validity

The study employed cronbach's alpha analysis to evaluate the reliability of the measurement. All measurement scales displayed allowable reliability coefficients. Composite reliability (CR) values were all higher than 0.7 within the permissible range (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Average variance extracted (AVE) was adopted to estimate the validity of the measurement. In this study, AVE values of scales were all above 0.5. Overall, the reliability and validity of the results was good.

Data Analysis

There were 66 subjects in expert group that people read blog product review written by expert bloggers, while, there were 75 subjects in novice group that read blog product review written by ordinary bloggers, and 54 participants were in advertisement group that people read the advertisement about BB cream.

Manipulation Check

The valence of eWOM in the blog could be seem positive ($M_{\text{positive-expert}}$=5.61; $M_{\text{positive-novice}}$=5.49).Besides, expertise of expert and novice had significant difference ($M_{\text{expertise-expert}} = 4.95$ vs. $M_{\text{expertise-novice}} = 4.23$, $F_{1, 139} = 1.09$, $p < 0.001$).

PLS Analysis of Involvement, Experience and Skepticism

This study employed Partial Least Squares (PLS) to examine the relationships among variables. PLS is a non-parametric analytical option to Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) methods. PLS is a very effective data analysis method that is widely used.

Firstly, researchers wanted to explore which factors will affect the consumer skepticism and to investigate whether different effects will happen in different situations.

Advertisement Group

Skepticism was explained 28.9% here. There was a negative relationship between involvement and skepticism (-.635, $p < 0.001$). It showed when people read cosmetic advertisement; those with high involvement have less skepticism toward the advertisement. These finding supported H2. There is a positive relationship between experience and skepticism (.394, $p < 0.05$). This finding indicated consumers with high experience generate more skepticism toward advertisement. Thus, H3 was supported.

Expert Group

There was a negative relationship between involvement and skepticism (-.407, $p < 0.05$). When consumers read cosmetic blog produce review written by expert, individuals with high involvement have little skepticism toward the advertisement. H2 also supported. And there was no a significant relationship between experience and scepticism (0.082, $p = 0.508$). The results represented that consumers with high experience may not provoke more skepticism toward cosmetic blog produce review written by expert. For this reason, H3 was not supported. Overall, skepticism had 13% explanation power.

Novice Group

There were no significant relationships among variables. Mentioned to blog product reviews written by ordinary bloggers, consumers with high involvement might not have doubt toward the content (-0.138, $p = 0.671$). And consumer with high experience might be not sceptical of the content provided by novice bloggers (-0.127, $p = 0.469$). Thus, H2 and H3 were not supported both. But the explanation power of scepticism was 5.8% slightly lower than previous groups.

All Groups

There was a necessary to survey these relationships in general data. And the result revealed there was a negative relationship between expertise and skepticism (-.433, $p<0.001$). The finding represented consumers thought content created with expertise was more credible than those written by ordinary bloggers. This finding supported H1. The result also showed there was a negative relationship between involvement and skepticism (-.234, $p<0.05$). It indicates the fact that subjects with a high level of product involvement were less sceptical about product reviews in blogs or advertisement message, and those with less involvement were more sceptical about such reviews or advertisement message. This finding was consistent with H2. However, there is no significant evidence to show that people with a lot of product experience of BB Cream will directly induce their skepticism. Therefore, H3 is not supported in most situations. Besides, the explanation power of skepticism was 0.270 and it can explain how skepticism generated in some extent.

PLS Analysis of Skepticism and Persuasive Effect

To go further, the researchers wanted to find out how consumer skepticism affected other factors. For this reason, the study executed PLS analysis to explore the relationship among these variables: skepticism, credibility, product attitude, purchase intention and WOM communication.

Table 1 Measuring the Influence of Skepticism on Persuasive effect

	Group			
	Advertisement	Expert	Novice	All
Credibility →Product Attitude	0.514*** (3.836)	0.699*** (7.759)	0.663*** (4.596)	0.627*** (6.670)
Skepticism → Credibility	-0.737*** (11.432)	-0.786*** (13.526)	-0.636*** (7.322)	-0.723*** (13.859)
Skepticism → Product Attitude	-0.203 (1.307)	-0.072 (0.470)	-0.011 (0.076)	-0.106 (0.919)
Product Attitude→ Purchase Intention	0.743*** (12.560)	0.748*** 8.656	0.785*** (18.308)	0.760*** (14.136)
Product Attitude →WOM communication	0.653*** (8.772)	0.764*** (8.859)	0.729*** (13.257)	0.723*** 12.542
$R^2$of Credibility	0.543	0.618	0.405	0.523
$R^2$of Product Attitude	0.501	0.573	0.448	0.500
$R^2$of Purchase Intention	0.577	0.559	0.616	0.577
$R^2$of WOM communication	0.522	0.584	0.532	0.522

Note: p *<0.05; p **<0.01; p ***<0.001

Generally, there was a significant positive relationship between credibility and product attitude. This revealed that when people thought the content was credible, they will have more positive product attitude, no matter blog product review or advertisement is. This finding supported H4. There existed a significant negative relationship between skepticism and credibility in most cases. It means no matter which content consumer read perceived skepticism will reduce perceived credibility. H5a was supported. And there is a negative relationship between skepticism and product attitude, however, it is not significant. It indicated that people that sceptical of message what they read may not produce significant negative product attitude. Therefore, H5b is not supported. Nevertheless, the result indicated credibility was a mediator, and it causes that there was a significant mediation effect between skepticism and product attitude.

Moreover, purchase intention and WOM communication were positively affected by product attitude significant. These finding indicated that once people have a positive product attitude, they will probably want to buy the product and propagate WOM to other peoples. Therefore, these finding also supported H5c and H5d.

Discussion

The result indicated consumers generate more skepticism when reading advertisement than blog product views. This finding was consistent with previous research (Calfee & Ringold, 1994; Obermiller & Spangenberg, 2000; Coulter, Zaltman, & Coulter, 2001). It indicated advertisement induce more consumer skepticism than eWOM, it was a

result that marketers had to face it.

Firstly, when consumer read cosmetic advertisement, more involvement they had will induce less skepticism toward it and more experience they had will cause more skepticism toward it. The finding indicated that consumer with more involvement were more easily persuaded by advertisement, because they more concerned about the product. However, the individuals with more product experience were more easily generate their skepticism because they know the functionality and possible performance that BB Cream may have. Further, they could detect what statement is exaggerated than those with lees experience. But when consumers read blog product review written by expert, only individuals' involvement affected the consumer skepticism. When consumers wanted to buy cosmetic product, they surf eWOM to do their purchase decision. At the same time, it might mean that consumer with no experience to specific product. Hence, their experience couldn't influence skepticism.

The research also displayed a negative relationship between expertise and skepticism for general participants. Based on previous research (Ohanian, 1990; Alba & Hutchinson, 1987), consumers think that expert sources are more persuasive and convincing than novice sources. Therefore, if individuals considered that a blogger was an expert, they might tend to believe what bloggers states.

And no matter consumers read advertisement or blog product review written by whom, consumer skepticism will affect negatively perceived credibility toward blog product reviews. Besides, the finding revealed that if consumers were sceptical of blog cosmetic review, they might reduce their blog perceived credibility but not directly affect product attitude. Further, their product attitude had positive influences on their intentions of purchase the cosmetic product and sharing the positive eWOM to other people.

Study 2

Experimental Product: Restaurant

Study 2 chose restaurant as the experimental product due to its universality in our life. As study 1, the blog article using in the study 2 included experience of dining out. Product reviews of restaurant usually have relations with the eating experience or feeling of dishes, both of them are claim types that consumers may be sceptical.

Participants

Study 2 posted a call-for-volunteers message on a discussion board in the largest online community in Taiwan. This survey used a lottery activity to stimulate people partaking in this survey. The study utilized fifteen US$10 convenience store gift coupons and five

reusable chopsticks as incentives.

There was 132 subjects partook in the survey voluntarily. Approximately 45.54% (51) of the participants were male. There were 20 responses excluded owing to duplication of participation, missing data, and manipulation checks. The remaining 112 (84.85%) were included in data analysis. The subjects in this survey showed that average age was 25.12 years old with a standard deviation of 5.17 years. Among them, most (67.86%) participants were college students. Referring to frequency of dining in restaurant per month, 87 (77.68%) participants reported that they dined in restaurant more than five times per month.

Experiment Design

As study 1 mentioned, the current study also created two pseudo-bloggers for the experiment. The one was an experienced gourmet, and the other was an ordinary consumer who wrote a blog to share her dining experience and what she eats in restaurant. The experimental blogs included the personal profiles of these two bloggers. A pseudo-brand was created for experimental purposes due to avoid the interference of a brand name. For exploring whether the difference exists between eWOM and advertisement. The survey created a pseudo-restaurant advertisement. Restaurant advertisement showed a delicious picture containing appetizer, steak, dessert and drink. In addition, it still include exaggerate words to induce individuals' dining-out intention. And as same as study 1, a positive eWOM was adopted for the study 2.

(a) Expert Group   (b) Novice Group   (c) Advertisement

Figure 2 Experiment Group

Measurement

The first part utilized two items that measured the subjects' level of product experience.

Two items were "how many times did you go out for a slap-up meal?" and "how many times did you go to restaurant every month?" Except the first part, the all measurement items was used the same scale mentioned in study 1. And a seven-point Likert scale was also employed in the investigation, with '1' representing 'strongly disagree', '3' representing 'neutral', and '7' representing 'strongly agree'.

Reliability and validity

Cronbach's alpha analysis was used to assess the reliability of the scales. All the reliability exceeded 0.7 in the acceptable range (Gefen, Sturb, & Boundreau, 2000). Based on Fornell and Larcker (1981), one item of experience and two items of skepticism were discarded because of the factor loading under 0.5 improperly. All composite reliability (CR) values were above 0.7 in the allowable range (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Referring to validity of scale, all AVE values of scales were above 0.5. Generally, the reliability and the validity of the results was acceptable.

Results

There were 35 subjects in expert group, and there were 32 subjects in novice group, and other 45 participants were in advertisement group.

Manipulation Check

The valence of blog in study 2 could be regard as positive ($M_{\text{positive-expert}}$=5.91; $M_{\text{positive-novice}}$=5.48). Besides, expertise between expert and novice group had significant difference ($M_{\text{expertise-expert}}$ = 5.05 vs. $M_{\text{expertise-novice}}$ = 4.48, $F_{1, 139}$ =1.02, $p < 0.05$).

PLS Analysis of Involvement, Experience and Skepticism

As study1 did, the research utilized PLS to investigate the relationship among variables here. This article wanted to understand how independent variables influenced consumer skepticism and how consumer skepticism affected individuals' behavior. Consequently, the study explored the previous part in the following section.

Table 2 The Effect of Involvement and Experience on Skepticism

	Group		
	Advertisement	Expert	Novice
Involvement→Skepticism	-0.226*** (3.949)	-0.243*** (5.285)	-0.314*** (9.220)
Expertise→Skepticism	0.232*** (4.188)	0.298*** (6.756)	0.087* (2.247)
$R^2$of Skepticism	0.107	0.143	0.115

Note: p *<0.05; p **<0.01; p ***<0.001

There was a significant negative relationship between involvement and skepticism no matter advertisement group or eWOM group. It represented when people read cosmetic message, they with high involvement has less skepticism toward the advertisement. These finding supported H2. It existed that a significant positive relationship between experience and skepticism. The results indicated that consumers with high experience may produce more skepticism toward message content. Therefore, H3 was supported.

All Groups

After finding out the relationship within grouped data, the study subsequently investigates its relationship for overall data. The finding showed that there was a negative relationship between expertise and skepticism (-.393, $p<0.001$). Once consumers considered that the message sender was with more expertise, the content will caused less consumer skepticism. Hence, H1 was totally supported here. Besides, it exist a negative relationship between involvement and skepticism (-.089, $p<0.05$). Although its path coefficient was slightly low, it still revealed the most people might cause their doubts toward message according to their involvement degree. If individuals has involved deeply in restaurant or food, they might be induced less doubts toward contents. The finding was supported H2. There was a significant positive relationship between experience and skepticism (.260, $p<0.05$). The result indicated that general experienced people were more sceptical of content they read. Non-experienced people were less induced their doubts toward article relatively. For this reason, H3 was supported. Moreover, the explanation power of skepticism was 0.248 and it can explain how skepticism was exerted in some level.

PLS Analysis of Skepticism and Persuasive Effect

The study wanted to discover that how skepticism influenced other elements exactly. As study 1 did, PLS analysis was also performed to investigate the relationship between skepticism, credibility, product attitude, purchase intention and WOM communication.

Table 3 Measuring the Influence of Skepticism on Attitude

	Group			
	Advertisement	Expert	Novice	All
Credibility →Product Attitude	0.577*** (16.424)	0.708*** (28.754)	0.401*** (7.581)	0.593*** (15.251)
Skepticism → Credibility	-0.636*** (28.745)	-0.526*** (15.989)	-0.526*** (15.112)	-0.568*** (16.593)
Skepticism → Product Attitude	-0.233*** (6.684)	-0.121*** (3.615)	-0.346*** (8.415)	-0.232*** (6.184)
Product Attitude→ Purchase Intention	0.855*** (68.860)	0.720*** (34.674)	0.680*** (23.674)	0.787*** (40.739)
Product Attitude →WOM communication	0.842*** (62.979)	0.652*** (24.890)	0.491*** (10.532)	0.726*** (21.481)
R^2 of Credibility	0.405	0.277	0.277	0.322
R^2 of Product Attitude	0.559	0.605	0.427	0.562
R^2 of Purchase Intention	0.730	0.518	0.463	0.619
R^2 of WOM communication	0.710	0.425	0.241	0.526

Note: p ***<0.001

It appeared a significant positive relationship between credibility and skepticism no matter what content people read. Generally, when consumers perceived the content was credible, they had more positive attitude toward the product. Hence, H4 was supported.

Besides, there was a significant negative relationship between skepticism and credibility. It meant most people if doubted the message content what they read, their skepticism induce less positive product attitude. Thus, H5a was supported. Skepticism had a notable negative influence on product attitude generally. Once after reading the message, individuals had doubts toward it, they might not have positive attitude relatively. The finding supported H5b. Further, the result displayed credibility was partial mediator between skepticism and product attitude. It showed the influence of skepticism was not only from skepticism also from skepticism through credibility.

For most people, their attitude toward produce had a positive effect on purchase intention and WOM communication significantly. These results revealed that when consumers with more positive product attitude had more intention to purchase product and spread eWOM. Therefore, H5c and H5d were supported.

Discussion

The result indicated advertisement cause more skepticism than eWOM. Moreover, no matter which content was, restaurant advertisement or blog restaurant review, consumers with more involvement was more easily persuasive through the content. It indicated that once consumers were more concerned delicious food or quality of eating, they might more care about what other people recommended or advertisement looked good. Therefore, they were more convinced by content that they read.

Besides, this study also found out a negative relationship between expertise and consumer skepticism. Once consumers thought the blogger was an ordinary blogger, they might more easily generate consumer skepticism than blog product reviews. This finding was consistent with previous studies (Ohanian, 1990; Alba & Hutchinson, 1987) that stated an expert source was more persuasive than a novice source.

Consumer skepticism negatively affected perceived credibility toward blog product reviews no matter what content consumers read. The results also showed that once consumers had doubts toward message, they will directly reduce their attitude toward the restaurant. In addition, consumer skepticism reduced perceived credibility and credibility had a positive influence on attitude toward product further. There was a mediate effect between skepticism and product attitude. The attitude toward restaurant also had positive effects on their consume intention and desire of sharing the WOM.

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Because blogs rise fast, a lot of firms have started to utilize blog as a marketing strategy to boost their product. In some markets, marketers and practitioners have invited bloggers to try their products and ask them to write down product reviews in their blogs as response or feedback. This research used two markets as our target market: cosmetic and restaurant because most girls and women made up and people dined out frequently. But no matter what markets is, once individuals start to consider these blog product reviews as advertisements, they will begin to suspect the quality of blog product reviews and may generate hostility toward it (Coulter, Zaltman, & Coulter, 2001).

No matter cosmetic or restaurant market, consumers with more involvement were more easily persuasive by blog. Thus, marketing executives should take advantage of consumers that more concerned the product. Besides, referring to restaurant, people with more dining-out experience was more doubt about blog product reviews. But most people were diners with some degree of experience. Hence, the restaurant marketing have to focus on reducing scepticism of consumers. And based on research findings, Consumers consider expert source more convincing than novice source. Marketers should adopted blog product reviews written by an expert than an ordinary blogger.

Consumer scepticism relatively reduced blog perceived credibility of consumers no matter what market was. Moreover, in cosmetic blog product reviews, consumer scepticism didn't affect the attitude toward product, BB cream. However, once consumers were sceptical of blog product reviews about restaurant or dining experience, they had a negative attitude toward the restaurant. Further, consumers had a bad product attitude that caused they don't want to purchase the product or dine in the restaurant, not to mention propagate the positive WOM to their friends, family, facebook, or twitter.

The present research provides a complete view to explore that how the expertise of message sender (blogger) and the involvement and experience of message receiver (consumer) influence consumer scepticism and how consumer scepticism influences the persuasive effects. The present research is helpful for those want to comprehend consumer scepticism toward blog product reviews. Further Research can focus on the influence of valence, response number, or characteristic of individuals further.

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