

**RESEARCH ON USER'S PARTICIPATION AND PURCHASE
INTENTION IN UGC COMMUNITY SHOPPING WEBSITE:
THE CASE OF RED**

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Abstract

With increasing popularity of UGC community and huge success of RED, more and more shopping websites intend to adopt UGC model to their operation. Therefore, it is actual value to carry out the research of consumer behavior in UGC shopping website. This paper aims to explore what drives users to participate in UGC shopping website and how they are turned into consumers of the platform.

Concluding form previous study, platform basic environment, the user's original needs and the user's social needs lead users to participate in UGC community. Combining with consumer behavior theory TRA and TPB model and the attributes of UGC shopping website, 5 factors (sociality, usability, e-WOM library, perceived value and perceived risk) are assumed to influence participation. These 5 factors and additional “participation” are supposed to accelerate the purchase intention. The mediation role of participation between the 5 predictors and the purchase intention is also discussed.

Based on data study on RED, the result of regression analysis indicates that usability, the attribute of e-WOM library and perceived value impel users participate in UGC shopping website. Participation have positive influence on purchase intention. The more the user participate in, the greater purchase intention will be. Meanwhile, in this process, sociability and usability are also the key factors to convert participation to purchasing behavior and the participation has no mediation effect in this study.

Keywords: UGC Shopping Website RED Participation Purchase Intention

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1. Introduction

Rapid users' engagement in today's internet industry leads to UGC business model is highly valued by enterprise. UGC model not only offers greater commercial benefits to business, but also bring more original content to the public. Study (Constantinides et al. 2008) shows about 88% will adapt UGC model to their business operation. However, Sun Shaojun and Zhanh yuhong (2017) argue that although the number of UGC products is increasing, the enthusiasm of users is decreasing. Such problems happen with increasing number of UGC products: the user viscosity decreasing, traffic reduction, user size shrinking, low convert form browsing to purchasing, and more and more users only browse the contents of the "public resource pool", but never contribute to the "public resource pool".

RED was set up in 2013 as an E-commerce platform, the company spends 5 years to grow up to the largest UGC shopping website in China, with 70 million users and \$1.47 billion sales profit in 2018. In addition, the success of RED also reflect in: rapid growth rate, huge traffic volume, smooth daily operation and maintenance mode, the virtuous circle of interaction between virtual community users, and the construction of user viscosity. The factors leading to the success of RED is worthy to research and can be a practical reference for other UGC shopping website and E-commerce company.

The main goal of this paper is to analysis consumers' behavior in UGC shopping website. The findings will answer the question "what drives users to participate in UGC shopping website and how to turn to the users to consumers". The factors attracting users' participation and key factors accelerating purchasing will be presented.

The structures of this study are as follows: chapter 2 is the literature review focusing on the previous consumer behavior theory and the background information of RED will be concluded in this chapter. The conceptual model is put forward in chapter 3, referring to previous study on UGC shopping website and consumer behavior theory. Method of analysis including design and measurement is presented in chapter 4. Chapter 5 focuses on data analysis to find out the relationship between dependent variables and independent variables and research the mediation role of participation. Chapter 6 will state the findings and implications. The limitations of the design and general conclusion are also discussed in this chapter.

2.Literrature Review

Study on consumer behavior mainly insights the whole buying decision process, revealing why consumer buy the product or service and the way they act. Such issues are explained in consumer behavior theories: the influence of emotions and object utility in the decision process, post-purchase attitudes, why consumers purchase as individuals or groups. Have a deep understanding of consumers behavior helps to explore factors influencing users' purchase intention in UGC platform. So, this section will refer to TRA and TPB to get research guidance first. And then the background information about RED will be provided.

2.1 TRA and TPB Model

The theory of reasoned action (TRA) (Ajzen, 1988) reveals the whole decision process form internal and external factors to the final behavior. The most immediate cause is behavioral intention which reflects in people's aim. Attitude is people's evaluation of specific behavior. Subjective norms always come from the external world, it could be the suggestion form others. Attitude and subjective norms can both lead to a particular behavioral intention. Attitude results from behavioral beliefs which is the evaluations of various consequences. Subjective norm is decided by consumers' perceptions and motivation to act the performance. In the result of regression model, if beta of attitude is larger than that of subjective norm, the behavior is regarded to be more under guidance of attitude (David Trafimow,2009).

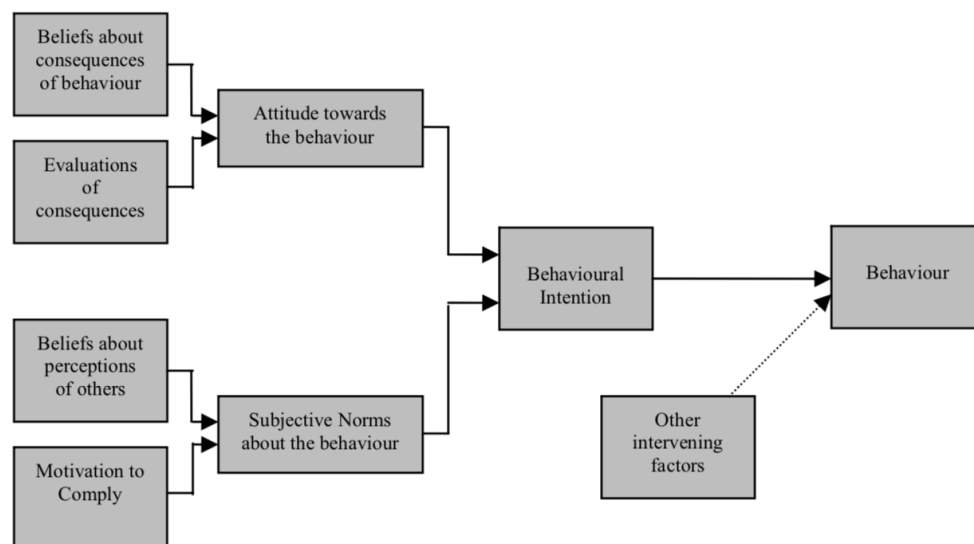


Figure1. Theory of Reasoned Action. Source: (Ajzen, 1988)

The pre-condition of TRA is that it assumes that the occurrence of behavior can be controlled by the will of the individual, but in reality, the control of the will of the individual behavior is often interfered by many other factors, which greatly reduces the explanatory power. The theory of planned behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991) originated in the TRA is a model to analysis individual's behavior under the circumstances. The central factor leading to a behavior is still the individual intention (Ajzen, 1991). Intention indicates how much the individual would like to perform the behavior. Generally, the stronger the intention is, the more likely to perform. Three independent factors determine the in intention in TPB model. TPB model distinguishes behavioral, normative, and control beliefs, which are related to attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control respectively(Ajzen, 1991).Attitude is the degree of willingness of preform the behavior. Subjective norm also means social factor, which can be understand as social pressure. The third one is perceived behavioral control which reflects past experience as well as perceived obstacles and gains.

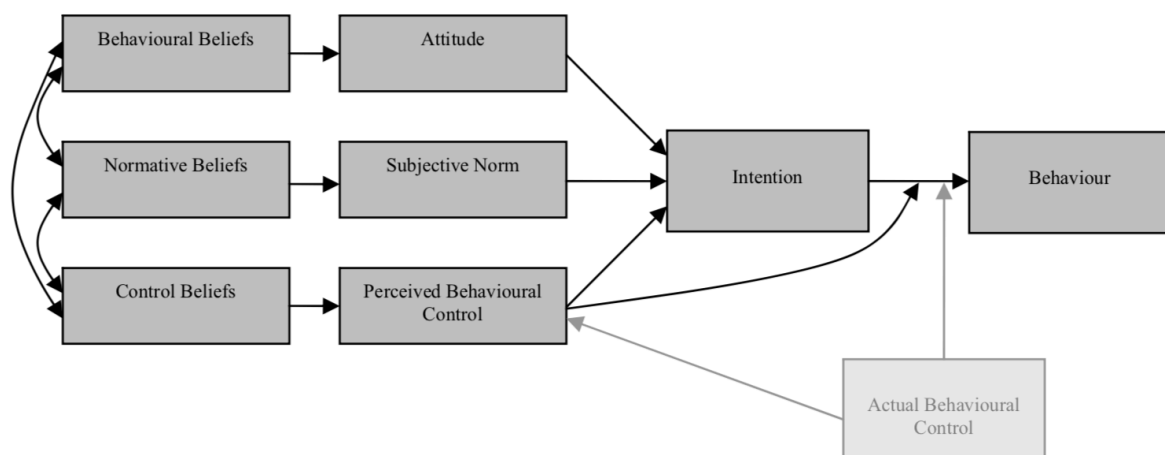


Figure 2. Theory of Planned Behavior. Source:(Ajzen,1991)

The TPB states that the specific behavior depends on both intention and ability (behavioral control) (Wayne W.2016). In fact, TPB differs from TRA because of its additional factor——perceived behavioral control. The resources and opportunities people facing with must have impact on the likelihood of behavior intention or certain behavior action directly to some extent (Ajzen,1991). We can un understand perceived behavioral control as people’s perception of how much the effort that should pay to perform the behavior. Also, it is the evaluation of pay-out and outcome of a certain behavior. TPB model gives us a direction that we should analysis the participation and purchasing from three aspects: attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control.

Referring to TPB model, these opinions should be held when analyzing users' behavior in UGC shopping website:

1. The behavior is influenced by behavior intention and the actual control. Specific example is that individual ability, opportunity and resources available to individuals, which are kind of actual control, can have impact on intention (Ajzen, 1991).
2. Behavior attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavior control mainly result in behavior intention. The more positive attitude, the greater support of important others, and the stronger perceived behavior control, the greater behavior intention, and vice versa.
3. Individual and sociocultural factors indirectly affect behavioral attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and ultimately affect behavioral intention and behavior by influencing behavioral beliefs. These factors could be personality, education level, cultural background, gender... (Ajzen, 1991).
4. Although behavioral attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control can be conceptually completely distinguished, they are both independent and related because they may have a common belief base (Ajzen, 1991).

2.2 The Success of RED

2.2.1 The Operation Mode of RED

The operation mode of RED can be described as Instagram + Amazon. The two major segments in Red are the UGC (User Generated Content) community model and e-commerce part "welfare community".

In the community segment, consumers are encouraged to share their shopping experience, write down their personal reviews of products, and post the review in the community. They can share pictures of products they have purchased, with commenting and liking features, which is similar to Instagram and Pinterest (Allen Peng, 2015). Under the part of e-commerce, Red cooperates with producers and distributors directly and delivers to consumers using the own delivery system. The targeted users are female studying or working in big cities, aged from 20 to 40 years old, who have great purchasing power, require high-quality lifestyle, as well as have high willingness to use social network and share their shopping experience.

2.2.2 Characteristics of RED

The Characteristics of RED can be concluded as: an e-WOM library, usability and sociability. Dennison (2009) defines UGC community is an electronic word-of-mouth library in essence. Experienced customers write down their personal evaluation of the products and share the

evaluation in the platform. These evaluations come from users and can be easily browsed by the public. Thus, RED has a one more attribute: Online Word-Of-Mouth Library.

Two key factors leading to a success for UGC shopping website are usability and sociability (Lu, Xianghua; Phang, Chee Wei; Yu, Jie, 2011). In this paper, Usability and sociability are two dependent variables: Usability is in the dimension of e-commerce platform, and sociability is in the UGC community dimension.

Based on Shackel (1991), Usability refers to the attribute of the platform that enables users can get access to easily and use effectively to achieve the goal of using it. Usability as an E-Commerce Platform means the attribute completing the purchasing process. As an online shopping platform in essence, RED has the similar usability as Amazon, Taobao and other platforms. There is lots of products recommendations in picture format with simple introduction in the first page, which generate form the view history and individual preference. Through the toolbar of “search” in the first page, users can easily input key words or specific content to skip to the information page. The information page is mainly made by users. Users share their shopping experience and write down the evaluation. After viewing the information page, there are two ways for users to purchase the product through RED directly:

- 1: Most other users will insert the link to product (the link is provided by RED), when they post the content about products. Users can get access to the product by clicking the link.
- 2: When users make the purchase decision, they are able to search the products in the “welfare community” page, which is the same as the process in Amazon.

About payment, RED supports China's most popular online payment method, including WeChat pay, Ali pay and E-bank payment. After the payment is completed, products will be shipped within 24 hours. As a result of the establishment of its own express system cooperating with large logistics companies, the delivery speed is 1/3 faster than average level.

The sociability as a UGC virtual community can be explain as follows: The "home page" is the module presented to the user, which is composed of high-quality shopping sharing content selected by the editor. According to the hot topics and users' reading preferences, RED can recommend the content with high degree of attention to individual users with the help of algorithm. Users are able search their interested topic to join in the relative community. In the community, users upload a variety of shopping feelings: how and where to purchase the products, the personal evaluation of the products, the excitement of buying a satisfactory product. The content in the home page can be names as "sharing notes" formed with pictures

and text. The style is normally fresh and concise to meet the aesthetic needs of its target users. Similar to Instagram, users can like, comment and collect their favorite sharing notes. Users are also able to follow their interested authors so that they can get notification when then content producers upload new notes. The “message” page is designed for connection among community members. Uses can send and receive private messages in this page. At the same time, users will also be notified of new updates of other users who are followed. Users who posted sharing notes can receive the praise and comment for their notes.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Users' Participation in the UGC Platform

Users are “producers” in the UGC platform. UGC platform enables users to produce contents to express their perspectives more than commentary ((Sun Shaojun & Zhang Yuhong,2017). In this section, the concept of participation will be clarified. Then, referring to pervious study the factors driving users to participate in UGC platform will be discussed.

3.1.1 The Concept of Participation

The users' participation in virtual community is discussed in different dimensions in previous research. Caroline Wiertz and Ko de Ruyter (2007) regard users' participation in a firm-hosted online community as a collective action activity, aiming to offer service support by solving peer-to-peer problem and exchanging information. In the participation process, the knowledge contribution to the community and to other users is fulfilled. The knowledge sharing process comprises information output and information acceptance (Viswanath Venkatesh al2003). Krishnamurthy and Dou (2008) examine participation in UGC context as a performance driven by psychological incentive to share knowledge, establish connection and express self. The knowledge sharing process comprises information output and information acceptance (Viswanath Venkatesh al2003). Based on these literatures, the participation can be understood as a performance involved in a community to create value and co-create value (Krishnamurthy & Dou,2008).

The general participation behavior in UGC shopping website, especially in RED, can achieve the social connection goal and knowledge sharing, thus creating value for new consumers by exchange the product information. From a macro perspective, participation is manifested in purchasing behavior and non-purchasing behavior posts (Gummerus,2012). In UGC shopping platform, non-purchasing participation behavior mainly includes writing recommendations and reviews, helping other consumers by offer suggestions, joining an online discussion, commenting on posts, searching information of products. The participation is discussed in this paper in non-purchasing behavior dimension, which can be termed as involvement. Dabholkar (1990) measures the participation as a degree reflecting how much the user is involved in a community. Referring to this measure and combining with the user's various activities, users' participation can be understood as a degree of involving or how much the user engages in UGC platform.

3.1.2 Factors Driving Participation in UGC Platform.

Combined with analysis on participating motivation on UGC platform, like Deci EL, Ryan RM, Zhao Yuxiang, Wu Chang, and taking into account the particularity of the UGC highly dependent on the content generated by the user, Sun Shaojun and Zhang Yuhong(2017) analyze the motives and reasons for the user's participation in the UGC platform from three dimensions: product basic environment, the user's original needs, and the user's social needs.

3.1.2.1 Product Basic Environment

Product basic environment mainly includes the infrastructure environment of product itself presentation (website, APP), such as whether the product itself is trustworthy, whether it can be recognized by social value and its own profit business mode (Sun Shaojun & Zhang Yuhong,2017). The product basic environment influences users' trust on the product. Trust refers to users' recognition and accept for the ability of the products developers and other information providers. Without a good product infrastructure, users will suspect the platform, thus the product basic environment is the most direct factor leading to user's participation. In the UGC shopping platform, the security of user account, the security of payment mode and the security of personal information will directly affect the trust of the user to the platform. The users will be more likely to choose the platform that can guarantee the security of their information and finance.

The product basic environment also decides the cost and benefit brought to users by the product. In the internet age, more and more users want to transform their knowledge into objective economic profit through the internet platform. Meanwhile, more and more Internet consumers are willing to get the knowledge of other people by paying the corresponding cost, such as money and time. In the virtual Internet community, users begin to consider the cost benefits obtained by their participation in the community, including the efforts, the time cost, the economic cost, the actual monetary rewards obtained through the platform, or the virtual payments such as integration, bonus and so on.

3.1.2.2 The User's Original Needs

The user's original demand for products, refers to the most fundamental needs and demands of the user, that is, the function and design of the product are expected to meet the user's reasonable consumption request, and able to maintain the smooth operation behavior in the use process. The user's original demand basically requires the product to be functionality. Additionally, emotional benefits are an important part of the user's original demand. It is mainly

reflected in the inner pleasure generated by using the platform (Sun Shaojun & Zhang Yuhong,2017). In this paper, Emotional benefits can be adapted to be a positive emotional experience. For example, emotional benefits grow if users can quickly find the items they want to buy on RED, and by checking the evaluation of the product by other users, it can help the user to judge the quality of the product efficiently. At the same time, additional emotional benefits generate form excellent extra service like convenient purchase links, fast delivery speed, and good packaging... Combining the characteristics of the social e-commerce platform, self-efficacy in UGC platform means the content contributed by users and users' evaluation ability of their participation (Sun Shaojun&Zhang Yuhong,2017). On RED, users' self-efficacy stands for such behavior: users are able to recognize the information value and finish value evaluation process.

Referring to users' behavior process, users' emotional benefits get from two aspects: participation in the pre-purchasing stage and after-purchasing. In the UGC platform context, users can post and search information of goods and brand, seek the goods they want and be able to buy it directly... etc. On the RED platform, functionality mainly reflects in that users are able to upload products information, search and view the information, finish purchase and payment process, then get the products delivered. Regarding to the fact that the basic platform environment can meet the emotional benefit, we define the original needs as the basic needs to purchasing in the platform. It means that the platform should enable users to purchase products in this website easily and conveniently.

3.1.2.3 The User's Social Needs.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs states five-tier model of human needs. The needs at the bottom is physiological needs, including the need for food, water and sleep, followed by safety needs, which referred as security, stability and freedom of fear. The needs in third layer is sense of belonging and love. Once these three needs are satisfied. The higher needs termed as self-esteem shows up, which can obtain from achievement, recognition and respect. After this stage, the highest level called self-actualization can be reached (Maslow, A.,1970). According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, individuals will pursue higher needs after meeting current needs. When the lower-level needs are "more or less" fulfilled, these needs will disappear. Then individuals will take actions to achieve the next needs, which have not been reached. The needs that are not obtained will be an outstanding need at the current stage. Then the needs in the higher layer become salient needs. However,

the needs at the higher level still exist and become stronger once the lower needs are completed (Maslow, A.,1970).

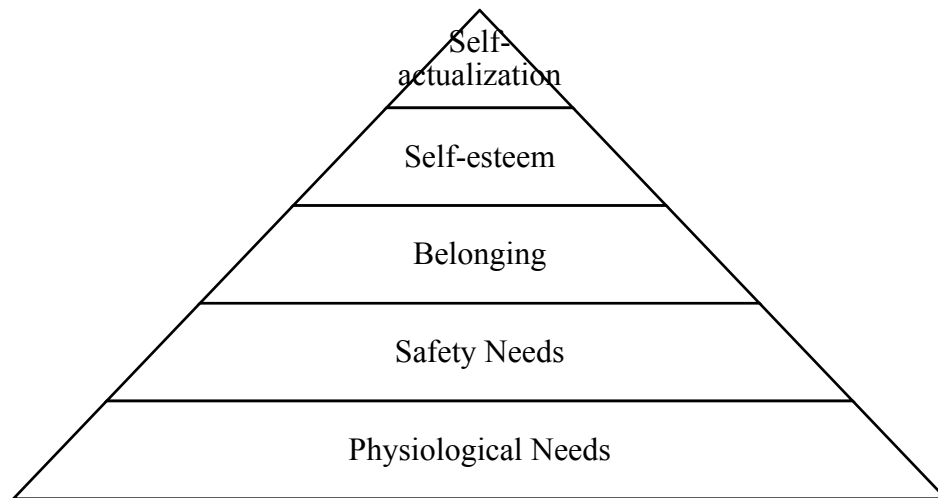


Figure3. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

During the participation in UGC platform, the user's original needs including functionality, emotional needs and self- efficacy belongs to lower-level needs. Once the User's Original Needs are met by the Product Basic Environment, the higher-level needs social needs will be addressed, followed by esteem needs and self-actualization needs. Preece (2001) defined sociability in UGC community as a state of being able to carry sociable activity. Users can establish connection and interact with other members to fulfill purposes, such as sense of identity, respect from others and belongingness to the community. Worthy to note that it is the function of the platform that realizes users' connection and interaction with other users (Hoffman, D. and Novak, T, 1996). As a branch of social e-commerce platform, an important attribute of UGC platform is high density social contact between users (Sun Shaojun & Zhang Yuhong,2017). Thus, it is necessary to take the social needs into account when analyzing the factors driving participation in UGC platform. Adopting Maslow's hierarchy of needs to UGC platform engagement, users' social needs form bottom to up are: social media presence, online reputation, engagement, ambassadors, and social media influence (Olsy Sorokina,2015).

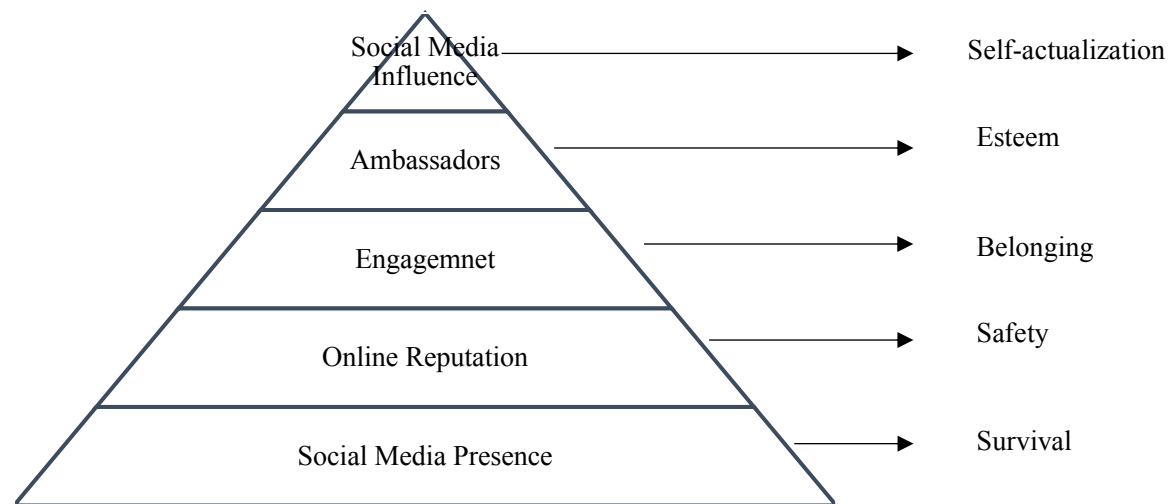


Figure 4. The Hierarchy of Needs for An Engaged Social Media Audience

Irene le Roux's study (2016) shows that motives drive customer engaging in virtual community. There are mainly two types of motives: hedonic motives and utilitarian motives. According to TRA model, attitude and subjective norms have direct impact on behavioral intention. In the digital context, the product basic environment is the fundamental element to meet users' original and social needs. The needs to be met better, the more positive attitude and subjective norms are, the greater intention will be. In the literature review part, the product basic environment of RED can be classified to usability, sociability. Thus, Accordingly, the following hypotheses are formed:

H1: Usability positively influences participation.

H2: Sociability positively influences participation.

3.2 Participation and Purchase Intention

TRA and TPB model states that the greater the intention is, the more likely users are to perform a specific behavior. Based on this theory, the stronger participation intention will more likely to lead to a participation behavior. Will the more frequent participation results in more intention to purchase? Scholars have done the following research.

That the main attraction for precipitation is the content generated by users, resulting in UGC community differ from the real community (Gou FongLiaw,2013). In this process, users interact with other users. It finds that the users' participation in a UGC community enhances their sense of belonging to the community (Gou FongLiaw,2013). Posting content in the platform partly generates a sense of belonging (Kazmer, Haythornthwaite, Shoemaker,2000).

Gou FongLiaw (2013) finds that the more the users are involved in community, the more sense of belonging in the brand community users will feel. Then he members will be more willing to spend their time to share information with other members (Kazmer, Haythornthwaite, Shoemaker,2000). According to Fiore, Jin and Kim (2005), the mechanism of content generating, and information sharing reduce the cost of searching and purchasing. Then users obtain a lower perceived risk and increased perceived value since they gain the benefits form the community. The sense of belonging enhances user's tendency to purchase in this platform (Gou FongLiaw,2013). Irene le Roux's study (2016) finds that customer engagement has a positive effect on brand attitude, and brand attitude has a positive effect on purchase intention. Thus, the hypothesis is put forward as follows:

H3: Participation positively influences purchase intention.

Users' participation brings traffic to the platform. But the most important section for companies is to convert the traffic to real income. For UGC shopping website, how to convert the "participation" to "purchase behavior" matters more. Motivations drive individuals to perform certain behavior (Lin, 2006). The previous literature on UGC shopping website mentioned the acceleration role of characteristics of platform (Lin, 2006). The logic is that the characteristics of the platform, such as usability and sociability, may enhance the intention to purchase in the platform while they participate in the platform (Lin, 2006; Yu et al., 2007).

Previous study such as Ranganathan and Ganapathy (2002) suggested the importance of usability to the success of a website. They mentioned that usability can be regared as a tool measuring the operation of the platform. Carlos.F, Raquel.G and Carlos.O(2009) pointed that usability improves consumers best understanding about the contents and realize consumers' achievement of a goal, such as purchasing. In the marketing view, usability is recognized as a key factor for shopping platform to turn users into customers (Agarwal, R., et Venkatesh, V. 2002). According to De Souza and Preece (2004), a shopping website should have the basic usability to complete the whole purchase process, including search products, information collecting to evaluate the product, placing an order and finishing the payment.

Sociability in UGC community should be a state of being pleasant to have sociable activity with each other (Phang et al. 2009; Preece, 2001). Through the connection and interaction, members are more likely to find information suitable for them. Then they perceive the benefits and significance of the platform (Hoffman.D,1996). In additional, the benefits brought from sociability positively influence the perceived enjoyment while users participating in the UGC

communitie (Preece, 2001). In section 2.1, usability and sociality are two of characteristics of RED. In section 2.2, we find out that usability and sociability are important to drive users participate in UGC platform. In this paper, we aim to research purchase intention in UGC community shopping website. Thus, we put forward hypotheses to test the role of usability and sociability to purchase intention.

H4: Usability positively influences purchase intention.

H5: Sociability positively influences purchase intention.

3.3 The Role of e-WOM

Dennison et al (2009) define social UGC shopping website as word-of-mouth to e-commerce. Electronic word-of-mouth or information sharing among consumers in social networks has become one of the most commonly formats of word of mouth in digital media (Chetna Kudeshia, 2017). Experienced consumers actively share the shopping notes and products evaluation in UGC platform, thus adding an attribute of online word-of-mouth library to the platform.

The influence of e-WOM to purchase intention proves to be existing. You cannot touch and feel the products while you shop online. So, consumers rely more and more on online recommendation and online review to judge the function and quality of the products (Dennison et al,2009). Lots of consumers are used to read suggestions related to product information provided by experienced consumers before they purchase products or services. While many new consumers look for e-WOM in the pre-purchasing stage, lots of experienced consumers voluntarily to share both positive and negative comments about their experience (Dennison et al,2009). Study (Senecal & Nantel, 2004) shows opinions given by experienced consumers have a significant effect on new customers' purchasing decision-making. Consumers need a reference to strengthen their confidence and decrease the perception of suffering from risks(Senecal & Nantel, 2004).

Unlike the information and evaluation shared in the merchant's official website, UGC community assembles the reviews and evaluation created by experienced consumers in their personal networks, which more objectively and accurately reflect the actual function and quality of the products (Chetna Kudeshia, 2017). UGC platform is an effective carrier of consumer electronic word-of-mouth and provide sorts of product-related information and opinions. UGC platform changes users' decision-making journey. Because users can easily and

quickly communicate with individuals to exchange product-related information and opinions, regardless of geographical and time constraints (Chetna Kudeshia, 2017).

The availability of product reviews posted by other consumers enhance the users' intention to search e-WOM in UGC platform (Huang et al,2009). The consumers who involve in online discussions present stronger intention to participate more in the future than the consumers who get the information which are generated by marketers (Bickart & Schindler,2001). Hence, eWOM on the site increases participation, so we propose:

H6: Usefulness and use of e-WOM on the website positively influences participation.

We put forward a hypothesis about participation and purchase intention, assuming that participation have a positive impact on purchase intention. And then we assume the relation between e-WOM library and participation, thus a new hypothesis is reasoned out progressively:

H7: Usefulness and use of e-WOM on the website positively influences purchase intention.

3.4 Perceived Value and Perceived Risk

The TPB model shows that the intention and the actual behavior get control from perceived behavioral control. Whether to take an actual behavior is partly determined by perceived behavioral control. The sufficient resources and little barriers have impact on behavior performance. Users will get a stronger perceived behavioral control and behavior intention if there is more resources and opportunity available to users or the less uncertain factors users faced with (Ajzen I,1986). In this process, consumers' perception plays a role.

Consumers have expectation when they buy products. They hope to get higher perceived value in the whole process. In the UGC shopping platform context, perceived value is the overall assessment of the experience in the platform, reflecting the trade-off between perceived benefit and perceived risk (Zeithaml,1988). Besides, Zeithaml (1988) states that perceived benefit come from the benefits users obtain from the platform, while perceived risk reflects in the efforts while obtaining the products or services from the platform. The perception and evaluation of the benefits they believe they will receive determines customers' intention (Zeithaml,1988). The perceived value is high if consumers believe the platform can satisfy their wants and needs. Teas & Agarwal (2000) find that perceived values deeply and positively influence users' attitude. Therefore, High perceived values cause positive attitude towards the platform (Teas & Agarwal, 2000). Also, if users keep having positive perceived values for the

platform, they will have more stronger positive attitude to the platform (Teas & Agarwal, 2000). Based on TPB model, the attitude has significantly and positively impact on intention, thus influencing the actual behavior. The results of Chunmei Gan and Weijun Wang (2017) in their study show that perceived value significantly and positively affect consumers' satisfaction, thus progressively influencing purchase intention.

In view of the research objective of this paper is to find out the factors influencing participation and purchase intention in a platform, rather than rather than regard to a specific product, this paper define the perceived value as the value perception to the platform. The exact measure to perceived value can see in the section 4.2. In the UGC context, the following hypothesis can be put forward:

H8: Perceived value positively influences participation.

H9: Perceived value positively influences purchase intention.

Perceived risk generally refers to the cognizance of an unpleasant result or users identify some factors that will be lead to the unpleasant result (Ivan Ross,1975)). Consumers perceive risks in virtual communities whether there is actually a risk or not. According to Baird and Thomas (1985) consumers will perceive risk when they think the situation bring less benefit, but the uncertainty increases their cost in the purchase decision. Mitchell and Greatedorex (1993) identifies the four key factors that increase the degree of perceived risk: intangibility, heterogeneity, perishability, and inseparability. Perceived risk theory can explain some extent consumer behavior when purchasing online. Consumer perceive higher degree of perceived risk when purchasing online (Mitra, Reiss, & Capella, 1999). Because consumer cannot feel the quality and function in first hand and need to finish payment online (Gefen, 2002). The intangibility increases perceived risk in purchasing process, because there is no trial period prior to purchase to feel the quality and function. Buying first and try-on later increase uncertainty (Mitra, Reiss, & Capella, 1999). Researchers have identified shopping online is filled with financial risk, performance risk, psychological risk, social risk, physical risk, and time risk (Jacoby & Kaplan, 1972; Roselius, 1971). Thus, Risk perception can be regarded as an assessment of the potential risk in a situation based on the perception of the degree of uncertainty and confidence to overcome it (Baird and Thomas 1985), including the time risk, financial risk and get low quality products etc....from the platform.

The degree of perceived risk has impact on consumers' decision-making process (Cox,1967). Element of risk exists in all decision-making process, because uncertainty is always involved (Pablo et al. 1996). Study (Damien J. Williams and Jan M. Noyes,2004) indicates that the

higher level of perceived risk is, the less likely to make a certain decision and take the action. Thus, in the participation context, higher level of perceived risk decreases the enthusiasm of participation. Perceived risk directly influences on user's behavior intention (Mitchell et al., 1999). The purchase intention is weakened by perceived risk (Baird Thomas ,1985) Accordingly, under the circumstance of UGC shopping website, we assume:

H10: Perceived risk negatively influences participation.

H11: Perceived risk negatively influences purchase intention.

3.5 The Mediation Role of Participation

As the definition of participation in section 3.1, the participation can be understood as the degree of involvement in UGC shopping website. Meanwhile the previous hypotheses assume the 5 factors (sociability, usability, the e-WOM library, perceived value and perceived risk) have impact on participation. Secondly, these 5 factors are assumed to influence purchase intention. Thirdly, participation is assumed to affect purchase intention.

Reuben M. Baron and David A. Kenny (1986) states that it is possible to take a mediation test once the following conditions are satisfied: a). the predictor is proved to influence the mediator. b). the predictor must affect the outcome. c). the mediator much have impact on the outcome. Accordingly, we can have a mediation test running through participation, to exam how or why the 5 factors affect the purchase intention. Thus, new hypotheses put forward:

H12: Participation mediates the effect of sociability on purchase intention.

H13: Participation mediates the effect of usability on purchase intention.

H14: Participation mediates the effect of the attribute of e-WOM on purchase intention.

H15: Participation mediates the effect of perceived value on purchase intention.

H16: Participation mediates the effect of perceived risk on purchase intention.

3.6 Conceptual Model

According to the classification of variables, the hypotheses are as follows:

- H1: Participation positively influences purchase intention.
- H2: Sociability positively influences participation.
- H3: Sociability positively influences purchase intention.
- H4: Usability positively influences participation.
- H5: Usability positively influences purchase intention.
- H6: Usefulness and use of e-WOM on the website positively influences participation.
- H7: Usefulness and use of e-WOM on the website positively influences purchase intention.
- H8: Perceived value positively influences participation.
- H9: Perceived value positively influences purchase intention.
- H10: Perceived risk negatively influences purchase intention.
- H11: Perceived risk negatively influences purchase intention.
- H12: Participation mediates the effect of sociability on purchase intention.
- H13: Participation mediates the effect of usability on purchase intention.
- H14: Participation mediates the effect of the attribute of e-WOM on purchase intention.
- H15: Participation mediates the effect of perceived value on purchase intention.
- H16: Participation mediates the effect of perceived risk on purchase intention.

Figure 4 provides a schematic view of the hypotheses.

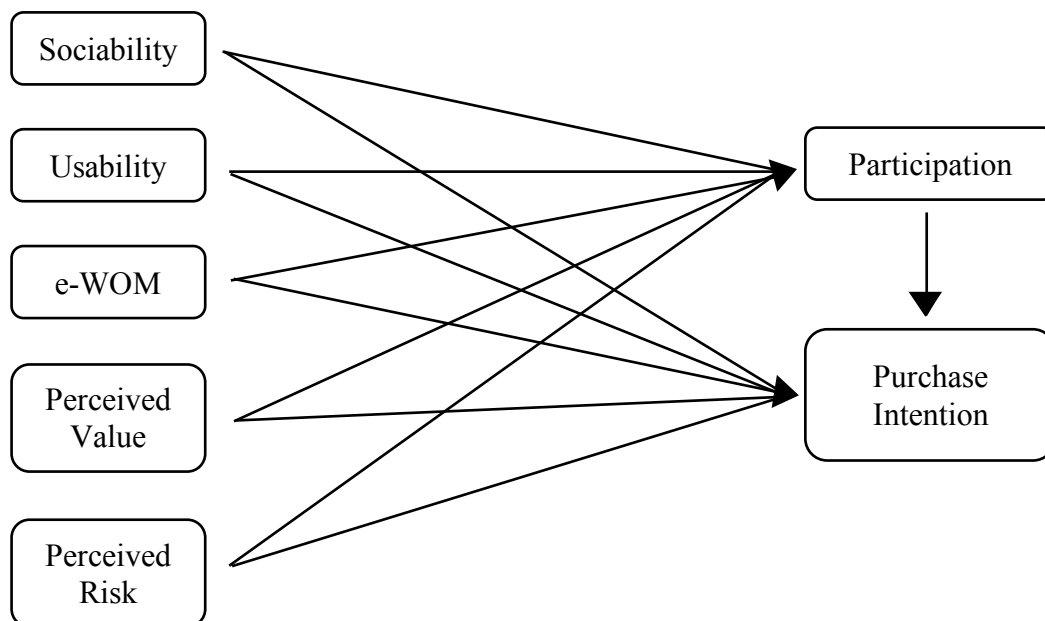


Figure 5. Conceptual Model

4. Method

4.1 Design

In order to investigate the factors influencing user's participation and purchase intention in UGC community shopping website, an online survey is carried out based on the conceptual model (see appdenx1). In order to make the findings more specific and precise, this study takes RED as a particular case. To ensure the diversity of respondents and reduce the interference of sample size on the results, this study tried to get access to more diversification respondents. The experiment tool is Tencent questionnaire. This research posted link in Weibo, WeChat and the online community in RED to get high diversification respondents' coverage. The introduction of the questionnaire announces that only users of RED are qualified to fill in this survey, in which way to ensure that all the respondents are the users of RED.

After collecting all the data, we first eliminated the invalid questionnaire. Secondly, we test the reliability SPSS 22. Finally, we test the relationship between independent variable and dependent variable. The appendix 2 provides a graphic view of the methodology.

4.2 Measurement

Most of the measurement scales involved in this study are based on the mature measurement method in previous studies and adjusted according to the specific case to ensure its accuracy and practicability.

4.2.1 The Measurement of Sociability.

Utpal M. Dholakia, Richard P. Bagozzi (2003) investigate two key social determinants of user's behavior in virtual community --- community engagement and social identity. Being able to engage in the community helps users to establish connection interact with other members. Social identity captures the individual's identification in the group because the user may get notice and self-identity from virtual the community membership. The sense of belonging to the community and being noticeable have emotional significant impact on participation. So, we measure the sociability from "community engagement" and 'social identity". Segmentally from "connection" "social interaction" "identification" and "emotional significance".

Table 1. The Measurement of Sociability.

Variable	Measurement	Questions	Reference
Sociability	Community Engagement	The participation and feedbacks on RED help me to build connection with others.	(Utpal M. Dholakia, Richard P. Bagozzi ,2003)
		The interaction on RED makes me easier to know people who have the similar interests.	
	Social Identity	The interaction on RED make me noticeable.	
		To be part of the community or interest groups on RED make me joyful.	

4.2.2 The Measurement of Usability.

The usability discussed in this paper is the function of the shopping website which can fulfill purchasing behavior. Udo Konrad, Hartmut Wandke (2003) states that the online web must first ensure users can get access to the website easily and conveniently, spending little time, energy and knowledge. Consumers hope to have various options, get products with favorable price with higher quality and prefer a fast delivery speed when purchasing online (Saleem ur Rahman, Muhammad Adnan Khan,2018). We term this attribute of the shopping website as “functionality”. Accordingly, we measure usability form accessibility and functionality.

Table 2. The Measurement of Usability.

Variable	Measurement	Questions	Reference
Usability	Accessibility	I can use RED for free.	(Udo Konrad, Hartmut Wandke,2003)
		I do not need to know special and advanced skills to use RED.	
		The shopping link in comments makes it convenient to purchase.	
	Functionality	RED sells a variety of products.	(Saleem ur Rahman, Muhammad Adnan Khan,2018)
		The quality of products sold on RED is trustworthy.	
		The price of products sold on RED is competitive.	
		The delivery speed is fast.	

4.2.3 The Measurement of e-WOM on The Website

The e-WOM is the user's information exchange and discussions on some products or services carrying out online. From the aspect of consumer behavior process, Alanah Davis and Deepak Khazanchi (2008) find that e-WOM help consumers know better about the product first. The outcome of information evaluation directly leads to the actual decision. So, we measure the e-WOM from section of "product information" and "decisions process".

Table 3. The Measurement of e-WOM on The Website.

Variable	Measurement	Questions	Reference
e-WOM	Production information	The WOM (word of mouth) helps me know better about the products.	(Alanah Davis and Deepak Khazanchi, 2008)
		The WOM on RED helps me to better compare different products	
	Decision process	I refer a lot to the WOM on RED while shopping.	
		The WOM on RED helps me to make a better purchase decision.	

4.2.4 The Measurement of Perceived Value.

Sheth, Newman and Gross (1991) finds that consumers' behavior of purchase mainly results from functional value, emotional value, epistemic value, social value and conditional value. In the UGC shopping website context, this paper reduces the 5 dimensionalities to 2 dimensionalities: objective value and emotional value. Objective value means that some function, effectiveness or physical attributes can meet the objective of using the website (Sheth, etc. al.,1991). Objective value corresponds to the external factors in consumer behavior theory. Emotional value focuses on whether users have positive emotions in the whole process, corresponding to the subjective norms in TPB model. In conclusion, this paper employs functional value and emotional value to measure the perceived value.

Table 4. The Measurement of Perceived Value.

Variable	Measurement	Questions	Reference
Perceived Value	Functional value	I can save a lot of time and energy acquiring information about products on RED.	(Sheth, newman, gross, 1991)
		The information about products on RED make me know the quality and function better.	
	Emotional value	I can find products that are more suitable for my personal quality and styles on RED.	
		Getting access to more product information make me more confident in this shopping process.	

4.2.5 The Measurement of Perceived Risk.

Researchers have identified shopping online is filled with financial risk, performance risk, social risk, physical risk, and time risk (Jacoby & Kaplan, 1972; Roselius, 1971). But the social risk is deleted in this paper because it has already been corresponded in “sociability”. and adopt time risk, financial risk, performance risk, physical risk to measure the perceived risk. The financial risk stands for the risk of financial issue, such as payment security issue, the price issue. The performance risk mainly regards to the product, whether users can get satisfactory products from the website. The physical risk considers the risk to health. The time risk mainly comprises of time-wasting and time opportunity cost.

Table 5. The Measurement of Perceived Risk.

Variable	Measurement	Questions	Reference
Perceived Risk	Time risk	I think I waste a lot of time on buying products and services through RED	(Jacoby & Kaplan, 1972; Roselius, 1971)
	Physical risk	Purchasing products and services through RED is harmful to my physical and psychological health (long time exposure to computer screen, anxiety of waiting goods arrival, etc.)	
	Financial risk	I think there is a high financial risk in buying products and services or acquiring information about products and services through RED.	
	Performance risk	I think I will get poor-quality products through RED.	

4.2.6 The Measurement of Participation

As mentioned in pervious section, the participation is defined as a degree to which users are involved in the platform. Through online experiment, Jan Gilbertson and Ian Wilson (2009) states that users first participate in the online community forwardly or because of others recommendation. After perceiving high vale or becoming loyal to the community, those users are like to repeat the participation behavior in the future. As to the level of participation, this paper measure it from current evaluation and future behavior.

Table 6. The Measurement of Participation

Variable	Measurement	Questions	Reference
Participation	Current Evaluation	I like to be involved in in RED.	(Jan Gilbertson and Ian Wilson, 2009)
	Future Behavior	I will be still involved in RED in future.	

4.2.7 The Measurement of Purchase Intention

The EBK model (Engel, Kollat, Blackwell,1984) explains the whole process of decision making (See appendix 3). The model is structured around a seven-point decision process: need recognition followed by a search of information both internally and externally, the evaluation of alternatives, purchase, post purchase reflection and finally, divestment(Engel, Kollat, Blackwell,1984). Finishing purchasing, the stage of post-purchase evaluation comes up. The outcome of evaluation is dissatisfaction or satisfaction. Satisfaction will be more likely to lead a repeated behavior. In shopping website context, the positive post-purchase evaluation will increase the intention of repeated purchasing in the future. Accordingly, this paper measure purchase intention from post-purchase evaluation and future behavior.

Table 7. The Measurement of Purchase Intention

Variable	Measurement	Questions	Reference
Purchase Intention	Post-Purchase Evaluation	I always feel satisfied with the shopping experience on RED.	(Jan Gilbertson and Ian Wilson, 2009)
		I always get products with high satisfaction on RED.	
	Future Behavior	I will purchase products on RED in the future.	

5. Data and Results

5.1 Alpha Reliability Test

Reliability is one of the most important indexes to a test quality of a questionnaire. Reliability test is the method to test overall consistency of a measure in statistics and psychometrics field (William M.K. Trochim,2006). Reliability is the degree of "consistency" or "repeatability" of measures, which shows the quality of measurement. The consistency of the scale mainly investigates whether the item can independently measure the same concept. The greater the coefficient of reliability, the higher the feasibility of measurement. Cronbach's alpha is a method widely used to assess the reliability. In other words, the reliability of any given measurement refers to the consistency of a scale, and Cronbach's alpha is one way to measure the strength of that consistency (Chelsea Goforth,2015). It is generally acknowledged that the consistency is excellent if Cronbach's alpha ≥ 0.9 . The consistency is good when Cronbach's alpha ≥ 0.8 . As shown in appendix 6, Cronbach's alpha for variables are larger 0.8 in this study shows that the measurement adopt in this study has a good consistency and the observations are reliable.

5.2 Regression Analysis

Duo to the fact that there is a mediation analysis in this paper, a series of regression should be integrated. Reuben M. Baron and David A. Kenny (1986) clarify that, to carry out a mediation test, the regressing of mediator on the predictors should be established first; then regressing the outcome on the predictors; and last, regressing the outcome both on the predictors and on the mediator. In the mediation analysis in this paper, these 5 factors (sociability, usability, the attribute of e-WOM, perceived value and perceived risk) are regarded as independent variables. The participation is assumed as mediator and the purchase intention is the dependent variable. Thus, the steps are listed as follows:

Step1: Regression analysis to test the influence of 5 variables on participation. In this step, the factors driving participation can be found out.

Step 2: Regression analysis to test the influence of 5 variables on purchasing intention, corresponding to the regressing the dependent variable on the independent variables.

Step 3: Regression analysis to test the influence of 5 variables plus participation on purchasing intention. Worth noting that the factors influencing purchase intention can be tested in this step.

Last, the mediation role of participation can be tested by comparing correlation results (Reuben M. Baron and David A. Kenny, 1986).

5.2.1 The Influence on Participation

Table 5 is the model summary of analysis of factors influencing on participation. Independent Variables are sociability, usability, the attribute of e-WOM, perceived risk, perceived value. Dependent variable is participation. 5% confidence levels are indicated. The model is overall statistically significant at the 1% level (P value < 0.01). The variables (sociability, usability, e-WOMA, perceived value, perceived risk) explain 66.6% of the variation in participation ($R^2 = 0.666$).

Table 8. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig.
1	.816a	.666	.655	129.075	.000b

Table 6 is coefficients of regression analysis for factors influencing on participation. It can be seen from the table that only the P value of usability, e-WOM and perceived value is less than 0.05, Indicating that these three variables has significant influence on participation. By comparing the value of unstandardized coefficients (Beta), we can know that perceived value has the biggest effect on users' participation ($B = 0.448$), followed by usability (0.287) and e-WOM (0.236).

Table 9. Coefficients of Regression Analysis 1

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig
	B	Std. Error		
Constant	.337	.337	.998	.320
Sociability	.011	.066	.163	.871
Usability	.287	.100	2.871	.005
e-WOM	.236	.099	2.382	.018
Perceived Value	.448	.100	4.467	.000
Perceived Risk	-.009	.057	-.159	.873

Notes: Independent Variables are: sociability, usability, e-WOM, perceived value, perceived risk. Dependent variable is participation.

5.2.2 The Influence on Purchase Intention

The second model is to test the relationship between 5 variables (sociability, usability, e-WOM, perceived value and perceived risk) and purchase intention, corresponding to the regressing the dependent variable on the independent variables in the mediation analysis process. The model 2 is statistically significant (P value < 0.01) and can explain 60.6% of the variation in purchase intention($R^2 = 0.606$).

Table 10. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig.
2	.778a	.606	.593	47.351	.000b

Also regarding to the P value which is less than 0.05, the sociability and usability have significant influence on the outcome. The left 3 predictors don't have significant impact on purchase intention. Thus, the step 3 is necessary to carry out to test whether relationship affect the relationship between the predictors and the outcome.

Table 11. Coefficients of Regression Analysis 2

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig
	B	Std. Error		
Constant	.240	.346	.694	.489
Sociability	.269	.067	3.987	.000
Usability	.323	.102	3.154	.002
e-WOM	.180	.101	1.777	.077
Perceived Value	.153	.103	1.492	.138
Perceived Risk	-.061	.059	-1.031	.304

Notes: Independent Variables are: sociability, usability, e-WOM, perceived value, perceived risk. Dependent variable is purchase intention.

5.2.3 The Mediation Role of Participation

Form the above analysis, usability, e-WOM and perceived value have significant influence on participation. This regression model is designed to research impact on purchase intention and mediation role of participation. Model summary (table7) indicates that the model is statistically significant at the 1% level (P value = 0.000 < 0.01) and can explain 61.9% of the variation in purchase intention ($R^2=0.619$).

Table 12. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig.
3	.787a	.619	.604	41.476	.000b

First, we can find out the factors influencing purchase intention from table 10. Because P-value less than 0.01 in the table, sociability, usability and participation have significant impact on purchase intention. Comparing the unstandardized coefficients value, those variables positively influence purchase intention and usability has the most significant impact on purchase intention, followed by sociability and participation. Specifically speaking, if usability, sociability or participation increases by 1, the purchase intention will be strengthened by 0.269, 0.267 and 0.189 respectively.

Table 13. Results for regression analysis 3

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error		
Constant	.176	.342	.516	.607
Sociability	.267	.066	4.013	.000
Usability	.269	.104	2.594	.010
e-WOM	.136	.102	1.333	.184
Perceived Value	.069	.108	.638	.524
Perceived Risk	-.059	.058	-1.016	.311
Participation	.189	.081	2.318	.022

Notes: Independent Variables are sociability, usability, e-WOM, perceived value, perceived risk and participation. Dependent variable is purchase intention.

Secondly, it is the step to estimate the mediation role of participation. According to Reuben M. Baron and David A. Kenny (1986), three conditions must be established. First, the predictors must influence the mediator. Second, the predictors must affect the outcome. Third, the mediator must affect the outcome. In section 5.2.1, the usability, e-WOM and perceived value have impact on participation. Seen from the section 5.2.2, only usability among the three predictors has influence on purchase intention. Therefore, we only need to take the usability into consideration. Really mediation establishes only if the predictor has no effect when the mediator is controlled (Baron and David A. Kenny, 1986). The usability proves to affect the outcome, indicating that there is no really mediation between independent variable and dependent variable in this paper.

5.3 Results of Proposed Model

In this study, the hypothesis is accepted if significance P value is less than 0.05. Based on the data collected from 160 respondents, this study first tests the quality of questionnaire by adopting reliability and validity tests, then study the relationship between independent variable and dependent variable using regression analysis. The hypothesis results can be summarized as table 14:

Table 14. Results of Proposed Model

No.	Hypotheses	Result
H1	Participation positively influences purchase intention.	S
H2	Sociability positively influences participation.	NS
H3	Sociability positively influences purchase intention.	S
H4	Usability positively influences participation.	S
H5	Usability positively influences purchase intention.	S
H6	Usefulness and use of e-WOM on the website positively influences participation.	S
H7	Usefulness and use of e-WOM on the website positively influences purchase intention.	NS
H8	Perceived value positively influences participation.	S
H9	Perceived value positively influences purchase intention.	NS
H10	Perceived risk negatively influences purchase intention.	NS
H11	H11: Perceived risk negatively influences purchase intention.	NS
H12	Participation mediates the effect of sociability on purchase intention.	NS
H13	Participation mediates the effect of usability on purchase intention.	NS
H14	Participation mediates the effect of the e-WOM on purchase intention.	NS
H15	Participation mediates the effect of perceived value on purchase intention.	NS
H16	Participation mediates the effect of perceived risk on purchase intention.	NS

Notes: S stands for *Supported*; NS stands for *Not Supported*

6. Discussion

Referring to consumer behavior theory and attributes of UGC shopping website, this section will first state the findings of this study. Then to discuss the implication for UGC shopping website and the limitations of this study. Finally, a general conclusion will be stated.

6.1 Findings

The first finding of this paper is that users' participation has impact on purchase intention. More specific is that the more the users are involved in RED, the stronger intention to purchase on it, which tallies with the findings of Gou FongLiaw (2013) that users' participation in a shopping community enhances their intention to perform a purchasing behavior in this platform. It is mainly because, according to Gou FongLiaw (2013), the customer's participation in the community have a positive influence on a customer's belongingness and trust to the community and will directly change the perceived value and purchase intention.

So what drives consumers to participates in UGC community? In this research, the result of sociality and value analysis on the effect of a customer's participation in the UGC platform does not reach a significant level, which differs the previous expectations. This study finds that the usability, the attribute of e-WOM library and perceived value significantly and positively influence the participation. According to TPB model, individuals' behavior results from the attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. These three norms are not independent but interacted with each other. In the RED context, users turn to RED to get information and evaluation of products in the information collection stage. As an online word of mouth library, RED can provide users with plenty of products reviews generated by experienced consumers. In addition, usability such as accessibility ensure users to log in the website easily and conveniently. Thus, perceived value to the platform is enhanced form the fact that users can not only get access to the platform, but also their purpose of using the platform is achieved.

As far as concerned with the purchase intention, the attribute of e-WOM library, perceived value and perceived risk does not reach a significant influence on purchase intention which is proposed in the previous concept in the RED context in this paper. However, while participating in RED, sociability and usability have a positive impact on purchase in RED. Having connect and interaction with other user especially with those who have similar interests, enhance the belongings and trust to the platform. The sense of belongingness and trust, according to Gou FongLiaw (2013), strengthens the purchase intention. This mechanism can

explain the positive impact of sociability on purchase intention in this paper. Agarwal, R., et Venkatesh, V (2002) point out that usability can be regarded as the key factor for a shopping website to turn users into customers. RED is a shopping website combined with UGC contribute in essence. The role of usability is to fulfill users' purchase behavior which performs the same functionality as other shopping platforms. For example, various options, high quality products, simple payment method and fast delivery speed provided for users, attract users to purchase in RED, rather than other platforms, if RED make a differentiation in these aspects.

6.2 Implications

This study also provides practical enlightenment for UGC shopping website on how to attract users and turn users into consumers.

6.2.1 Stimulate Participation

The regression results highlight the importance of participation to purchase intention. The first task for UGC shopping website is to attract user as more as possible. Based on the case study on RED, it proves that usability, the attribute of e-WOM library and perceived value have positive impact on participation. Motivation drives individuals to perform a particular behavior. The participation behavior can be understood as this process: users are attracted by the useful e-WOM to collect more product information. The usability of the website enables user to get access to the platform quickly and conveniently. The usefulness of e-WOM and the usability make users perceive higher value to the website, thus leading to a satisfactory evaluation to the current participation and enhancing the belief of deeper participation in the future.

If the e-WOM is the first factor to bring traffic. UGC shopping website as well as the RED, are supposed to consummate the attribute as a e-WOM library. Users should be encouraged to publish more original and objective product evaluations. This study measures the usability from the dimension of accessibility and functionality. The accessibility influences the participation stage, while the functionality enhances the purchase intention. It implies that UGC shopping website should maintain the “accessibility” as well as “functionality”. The shopping website should be accessed at any time at any place and for free, and don't need any special skills to use it.

The result of data analysis suggests that the perceived value positively affect the participation, corresponding to the mechanism in TPB model that the perceived behavioral control directly result in behavior intention. This study measures the perceived value from perceived functional value and emotional value. As mentioned above, perceived value is a perception of situation,

thus perceived value is generated from the basic website environment. To achieve higher functional value, UGC shopping website should develop the usability and the attribute of e-WOM library, enabling users to get more effective product information spending little time and energy. The quality and objectivity of reviews make contribute for users to know the quality and function of product better and enhance the confidence in the decision-making process. The perceived emotional value requires platform to pay attention to individuation. Websites can use large data algorithms to predict user preferences based on user browsing history and previous subscription, then push personalized notifications, in which way help users to find content and products that are more suitable for their personality and style.

6.2.2 Stimulate Purchase Intention

The first finding of this paper put forward the importance of participation to purchase intention. The more involved in the platform users are, the stronger intention to purchase is. After attracting traffic to the platform, it is the step to transform users to consumers. Sociability and usability are suggested to strengthen the purchase intention.

The connection and interaction with other members enhance trust to the virtual community (Hoffman.D,1996). Being pleasant to engage sociable activity promotes the perceived enjoyment in the shopping journey (Preece, 2001). Platforms can promote data algorithms, improve relational networks, to help users to establish connection with those who have similar interests. In additional, platforms are supposed to improve personalized content-push mechanism, helping users find and participate in communities that they may be interested in. Besides, the platform ought to take actions enhance users' social identity and strengthen their status and self-esteem to develop their perceived enjoyment as well as to meet their social needs (Utpal M. Dholakia, Richard P. Bagozzi, 2003).

As an important part of usability, functionality which enhances purchase intention, requires to platforms try their best to increase users' perceived value and decrease the perceived risk by taking measures such as: provide various options, make sure products worth the prices and reliable, offer fast delivery speed, inset convenient shopping link.

6.3 Limitations and Future Research

There are still a few limitations in this paper. First limitation is the aspect of an online survey. The respondents fill in the questionnaire in different circumstances. The external factors interfering the respondents while answering the questions cannot be measured. Therefore, the

power of guaranteeing that the data accurately reflect the real inner thoughts of users is weakened.

The second is the issue of sample size. Generally, the larger data base will reflect reality better. The valid data in this study is collected from 160 respondents. This relatively smaller size of data base limits the power of this research to generalize the findings. Future research could experiment with more respondents to generalize the findings.

The findings in this study is based on the survey for RED. To imply the case to reality, although RED is a typical UGC shopping website, it is still not able to response to all UGC shopping website in macroscopic view. Therefore, the findings in this study can only provide reference to other UGC shopping platform to some extent.

6.4 General Conclusion

This study aims to find out the factors influencing purchase intention in UGC shopping website. To make the findings more specific, this study take RED as an example and carries out a survey focusing on consumer behavior in RED. Referring to consumer behavior theory, general factors driving users participating and purchase in UGC platform are figured out. A case-by-case analysis system is adopted. The specific attribute of RED is taken into the measurement dimension. 13 hypotheses are proposed at the first. 6 hypotheses are supported through the regression analysis. Based on the case study on RED, findings show that usability, the attribute as e-WOM library and perceived value attract users participate in UGC shopping website. Participation positively influence purchase intention. Moreover, sociability and usability accelerate the intention to purchase in this platform.

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Appendix

Appendix 1 Questionnaire

I appreciate your participation in this online survey for my master thesis. The survey studies on consumer behavior on UGC shopping platform. This questionnaire is aimed at consumers who are users of RED or have purchased experience in RED. If you never use RED, please do not fill in this questionnaire.

There are no wrong answers. Just answer each question basing on your personal experience in RED. You will spend about 4 minutes to fill the whole survey. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me: 476948tz@eur.nl.

Respectfully

Tingting Zhu

Part 1 You are highly invited to answer the following personal experience on RED.

1. How long have you been a user of RED?
 - ☐ 0-3 months
 - ☐ 3-6 months
 - ☐ 6-12 months
 - ☐ 1-2 years
 - ☐ >2 years
2. How often do you use RED in a week?
 - ☐ Everyday
 - ☐ 2-3 times a week
 - ☐ Once a week
 - ☐ Once a month
 - ☐ Less than once a month
3. What time do you usually log in RED in a day? (multiple)
 - ☐ 6-9am
 - ☐ 9-12am
 - ☐ 12-15pm
 - ☐ 15-18pm
 - ☐ 18-21pm
 - ☐ 21-24pm
4. How often do you purchase products on RED in a week?

- Everyday
- 2-3 times a week
- Once a week
- Once a month
- Less than once a month

Part 2 Looking back to your recent and real experience on RED, you are invited to give feedback on how much you agree with each statement.

No.	Questions	0-7
1	The participation and feedbacks on RED help me to build connection with others.	
2	The interaction on RED make me noticeable.	
3	The interaction on RED makes me easier to know people who have the similar interests.	
4	To be part of the community or interest groups on RED make me joyful.	
5	I can use RED for free.	
6	I do not need to know special and advanced skills to use RED.	
7	The shopping link in comments makes it convenient to purchase.	
8	RED sells a variety of products.	
9	The price of products sold on RED is competitive.	
10	The quality of products sold on RED is trustworthy.	
11	The delivery speed is fast.	
12	The WOM (word of mouth) helps me know better about the products.	
13	The WOM on RED helps me to better compare different products	
14	I refer a lot to the WOM on RED while shopping.	
15	The WOM on RED helps me to make a better purchase decision.	
16	I can save a lot of time and energy acquiring information about products on RED.	
17	The information about products on RED make me know the quality and function better.	
18	I can find products that are more suitable for my personal quality and styles on RED.	
19	Getting access to more product information make me more confident in this shopping process.	
20	I think I waste a lot of time on buying products and services through RED	
21	Purchasing products and services through RED is harmful to my physical and psychological health (long time exposure to computer screen, anxiety of waiting goods arrival, etc.)	

22	I think there is a high financial risk in buying products and services or acquiring information about products and services through RED.	
23	I think I will get poor-quality products through RED.	
24	I like to be involved in in RED.	
25	I will be still involved in RED in future.	
26	I always feel satisfied with the shopping experience on RED.	
27	I always get products with high satisfaction on RED.	
28	I will purchase products on RED in the future.	

Part3 You are kindly to be asked some personal information to identify the user's group of RED.

1. The gender of you

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

2. The age of you

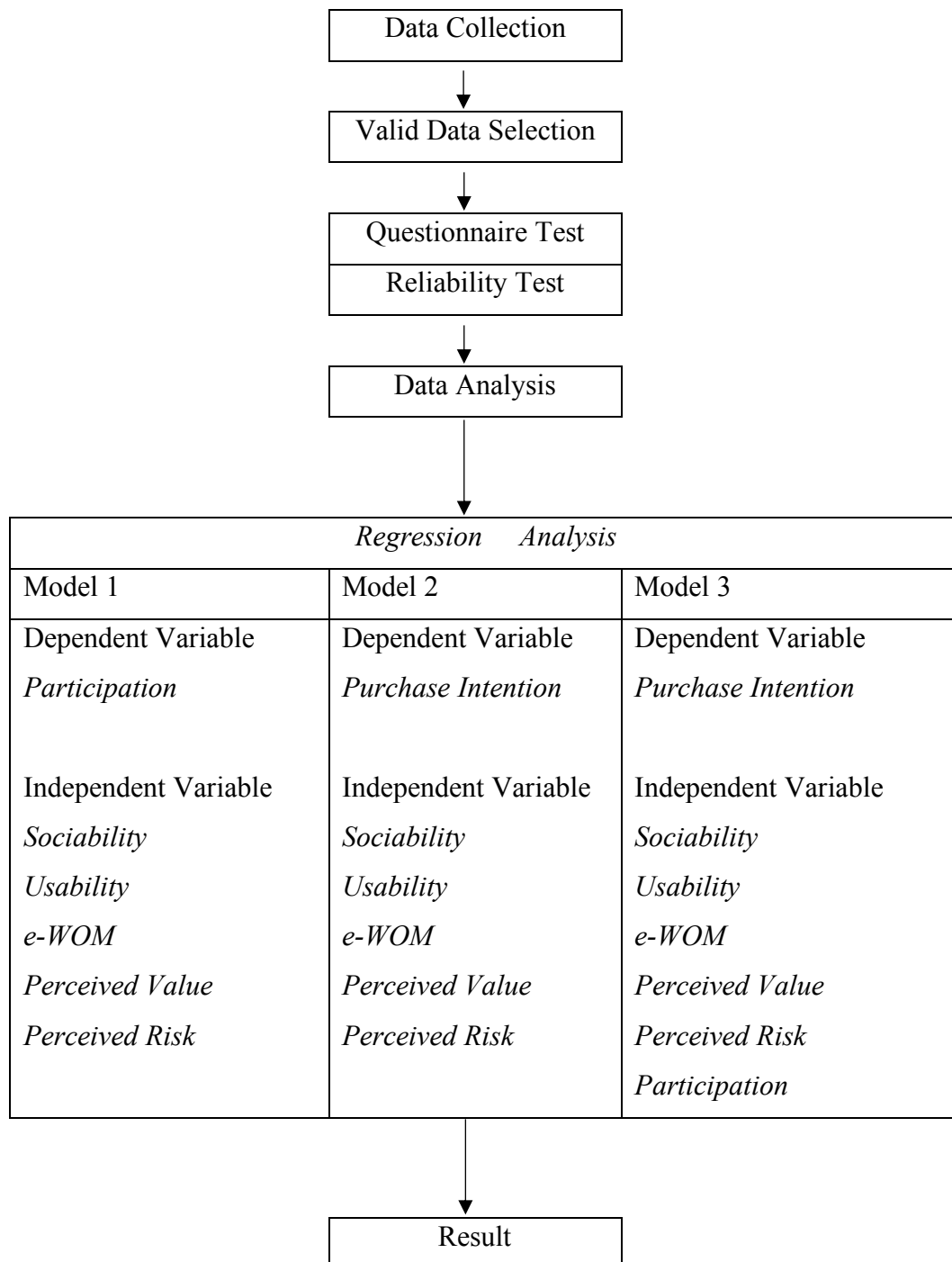
- ☐ Under 18
- ☐ 18-30
- ☐ 31-40.
- ☐ 41-50
- ☐ over 50

3. The education level of you

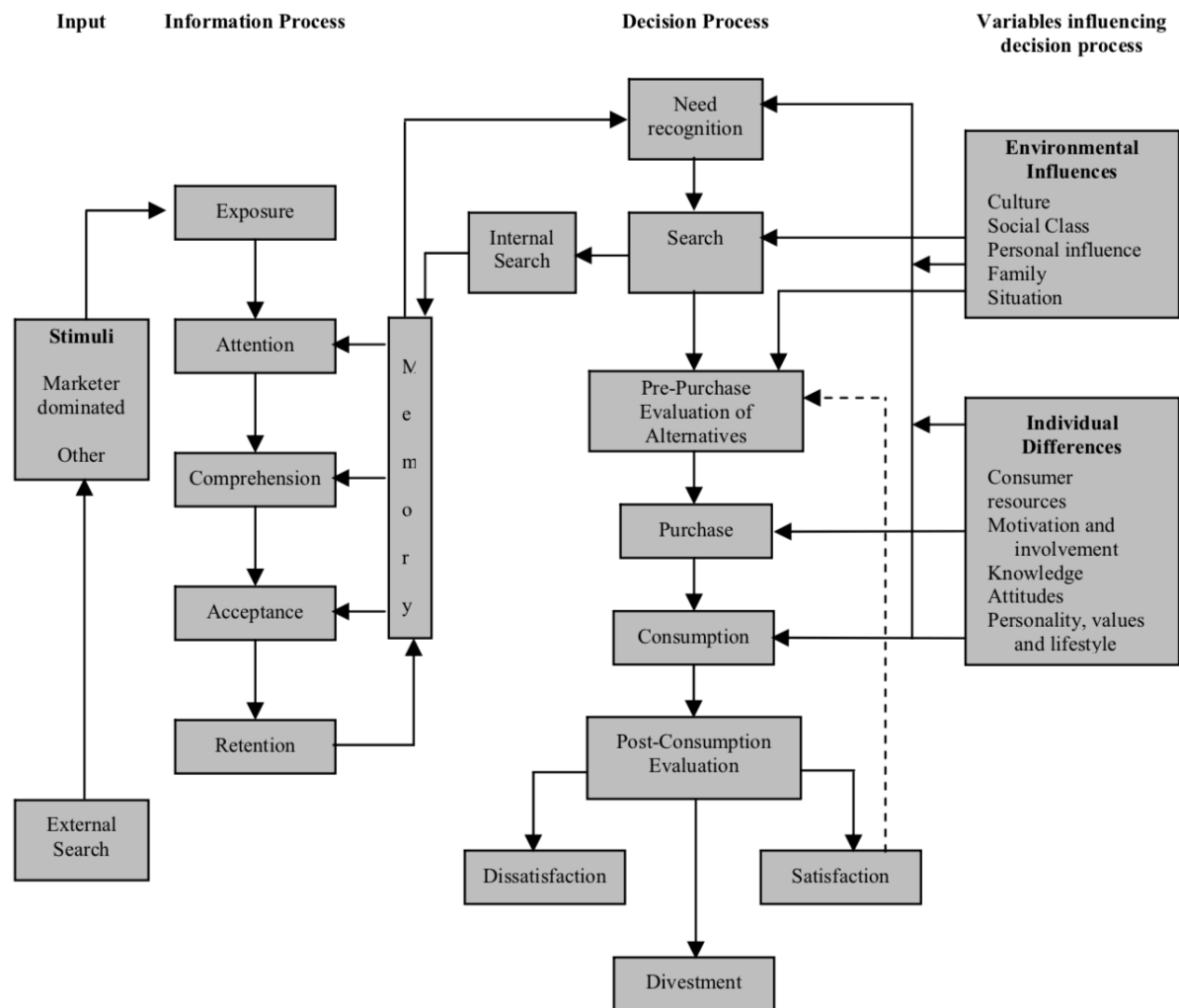
- ☐ Secondary or High School
- ☐ Junior College
- ☐ Bachelor
- ☐ Master and above
- ☐ Other

Your participation is highly appreciated.

Appendix 2. Graphic View of The Methodology



Appendix 3. EKB Model



Appendix 4. Table Cronbach's Alpha

Variables	Item	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha
Sociability	S1	12.39	22.251	.800	.655	.883	.910
	S2	12.21	22.080	.840	.714	.868	
	S3	11.72	24.216	.715	.515	.911	
	S4	12.21	22.353	.832	.705	.871	
Usability	U1	28.01	68.277	.536	.411	.890	.888
	U2	27.79	67.913	.579	.522	.884	
	U3	28.36	62.610	.771	.679	.860	
	U4	28.64	63.402	.753	.640	.863	
	U5	29.11	65.202	.642	.577	.877	
	U6	29.18	64.196	.738	.706	.865	
	U7	29.01	64.817	.766	.743	.862	
e-WOM	W1	15.19	21.352	.778	.627	.922	.927
	W2	15.02	20.220	.848	.725	.898	
	W3	14.86	20.811	.851	.767	.897	
	W4	14.81	21.172	.842	.746	.901	
Perceived Value	PV1	14.66	20.667	.690	.528	.898	.897
	PV2	14.24	19.368	.843	.714	.840	
	PV3	14.18	20.665	.785	.663	.863	
	PV4	14.44	20.110	.774	.634	.866	
Perceived Risk	PR1	10.49	17.635	.720	.599	.827	.866
	PR2	10.97	17.968	.804	.677	.796	
	PR3	10.53	17.244	.771	.602	.805	
	PR4	10.22	19.128	.584	.366	.882	
Participation	P1	5.01	2.528	.982	.965	.	.991
	P2	5.06	2.619	.982	.965	.	
Purchase Intention	PI1	8.62	10.212	.766	.612	.845	.885
	PI2	8.53	9.823	.823	.681	.796	
	PI3	8.62	9.294	.745	.566	.869	