
BLOGGERS: ONE FOR THE BOOKS

*Exploring the relationship between book bloggers' personal motivations and
recommendation techniques*

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Abstract

Book bloggers play an important role in the circulation of books in the book industry. They review and recommend books, organize reading events and giveaways, and often help authors publicize their books by obtaining advance reading copies (ARCs). They use personal blogs and platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube to reach their audiences through electronic word of mouth (eWoM), assisting in attracting consumers' attention not only through blogging, but by microblogging. However, there are significant research gaps in this area, proving a lack of studies on book bloggers, the process of creating reviews, as well as diversity and representation in the book blogging community and book industry. While research exists on bloggers in general and reviews from various media (e.g. film and TV), there is limited research on the producers' processes; i.e. the reviewers themselves – in this case, book bloggers. This study provided a start for this area of research by exploring the relationship between book bloggers' personal motivations and their recommendation techniques on Twitter, i.e. their process of creating posts. This research question was embedded in the context of diversity and representation, and thus book bloggers personality traits and ethnic backgrounds were examined to obtain a richer outlook. Relevant literature was reviewed to build a framework for the study, which employed a uses and gratifications perspective. A new scale was created to measure recommendation techniques, and the study was carried out by means of an online survey ($N = 330$). The statistical analysis of the data gathered from the respondents lead to a number of interesting results. Major findings showed that there is indeed a relationship between book bloggers' personality traits and personal motivations, as well as between their personal motivations and recommendation techniques. Personality traits lead bloggers' to have certain motivations for book blogging, and these motivations lead them to use certain recommendation techniques for posting. Examination of the book bloggers' ethnic backgrounds provided further insight into how their motivations are influenced in an industry in which inequality and biases are present like any other. This has certain implications for the book industry that should be kept in consideration, particularly in today's age, as discussed further in this paper. Finally, the conclusion offers potential areas for further research.

Keywords: *Book bloggers, eWoM, motivations, recommendations, U&G*

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1. Introduction

Book bloggers play an important role in the circulation of books by providing blog posts in the format of book reviews, containing relevant information about books and their thoughts and opinions on them. Occasionally, bloggers include summaries and whether or not they might recommend a book to their readers. These reviews are particularly of books by indie authors or authors that are attempting to make their debuts in the book industry (Crawford, 2020). Book bloggers' practices assist in the publicization of books and brings them to the attention of readers who may be interested in them after reading reviews. The task of creating and managing book blogs appears fitting for those who are generally quite passionate about books, as the profession is not particularly lucrative, costing time and effort on the part of the book blogger which is often not compensated (Emma The Little Bookworm, 2019). Bloggers take time aside from their daily responsibilities, including their family and work lives, to read books, plan out their reviews, create their posts, and request more books or plan their future reads – and these steps involve further work in themselves (Emma The Little Bookworm, 2019). In addition, book bloggers often create communities, building their own networks with likeminded individuals, i.e. other bloggers, authors, readers or writers (Crawford, 2020). Not only does this provide accessible spaces for all, book bloggers support one another and engage in discussions about the books they have read, which in turn furthers the circulation and sales of books.

There are several ways in which book bloggers may connect with one another. 'Book Twitter' is the community on Twitter dedicated to reviewers, readers, writers, and fans of books. Twitter has become an accessible and convenient platform for users to find book reviews, receive book recommendations, read opinions, have discussions, and participate in book-related events, such as giveaways and readathons. It is a social media platform that allows users to create posts limited to 280 characters, and may be considered a form of microblogging if intended to be used for blogging (Jansen, Zhang, Sobel, & Chowdury, 2009). Book bloggers often use secondary platforms aside from their own blogs to connect with others, including Instagram and YouTube, which are popular spaces for book bloggers. Since the advent of the internet, the number of bloggers in general worldwide has steadily risen, with the US alone predicted to have over 31 million bloggers in 2020 (Statista, 2016). Daily posts on blogging websites worldwide number in the billions, with the frequency of weekly blog posts at approximately 24% as of

September of 2019 (Clement, 2020a). Around the same time period, 97% of respondents from a survey used social media to promote their blog posts (Clement, 2020b). Considering the magnitude of these numbers, it may be assumed that book bloggers are posting and connecting with each other on a frequent basis. Unfortunately, however, statistics on book blogging specifically – concerning both blogs and activities – are lacking, as well as studies on the bloggers themselves.

On the other hand, there are a number of related topics that have been covered by existing academic studies. Electronic word of mouth (eWoM) is a form of digital communication that is becoming more widely studied in the academic world, and should be taken into account when studying bloggers. Research on eWoM focuses largely on marketing and sales factors that eWoM communication may influence (Jalilvand, Esfahani, & Samiei, 2011; Sandes & Urdan, 2013). For example, Jalilvand et al. (2011) provided a theoretical framework for eWoM, stating that WoM shapes consumers' expectations and affects their purchase decisions, helping in generating sales, which further generates WoM, which further generates sales. This process is made more complex by electronic referrals, for example by extending the reach of referrals outside of geographically close locations (Jalilvand et al., 2011). Furthermore, studies have shown that brands are impacted negatively by negative WoM comments, an example of this being Sandes and Urdan's (2013) research. Bloggers' eWoM was shown to be an effective marketing strategy for increasing sales, as they influence consumer's purchase intentions (Hsu, Lin, & Chiang, 2013). Thus, existing research has focused in particular on, for example, the effects of eWoM on the sales and consumption of brands and products and the strategies that may be used to proliferate them (Jalilvand et al., 2011; Sandes & Urdan, 2013). While the aforementioned studies refer to implications on brands, which may be extended to books, research on book blogging itself is limited as studies tend to view blogging as a general category; a subcategory like book blogging, therefore, is very understudied (Giles, 2017).

Another relatively more commonly researched topic is of reviews' and WoM influence on cultural products. In particular, this seems to apply to film and TV reviews, such as Beaudouin and Pasquier's (2016) analysis of professional and amateur critics' film reviews, resulting in different models thereof, or Verboord's (2014) study on film reviews that examined the influence of user-generated criticism on the value of cultural products. According to Verboord (2010), criticism plays the role of mediating between cultural producers and

participants by “selecting, describing, labelling and evaluating their products” (p. 623). One such important cultural product is books. Verboord’s 2010 study examines book critics in the age of the internet, comparing traditional means of evaluating products, for example in newspapers, with digital mediums, such as websites like Goodreads.com, for example. The use of digital mediums allows readers to obtain a wider variety of opinions (Verboord, 2010). While this study addresses that audiences are becoming involved in the evaluation of products, it does not examine the specifics of the production processes. Research on the production of recommendations is severely lacking. Thus, an important question posed in this study concerns how book recommendations or reviews are produced, which requires the exploration of book bloggers’ practices. Furthermore, in exploring this process, examining book bloggers’ motivations sheds further light on their use of particular recommendation techniques. There are many existing studies on the motivations of bloggers in general (Chung & Kim, 2008; Courtois, Mechant, De Marez, & Verleye, 2009; Dunne, Lawlor, & Rowley, 2010; Grace-Farfaglia, Dekkers, Sundararajan, Peters, & Park 2006; Huang, Shen, Lin, & Chang, 2007; Hsu & Lin, 2008; Leung, 2003; Nardi, Schiano, Gumbrecht, & Swartz, 2004; and Sepp, Liljander, & Gummerus, 2011). However, once again, studies on book bloggers’ motivations specifically are lacking.

Addressing book bloggers cannot be done without looking book industry. There are studies on the publishing industry post digitization, such as the paper by Hviid, Izquierdo-Sanchez and Jacques (2019) that examines disruption in the industry and authors’ new options for self-publication and the effects thereof on the market and quality of books. There have also been studies on pricing and marketing strategies for the online book industry, as explored in Clay, Krishnan, Wolff, and Fernandes’s study (2002) and Li, Gu, and Liu’s study (2013). Furthermore, there is an important study on diversity in book publishing by Lee & Low Books that provides some insight into representation in the book industry in 2015 as well as 2019 (Jiménez & Beckert, 2019). Considering the political climate of today’s world, such aspects are becoming increasingly important for industries and markets to consider. Research on the diversity and representation of book bloggers specifically is limited, and as 97% of respondents of a study indicated they use social media to promote themselves, book bloggers’ choice of platforms such as Twitter ought to be examined as well. There has been research on Twitter as a form of microblogging and eWoM, as well as uses and gratifications research to study why and

how people use Twitter and what gratifications they get from it (Jansen et al., 2009; Chen, 2011). Although Smith and Brenner (2012) offer some insight into the demographics of US Twitter users, Twitter use has since increased and there is not much research on diversity and other characteristics of the platform, and how many people use Twitter for the same reasons. Overall, it can be concluded that research on these topics has been fairly general rather than specific: Studies focused on brands or products as opposed to books; blogging, but not particularly for books; Twitter, but not so much its subsets.

These areas are important to study due to the influence they have on society. From kids to senior citizens, many people read books in their lives; they are used for educational purposes as well as for leisure (Pew Research Center, 2012; Scholastic, 2019; Sörman, Ljunberg, & Rönnlund, 2018). As blogs and book reviews become more common due to the rise of the internet, and with the help of platforms like Twitter, it is important to consider that many readers seem to read opinions and trust them – reading and heeding, without really considering where they come from or how or why (Clement, 2020c). Books are an understudied form of media consumption, although they play a large role in influencing how people in society think about or view certain things. They are tools for learning about others’ perspectives and thought processes and aid in peoples’ social and cognitive development as well as understanding of language (Peterson & Lach, 1990; Schlichter & Burke, 1994; Wasik & Bond, 2001; Whitehurst et al., 1988). In addition, Twitter is one of the most widely used social media platforms in the world; it impacts users’ social relationships with others by connecting them to each other, fulfils their psychological needs, and is an avenue for gaining information and interacting with content (Chen, 2011). Thus, it is socially relevant to study how it is used, especially by book bloggers, and to gain insight on the subsets of the platform.

Considering the large research gaps mentioned, as well as the societal importance of this topic, this study will attempt to cover some of these aspects. To provide a start to this area of research, the most salient aspects appear to be book bloggers’ personal motivations and recommendation techniques; why they blog and how they blog. This leads to the following research question for this paper: *To what extent is there a relationship between book bloggers’ personal motivations and their recommendation techniques on Twitter?* Studying this question will provide an opportunity to gain more information on the understudied dimension of producers vs. the more-studied reviews. It will be interesting to look at what motivates book

bloggers to produce their recommendations and what techniques they use to create them, and for the purposes of this research, access has been obtained to a community of book bloggers on Twitter. As this research is embedded in the context of diversity and representation, examining book bloggers recommendation techniques, it is also interesting to study their demographic backgrounds and personality traits in order to gain a deeper understanding of their motivations. Therefore, relevant sub-questions to ask are: To what extent are book bloggers conscious of selecting books of authors of color? To what extent are their personal motivations related to their ethnic backgrounds? To what extent are bloggers' personal motivations related to their personality traits? Possible expectations for these questions are that book bloggers of color may be more conscious of selecting books by authors of color, and bloggers' ethnic backgrounds and personality traits may lead them to having certain motivations for book blogging, which in turn may lead to their use of particular recommendations.

In order to examine this research question, this paper proceeds with Chapter 2, which focuses on the theoretical framework that guides the study, lays out interconnected concepts, and leads to concepts and relationships that ought to be measured. The framework begins by defining and introducing book bloggers, and goes on to describe how book bloggers' recommendations are publicized through eWoM. It then explores the new area of recommendation techniques, focusing on book bloggers' practices and leading into potential concepts to measure. Next, a uses and gratifications perspective is applied, after which book bloggers' possible motivations are explored. These motivations are then connected with recommendation techniques, consequently forming the first set of hypotheses under study. The dimension of personality traits is then explored and connected with book bloggers' motivations in order to gain more insight into what leads book bloggers' to have certain motivations. This forms the second set of hypotheses under study, after which the overall research model for this paper is presented. The paper then goes on to Chapter 3 explaining the methodology for the study, expounding on the type of research conducted, descriptions of measuring instruments that were used, and examples of items. It further provides reliability results for the measuring instruments. The chapter describes the data collection procedure, as well as details of the obtained sample and the preparation of the data for statistical analysis. It concludes with an assessment of the validity of the study. Chapter 4 lays out the results of the statistical analyses, and Chapter 5 discusses these results and major findings in relation with the theoretical framework. Finally, Chapter 6 offers a conclusion to the paper,

summarizing it, laying out the limitations of the paper, and providing avenues for further research.

2. Theoretical framework

This chapter grounds the study in a theoretical framework. It begins by defining key terms and providing a backdrop for book bloggers and their practices and contributions in the context of the industry and diversity thereof. It goes on to expand on the digitization of the book industry and influence of the internet, and then discusses how book bloggers publicize their recommendations using eWoM. Twitter is discussed as a microblogging platform, relating it to users' personal motivations, as well as the opportunity such a channel presents for representation and diversity. Following this, the framework presents a basis for book bloggers' recommendation techniques, offering a new set of concepts for exploring this understudied topic. It then goes into the most important approach for this paper, uses and gratifications theory, which provides the perspective this study looks at the research question from. Insight on the core principles of bloggers' motivations from the uses and gratifications theory is then applied to book bloggers specifically, and connected to formulate a first set of hypotheses. Next, the possible reasons for particular motivations to exist are explored through a psychological dimension, by looking at the role of personality traits, and consequently providing a second set of hypotheses to test. The two sets of hypotheses and the core concepts are then presented in the form of a research model.

2.1. Book bloggers

It is important to first define 'blogs', 'book bloggers' and 'recommendations' more clearly. 'Blogs' are relatively straightforward: They are personal websites on the internet that serve as personal journals, made up of entries that include texts, images, audio, and video, which further allows for communication with others through these elements, making the experience interactive in nature (Huang et al., 2007). Generally, these entries are presented in reverse chronological order so that the newest entries are visible first (Huang et al., 2007). 'Bloggers' manage these blogs, and they are often dedicated to particular purposes. A more detailed definition is that bloggers are ordinarily amateurs not employed by the industry; in this case, book bloggers are amateurs that are not employed by the publishing industry (Giles, 2017). They manage blogs dedicated to reviewing books, writing about interviews with authors, engaging with fellow bloggers and readers, or creating events like giveaways. Finally, by

‘recommendations’ this study refers to instances where book bloggers review books and provide their opinions or suggestions to their audience for informing the selection of their own books.

Book bloggers have become an important and mainstream element of the book world and influence the publishing of books, and especially their marketing and distribution (Steiner, 2010). An important aspect of book bloggers’ contributions concerns their reviews of Advanced Reader Copy (ARC, also known as Advanced Review Copy) books (Avery, 2019; Devouringbooks2017, 2018). These are copies of books sent free of charge to bloggers and salespeople in return for reviewing before release (Devouringbooks2017, 2018). The reviews generate WoM or eWoM, which helps to create a buzz and promote the books prior to release (Devouringbooks2017, 2018). Although the books may be free of charge, writing book reviews involves an investment of time and effort; outside of their other life responsibilities – e.g. work and family – and in order to commit to author or publisher’s deadlines, bloggers need time to read books, write reviews, sometimes including links to buy the books or other relevant information, format their posts, proofread them, scheduling posting, and share on social media platforms and websites such as Goodreads.com for exposure (Emma The Little Bookworm, 2019). To receive ARCs, book bloggers must join websites or groups, mailing lists, giveaways, and programs, and make requests for books (Devouringbooks2017, 2018). According to a survey, 17% of bloggers worldwide spend 1-3 hours on a typical post, and 19% spend more than 6 hours (Clement, 2020d). They network and support each other (Crawford, 2020). Overall, book bloggers are driven by passion as are given little to no compensation for their work, despite the significance of it (Crawford, 2020; Emma The Little Bookworm, 2019). The process of reviewing ARCs gives potential readers an indication of what the books are about and how they are received, and assists in their decision making process for consumption: Is a book worth buying? (Hidden Gems, 2017). This is particularly important for debuting or indie authors in order to get exposure and increase sales (Crawford, 2020).

As such, book bloggers serve as some of the gatekeepers of the book industry, which has the capability to define culture by influencing which books or stories receive exposure and which do not (Jiménez & Beckert, 2019). However, it is not possible for different voices to be heard if those working in the industry itself are not diverse themselves (Jiménez & Beckert, 2019). It is important, therefore, to take a look at the diversity of the book industry. Although studies are limited, the Diversity Baseline Survey by Lee & Low Books makes an important contribution.

Conducted every 4 years – thus far in 2015 and 2019 – it examines the state of the industry in terms of representation. According to the survey, as of 2019, 76% of the industry overall is white, 74% are cis women, 81% are straight, and 89% are not disabled (Jiménez & Beckert, 2019). Although there has been an increased demand for more diverse books, particularly for children’s books, these numbers have seen only minimal change since 2015 (Jiménez & Beckert, 2019). Taking into account significant political events over the years, including the election of Donald Trump as POTUS in 2016 and the viral #MeToo movement that spread in 2017, as well as the current anti-police brutality and Black Lives Matter movement of 2020, it seems more critical than ever for industries to understand the need for representation (Jiménez & Beckert, 2019; Taylor, 2020). Another factor encouraging industries to stand for diversity is cancel culture. Cancel culture refers to silencing one’s voice or condemnation if one has done something that is deemed problematic (Hagi, 2019). For example, bloggers, authors, publishers, and organizations have been condemned if they have not shown solidarity with black people in 2020 (Curto, 2020). This is more easily done in the age of the internet, which is another significant aspect of the book world to delve into.

2.2. Digitization of the book industry

When it comes to the book world, the internet has caused some division in perspectives on traditional literature compared to digital. While some theorize that digitization has helped the distribution and consumption of books due to the more permanent nature of digital formats and the ability to buy them from anywhere in the world, others argue that digital technology threatens our literacy levels (Steiner, 2010). Some dread that digitization will eventually eradicate the presence of physical books, while others insist that they will persist regardless. Some argue that it seems undeniable that a difference in format affects content itself intrinsically, and there is an evident longstanding competition between traditional mediums and digital technology; however, there are a number of theories on the future of books, and some believe that convergence culture will come into play (Steiner, 2010). Henry Jenkins stated that “convergence alters the relationship between existing technologies, industries, markets, genres, and audiences” (Jenkins, 2006). As convergence culture is known as a process, it can be applied to the book industry as we see how books, readers, and the market adjust their positions in the industry (Steiner, 2010).

With the internet comes the ability to access and consume a larger and more diverse variety of content such as books; similarly, there has been an increase in research on the audience as active rather than passive. The relationships between authors, publishers, and readers were considered separately before, but this model was found to be simplistic and they are now seen as more intertwined and complex (Steiner, 2010). An example of this is provided by Steiner: Amazon is involved not only in publishing, distributing, and marketing books, but also in evaluating them (Steiner, 2010). Thus, authors, publishers, readers, and the market should be considered together. Following this, it is reasonable that elements of the industry should be studied at different angles. An angle to consider is the differences in social institutions like literary societies (Steiner, 2010). A change that has made itself known in this sphere is a difference in what is called ‘the social infrastructure of reading’ (Long, 2003). Consumers have taken to book blogging, joined book clubs, and use online bookstores, all of which allows them to interact and connect with others (Steiner, 2010). This means that consumers are more active when it comes to reading books, having discussions about them, and promoting them (Steiner, 2010). In this respect, book bloggers play an important role in the industry.

Book bloggers benefit from the digitization of the industry and the age of the internet by being able to post blog posts, publicize them, and connect with others online. There are many different types of book blogs and writers, however, which may present some difficulty in defining the particular group of book bloggers examined in this study. In providing more context, it is observed that bloggers often write about more than simply books; they may write about their personal lives or other interests, work, and hobbies (Steiner, 2010). Furthermore, the blogs may have commercial or non-commercial purposes, and the writers themselves may be professionals or amateurs (Steiner, 2010). The distinction between the latter two categories may be somewhat blurred considering individual bloggers’ personal backgrounds and fields; after all, a book blogger may be anybody that manages a blog dedicated to books, as many people are capable of reading. Generally, amateurs may not necessarily have work experience in literary fields or be employed in the industry, while professionals have this experience; professionals tend to blog for commercial purposes, while individual amateur bloggers do not (Steiner, 2010). Considering the community of book bloggers that will be looked at in this study, amateur bloggers appear to be prevalent. Along with the benefits of digitization, the community seems to be comprised of book

bloggers that use both their personal blogs as well as other platforms – Twitter being of particular interest – to publicize their content.

2.3. Publicization of recommendations

For studying book bloggers' communication techniques, it is a must to take a look at their use of electronic word of mouth (eWoM) to publicize their recommendations. Traditional word of mouth (WoM) refers to communication, i.e. talking or imparting information from one person to another (consumer to consumer or business to consumer), in relation to a product or brand, and potentially promoting or demoting it while doing so (Jalilvand et al., 2011; Jansen et al., 2009). Electronic WoM, made possible through the development of the internet and new media and communication platforms, carries this method of WoM communication further (Jalilvand et al., 2011). While traditional WoM is limited in terms of direct, relatively more private conversations, the internet allows for the observation of others' discussions and opinions and the omission of face-to-face communication (Jalilvand et al., 2011). EWoM "refers to any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet" (Jalilvand et al., 2011, p. 43). Such statements and information influence consumers' decision making processes, as they are provided with others' experiences with a product or brand, which they appear to trust (Jalilvand et al., 2011). According to existing research, eWoM has a significant and effective role in decision making (Jalilvand et al., 2011; Jansen et al., 2009). Following this, book bloggers' use of eWoM to relay their recommendations may impact the decision making process of their readers significantly, for example influencing answers to questions such 'What book should I buy?' Book bloggers may use such eWoM communication methods on their chosen platforms, reviewing, giving their opinions, and recommending particular books.

The platforms book bloggers use may range from their own websites or blogs, to social media channels such as YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter. Twitter is of particular interest as it is a form of microblogging, which is seen as eWoM communication (Jansen et al., 2009). Microblogging pertains to posts or comments that are short in length, delivered to one's network on a platform such as Twitter, which is the most popular avenue for microblogging (Jansen et al., 2009). Microblogging includes 'micro-sharing' and 'micro-updating' (sharing or updating of

posts) (Jansen et al., 2009). In the case of Twitter, it allows users to post and share Tweets, which are short posts limited to 280 characters on their timelines. The appeal of this short format is that it provides an accessible format for people to post in different locations, where they may otherwise be unable to write a longer post, as well as the opportunity to reach more people (Jansen et al., 2009). An important addition to the appeal of microblogging or Tweeting is that due to the short nature of the posts, they are easily produced and consumed: This is taken into consideration by brands or purveyors of products that are constantly competing for consumers' attention (Jansen et al., 2009). Considering consumers' short attention spans, coupled with an access to a large quantity of products to select from via the internet, the importance of eWoM through microblogging on this appears to be a significant avenue to study.

Twitter has been studied through a uses and gratifications approach, with the results mostly indicating that the platform gratifies users' needs for connecting with others; however, users also use Twitter for gaining information from the content provided (Chen, 2011). In other existing studies, Twitter has been examined as having a role in representing marginalized segments of society (e.g. Brock, 2012; Graham & Smith, 2019). Graham and Smith explored 'Black Twitter' as a counterpublic, Black Twitter being known as the segment of Twitter users that are black people, a demographic that appears to dominate when it comes to the use of Twitter when compared to others. Although the general public discourse is not inclusive for those outside of dominant groups, according to their study, this demographic participates in, and has a significant influence on, such discourse (Brock, 2012; Graham & Smith, 2019). The latter work by Brock goes into more detail about Black Twitter and how users engage in conversation on Twitter; while Brock states that Black Twitter may be described as a public, it is, however, not a definition of the group (Brock, 2012). In these cases, Twitter is discussed as being used by black people in order to make their voices heard and to participate in discourse, with hashtags and trending topics helping to bring attention to certain subjects (Brock, 2012). Existing studies show the same kind of results when looking at the microblogging platform through a uses and gratifications perspective: It is apparent that Twitter gratifies a need for people to connect with one another (Chen, 2011). When looking at the phenomenon of Black Twitter and other minority groups' use of certain digital platforms for discourse, it may be argued that this is particularly successful due to the pull of homophily, as discussed further in the next section (Correa & Jeong, 2011).

While these cases focus on the use of Twitter by minorities in the context of racial groups, there is lacking information on how Twitter is used by niche groups in different contexts, such as book bloggers – and the diversity within the group. Although research on the demographics of Twitter is limited, a study conducted by Smith and Brenner (2012) of Pew Research Center in the US contributes some information. The study found that use of Twitter on a typical day had steadily increased over the years, being 8% in 2012, which has most likely increased over the 8 years since (Smith & Brenner, 2012). Of the 1,729 respondents, roughly half were men with slightly more women, and almost three quarters were white (Smith & Brenner, 2012). However, according to the study, the most active users of Twitter appear to be young adults, African Americans, as well as urban and suburban residents (Smith & Brenner, 2012). Another distinction was that users on their smartphones were more active on Twitter, particularly youth – who also experienced a significant increase in smartphone ownership over time (Smith & Brenner, 2012).

Another study explores the representation of a marginalized group in society using blogging in general, done by Eckert and Chadha (2013); in this case, blogging was found to be a counterpublic for Muslims in Germany. Following the idea of Twitter, i.e. microblogging, and blogging in general being used as seemingly successful mediums for representation, it is not unreasonable to assume that bloggers that also use Twitter may provide room for representation for this niche group as well. Twitter as a social media site may serve as a supplementary platform for book bloggers to reach various audiences aside from their personal blogs/websites. Thus, Twitter allows book bloggers to publicize and promote their blogs and recommendations further on the internet, increasing opportunity for diversity and representation (of minorities), which may contribute to bloggers' personal motivations for using it. For example, bloggers may use Twitter to help boost the representation of books by authors that are part of minorities, such as women. However, there appears to be limited research on the diversity of bloggers on Twitter, particularly that of book bloggers, and this study will attempt to shed some light on this aspect as well by looking at demographic factors. It is important to consider the use of Twitter and the space for diversity and representation, as these factors may influence book bloggers' personal motivations, which, as this paper is exploring, may impact the techniques bloggers use to write their recommendations.

2.4. Recommendation techniques

For the sake of clarification, it should be noted that the term ‘recommendation techniques’ in this paper does not refer to recommendation systems that may look at which personalized blogs are recommended to readers on the internet – for empirical research on recommendation systems, see Esmaili, Neshati, Jamali, Abolhassani, and Habibi’s (2006) study and Hayes, Avesani, and Bojars’s (2007) work. Recommendation *techniques*, rather, pertains to the techniques used by individual bloggers in the construction of their book recommendations, specifically looking at their processes for writing their posts. For the purpose of publicizing their recommendations and attracting an audience, bloggers tend to employ a certain set of techniques and practices, often following similar mindsets. It is posed in this paper’s hypotheses that these recommendation techniques must stem from bloggers’ motivations; and these are intrinsically related to their mindsets. In existing research, the common consensus seems to be that bloggers are motivated, for example, by their desires to participate, attract attention, and share knowledge (Steiner, 2010). There is also a consensus on the idea that bloggers’ writing is often very personalized, walking a line between the writing of a public and private ‘diary’, so to speak (Steiner, 2010). It is reasonable, therefore, to assume these elements are related. The writings of average bloggers that write personally (at least to some extent) and draw attention must contain some similarities. Existing studies examine the similarities between the professional vs. the amateur reviewer, as well as the genres and topics these parties are likely to cover – i.e. their behaviors (Verboord, 2014). However, literature on recommendation techniques (i.e. the recommendation process of a blogger) specifically is lacking.

On the other hand, there is a plethora of articles from online blogs, magazines, and other websites that are dedicated to providing an understanding of how to write blog posts. Using these, as well as personal observations of book bloggers practices, a number of general similarities have been recognized when it comes to what bloggers keep in mind and practice when they are writing their posts. According to Cooper’s collection of advice for beginner bloggers, gathered from a variety of what she deems successful bloggers, these include: ‘Understanding the audience’, ‘ideation’, ‘writing’, ‘consistency’, and ‘authenticity’ (2016). These elements have the potential to influence bloggers’ recommendations. By *understanding their audience*, bloggers might gain a better sense of the kind of content that will attract and resonate with them, and thus it is useful to engage with the audience in some way, e.g. by asking

questions about their views or seeing how much they have ‘liked’ a post – this also shows the audience that they are valued (Cooper, 2016). This understanding and connection then leads to *ideation*, providing the bloggers with new ideas for content to write about. This relies not only on the audience’s needs, but one’s own ideas, knowledge, and opinions, which bloggers should not necessarily withhold as this will attract readers (Cooper, 2016). When it comes to *writing* using these ideas, then, it is important to consider readers’ interest and attention spans; often, bloggers write attractive headlines and negotiate the length of their writing (Cooper, 2016). For example, posts need to be long enough to be recognized by search engines, but there appears to be a trend of relatively shorter posts being more well received – overall, however, this judgement is up to the blogger and their knowledge of their audience (Cooper, 2016). It also appears a good idea to present one idea at a time and let this be built upon, and to consider whether a reader will find something compelling enough to repost it (Cooper, 2016). The bloggers should maintain *consistency* as well, in regards to their posts and their ‘brands’ so to speak, as it appears that those who post more regularly will build a following, while those who do not may risk losing their readers (Cooper, 2016). Finally, *authenticity* assists with the previous elements. Writing about your own ideas and letting your voice be heard – being genuine and considering *how* to say something– not only helps a blogger to be consistent and continue writing rather than burning out, but helps with their ideation and writing processes. It seems audiences do not only follow content, but the people who produce it.

It is possible that people will follow bloggers that they are more able to relate to. For example, one blogger may be more likely to follow another, or a person of color may be more likely to follow a fellow person of color, or a religious person may be more likely to follow someone of the same faith. As some researchers such as Chen (2011) point out, this due to people’s intrinsic need to connect with one another. And what makes people more likely to connect with or relate to certain people that are similar to themselves is known as homophily. More explicitly, it pertains to the attraction of attributes similar or relatable to oneself (Simpson, Snuggs, Christiansen, & Simples, 2000). Simpson et al.’s research indicates that when it comes to advertising, products advertised by those with which one can identify will be more appealing (2000). It is possible that a similar phenomenon would occur for bloggers’ book recommendations appealing to certain people who can identify with the blogger or author. Additionally, according to the results of Correa and Jeong’s (2011) research on race and the

production of content online, it appears that minority groups such as African Americans, Asians, and Latinos appear to create content more than other groups. More interestingly, while all groups discussed connecting with others socially, it seemed that minority groups were more likely to connect with niche communities with which they identified and felt that their voices were more relevant in (Correa & Jeong, 2011). This is because platforms dedicated to user-generated content allow minorities the space to represent themselves, connect with others, and participate in discourses from which they have been excluded (Correa & Jeong, 2011).

Following this line of reasoning, it is possible that bloggers of minority backgrounds may be likely to create more content and connect with niche communities, such as for book bloggers. Furthermore, it appears that content creators of different backgrounds have different ways of thinking about using their platforms for particular purposes; African Americans seemed to lean toward self-expression, Asians preferred keeping a kind of diary without requiring feedback, while white people leaned toward self-promotion, needing attention and feedback (Correa & Jeong, 2011). Thus, it is possible that those with Asian backgrounds may blog more than others, considering blogs are considered a type of diary as well. Interestingly, when it comes to content with hostile environments and reaching untargeted audiences, it appeared that white people felt more alienated by this than Asians and Latinos, who persevered in their struggles (Correa & Jeong, 2011). The aforementioned results of the study may influence, in this case, what topics bloggers write about, how often they post, and how they interact with their audiences (intended or not); thus, possibly influencing their use of recommendation techniques. Though further research needs to be done on this topic, it is a start, a basis for creating expectations for this paper's hypotheses regarding the relationship between bloggers' recommendation techniques and personal motivations, which will be further discussed. Correa and Jeong (2011) employed a uses and gratifications approach, which is useful for looking at how and why people use certain platforms, and this approach is appropriate for this paper as well. The following section expounds on this and how it provides insight into personal motivations.

2.5. Uses and gratifications

In addressing the research question, employing a uses and gratifications approach is most suitable. Uses and gratifications theory assists in gaining an understanding of why people use certain media, how they use it, and what needs they are fulfilling by doing so (Shao, 2009). It is

an effective perspective for studying why audiences select different media forms in the industry (Ruggiero, 2000; Shao, 2009). This pertains not only to traditional forms of media such as TV, radio, or newspapers, but also to contemporary forms such as social media and the internet (Shao, 2009). It is of note that uses and gratifications theory is argued to be of significance for studying mass communication (Ruggiero, 2000). This applies particularly to contemporary media channels using the internet, which allow for mass distribution of content; user-generated content has experienced great growth and become a “social phenomenon” over time (Shao, 2009, p. 8). The internet provides access to a wider audience and user-generated media refers to media content that is publicly accessible via the internet, and which involves a creative production process, done usually through newer technologies such as digital videos and podcasts (Shao, 2009). Users such as book bloggers distribute content as described through different media channels made available through the internet.

The uses and gratifications approach may be applied to book bloggers to study their personal motivations for recommending books on social media (such as Twitter) in particular. Book bloggers have different motivations for blogging and producing recommendations, which is of interest for this paper because it will provide insight into what incites people to blog and how (or whether) they gain satisfaction, pleasure, or knowledge through it. It will begin to answer the question, as well, of what kinds of people blog about books and why they do so. Uses and gratifications theory has its share of criticism, however. One of these criticisms is that this type of research relies too heavily on self-reporting, which may be unreliable as people may not know why they are motivated or their memory may not be reliable (Ruggiero, 2000). However, early studies were qualitative in nature with open-ended questions, while this study is quantitative, providing respondents with answer options and time to give accurate answers based on their current blogging motivations and practices, which should minimize the unreliability of memory recall. Uses and gratifications research is also criticized for being too individualistic, focusing on people’s individual psychological gratifications, but not exploring the link between these psychological gratifications and their sociological basis (Ruggiero, 2000). With the internet, however, and its potential for connecting people, perhaps this link will be able to be explored. Furthermore, the idea of the audience as active was questioned as it is more of a spectrum (e.g. some people may post comments on a platforms, while others simply read); in this case, however, it is the producers of the book recommendations that are being studied, which

means that the respondents should be active in nature (Ruggiero, 2000). While there are many criticisms, this use of uses and gratifications for this paper seems justifiable given the counterpoints made. Compared to the past, there is much more access to different varieties of digital platforms now with myriad user-generated content available, leading to the need to study why and how people use certain platforms, and for what purposes.

According to Shao, the motivations described by uses and gratifications theory for dealing with user-generated media are consuming, participating, and producing (2009). Consuming encompasses the consumption of content for information, entertainment, and mood management; including watching, reading, viewing, but excluding participating (Shao, 2009). Participating refers to social interaction and (virtual) community development; both user-to-user and user-to-content interaction – e.g. adding things to playlists, ranking, sharing, and commenting (Shao, 2009). And finally, producing entails self-expression (showing who you are) and self-actualization (creating for personal fulfilment and growth); pertaining to the creation and publication of personal content such as text, images, audio, and video (Shao, 2009). Huang et al.'s (2007) model for bloggers' motivations may be applicable to book bloggers in particular to study their motivations.

2.6. Personal motivations

As stated, this paper poses that book bloggers' use of recommendation techniques must be connected to their personal motivations. Using uses and gratifications theory and Huang et al.'s 2007 model, it appears that there are a number of commonly considered motivations for bloggers to blog: These include 'self-expression', 'documenting', 'commenting', 'community participation' and 'information seeking'. However, it is interesting to look at papers that build off of existing studies: Sepp et al. (2011), for example, take into account a number of articles on this topic, accumulating their knowledge and streamlining it. They provide a more detailed look at potential motivations beyond Huang et al.'s model. These include such motivations as 'education', 'self-improvement', and 'getting support', among many others (Sepp et al., 2011). They organize gratifications in their study into three categories: Process, content, and social gratifications (Sepp et al., 2011).

According to their framework, process gratifications are those that are likely to stem from the process of writing a post (Sepp et al., 2011). Meanwhile, content and social gratifications

represent the results of writing and sharing (i.e. an information and entertainment factor), and interacting and connecting with other people, respectively (Sepp et al., 2011). Considering these explanations and that process gratifications appear to stem from the writing process, it may be more likely that there is more of a relationship between motivations that fit into the category of process gratifications and book bloggers' recommendation techniques compared to the relationships between motivations in the content and social categories and recommendation techniques. However, it still seems pertinent to investigate whether there is a relationship with the latter categories as well, as research in this area is limited. Furthermore, while their framework suggests that process motivations 'stem from' the writing process, this paper considers how the writing process stems from the motivations, and thus it is interesting to examine the relationship further.

Sepp et al. categorize gratifications as follows. Process gratifications include: Emotion management, self-improvement, and enjoyment (Sepp et al., 2011). Content gratifications include: Life-documenting, commenting, promotion, advertising, entertaining others, and enlightening others (Sepp et al., 2011). And social gratifications include: Discussion, communication, self-expression, finding friends, image management, vanity, and getting support (Sepp et al., 2011). For the purposes of this paper, the most relevant motivations appear to be emotion management, self-improvement, enjoyment, life-documenting, commenting, entertaining others, enlightening others, discussion, communication, finding friends, image management, and getting support. Furthermore, although Sepp et al. did not find escapism (a process gratification) in their study, it seems quite relevant as readers are known to dive into books for the purpose of escapism (Merga, 2017). To add to this, media use itself is also considered an escape, and so bloggers' posting book recommendations on digital media platforms may be a form of escapism (Katz & Foulkes, 1962). Brief descriptions of these 15 motivations follow in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1. Descriptions of the motivations to be investigated in this study (Chung & Kim, 2008; Courtois et al., 2009; Dunne et al., 2010; Grace-Farfaglia et al. 2006; Hsu & Lin, 2008; Huang et al., 2007; Leung, 2003; Nardi et al., 2004; and Sepp et al., 2011).

Motivations	
Concept	Description
Process	
Emotion management	Use of blogging as emotional outlet and relief, sorting out feelings, reflecting
Self-improvement	Use of blogging to improve thinking and writing skills, learn, get inspired, keep up to date on things
Enjoyment	Use of blogging for fun, entertainment, relaxing, as a pastime
Escapism	Use of blogging to escape from reality, find new identities, reduce boredom, escape responsibilities and problems, procrastinate
Content	
Life-documenting	Use of blogging to document life, photos, writing, for the self or to let others know
Commenting	Use of blogging to express opinions, critique, comment of current issues, start discussions, communicate
Entertaining others	Use of blogging to entertain others with discussions and community
Enlightening others	Use of blogging to share information and expertise with others
Social	
Discussion	Use of blogging to engage in dialogue, discuss problems, interest others, make arguments

Communication	Use of blogging to make contact with others, sharing with others
Self-expression	Use of blogging to share ideas, thoughts, opinions, feelings
Finding friends	Use of blogging to find social companionship, meeting new people, meeting people with similar interests or opinions
Image management	Use of blogging to present an image of oneself to the world, share developments, showcase accomplishments
Vanity	Use of blogging to feed ego, show qualities one likes, for people to get to know and talk about oneself
Getting support	Use of blogging to get material, knowledge, emotional support

Before expanding on the hypotheses, it should be noted that after factor analysis, concept names for personal motivations and recommendation techniques were changed. The previous categories of recommendation techniques (understanding the audience, ideation, writing, consistency, and authenticity) were combined into the categories ‘consideration of audience’, ‘posting consistency’, and ‘authenticity’. The remaining new categories ‘writing length’ and ‘writing style’ were not used in testing. The previous categories of personal motivations (emotion management, self-improvement, enjoyment, escapism, life-documenting, commenting, entertaining others, enlightening others, discussion, communication, self-expression, finding friends, image management, vanity, and getting support) were combined into the categories ‘coping mechanism’, ‘interact with others’, ‘image management’, and ‘self-expression’. The remaining new categories ‘entertainment’ and ‘improve writing’ were not used in testing. Further details about the factor analyses and explanations for the combination of the previous concepts into the new categories may be found in Chapter 3.

As mentioned before, this study looks at book bloggers' motivations and recommendation techniques in the context of diversity and representation rather than a marketing and sales perspective. It is therefore relevant to take into account such factors as race, gender, ethnicity, and religion. As diversity is a complex topic, it is interesting to look at how these selected motivations may have a connection with individual bloggers' personality traits as well, discussed further in the following section. Differing motivations may have a relationship with the books bloggers choose to recommend, taking into account their backgrounds. As there is a similarity in how advertisers formulate their adverts with different priorities; considering this relationship between producers and production, there may be a relationship between bloggers' motivations and their recommendation techniques (Simpson et al., 2000). This lends ground to the overall research question for this study. Furthermore, studying homophily shows that there is evidence of people of color being attracted to adverts portraying people of color as they are considered more relatable (Simpson et al., 2000). Thus, similar to this trend, it may be expected that book bloggers of color may be more conscious of selecting books by authors of color, leading to H2, shown below.

Employing uses and gratifications theory and perusing literature on this topic – albeit very limited – there is evidence that content creators of color may be motivated by a few particular needs. One of these is connecting with communities. According to Correa & Jeong (2011), minorities appeared to value tools like content creation as means to connect with others with whom they identify and feel their voices are more relevant. Content creation refers to sharing information and material online, including writing, music, video, and photography, particularly online in a digital format, often through social network sites (Correa & Jeong, 2011; Hargittai & Walejko, 2008). Thus, it can be concluded that book blogging is a form of content creation. It may be a possibility, therefore, that book bloggers of minority backgrounds may be more motivated to connect with others – those they may identify with or likeminded people – than non-minority bloggers, in order to share their struggles and let their voices be heard. Connecting with others implies a form of interaction, which lead to the formulation of H3(a). Correa & Jeong's (2011) results further showed that groups such as African Americans underlined the idea of self-expression compared to white groups who underlined self-promotion; the former seemed to desire the opportunity to express their culture and internal thoughts. This lead to the formulation of H3(b). Interestingly, a study by Lopez (2014) showed that activism by

Asian Americans in the blogosphere tended to involve a form of emotional labor. In consideration of this finding, as well as Correa & Jeong's (2011) result that certain ethnic groups were motivated by connecting with those with whom they could share their voices and identify with – as they otherwise may be unable to, according to Graham and Smith (2016) – it appears that there may exist a manner of connection between minority bloggers and the motivation to blog as some form of coping mechanism (in conjunction with activism). To explore this potential relationship with book bloggers, this lead to H3(c).

It is necessary to also take a look at the relationship between bloggers motivations and recommendation techniques. Correa & Jeong's (2011) results indicated that those with minority backgrounds were better able to handle hostile or unintended audiences than white groups. It is possible, therefore, that bloggers that wish to connect or interact with others, as explained above, may consider their audiences more; taking into account their opinions or thoughts on certain topics. Thus, H4 explores this potential positive relationship with book bloggers. As their work further showed that minority groups are concerned with self-expression, offering their personal thoughts and sharing their cultures, it is possible that there may be a relationship here with the recommendation technique authenticity, which involves letting one's voice be heard (Cooper, 2016; Correa & Jeong, 2011). This lead to H5. Correa & Jeong's (2011) study showed that minority groups appeared to blog more often. As those groups also appeared to be motivated to connect with one another, it is expected that there may be a positive relationship between the motivation interacting with others and the recommendation technique posting consistency, leading to H6(a). Furthermore, according to Sepp et al. 2011, bloggers may be motivated to blog for entertainment and image management purposes. It is possible, therefore, that bloggers will post more consistently in order to derive regular entertainment and manage their images, leading to H6(b) and H6(c). Finally, in order to further explore the potential of book bloggers using blogging as a coping mechanism, it may be possible to expect that this may relate to posting consistency as well, due to the need to get support. This lead to the formulation of H6(d).

Research question: There is a relationship between book bloggers' personal motivations and their recommendation techniques on Twitter.

1st set of hypotheses:

H2: Book bloggers of color are more conscious of selecting books by authors of color than white book bloggers.

H3(a): Book bloggers with ethnic minority backgrounds are motivated by the need for interacting with others more than non-minority bloggers.

H3(b): Book bloggers with ethnic minority backgrounds are motivated by the need for self-expression more than non-minority bloggers.

H3(c): Book bloggers with ethnic minority backgrounds are motivated by the need for a coping mechanism more than non-minority bloggers.

H4: There is a positive relationship between the personal motivation interacting with others and the recommendation technique consideration of their audience.

H5: There is a positive relationship between the personal motivation self-expression and the recommendation technique authenticity.

H6(a): There is a positive relationship between the personal motivation interacting with others and the recommendation technique posting consistency.

H6(b): There is a positive relationship between the personal motivation entertainment and the recommendation technique posting consistency.

H6(c): There is a positive relationship between the personal motivation image management and the recommendation technique posting consistency.

H6(d): There is a positive relationship between the personal motivation coping mechanism and the recommendation technique posting consistency.

2.7. Personality traits

It is posed in this study that book bloggers' personal motivations themselves must stem from somewhere; in this case it is relevant to consider a psychological perspective. Therefore, this study will also be examining bloggers' personality traits to gain some insight on this. Personality psychology pertains to describing, predicting, and explaining recurring behaviors in individuals for the purpose of distinguishing them from others (Asendorpf, 2009; Li, Li, Hao, Guan, & Zhu, 2014). Personality traits refer to individuals' behavioral tendencies that characterize their personalities (Asendorpf, 2009). In existing research, personality traits have

been studied extensively as they are a significant element of psychology studies, although there is much left to be done. A prevailing and influential paradigm of personality structure is that of the Five Factor Model (FFM), also known as the Big 5 or OCEAN model (Asendorpf, 2009). There are many other personality structure models, all of which, including the FFM, have been critiqued thoroughly; while no model may seem perfect, the FFM appears to be the most commonly used, is suitable for exploratory research, and thus will be the model used in this study (McCrae, 2009).

The FFM consists of five factors, comprising the highest level of a hierarchy of personality traits, with a number of narrower corresponding qualities (or facets), i.e. lower levels, that supply a structure for the categorization of personality traits (McCrae, 2009). These factors are ‘openness to experience’ (O), ‘conscientiousness’ (C), ‘extroversion’ (E), ‘agreeableness’ (A), and ‘neuroticism’ (N) (McCrae, 2009). The behaviors associated with openness to experience are an appreciation for art, imagination, experiences, and ideas (Gill, Nowson, & Oberlander, 2009). Discipline, dutifulness, perfectionism, and persistence are related to conscientiousness, and assertion, action, and thrill-seeking are related to extroversion (Gill et al., 2009). Behaviors involving compassion, consideration, and cooperation are associated with agreeableness, and finally, neuroticism is associated with negative qualities, such as emotional instability, anxiety, hostility, and depression (Gill et al., 2009). The five factors are measured through quantitative survey items, and there exist a number of inventories for this; for this study, the inventory used will be John’s BFI from 1991. Statistical factor analysis is applied to the results, leading to the deduction of personality traits (Asendorpf, 2009).

There are existing studies examining the personality traits of bloggers using the FFM, such as Gill et al.’s (2009) study on the role of personality traits in the motivations for blogging, Li et al.’s (2014) study on predicting users’ personalities based on their microblogging behaviors, as well as Yarkoni’s (2010) research on personality and word use amongst bloggers, and Iacobelli, Gill, Nowson, & Oberlander’s (2011) research on the relationship between bloggers’ language use and their personalities. While the latter two studies focus on the relationship between bloggers’ language and personality, others such as Li et al.’s focus on deducting personality traits from blogging behaviors. In contrast, this study will look at the reverse; looking at the role of personality traits in blogging motivations, similar to Gill et al.’s work. Their research investigates how linguistic elements express what bloggers write about and

how they present themselves, relying on automated content analysis (Gill et al., 2009). Their results indicate that those with high openness use blogging to write about topics concerning leisure activities (often related to the arts), and use negative emotion words (related to anger) as well as self-referencing, indicating that they may be reviewing something (Gill et al., 2009). Bloggers with high conscientiousness seemed to write about mundane topics with more positive word use, commenting on life around them (Gill et al., 2009). Those with high extraversion seem to blog to express their opinions and document their lives, particularly regarding their interactions with others, and share their experiences through writing (Gill et al., 2009). Bloggers with high agreeableness use more positive words and talk less about leisure activities (Gill et al., 2009). Finally, those high neuroticism tend to use blogging for the purpose of self-therapy or catharsis, venting their often negative emotions (Gill et al., 2009).

While Gill et al. investigated bloggers who write for different purposes, measured through content analysis, this study will focus solely on book bloggers, measured through a survey and focusing less on particular word use. Using the aforementioned qualities associated with the five factors of the FFM as well as the findings of previous research as a basis, and considering the personal motivations that will be examined in this study as described in the previous section, the following hypotheses have been created to test the relationship between book bloggers' personality traits and their personal motivations. As people with high openness to experience are known to be more open to experiences and ideas and are curious and broad-minded, it stands to reason that they would be open to discussion, which implies interaction (Li et al., 2014). This lead to the formulation of H7. Those with high conscientiousness, according to Li et al. (2014), are known to communicate with others regularly, also implying interaction, and thus this lead to H8. Furthermore, according to Li et al. (2014), people with high extroversion are known to be social, assertive, and talkative, which lead to the formulation of H9(a) and H9(b), as they may therefore by likely to be motivated by interacting with others and self-expression. Those with high agreeableness tend to get along with others, and thus it is possible that there may be a relationship here with a motivation to interact with others, leading to H10 (Li et al., 2014). Finally, people with high neuroticism are known to blog for self-therapy and to vent, and due to this, it may follow that they seek out support through this process, leading to H11(a) and H11(b) (Gill et al., 2009).

2nd set of hypotheses:

H7: There is a positive relationship between book bloggers that are motivated by the need for interacting with others and the personality trait openness.

H8: There is a positive relationship between book bloggers that are motivated by the need for interacting with others and the personality trait conscientiousness.

H9(a): There is a positive relationship between book bloggers that are motivated by the need for interacting with others and the personality trait extroversion.

H9(b): There is a positive relationship between book bloggers that are motivated by the need for self-expression and the personality trait extroversion.

H10: There is a positive relationship between book bloggers that are motivated by the need for interacting with others and the personality trait agreeableness.

H11(a): There is a positive relationship between book bloggers that are motivated by the need for a coping mechanism and the personality trait neuroticism.

H11(b): There is a positive relationship between book bloggers that are motivated by the need for self-expression and the personality trait neuroticism.

2.8. Research model

A model assists in summing up and clarifying the structure of the hypotheses. Book bloggers' personality traits (X), ethnic backgrounds (Z), and personal motivations (M) are considered independent variables in juxtaposition with the dependent variable, their recommendation techniques (Y). However, personal motivations may also have its own relationship with personality traits and ethnic backgrounds, wherein it would be considered the dependent variable. Thus, X may have a relationship with M, tested by the 2nd set of hypotheses and M may have a relationship with Z and Y, tested by the 1st set of hypotheses. Furthermore, it is possible that X may be more directly related to Y. A visual representation of this research model is provided in Figure 2.1. The hypotheses were tested by conducting a number of

statistical analyses on data collected by means of a survey, explained further in the following chapters.

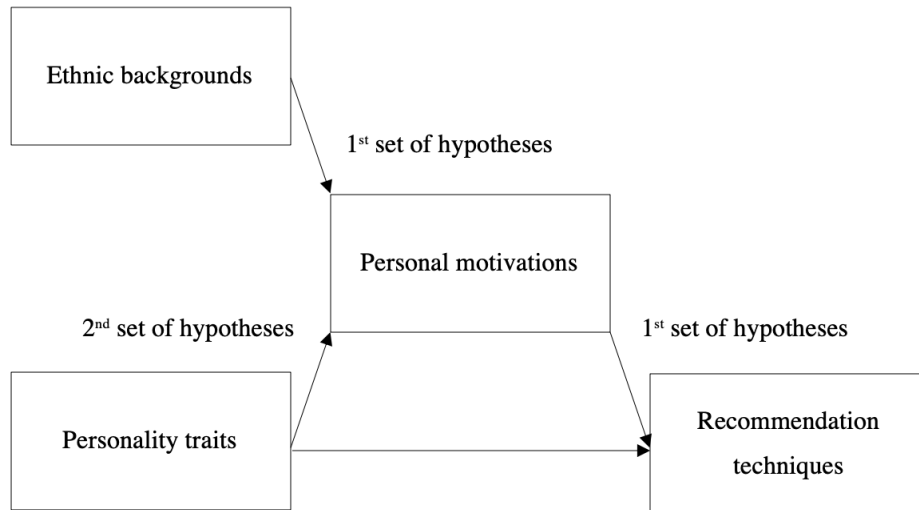


Figure 2.1. Relationships between ethnic backgrounds, personality traits, personal motivations, and recommendation techniques

3. Methodology

The goal of this research was to look at the relationship between book bloggers' personal motivations and their recommendation techniques on Twitter. In doing so, the relationship between personal motivations and bloggers' personality traits was also examined to provide further insight. In order to carry out a study on this, it was necessary to operationalize book bloggers' personality traits, personal motivations, and their recommendation techniques. The most useful tool to collect data for this was an online survey, as it allowed for the asking of questions to a large, diverse, and international audience on Twitter. Therefore, this research was quantitative in nature. Quantitative methods are suitable for looking at relationships and give a study a measure of accuracy and reliability due to their numerical and mathematical nature (Profillidis & Botzoris, 2019). Surveys are not only efficient in terms of time, they are low in cost, and they may curb any issues that may potentially arise from face-to-face communication (Wright, 2006). The survey for this study took approximately 10 minutes for respondents to complete and was created and distributed online using the well-established survey tool Qualtrics. The respective benefits of this was that the survey did not take up too much of the respondents' time, thereby encouraging more responses, and it did not cost much to make and administer. The data collected from the survey was then studied using statistical analysis techniques.

3.1. Measuring instrument

The survey began with an introduction, including a greeting and a brief description of the researcher, the purpose of the research, the number of questions, and its approximate length, so that respondents were appropriately informed before participating. Furthermore, the introduction explained that the survey would be anonymous, to reduce the potential for a social desirability bias by giving no benefits or disadvantages to any respondents. It stated that the responses would be treated confidentially, stored securely, and that the survey contained no disturbing content, with no risks associated with participation, which was voluntary and could be withdrawn at any point. It then thanked the respondents in advance for their time. At the end of this message was a required response for informed consent, without which the respondent could not proceed. The survey then commenced with a section of preliminary questions, asking, "Would you say that you are a book blogger?" with "yes" or "no" answer options, "How often do you post about book

on Twitter?” with the answer options “never”, “less than 2 times per month”, “2-4 times per month”, and “more than 4 times per month”, “Do you post book recommendations?” and “Do you post book reviews?” both with “yes” or “no” answer options, “How long have you been blogging about books?” with the answer options “less than 6 months”, “6 months to less than 1 year”, “1 year to less than 2 years”, “2 years to less than 3 years”, and “3 years or more”, and “How often are you conscious of selecting books by authors of color?” with the answer options “always”, “most of the time”, “about half the time”, “sometimes”, and “never”.

To create the rest of the survey, the essential elements for answering the research question were operationalized into questions. The second section of the survey focused on measuring personality traits (which provide insight into personal motivations). There are many different models for looking at personality structures, including the well-known, dominant Five Factor Model (aka Big 5 or OCEAN model) that was applied in this study. Personality psychology has a long, complex history, resulting not only in a variety of different models with varying numbers of factors, but a variety of measuring instruments for each model. In the case of the FFM, the most widely discussed questionnaires are Costa and McCrae’s NEO (1992), Goldberg’s TDA (1992), and John’s BFI (1991) (John, Naumann, & Soto, 2008). This paper used John’s BFI. This particular measuring instrument was chosen because it measures the five factors with short phrases; the brevity of these phrases and the overall scale is beneficial because the questionnaire may be completed in a short amount of time (approximately 5 minutes), reducing the risk of tiring out or boring respondents, who may be less likely to complete their responses otherwise (John et al., 2008). Thus, the nature of this measuring instrument is not only efficient, but flexible. A common criticism of the FFM is that it is restrictive in the sense that it relies on adjectives that describe certain traits. However, John’s BMI uses short phrases based on these adjectives, as giving elaborations on the descriptors makes them easier to understand and results in more consistent answers (De Raad, 2009; John et al., 2008). Considering the full questionnaire for this study necessitated multiple sections measuring book bloggers’ general practices, personality traits, personal motivations, recommendation techniques, demographics, and ethnic identities, which resulted in a lengthy survey otherwise, it was beneficial to use the efficient BFI compared to the longer NEO and TDA questionnaires, while retaining the important core measurements of the Big Five (John et al., 2008). Furthermore, the BFI was used

in previous research pertaining to personality traits and micro-blogging behaviors, such as in Li et al.'s 2014 work, which were somewhat similar to the concepts measured in this study, i.e. bloggers' personality traits.

The BFI contains 44 items measuring the Big Five and is suitable for self-reporting (John et al. 2008). The survey is based on a five-point Likert scale (John et al., 2008). The wording of the answer options was slightly modified in this study for the sake of consistency with the rest of the questionnaire, resulting in the options “strongly agree”, “somewhat agree”, “neither agree nor disagree”, “somewhat disagree”, and “strongly disagree”. Example items measuring the five variables, i.e., openness, conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism may be viewed in Table 3.1. The items were preceded with the statement, “I am someone who...”.

Table 3.1. Example survey items for measuring Big 5 personality traits (John et al., 2008)

Personality traits	
Concept	Example survey item
Openness	Is curious about many different things
Conscientiousness	Does a thorough job
Extroversion	Is talkative
Agreeableness	Is helpful and unselfish with others
Neuroticism	Can be tense

John's instructions for coding the answers and syntax for analysis were used after the data was collected. Factor analysis was not deemed necessary for the validated personality traits scale. However, the variables were tested to see whether the data was distributed normally by looking at skewness and Kurtosis – for which all were normally distributed – and tested for reliability. Reliability analyses for personality traits showed that the Cronbach's alpha for openness ($M = 22.29$, $SD = 4.86$) was .69, which was improved to .72 by deleting 'Prefers work that is routine'. The Cronbach's alpha for conscientiousness ($M = 21.62$, $SD = 5.87$) was .80, .86 for extroversion ($M = 25.69$, $SD = 6.76$), .82 for agreeableness ($M = 19.69$, $SD = 5.86$), and .86 for neuroticism ($M = 21.08$, $SD = 6.68$), none of which could be improved further. The items were then computed into new variables for testing.

The next section of the questionnaire focused on measuring book bloggers' personal motivations. Sepp et al.'s (2011) research amalgamated and tested the studies of others; this manner of combining existing studies served as the basis for creating the measuring instrument for bloggers' motivations. This paper used the works of Chung and Kim (2008), Courtois, et al. (2009), Dunne et al. (2010), Grace-Farfaglia et al. (2006), Hsu and Lin (2008), Huang et al. (2007), Leung (2003), Nardi et al. (2004), and Sepp et al. (2011). These studies focused on a variety of topics, mostly including some version of measuring bloggers' gratifications; while they differed in certain ways, these existing studies' application of uses and gratifications approaches was useful for constructing the measurement scale for this study. Of these studies, Dunne et al. (2010), Nardi et al. (2004), and Sepp et al. (2011) incorporated qualitative research methods, such as interviews and focus groups, while the others included quantitative methods for measuring gratifications. Most of these relied on 5-point Likert scales, with the exception being Huang et al. (2007), who used a 7-point scale. Thus, this section of the questionnaire used a 5-point Likert scale as it was the majority format, and any of Huang et al.'s (2007) items used were adapted for the sake of consistency. Answer options were the same as described above. Due to the large number of factors measured, only 2 statements were used to measure each factor. Items for each of the 15 motivation factors were selected according to which of the aforementioned studies' scales or descriptions were deemed most relevant. Examples of items that were used to measure the variables, and the respective studies and scales that were used for their construction, may be viewed in Table 3.2. The items were preceded with the statement, "I blog about books because...".

Table 3.2. Example survey items for measuring personal motivations (Chung & Kim, 2008; Courtois et al., 2009; Dunne et al., 2010; Grace-Farfaglia et al., 2006; Huang et al., 2007; Hsu & Lin 2008; Leung, 2003; Nardi et al., 2004; Sepp et al., 2011)

Motivations	
Concept	Example survey item
Process	
Emotion management	It is an outlet for my thoughts and feelings
Self-improvement	It helps me improve my writing
Enjoyment	I find it enjoyable
Escapism	It helps me escape my other responsibilities
Content	
Life-documenting	It is a way for me to document the books I have read
Commenting	I can receive people's comments on the books I write about
Entertaining others	Others might enjoy the books I write about
Enlightening others	It helps me share information with others
Social	
Discussion	It helps me offer a dialogue
Communication	It helps me be in contact with others
Self-expression	It is a way for me to express myself
Finding friends	It is a way for me to meet or make friends or acquaintances
Image management	It allows me to present my accomplishments
Vanity	It lets people know about me
Getting support	It is a way for me to get emotional support

The test for the personal motivations variables showed that all variables were distributed normally except for 7 items with high Kurtosis: ‘It is an outlet for my thoughts and feelings’ (4.20), ‘It is a way for me to document the books I have read’ (3.95), ‘Others might enjoy the books I write about’ (4.33), ‘It is a way for me to express myself’ (4.86), ‘It allows me to write about books others might relate to’ (3.91), ‘It allows me to write about books others may not know about’ (9.88), and ‘It allows me to provide my commentary about books’ (4.54).

The personal motivations scale then contained 23 items based on a Likert scale that were entered into factor analysis using Principal Components extraction with Varimax rotation based on Eigenvalues (> 1.00), $KMO = .87$, $\chi^2 (N = 330, 253) = 2696.16$, $p < .001$. The resultant model explained 60.5% of the variance in personal motivations. 6 factors were found; factor loading of individual items onto the 6 factors are presented in Table 3.3. The factors found were as follows. Coping mechanism, which included 6 items related to book bloggers’ use of blogging as a way to cope with their issues and get emotional support. Interact with others, which included 7 items related to book bloggers’ use of blogging as a means to communicate and hold discussions with others, and meet new friends. Image management, which included 3 items related to book bloggers’ use of blogging to portray their ideal image and impress others. Self-expression, which included 3 items related to book bloggers’ use of blogging as a way to speak their mind and communicate their interests. Entertainment, which had 3 items related to book bloggers’ use of blogging as a means to escape their responsibilities and have fun. Improve writing, which had 1 item related to book bloggers’ use of blogging to improve their writing. Reliability analyses were conducted on the first 5 factors. The Cronbach’s alpha for coping mechanism ($M = 17.55$, $SD = 5.38$) was .85 and there was no significant improvement by deleting items. The Cronbach’s alpha for interact with others ($M = 14.18$, $SD = 4.51$) was .79, which could not be improved. The Cronbach’s alpha for image management ($M = 9.79$, $SD = 2.84$) was .74, which could not be improved. The Cronbach’s alpha for self-expression ($M = 5.23$, $SD = 1.84$) was .62, which was improved to .76 by deleting ‘It is a way for me to update what I have been doing’, leaving it with 2 items. The Cronbach’s alpha for entertainment ($M = 4.92$, $SD = 1.62$) was .29, which was improved to .49 by deleting ‘It helps me escape my other responsibilities, leaving it with 2 items; however, this reliability was still too low, leading to it being excluded from testing. Due to this, H6(b) could not be tested. Improve writing was not used in testing. According to the factor analysis and reliability tests, the items were then computed into new variables for testing.

Table 3.3. Personal motivations: Item loadings on a 6 factor principal components solution

Items	Coping mechanism	Interact with others	Image management	Self- expression	Entertainment	Improve writing
I blog about books because...						
It helps me cope with my issues	.827					
It helps me talk about my problems	.734					
It helps me feel less lonely	.718					
It is a way for me to get emotional support	.688					
It helps me forget about my problems	.589					
It allows me to learn and improve myself	.467					
It helps me be in contact with others		.755				
It is a way for me to meet or make friends or acquaintances		.669				

It helps me comment on what other bloggers say	.614
I can receive people's comments on the books I write about	.602
It helps me offer a dialogue	.585
It lets people know about me	.526
It helps me share information with others	.380
It helps me impress others	.764
It is a way for me to portray my ideal image	.714
It allows me to present my accomplishments	.581
It helps me communicate things that interest me	.821
It is a way for me to speak my mind	.803
It is a way for me to update what I have been doing	.428

It helps me escape my other responsibilities					.699	
It is a way for me to have fun					.650	
I find it enjoyable					.471	
It helps me improve my writing						.794
<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>	.85	.79	.74	.76	.49	
<i>R²</i>	.15	.14	.10	.09	.07	.06
<i>Eigenvalue</i>	6.78	2.08	1.47	1.37	1.16	1.06

The questionnaire then went on to measure book bloggers' recommendation techniques by asking respondents to respond to items concerning the variables, 'understanding the audience', 'ideation', 'writing', 'consistency', and 'authenticity'. Due to the scarcity of research on this topic, I devised variables and the measurement scale myself, using resources such as Cooper (2016), and focusing on the aspects I believed were most relevant to writing for a blog from my 3 years-long observations of bloggers and blogging communities on Twitter. The items were created by observing which aspects were most relevant regarding the variables, and 3 items in the form of statements were used to measure each variable. These variables for book bloggers recommendation techniques were measured on a 7-point Likert scale to obtain more nuanced information on this understudied topic. Therefore, the answer options for this scale were "strongly agree", "agree", "somewhat agree", "neither agree nor disagree", "somewhat disagree", "disagree", and "strongly disagree". Example items measuring the five variables may be viewed in Table 3.4. The items were preceded with the statement, "In my process of creating posts about books...".

Table 3.4. Example survey items for measuring recommendation techniques

Recommendation techniques	
Concept	Example survey item
Understanding the audience	I ask my audience about their opinions on certain topics
Ideation	I focus my posts on things my audience likes to read about in books
Writing	I keep my writing short and to the point
Consistency	I am quick to make new posts
Authenticity	I write my genuine thoughts

Factor Analyses were carried out for the 15-item recommendation techniques and 30-item personal motivations scales. Before conducting them, the variables were tested to see whether the data was distributed normally by looking at skewness and Kurtosis. According to the test for the recommendation techniques variables, all variables were normally distributed except

for the item 'I write my genuine thoughts', which was removed due to high Kurtosis (13.73; the acceptable range was between -3 and 3). The recommendation techniques scale then contained 14 items based on a Likert scale that were entered into factor analysis using Principal Components extraction with Varimax rotation based on Eigenvalues (> 1.00), $KMO = .78$, $\chi^2 (N = 330, 91) = 1074.59$, $p < .001$. The resultant model explained 64.4% of the variance in recommendation techniques. 5 factors were found; factor loading of individual items onto the 5 factors are presented in Table 3.5. The factors found were as follows. Consideration of audience, which included 6 items related to book bloggers' understanding of their audience and keeping them in mind while writing. Posting consistency, which included 3 items related to how consistent and quick book bloggers' are regarding posting. Authenticity, which included 3 items related to book bloggers sharing their own ideas and letting their voices be heard. Writing length and writing style, which had 1 item each, related to bloggers' post lengths and whether they write attractively respectively. Reliability analyses were conducted on the first 3 factors. The Cronbach's alpha for consideration of audience ($M = 20.31$, $SD = 6.93$) was .80 and there was no significant improvement by deleting items. The Cronbach's alpha for posting consistency ($M = 12.63$, $SD = 3.51$) was .60, which was improved to .72 by deleting 'I often take breaks between writing book recommendations', leaving it with 2 items. The Cronbach's alpha for authenticity ($M = 8.48$, $SD = 3.00$) was .54, which could not be improved significantly. Respondents are not always able to honest about themselves in these cases, due to which reliability may be low. Another reason may be due to the low number of questions, caused by the high number of variables. This variable was kept for testing, however, the low reliability was kept in consideration. Writing length and writing style were not used in testing. According to the factor analysis and reliability tests, the items were then computed into new variables for testing.

Table 3.5. Recommendation techniques: Item loadings on a 5 factor principal components solution

Items	Consideration of audience	Posting consistency	Authenticity	Writing length	Writing style
In my process of creating posts about books...					
I learn about my audience by posting about particular topics to evaluate how they are received	.784				
I focus my posts on things my audience likes to read about in books	.754				
I consider my audience important when coming up with ideas for posts	.745				
I take into account how many likes posts about certain topics have received	.705				
I ask my audience about their opinions on certain topics	.582				
I keep my audience's attention span in mind while writing	.578				
I am consistent with posting		.856			
I am quick to make new posts		.809			

I often take breaks between writing book recommendations	.489				
I often write about my own ideas to let my voice be heard	.762				
I like to come up with my own ideas for posts to share with my audience	.735				
I write about my opinions on controversial topics	.628				
I keep my writing short and to the point	.878				
I try to write attractively	.817				
Cronbach's alpha	.80	.72	.54		
R²	.22	.12	.12	.09	.08
Eigenvalue	3.64	1.73	1.54	1.07	1.03

The last section of the survey concluded with demographic and ethnic identity questions in its last section, including questions about the respondents' age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, and ethnicity, to gain a better understanding of the sample population. These questions were quite straightforward: "How old are you?" was answered by asking respondents to type in their age, "What is your sex?" was answered with the options 'male', 'female', and 'intersex', and "With which gender identity do you most identify?" with the answer options "male", "female", "transgender male", "transgender female", "gender variant/non-conforming", "other" with an open field, and "prefer not to say". "Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?" was answered with the options "straight", "gay or lesbian", "bisexual", "other" with an open field, and "prefer not to say". "What is your present religion, if any?" had the answer options "Buddhist", "Catholic", "Christian/Protestant/Methodist/Lutheran/Baptist", "Greek or Russian Orthodox", "Hindu",

“Jewish”, “Mormon”, “Muslim”, “Atheist”, “Agnostic”, “None”, and “prefer not to say”. “What is your nationality?” was given 195 country options. “Please specify your ethnicity (select all that apply)” was given the options “White”, “Asian”, “Hispanic or Latino”, “Black or African American”, “Middle Eastern or North African”, “American Indian or Alaska Native”, “Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander”, and “Other”. For this question, options will include “male”, “female”, and “other”. Finally, to gain further insight about respondent’s ethnicities, they were asked to answer statements from Umaña-Taylor, Yazedjian, and Bámaca-Gómez’s 2004 ethnic identity scale (EIS). Such statements included “I am not happy with my ethnicity”, and “I understand how I feel about my ethnicity” (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2004). After pre-testing the survey before distribution, feedback concluded that the EIS was rather repetitive, and thus 8 items were removed to address the issue. Due to ethical concerns, the information from this final section of the survey was handled carefully as it was considered sensitive. Once completed, a thank you message was displayed to respondents, stating their responses were successfully recorded.

Factor analysis was not deemed necessary for the validated EIS. However, the variables were tested to see whether the data was distributed normally by looking at skewness and Kurtosis – for which all were normally distributed – and tested for reliability. Reliability analyses for the EIS showed that the Cronbach’s alpha for affirmation was .50, which could not be improved, and was therefore excluded from testing. The Cronbach’s alpha for exploration ($M = 9.19$, $SD = 3.76$) was .86, and .68 for resolution ($M = 5.74$, $SD = 1.65$), neither of which could be improved further. According to the reliability tests, the items were then computed into new variables for testing.

3.2. Sampling method

As mentioned, the questionnaire was piloted in order to test its measurements and make improvements based on feedback. Once it was finalized it was administered to book bloggers. To do this, a sample was required from the population of book bloggers, which were the units of analysis. For this study, snowball sampling was the most suitable technique to create a sample. The survey was initially planned to be distributed through a gatekeeper on Twitter to a community of book bloggers; however, complications arose which hindered this process and the gatekeeper only reached a few participants. Thus, an alternative plan was made. A template

message was formulated with a greeting, a short description of the researcher and research topic, and a request to fill out the survey and share it with other book bloggers. It ended by thanking the bloggers in advance for their time. This template message was then disseminated according to the following procedure. Book bloggers were found through Twitter's search function using hashtags such as #bookblogger, #bookreview, and so on. Book blogging communities' follower lists were also used to find appropriate bloggers. This procedure required that the blogger had their Twitter direct messages (DMs) enabled; thus, this criterion was looked for first, after which the criteria of being book bloggers that use Twitter were confirmed by evaluating their Twitter feed and (if possible) book blogs of various forms. After checking the criteria, each message was then edited to include the appropriate bloggers' name as a courtesy and to increase attention. Furthermore, a Tweet was posted on the researcher's profile that was retweeted by others, which allowed those without their DMs enabled to be reached as well.

The book bloggers were encouraged in the template message to share the survey with other book bloggers that use Twitter, resulting in myriad small snowballs. While snowball sampling is non-random and therefore unsuitable for representing the entire population, it allows for the inclusion of people that would otherwise not be known or left out in the population (Handcock & Gile, 2011). It is also a useful sampling method for reaching niche respondents, such as those required for this study (Handcock & Gile, 2011). The aim was to reach at least 300 respondents due to the comparatively niche nature of the units of analysis, and this was achieved successfully. The template message was distributed through DM's to 780 unique book bloggers; the number of bloggers reached through retweets and exposure through bloggers' sharing in groups and other such methods were not possible to calculate accurately. 370 responses were recorded, which were then cut down to a final sample of 330 responses after data cleaning. It should be noted that data collection began on May 15 and ended on May 21, before the murder of George Floyd on May 25, which triggered Black Lives Matter and anti-police brutality protests in the US and internationally, altering the political landscape (Taylor, 2020).

3.3. Sample

The sample consisted of respondents ranging from ages 14 through 66. 49.1% of the respondents were aged 14-26, including a 2.7% of those who did not provide their age (9 cases, $N = 321$). Excluding these cases, the mean age was 29.01. The sex of 302 respondents (91.8%)

was female, while 27 (8.2%) were male ($N = 329$). 287 of the respondents ($N = 329$) identified as female (87.2%), 25 as male (7.6%), 2 as transgender males (0.6%), 8 as gender variant/non-conforming (2.4%), 3 that preferred not to say (0.9%), and 4 that selected 'other' (1.2%). Of those that selected 'other', 1 was agender (0.3%), 1 was stated 'N/A' (0.3%), and 2 were non-binary (0.6%). 209 of the respondents ($N = 330$) stated their sexual orientation was straight (63.3%), 11 were gay or lesbian (3.3%), 59 were bisexual (17.9%), 10 preferred not to say (3%), and 41 selected 'other' (12.4%). Of those that selected 'other', there were 40 responses, with mixed orientations: There were 17 instances of who said they were asexual, 7 of queer, 3 of aromantic, 3 of demisexual, 2 of panromantic, 1 of demi-pansexual, 7 of pansexual, 1 of polyamorous, 1 of biromantic, and 1 of open minded.

3 respondents ($N = 317$) were Buddhist (0.9%), 24 were Catholic (7.6%), 65 were Christian or Protestant or Methodist or Lutheran or Baptist (20.5%), 9 were Hindu (2.8%), 6 were Jewish (1.9%), 2 were The Church of Jesus Christ Latter-day Saints (0.6%), 23 were Muslim (7.3%), 40 were Atheist (12.6%), 44 were Agnostic (13.9%), 84 stated 'none' (26.5%), and 17 preferred not to say (5.4%). The respondents were of 43 different nationalities; of the most represented nationalities, 116 respondents ($N = 323$) were from the US (35.6%), 104 from the UK and Northern Ireland (31.9%), 18 from Canada (5.5%), 15 from India (4.6%), and 9 from the Philippines (2.8%). Respondents were able to select multiple ethnicities; there were 239 instances of white, 58 instances of Asian, 21 instances of Hispanic or Latino, 13 instances of Black or African American, 10 instances of Middle Eastern or North African, 5 instances of American Indian or Alaska Native, 2 of Native Hawaiians or Pacific Islanders, and 18 who selected 'other'.

324 respondents stated they were book bloggers (98.2%), while 6 said they were not (1.8%). 16 respondents stated their posting frequency on Twitter about books was less than 2 times per month (4.8%), 47 stated 2-4 times per month (14.2%), 263 stated more than 4 times per month (79.7%), and 4 stated never (1.2%). 295 bloggers stated they posted book recommendations (89.4%), while 35 stated they did not (10.6%). 319 bloggers stated they posted book reviews (89.4%), while 11 stated they did not (3.3%). 35 respondents stated they had been blogging for less than 6 months (10.6%), 23 stated 6 months to less than 1 year (7%), 55 stated 1 year to less than 2 years (16.7%), 62 stated 2 years to less than 3 years (18.8%), and 155 stated 3

years or more (47%). Regarding consciousness of selecting books by authors of color ($M = 3.12$, $SD = 1.30$), on average the respondents were conscious of this about half the time.

3.4. Data preparation

Once the data was collected, it was exported and entered into the statistical analysis software, SPSS. The initial number of cases was 370. It was cleaned up, for example by removing incomplete questionnaires, keeping only complete responses or those missing only the ethnicity questions, and editing any non-numerical responses for 'age' to numerical answers, editing variable names and labels, and so on. 10 cases of respondents under the age of 18 were removed. A response that was mostly complete except for the recommendation techniques questions was removed due to these missing answers, as well as due to the majority of the answers for the personal motivations and personality traits questions being "strongly agree"; while this is not impossible, the response was deemed incomplete and unreliable. The median duration in seconds for the completion of the survey was checked and any responses that took less than 40.0% of the median ($Mdn = 509.50$), i.e. below 203.80, were removed if the answers were not deemed coherent or reliable. Negatively worded items from the recommendation techniques scale, personality traits scale (John's BFI), and ethnic identity scale (EIS) were reverse coded. The cleaned dataset, which resulted in 330 responses, was then prepared to be used to conduct tests on the data and eventually lead to the formation of conclusions about the relationship between book bloggers' personal motivations and recommendation techniques on Twitter.

This preparation included checking the data for normal distributions and conducting factor analyses and reliability tests for the recommendation techniques and personal motivations scales as described above, after which new variables were computed. New variables were also computed for the multiple choice ethnicity answers. 'Ethnicity' was created, dividing the ethnicities into 2: White and Not-white. 'Ethnicities' was created by merging all of the answers into a single variable, i.e. white, Asian, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Middle Eastern or North African, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and Other. After this, the dataset was ready to use and the hypotheses presented in this study were tested. The results provided insight into the relationship between book bloggers' personality traits and personal motivations, and personal motivations and recommendation

techniques, as well as answering questions regarding differences between the practices and personal motivations of minority or non-minority bloggers. The results of these tests are given in chapter 5.

3.5. Validity

There are some sources of error in online surveys affecting validity, one of which is coverage error, for example by not completely representing the population by mostly reaching out to book bloggers who use Twitter that had their DMs enabled; however, snowball sampling is not suitable for representing the population regardless (Sue & Ritter, 2012). There is also potential for sampling error, as it was not possible to include all book bloggers who use Twitter; therefore, estimates may differ from between different samples (Sue & Ritter, 2012). Accurate unit nonresponse cannot be calculated, however, item nonresponse in the cleaned dataset was low. Further, in the case of nonresponse, it is possible that respondents may have encountered technical difficulties that prevented them from beginning or completing the survey, or they may have had confidentiality concerns about sharing their information, although they were assured their data would be treated carefully (Sue & Ritter, 2012). To prevent nonresponse, the respondents were told the survey would be relevant to them, as book bloggers are understudied, and that their responses would be very valuable (Sue & Ritter). Additionally, the survey was suitable for both computer and mobile use through the use of Qualtrics.

An effort was made to ensure validity of the measurements in the survey, so that items measured what they were supposed to measure, often by using multiple items to measure a single variable or concept (Sue & Ritter, 2012). Despite this, it is possible that respondents may provide information that is not accurate (Sue & Ritter, 2012). Although respondents tend to be more honest completing surveys compared to face-to-face research methods, it is still possible for this problem to arise, whether by wanting to avoid embarrassment, being unable to recall something, or being forced to give an opinion (Sue & Ritter, 2012). Such questions were limited, and social desirability bias was reduced by reassuring respondents that their answers would be anonymous and confidential (Sue & Ritter, 2012). To improve accuracy of respondent's estimates, they were given answer options within limited ranges; such as less than 6 months to 3 years or more for duration of book blogging (Sue & Ritter, 2012). Furthermore, respondents were asked about their own behavior, not others' (Sue & Ritter, 2012). To prevent respondents from answering with an

option that does not fit them, they were given the option of answering 'prefer not to say' for some questions. The formatting and wording of questions was also edited to sound natural and easy to answer (Sue & Ritter, 2012).

4. Results

From the 1st set of hypotheses, H2 and H3(a), (b), and (c) were tested by carrying out Independent Samples T-tests, as well as Multiple Regression Analyses. The former test used a variable 'Ethnicity' that combined the multiple categories into 'White' and 'Not white' book bloggers for the independent variable, while the latter analyses used the Ethnic Identity Scale items that were grouped into the variables 'Exploration' and 'Resolution' for the independent variables; the third variable 'Affirmation' was excluded due to low reliability. The T-test for H2 showed that non-white book bloggers were significantly more conscious of selecting books by authors of color ($M = 2.48$, $SD = 1.34$) than white book bloggers ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 1.15$), $t(191.91) = 6.44$, $p < .001$. To clarify, a higher mean in this case is indicative of lower consciousness. The results support H2. A linear regression was then conducted with consciousness of selecting books by authors of color as the criterium. Predictors were Exploration and Resolution. The model was found to be significant, $F(2, 309) = 20.93$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .12$. Exploration ($\beta = -.34$, $p < .001$) was found to be a significant predictor, while Resolution ($\beta = -.01$, $p = .844$) was not significant for consciousness of selecting books by authors of color. Considering the negative beta coefficients of Exploration and Resolution and the scales used to measure the variables, the results indicate that the higher the Exploration and Resolution, the higher the consciousness of selecting books by authors of color. This positive relationship further supports H2.

The T-test for H3(a) showed that non-white book bloggers were significantly more motivated to blog about books to interact with others ($M = 1.88$, $SD = 0.60$) than white book bloggers ($M = 2.10$, $SD = 0.65$), $t(315) = 3.05$, $p = .002$. To clarify, a higher mean in this case is indicative of lower motivation to interact with others. The results support H3(a). A linear regression was then conducted with the personal motivation interacting with others as the criterium. Predictors were Exploration and Resolution. The model was found to be significant, $F(2, 309) = 10.12$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .06$. Only Exploration ($\beta = -.20$, $p = .002$) was found to be a significant predictor, Resolution ($\beta = -.08$, $p = .179$) was not significant for being motivated to blog by the need to interact with others. Considering the negative beta coefficients of Exploration and Resolution and the scales used to measure the variables, the results indicate that

the higher the Exploration and Resolution, the higher the motivation interacting with others. This positive relationship further supports H3(a).

The T-test for H3(b) showed that non-white book bloggers were significantly more motivated to blog about books for self-expression ($M = 1.35$, $SD = 0.52$) than white book bloggers ($M = 1.60$, $SD = 0.62$), $t(256.37) = 3.68$, $p < .001$. To clarify, a higher mean in this case is indicative of lower motivation for self-expression. The results support H3(b). A linear regression was then conducted with the personal motivation self-expression as the criterium. Predictors were Exploration and Resolution. The model was found to be significant, $F(2, 309) = 3.58$, $p = .029$, $R^2 = .02$. Neither Exploration ($\beta = -.11$, $p = .080$) nor Resolution ($\beta = -.06$, $p = .336$) was found to be significant for being motivated to blog by the need for self-expression. Considering the negative beta coefficients of Exploration and Resolution and the scales used to measure the variables, the results indicate that the higher the Exploration and Resolution, the higher the motivation self-expression. This positive relationship further supports H3(b).

The T-test for H3(c) showed that non-white book bloggers were significantly more motivated to blog about books as a coping mechanism ($M = 2.66$, $SD = 0.87$) than white book bloggers ($M = 3.06$, $SD = 0.87$), $t(315) = 3.91$, $p < .001$. To clarify, a higher mean in this case is indicative of lower motivation to blog as a coping mechanism. The results support H3(c). A linear regression was then conducted with the personal motivation coping mechanism as the criterium. Predictors were Exploration and Resolution. The model was found to be significant, $F(2, 309) = 8.38$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .05$. Exploration ($\beta = -.21$, $p = .001$) was found to be a significant predictor, while Resolution ($\beta = -.03$, $p = .689$) was not significant for blogging as a coping mechanism. Considering the negative beta coefficients of Exploration and Resolution and the scales used to measure the variables, the results indicate that the higher the Exploration and Resolution, the higher the motivation coping mechanism. This positive relationship further supports H3(c).

H2-H3 were also tested by conducting univariate ANOVAs. This was done by combining the ethnicity categories into the variable 'Ethnicities', including White, Asian, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Middle Eastern or North African, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and Others. However, due to the vast differences in N of each category (213, 50, 19, 11, 10, 4, 2, and 18 respectively), these tests were not very reliable.

H4-H11 were tested by Regression Analyses. The analysis for H4 was conducted with the recommendation technique consideration of audience as the criterium. The predictor was the personal motivation interact with others. The model was found to be significant, $F(1, 318) = 90.43, p < .001, R^2 = .22$. Interact with others was found to be a significant predictor of consideration of audience ($\beta = .47, p < .001$). Thus, H4 was supported. The analysis for H5 was conducted with the recommendation technique authenticity as the criterium, although it should be noted that the reliability for this was low. The predictor was the personal motivation self-expression. The model was found to be significant, $F(1, 318) = 32.94, p < .001, R^2 = .09$. Self-expression was found to be a significant predictor of authenticity ($\beta = .306, p < .001$). Thus, H5 was supported. H6(a), (b), (c), and (d) were tested together through Multiple Regression Analysis. The analysis was conducted with the recommendation technique posting consistency as the criterium. Predictors were interact with others, entertainment, image management, and coping mechanism (for H6(a), (b), (c), and (d) respectively). However, the reliability for entertainment was found to be low, and thus H6(b) was not tested. The model was found to be significant, $F(3, 316) = 4.92, p = .002, R^2 = .05$. Interact with others ($\beta = .21, p = .002$) was found to be a significant predictor, while image management ($\beta = .02, p = .818$) and coping mechanism ($\beta = -.01, p = .907$) were not significant for posting consistency. Thus, H6(a) was supported, however H6(c) and H6(d) were not supported. Considering the negative beta coefficients of coping mechanism and the scales used to measure the variables, the results indicate that the lower the motivation coping mechanism, the higher the posting consistency. This negative relationship does not support H6(d).

From the 2nd set of hypotheses, H7, H8, H9(a), and H10 were tested together as they all have in common the personal motivation interact with others as the criterium. Predictors were the personality traits openness, conscientiousness, extroversion, and agreeableness (for H7, H8, H9(a), and H10 respectively). The model was found to be significant, $F(4, 315) = 9.95, p < .001, R^2 = .11$. Openness ($\beta = .26, p < .001$) and agreeableness ($\beta = .18, p = .001$) were found to be significant predictors, while conscientiousness ($\beta = -.05, p = .371$) and extroversion ($\beta = -.06, p = .267$) were not significant for interact with others. Thus, H7 and H10 were supported, however H8 and H9(a) were not supported. Considering the negative beta coefficients of conscientiousness and extroversion and the scales used to measure the variables, the results indicate that the higher the conscientiousness and extroversion, the higher the motivation

interacting with others. These positive relationships further support H8 and H9(a). H9(b) and H11(a) were tested together as both have in common the personal motivation self-expression as the criterium. Predictors were the personality traits extroversion and neuroticism (for H9(b) and H11(a) respectively). The model was found to be significant, $F(2, 317) = 6.20, p = .002, R^2 = .04$. Extroversion ($\beta = .13, p = .024$) and neuroticism ($\beta = .19, p = .001$) were both found to be significant predictors of self-expression. Thus, H9(b) and H11(a) were both supported. H11(b) was tested with the personal motivation coping mechanism as the criterium. The predictor was the personality trait neuroticism. The model was found to be significant, $F(1, 318) = 50.16, p < .001, R^2 = .14$. Neuroticism was found to be a significant predictor of coping mechanism ($\beta = .37, p < .001$). Thus, H11(b) was supported.

5. Discussion

Book blogging serves as a means for fulfilling different kinds of gratifications, as similarly corroborated by various previous studies on bloggers in general (Sepp et al., 2011). The book blogging community on Twitter is fairly diverse; although it is difficult to obtain an accurate representation of the community, roughly half the sample was composed of non-white bloggers. Examining the relationship between bloggers' ethnicities and their book selections provided some insight into any patterns and practices that exist in book bloggers' communities. The results of this study showed that non-white bloggers were more conscious of selecting books by authors of color than white bloggers. Similar relationships may be found in different contexts, such as in advertising, and this phenomenon may be explained and supported by the generation of homophily (Simpson et al., 2000). People that share such ethnic, cultural, or linguistic similarities may be able to relate to one other more greatly than those from different backgrounds (Simpson et al., 2000). Furthermore, due to historical political issues such as the existence of racism, it is no stretch of the imagination that those that are marginalized or oppressed understand and support one another in their struggles. Systemic complications permeate society and industries, including book-related communities and the book industry (Jiménez & Beckert, 2019). The book industry poses no exception towards inequity; book publishers and books published are not representative of diverse groups when the majority are white, straight, and not disabled – including those working in publishing as well as authors (Jiménez & Beckert, 2019). Approximately two thirds of the book bloggers studied were white and straight, thus there may be similar issues with readership, bloggers, and representation. Minorities are often underrepresented, and such is the case in the book industry (Jiménez & Beckert, 2019).

This study substantiated that book bloggers of color are more motivated to blog for certain motivations than white bloggers, including the need to blog to interact with others and use book blogging as a form of self-expression, as well as a coping mechanism (Correa & Jeong, 2011). Non-white book bloggers' apparent greater need to use blogging as a means to interact with others may be explained by the ability to find likeminded people on social media such as Twitter, or blogging communities. Furthermore, and in conjunction, it allows them to express themselves more freely, letting their voices be heard using platforms without which they may not be heard otherwise as stated by Correa and Jeong (2011) and Graham and Smith (2016).

Similarly, it serves as a means to help bloggers cope with personal or emotional issues, escape their problems or the world at large, or get support, supporting the results of Courtois et al. (2009) and Leung (2003). The variable ethnicities was found to be a predictor of consciousness of selecting books by authors of color, as well as interacting with others, self-expression, and the use of blogging as a coping mechanism. The use of the Ethnic Identity Scale's exploration and resolution measures provided further insight into how ethnicities influenced these elements. Exploration referred to how much bloggers had explored their ethnicity and resolution referred to whether they had resolved any issues regarding their ethnicity (Umaña-Taylor, et al., 2004). Affirmation, referring to feeling positively about one's ethnicity, was not included due to low reliability (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2004). Tests with consciousness of selecting books by authors of color, interacting with others, and the use of blogging as a coping mechanism showed similar results: Exploration was a significant predictor, while resolution was not.

Overall, the book bloggers were found to have slightly low exploration and resolution scores (with resolution being slightly higher than exploration). The bloggers had somewhat explored their ethnicities and resolved issues surrounding them. This may explain why non-white bloggers were more conscious of selecting books by authors of color than white bloggers; the overall scores may have been slightly low due to the majority of the sample being white, which may affect scores. This may be because many white bloggers may not need to actively explore their ethnicity or resolve issues with them, whereas non-white bloggers' situations may be more complex, as explained above, in terms of exploration and resolution. This possible difference between white and non-white bloggers' experiences with their ethnicities may explain why exploration was a significant predictor for consciousness of selecting books by authors of color, interacting with others and the use of blogging as a coping mechanism. Book blogging may serve as a means for bloggers to further explore their ethnicities, while they may not necessarily come to a resolution. For self-expression, neither exploration nor resolution were significant predictors. This may possibly be because learning about and solving any issues with one's ethnicity appears to be more of an informative and reflective process than one that may require actively communicating one's interests or speaking one's mind.

These motivations seem to reflect, in some part, book bloggers' posting processes. In this study, a relationship revealed itself between book bloggers motivations and their recommendation techniques. Those that were motivated to blog to interact with others showed a

positive relationship with consideration of their audience, including forming an understanding of their audience and taking into account their opinions on certain topics, as well as with consistency in posting. As interacting with others involves communication and discussion, it explains book bloggers' consideration of their audience; understanding and listening to their thoughts and opinions on certain topics. This also impacts what they post and how they do so in terms of consistency, being quick to post to be able to continue to interact with each other. However, neither book bloggers that were motivated by image management nor those using blogging as a coping mechanism had a positive relationship with consistency in posting. Although it may be expected that those motivated by image management would be concerned with consistency, it is possible that book bloggers post only to express their reading accomplishments or impress others by portraying their ideal image; this type of management does not necessarily require posting to be regular. Similarly, those who use book blogging as a coping mechanism may post only when they need to manage their issues or get support, which may cause irregular posting. Perhaps some bloggers only post when they have read a certain number of books without regard to reading speed. While some book bloggers may be more concerned with consistency and image management, some are concerned with authenticity. Those that were motivated to blog about books as a form of self-expression were positively related to authenticity, although the reliability for the latter was low, and thus this cannot be taken as a reliable conclusion. A possible explanation for this is that respondents are not always able to answer questions about themselves accurately. This relationship may be explained by bloggers' need to write about their own ideas and opinions, however, letting their voices be heard, and thereby expressing themselves.

Particular motivations, and by extension particular recommendation techniques, may stem from something deeper. This is why relationships between book bloggers' personality traits and personal motivations were also examined. A positive relationship was found between book bloggers that were motivated by the need to interact with others and the traits openness and agreeableness, however they were negatively related to the traits conscientiousness and extroversion. The former are fairly self-explanatory; engaging with others, communication, or discussion signifies a relation with curiosity and an appreciation for ideas and experiences (openness), as well as consideration, a willingness to help others, or even an argumentative nature (agreeableness). Overall, the book bloggers were found to be both somewhat open ($M =$

2.07) and agreeable ($M = 2.19$). They were also somewhat conscientious ($M = 2.40$), but relatively less extroverted ($M = 3.21$). The negative relation with conscientiousness may be explained by discipline and dutifulness not necessarily being reliant on interaction or communication. Furthermore, the negative relation of interacting with others with extroversion may be explained by extroverts not necessarily relying on blogging to socialize with others, as they are outgoing and socially confident (Li et al., 2014). On the other hand, extroversion was positively related to the motivation self-expression, and this applied to neuroticism as well. Extroversion was shown to have a positive relationship with self-expression; perhaps this may be explained by book blogging being a written form of communication, yet another avenue for extroverts, who are known to be talkative, to express themselves (Li et al., 2014). Neurotic tendencies such as worrying, stressing or anxiety, which the book bloggers showed a measure of, may similarly be handled by self-expression through blogging. Finally, book bloggers that used blogging as a coping mechanism were also positively related to neuroticism, in line with the previous reasoning.

The findings from the examination of personality traits and motivations gave some insight into the relationships between motivations and recommendation techniques. Although this study was not examining cause and effect, it appears to be slightly causal in nature nonetheless. Particular personality traits generally appeared to lead to book bloggers blogging for certain motivations. Openness and agreeableness related positively to interacting with others; extroversion and neuroticism related to self-expression; neuroticism related to coping mechanisms. These motivations then appeared to lead the bloggers to use recommendation techniques that best fit their needs in terms of book blogging. Those that were open and agreeable, and motivated to interact with others, were considerate of their audience and consistent in posting – and conscious of selecting books by authors of color. Those who showed extroversion or neuroticism, and were motivated by self-expression, were concerned with authenticity, or in the case of neuroticism, not concerned with consistency in posting. Negative relations, such as those between image management and coping mechanism with consistency in posting, may be explained by the level of neuroticism shown in the sample. Thus, these findings between personality traits and personal motivations, as well as those between personal motivations and recommendations techniques, contribute to an overall answer to the research question: To some extent, there is a relationship between book bloggers' personal motivations

and their recommendation techniques on Twitter. Not only personality traits provided background information; the relationships between ethnicities and personal motivations were also substantiated.

These findings may have some implications on the book industry. With the political state of 2020 concerning the fight against racism and the stark inequity in the book industry, it is more important than ever for the book industry to consider its constituents: Executives, editorial staff, sales workers, marketing and publicity employees, literary agents, interns, and book reviewers (Jiménez & Beckert, 2019). Following this, book bloggers who review books and contribute to the circulation and exposure of certain books, should be given greater consideration. Not only are they relatively conscious of selecting books by diverse authors, but as individuals they are oriented in particular ways. It seems their personality traits and backgrounds lead to their motivations, which lead to their recommendation techniques, which eventually lead to the books that receive praise or criticism before release. Not only should attention and research on these aspects be increased, but the book industry ought to take into account these trends that bloggers' appear to exhibit in order to market books more appropriately. This is not to take advantage of their services – and in the discourse regarding equality, it cannot be forgotten that those who work effortlessly ought to be compensated fairly – but rather to promote diversity. Although there has been a slight rise in demand for more diverse books, it appears that in today's age, this is not enough (Jiménez & Beckert, 2019). Since the murder of George Floyd and the rise in anti-racism protests toward the end of May, 2020, I have already observed changes in attitudes toward members of the book industry in the book blogging community on Twitter – whether fellow bloggers, authors, or publishers – depending on their stances on equality. On the internet, on social media, the possibility of holding others accountable has increased. There are those that support the movement and are considered allies, there are those that are educating themselves, and there are those that do not stand with the movement and are condemned. The book industry is no exception.

6. Conclusion

Book bloggers have a significant impact on the book industry, contributing by recommending or reviewing ARCs and books that they have read, organizing reading events, and doing giveaways. Thereby they assist in promoting authors' books, increasing marketing efforts, and determining which books receive exposure. They use their blogs as well as platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, to reach audiences and create networks; promoting books and supporting authors through the use of eWoM. However, book bloggers are severely understudied in the academic world, particularly in regards to their blogging processes. This study provided a start by investigating the relationship between book bloggers' personal motivations and their recommendation techniques on Twitter. It looked at the research question in the context of diversity and representation and diversity, and through the perspective of uses and gratifications theory. Furthermore, a new scale for measuring book bloggers' recommendation techniques was created and tested, with decent reliability for the main components, consideration of audience and consistency in posting. A survey was conducted using snowball sampling, obtaining 330 responses, and the data was analyzed using a number of statistical tests.

The results showed that there appear to be relationships between book bloggers' personal backgrounds and personal motivations, personality traits and personal motivations, and their personal motivations and recommendation techniques. As the book bloggers' practices have practical implications for the publishing industry, in terms of gatekeeping and circulating books, these results are significant and further studies ought to be conducted on bloggers to obtain a deeper understanding of them and to identify more ways in which new findings may be applicable. The examination of book bloggers' personal backgrounds, especially in terms of their ethnic identities, contributed to an understanding of how these important factors influenced their personal motivations in an industry influenced like any other by inequality and biases. Diversity and representation are important factors to take into consideration in contemporary times. Bloggers' personal backgrounds and motivations influence their reading choices and output, which may impact the industry regarding which books are circulated. Furthermore, considering the heated political climate as people and organizations are now more easily held accountable due to the internet and social media, calls for diversity and representation are increasing.

The study was limited in a number of ways, however. Time and resources were limited, as well as existing research on bloggers and especially recommendation techniques. Therefore, a new scale was created, although more work needs to be done on this front. The scale included the main components consideration of audience and posting consistency, which were found to be reliable, however the authenticity component may be improved. Furthermore, future work on the scale should take into account more efforts on measuring a book bloggers' writing processes, as this is an important factor in creating posts. Other components that were unreliable were affirmation from the EIS, and entertainment and improvement from the personal motivations scale, which were consequently not used in the statistical tests. It should also be noted that certain items were removed from the scales if the data was not normally distributed. The research was further limited by which book bloggers were possible to contact directly for participation in the survey. If their direct messages were not enabled, it was not possible to contact them directly, and they were only able to participate if messages regarding the survey were shared with them or whether they saw retweets. Snowball sampling cannot be generalized, and in a quantitative study, in-depth information cannot be obtained. In addition, due to the number of variables measured, which contributed to the length of the survey, there were questions that could not be asked if they were not directly related to the needs of this study. Therefore, these elements could form a basis for future research options.

Future studies may be quantitative in nature to further work on the recommendation techniques scales or obtain more information on book bloggers, as well as qualitative to obtain in-depth information. As book bloggers are being newly studied, this will be important in discovering motivations or other factors that may come into play for bloggers; for example, this study did not measure whether book bloggers were motivated to blog so that they might support authors. Furthermore, studies may take into account the types of books bloggers blog about, e.g. physical books, electronic books, audiobooks, comics, graphic novels, etc. Genres may also be interesting to study, as well as distinctions in prose or poetry, fiction or non-fiction. Some research has been done on professionals vs. amateurs, and this may be relevant for future studies in this context, taking into account the bloggers' professions. Book bloggers' preferred platforms would also be interesting to include, as this study only confirmed whether the bloggers used Twitter in addition to any other platforms without specifics, as bloggers were somewhat hard to reach and convince to participate. More work on not only Book Twitter, but platforms such as

Bookstagram and BookTube is needed. This study provided a general start on book bloggers using Twitter for future studies to build on.

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8. Appendix

Questionnaire
Master Thesis Survey: Book Bloggers

Start of Block: Welcome!

Hello! I'm a master student in the Media and Creative Industries program at Erasmus University Rotterdam in The Netherlands. My research explores the relationship between book bloggers' personal motivations and their recommendation techniques (i.e. process of creating posts about books) on Twitter. It also looks at how bloggers' personal motivations may stem from their personality traits and personal backgrounds. This is why I'm inviting book bloggers that use Twitter to participate in my survey, which consists of 17 questions and takes approximately 10 minutes to complete. It will ask you questions about how you go about blogging, why you blog about books, your personality, as well as some background questions about yourself and your ethnicity. Please answer as honestly and accurately as you are able to.

Considering the nature of some of the questions, please be assured that all of the responses will be **anonymous** and will be treated confidentially. They will be stored securely on a password-protected device. Furthermore, the survey contains no disturbing content. There are no risks associated with participation, and your participation is entirely voluntary; you may withdraw at any moment. If you have any questions, suggestions, or concerns about the survey, please leave them at the end of the questionnaire or contact 510716fr@eur.nl.

As book bloggers are quite understudied, your responses are very valuable to me and I encourage you to share this survey with fellow book bloggers that use Twitter. Thank you for your time!

Q0. I hereby acknowledge the above, feel sufficiently informed, and consent to participate in this survey:

- Yes
- No

End of Block: Welcome!

Start of Block: Preliminary Questions

Q1. Would you say that you are a book blogger?

- Yes
- No

Q2. How often do you post about books on Twitter?

- Never
- Less than 2 times per month
- 2-4 times per month
- More than 4 times per month

Q3. Do you post book recommendations?

- Yes
- No

Q4. Do you post book reviews?

- Yes
- No

Q5. How long have you been book blogging?

- Less than 6 months
- 6 months to less than 1 year
- 1 year to less than 2 years
- 2 years to less than 3 years
- 3 years or more

Q6. How often are you conscious of selecting books by authors of color?

- Always
- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Sometimes
- Never

End of Block: Preliminary Questions

Start of Block: How do you blog?

Q7. In my process of creating posts about books...

I write about my
opinions on
controversial
topics

End of Block: How do you blog?

Start of Block: Why do you blog?

Q8. I blog about books because...

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
It is an outlet for my thoughts and feelings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps me improve my writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find it enjoyable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps me escape my other responsibilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is a way for me to document the books I have read	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can receive people's comments on the books I write about	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Others might enjoy the books I write about	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps me share information with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps me offer a dialogue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps me be in contact with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is a way for me to express myself	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

It is a way for me to meet or make friends or acquaintances	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It allows me to present my accomplishments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It lets people know about me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is a way for me to get emotional support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps me cope with my issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It allows me to learn and improve myself	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is a way for me to have fun	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps me forget about my problems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is a way for me to update what I have been doing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps me comment on what other bloggers say	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It allows me to write about books others may relate to	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

It allows me to write about books others may not know about	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It allows me to provide my commentary about books	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps me communicate things that interest me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is a way for me to speak my mind	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps me feel less lonely	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is a way for me to portray my ideal image	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps me impress others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps me talk about my problems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Why do you blog?

Start of Block: What are you like?

Q9. I am someone who...

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Is talkative	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tends to find fault with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Does a thorough job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is depressed, blue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is original, comes up with new ideas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is reserved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is helpful and unselfish with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Can be somewhat careless	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is relaxed, handles stress well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is curious about many different things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is full of energy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Starts quarrels with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Is a reliable worker	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Can be tense	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is ingenious, a deep thinker	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Generates a lot of enthusiasm	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Has a forgiving nature	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tends to be disorganized	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Worries a lot	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Has an active imagination	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tends to be quiet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is generally trusting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tends to be lazy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is emotionally stable, not easily upset	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is inventive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Has an assertive personality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Can be cold and aloof	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Perseveres until the task is finished	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Can be moody	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Values artistic, aesthetic experiences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is sometimes shy, inhibited	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is considerate and kind to almost everyone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Does things efficiently	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Remains calm in tense situations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prefers work that is routine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is outgoing, sociable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is sometimes rude to others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Makes plans and follows through with them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gets nervous easily	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Likes to reflect, play with ideas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Has few artistic interests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Likes to cooperate with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is easily distracted	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is sophisticated in art, music, or literature	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: What are you like?

Start of Block: What is your background like?

Q10. How old are you?

Q11. What is your sex?

- Male
- Female
- Intersex

Q12. With which gender identity do you most identify?

- Male
- Female
- Transgender Male
- Transgender Female
- Gender Variant/Non-Conforming
- Other _____
- Prefer not to say

Q13. Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

- Straight
- Gay or Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Other _____
- Prefer not to say

Q14. What is your present religion, if any?

- Buddhist
- Catholic
- Christian/Protestant/Methodist/Lutheran/Baptist
- Greek or Russian Orthodox
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Mormon
- Muslim
- Atheist
- Agnostic
- None
- Prefer not to say

Q15. What is your nationality?

-
- Afghanistan
- Albania
- Algeria
- ...
- Zimbabwe

Q16. Please specify your ethnicity (select all that apply)

- White
- Asian
- Hispanic or Latino
- Black or African American
- Middle Eastern or North African
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Other _____

Q17. Regarding my ethnicity...

	Does not describe me at all	Describes me a little	Describes me well	Describes me very well
I am clear about what my ethnicity means to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My feelings about my ethnicity are mostly negative	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have experienced things that reflect my ethnicity, such as eating food, listening to music, and watching movies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have attended events that have helped me learn more about my ethnicity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have participated in activities that have exposed me to my ethnicity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am not happy with my ethnicity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I have learned about my ethnicity by doing things such as reading (books, magazines, newspapers), searching the internet, or keeping up with current events

I understand how I feel about my ethnicity

If I could choose, I would prefer to be of a different ethnicity

End of Block: What is your background like?

Start of Block: Suggestions

Q18. If you have any questions, suggestions or concerns regarding this questionnaire, please leave them below

End of Block: Suggestions