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Analyzing Online Shopping Behavior from the Perspective of Youtube: Do Vlog Content and Vlogger Characteristics Matter

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Abstract

Video blogs (Vlogs) and video bloggers (Vloggers) have gained importance in marketing with their entertaining and educational content as they are attracting huge numbers of viewers and are therefore shaping many consumers' attitudes and purchase decisions. Research on vlogs concentrated on content characteristics, vlogger characteristics and general vlog features. However, this stream of research is fragmented, mostly ignores vlog audience motivations and lacks empirical investigations that parsimoniously study influence of certain vlog and vlogger characteristics on consumers' online purchase decisions. The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of vlog content value in terms of informativeness and entertainment and vlogger personal characteristics such as authoritative and engagement knowledge on consumers' information satisfaction and further on their intention to shop online. With this aim, data were gathered via an online survey from 627 purposively sampled respondents and a theoretical structural equation model was tested. Vlog content's informative and entertaining value and authoritative knowledge of the vlogger were found to be important factors explaining information satisfaction, whereas the effect of engagement knowledge on information satisfaction was insignificant. Furthermore, strong impact of information satisfaction on intention to shop online was determined. Managerial and theoretical implications are discussed in the paper.

Keywords: *Vlog content value, vlogger personal characteristics, online shopping intention, information satisfaction*

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Online Alışveriş Davranışının Youtube Perspektifinden Analizi: Vlog İçeriği ve Vlogger Özellikleri Etkili Mi?

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Öz

Video blogları (Vlog'lar) ve video blog içerik üreticileri (Vlogger'lar), eğlenceli ve eğitici içerikleriyle çok sayıda izleyiciyi cezbettikleri için tüketicinin tutumlarını ve satın alma kararlarını şekillendirmelerinden dolayı pazarlamada önem kazanmıştır. Vloglar üzerine yapılan çalışmalar içerik özellikleri, vlogger özellikleri ve genel vlog özellikleri üzerinde yoğunlaşmıştır. Ancak bu çalışmaların birbirinden kopuk olduğu ve vlog izleyen kitlenin motivasyonlarını göz ardı ettiği ve belirli vlog içeik ve vlogger özelliklerinin tüketicilerin çevrimiçi satın alma kararlarına etkisini ayrıntılı bir şekilde inceleyen empirik çalışmalardan yoksun olduğu görülmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, bilgi ve eğlence açısından vlog içerik değerinin ve yetkili bilgisi ve katılım bilgisi gibi vlogger kişisel özelliklerinin tüketicilerin bilgi memnuniyeti ve ayrıca çevrimiçi alışveriş yapma niyetleri üzerindeki etkisini araştırmaktır. Bu amaçla, veriler kasıtlı olarak örneklenmiş 627 katılımcıdan çevrimiçi anket yoluyla toplanmış ve teorik bir yapısal eşitlik modeli test edilmiştir. Vlog içeriğinin bilgilendirici ve eğlenceli değeri ve vloggerın yetkili bilgisi, bilgi memnuniyetini açıklayan önemli faktörler olarak bulunurken, etkileşim bilgisinin bilgi memnuniyeti üzerindeki etkisi anlamlı bulunmamıştır. Ayrıca bilgi memnuniyetinin online alışveriş yapma niyeti üzerindeki güçlü etkisi tespit edilmiştir. Yönetsel ve teorik çıkarımlar makalede tartışılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *vlog içerik değeri, vlogger kişisel özellikleri, online alışveriş niyeti, bilgi memnuniyeti*

Introduction

In today's competitive environment, with 3.8 billion users worldwide (Global Digital Yearbook, 2020), social media have become the most powerful and unavoidable communication tool for marketers. While consumers can express themselves and share their ideas and experiences about life, people, products and brands with each other and with companies easily (Veloutsou and Delgado-Ballester, 2019), with Social Media platforms, marketers can also reach consumers more directly and effectively (Kozinets, De Valck, Wojnicki, and Wilner, 2010). Therefore, social media are believed to develop and enhance brand equity (Godey et al., 2016), engagement (Dessart, 2017), knowledge (Cheung et al., 2020) and more importantly shape consumers' consumption related decisions (Webster, 2010). Whilst the hyperconnected Social Media platforms enable constant information flow, connectivity and more stronger relationships (Swaminathan et al., 2020) both for brands and consumers and the effects of many Social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Twitter and Facebook on consumer decision making and purchase is undeniable (Webster, 2010), the characteristics of each platform is unique (Smith, Fischer, and Yongjian, 2012) giving rise to different type of contents and benefits (Lee and Watkins, 2016).

Among the popular Social Media platforms, blogs and recently video blogs (vlogs), play a significant role for companies for their content marketing strategies. Vlogs, either created by the companies or by professional or amateur users (vloggers), are videos shared on YouTube and enable companies reach new markets and increase brand preference and knowledge (Batra and Keller, 2016). More importantly, as vloggers produce and share videos about their personal life and personal product or brand experiences (Lee and Watkins, 2016), vlogs generate identification (Brouwer, 2015), interaction (Brouwer, 2015) and intimacy (Lee, 2020) among the followers and are perceived as user generated content by some consumers (Stein, Koban, Joos, and Ohler, 2020) being regarded by many as trustful sources for their purchase decisions (Barker, Barker, Bormann, and Neher, 2017). Although many of the vlogs are sponsored content (Jans, Cauberghe, and Hudders, 2018), the popularity of vlogs as sources of information has turned them into a

competitive medium against traditional media (Gürkaynak and Kama, 2018) and created a million-dollar business for vloggers through sponsors (Lynch, 2018).

Recent research on vlogs' influence on consumption decisions concentrates on (1) content characteristics such as being amateur and professional (Stein et al., 2020) or authentic (Cunningham and Craig, 2017), (2) vlogger characteristics such as popularity, expertise (Ladhari, Massa, and Skandrani, 2020), credibility (Munnukka, Maityb, Reinikainena, and Luoma-aho, 2019; Sakib, Zolfagharianb and Yazdanparast, 2020) or physical and social attractiveness (Liu, Liu, and Zhang, 2019; Sakib et al., 2020), (3) audiences motivations such as gaining information, being entertained, building a social network of like-minded individuals (Liu et al., 2019) and self-presentation (Harnish and Bridges, 2016) and (4) general vlog features such as level of audience participation and interaction (De Jans et al., 2018; Munnukka, et al., 2019) and sensory and social elements (Zhang, 2018). However, this stream of research is fragmented, mostly ignores the values offered by vlogs derived from vlog followers' motivations and lacks empirical investigations that parsimoniously study influence of certain vlog and vlogger characteristics on consumers' purchase decisions.

Against this background, the current study focuses on vlog content characteristics such as informativeness and entertainment from the perspective of the values followers look for within vlogs and on vlogger characteristics such as engagement knowledge and authoritative knowledge and tries to identify their influence on viewers' information satisfaction and purchase intention. With this aim, the study initially reviews the literature, presents the methodology of the study, which are followed with the findings of the statistical analyses. The study concludes with a discussion of the findings as well as managerial and theoretical contributions and future research directions.

YouTube, Vlogs and Vloggers

Today, along with Facebook and Instagram, YouTube is among the third most visited Social Media platforms in the whole world (Nyagadza, 2020). Users of YouTube may create personal profiles to post their own

videos and view and comment to videos that are posted by other users. While anybody can produce and upload any kind of video on the platform, highly watched and influential ones are mostly produced by professionals (Kruitbosch and Nack, 2008) and are in the form of vlogs, music videos, live performances, consumption and experience videos, product reviews such as unboxing videos or comedy performances (Blythe and Cairns, 2009; Burgess and Green, 2009), reaching a large number of users from different parts of the world. Hence, with many different forms that can attract different types of audiences, YouTube has become an important Social Media medium for brands and consumers (Singh and Sonnenburg, 2012; Smith, Fischer, and Yongjian, 2012).

Among the content types available in YouTube, vlogs, which are "informal communications directed at other consumers about the ownership, usage, or characteristics of particular goods and services" (Westbrook, 1987, p.261) are similar to their written counterparts, blogs, and contain visual documentations about the lives and ideas of video bloggers, vloggers (Hill et al., 2017). Vlogs include several types such as haul videos of purchased products, Q and as and fan videos, reviews of products or do-it-yourself videos with recipes or tips of all kinds (Zhang, 2018). They are viewed by large audiences and with their authentic (Cunningham and Craig, 2017), credible (Johnson and Kaye, 2004) and realistic nature, they attract millions of watchers (Lee and Watkins, 2016) and therefore are more influential on individuals' purchase decisions than any other type of content available on social media (Burgess and Green; 2009; Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017). As a result, some YouTube vlog content creators, vloggers, with their enormous audience sizes have become "social celebrities" (Hsu, Huang, Ko, and Wang, 2013) and real influencers (Stein et al., 2020), such that vlogs have gained managerial importance (Lee and Watkins, 2016).

Whilst the influence of social media on consumer decision making and shopping intentions is an inevitable reality for consumers and companies (Swaminathan, 2016), in terms of the effect of vlogs on consumers' consumption decisions and behaviors, previous research provided vast amount of evidence. Studies report that vloggers' trustworthiness (Rahmi, Sekarasih and Sjabadhyn, 2016), expertise (Wang, 2015; Weismüller, Harrigan, Wang, and Soutar, 2020) and

popularity (Ladharia et al., 2020) and the persuasiveness of the messages (Ramadanty, Muqarrabin, Nita, and Syafganti, 2020) are among the factors that affect purchase and impulse buying intentions of the viewers (Arviansyah, Dhaneswara, Hidayanto, and Zhu, 2018). While vlogs are valuable for companies and brands to connect with the consumers, raise awareness and create brand-related attitude and knowledge (Munnukka et al., 2019), latest research mainly concentrates on the audiences' motives (Harnish and Bridges, 2016; Munnukka et al., 2019) and preferences in vlog content and vloggers (Cunningham and Craig, 2017; Munnukka et al., 2019; Stein et al., 2020) to attract more audiences and to influence purchase intentions.

Vlog Content Value

According to previous research, individuals are viewing vlogs on YouTube to fulfill self-enhancement motivations (Khan, 2017), to feel socialized with individuals with similar values (Harnish and Bridges, 2016; Liu et al., 2019), but mostly to get information from and to be entertained by the content shared by vloggers (Khan, 2017; Liu et al., 2019).

Informativeness of a vlog is defined as "the degree of how much information about a product in the vlog can be helpful for the viewers" (Arviansyah et al., 2018, p.251) According to Ducoffe (1996) level of informativeness of an advertisement depends on the capability of the advertisement to make consumers satisfied in providing some helpful information concerning any product or any service. Similarly, previous research on vlogs documents that viewer watch the content mainly for the information provided (Choi and Behm-Morawitz, 2017; Dehghani, Niaki, Ramezani, and Sali, 2016) motivating their consumption and participation (Haridakis and Hanson, 2009; Ladhari, Massa and Skandrani, 2020).

Whilst consumers need a great deal of information in simplifying their consumption decisions, they also look to satisfy their needs for daydreaming, distortion, aesthetic pleasure or affective freedom (McQuail, 1983). In the advertising value context, previous researchers have demonstrated that the entertainment content has a positive impact

on advertising value (Ducoffe 1995; Haghirian, Madlberger and Tanuskova, 2005; Ko, Cho, and Roberts, 2005). In a similar fashion, vlogs have been referred as "Social Media entertainment" (Cunningham and Craig, 2017) that are serving to the viewers' hedonic needs (Parboteeah, 2005) and have been documented to be viewed (Khan, 2017) and to be instrumental in brand choices (Liu et al., 2019) by the level of entertainment they provided.

While vlogs created for certain products (such as beauty vs. computers) might show differences in their levels of informativeness and entertainment, the reasons why individuals consume vlogs in general are still particularly important. Depending on the overall assessment of audience expectations and what the vlogs are offering (Zeithaml, 1988), vlogs need to display certain characteristics to create value for the YouTube audience, regardless of being regarded as advertising (De Jans et al., 2018) or user-generated content (Lee and Watkins, 2016) by the consumers. According to the advertising value model (Ducoffe, 1996), which was applied to describe consumers' value perceptions towards advertisements on digital environments (Murillo et al., 2016), individuals evaluate the value of an advertisement based on mainly two factors, which are entertainment and informativeness (Ducoffe, 1995). Based on this and the discussion above, we suggest that just like advertisements, the value of video content is also a subjective assessment of the relative value efficacy of that video by the followers based on the informativeness and entertainment character of the content. Hence, content that is entertaining and informative that matches with the expectations of the YouTube audience would provide value for them and might be important in strengthening the satisfaction of vlog followers. Accordingly, we develop the following hypotheses:

H1a: Informativeness has a positively effect on information satisfaction.

H1b: Entertainment has a positive effect on information satisfaction.

Vloggers Personal Characteristics

Studies on vlogs mention that viewers prefer professional vlogs (Stein et al., 2020) and identify vloggers' characteristics that signify

professionalism such as expertise and credibility (Chapple and Cownie, 2017; Hill et al., 2017; Sakib et al., 2020) as well as physical and social attractiveness (Chapple and Cownie, 2017; Liu et al., 2019) to influence viewers' brand related knowlegde (Liu et al., 2019) and buying intentions (Hill et al., 2017; Munnukka et al., 2019). In the context of blogs, Doyle et al. (2012) identifies authoritative and engagement knowledge as two human-capital ability sources that not only determine trust in the blog but also create desirable outcomes in the readers. The definition of authoritative knowledge is very straightforward. Individuals have authoritative knowledge "on the basis of exercising authority" (Glasscock, 2020, p.8) and it is non-dependent whether they have direct experience or not. Given that vloggers are either reporting their own or others' experiences and are believed to own knowledge on the topic area, they are supposed to have authoritative knowledge. In contrast, engagement knowledge is gathered in a longitudinal fashion through the topic area "participation", deliberate communal activity including both time and engagement (Bagotzzi and Dholakia, 2002). Therefore, engagement knowledge is directly related to the vlogger's participation to the topic area (Doyle et al., 2012) and is developed through involvement with the real, lived experiences of the vlogger. Hence, vloggers' personal characteristics and their own interests that pave the way to authoritative and engagement knowledge play a role in persuading consumers and satisfying their needs in terms of the content shared (Doyle et al., 2012).

Given that vlogs are similar in nature to blogs in many aspects (Griffith and Papacharissi, 2010), we believe that those two characteristics of the vlogger will be effective in viewers' satisfaction. Hence, based on the discussion above, the following hypotheses were formulated.

H2a: Authoritative knowledge has a positive effect on information satisfaction.

H2b: Engagement knowledge has a positive effect on information satisfaction.

Information Satisfaction

Information satisfaction can be described as "the extent to which users believe the information system available to them meets their information requirements" (Ives, Olson and Baroudi, 1983). While individuals watch vlogs both for their entertaining and informative nature, vlogs became solid information sources for most of the viewers (Lee and Watkins, 2016) as previous studies illustrated that information which has high levels of quality and meaning are beneficial for both the overall community and individual followers (Koh, Kim, and Kim 2003). Consequently, when a vlog is able to provide information, which the followers are valuing, ahead of any other competition, satisfaction with the information obtained from the vlog increases and not only time spent on the vlog rises but also the number of the viewers (Hsu et al., 2013; Wang and Chang, 2020). As a result, vloggers posting or sharing a video consisting of product reviews assist many consumers while shopping online or shape their purchase decisions (Liu, Liu, and Zhang, 2019; Stein et al., 2020). Accordingly, the following hypothesis has been formulated.

H3: Information satisfaction has a positive effect on intention to shop online.

Based on the discussion above, the conceptual model of the study is represented below in Figure 1.

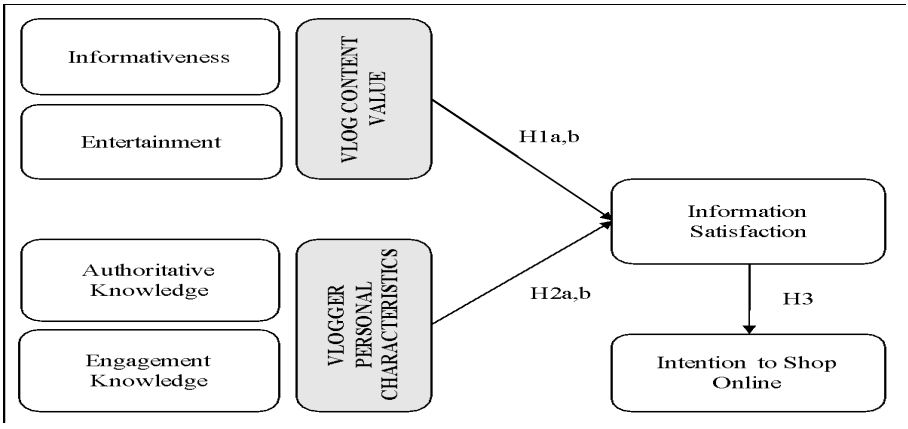


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Methodology

Instruments

Data to measure the constructs in the study have been collected using previously validated scales with high construct validity, while minor variations in the wording of the questions were done to adjust the items to the study setting.

Table 1 Measurement items

Construct	Item	Source
Entertainment	**ENT1** This vlog is entertaining.	Ducoffee, 1996
	ENT2 This vlog is enjoyable.	
	ENT3 This vlog is pleasing.	
	ENT4 This vlog is fun to use.	
	ENT5 This vlog is exciting.	
Informativeness	**INF3** This vlog provides timely information.	
	INF4 This vlog is a good source of up-to-date product information.	
	INF5 This vlog makes product information immediately accessible.	
	INF6 This vlog is a convenient source of product information.	
	INF7 This vlog supplies complete product information.	
Engagement Knowledge	**EW1** Has wide-ranging experience.	Doyle et al., 2012
	EW2 Has extensive experience in the area.	
	EW3 Has resources that others do not.	
	EW4 Is heavily involved in the area.	
	EW5 Is passionate about the topic.	
	EW6 Is very critical in discussing the topic.	
	EW7 Is very engaged in the topic field.	
	EW8 Is interested in topic-area improvements.	
	EW9 Spends a lot of time studying the topic.	
	EW10 Knows about unusual aspects of the topic.	
	EW11 Uses correct terminology.	
Authoritative Knowledge	**AW5** Has written a book about the topic.	
	AW6 Has specialized education in the topic area.	
	AW8 Writes about the topic in mainstream media.	
Information Satisfaction	**IS1** I can find the information I want on this Vlog.	Hsu et al., 2014
	IS2 I can easily find information I want on this Vlog.	
	IS3 I can find a wealth of information I want on this Vlog.	
Online Shopping Intention	**ITS1** I will frequently shop online in the near future.	To et al., 2007; Hsu et al., 2013
	ITS2 I will strongly recommend others to shop online.	
	ITS3 Vlogs are a good way to shop online.	
	ITS4 I will continue using Vlogs to shop online in the future.	

All questions were translated into Turkish and then back translated by a group of academicians fluent in English and Turkish to assure face validity and were gauged on five-point Likert scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Vlog content value measures were derived from Ducoffee (1996), with two sub-dimensions Entertainment and Informativeness. Vlogger personal characteristics' measures were derived from Doyle et al. (2012) with Engagement Knowledge and Authoritative Knowledge as the sub-dimensions. To measure Information Satisfaction three items by Hsu et al. (2014) were used and finally to measure Online Shopping Intention four items were adapted from To, Liao, and Lin (2007) and Hsu et al. (2013). Scales, their sources and corresponding items are listed in Table 1.

Sample and Data Collection

As the topic of the study involves online interaction, an online survey in Turkish was developed and distributed through a link on Social Media platforms. In order to ensure validity of the findings, two context-related screening questions were used (1- "Do you follow any Vloggers?" and 2- "Who is your favorite Vlogger?") to eliminate invalid responses. Convenience sampled participants who were able to pass those questions were directed to the questionnaire and were asked to provide their answers with regards to the Vlogger they named in the second question. Finally, they provided demographic and descriptive information about themselves and their Social Media usage. This procedure yielded a total of 758 responses. After cleaning the participants with missing, inconsistent and illogical responses, 627 completed surveys were available for further analysis.

The respondents were 18 to 60 years old with a mean of 28.30 and standard deviation of 7.34. The majority of respondents were female (65.6%) and had undergraduate and graduate degrees (90%). The sample consisted of at least one-year Vlog subscribers and majority of the respondents (59.9%) were following Vlogs at least for two years. 72.8% of respondents indicated they are spending 1 to 3 hours per day on internet sites and 69.2% of respondents are on social media platforms for 1 to 3

hours per day. Descriptive statistics of the sample are provided in Table 2.

Table 2 Descriptive statistics of the sample's characteristics

		Number	Percentage
Gender	Female	411	65.6%
	Male	216	34.4%
Marital Status	Married	180	28.7%
	Single	447	71.3%
Education	High School	63	10.0%
	University	409	65.2%
	Graduate	144	23.0%
	PhD	11	1.8%
Income	0-1000 TL	89	14.2%
	1001-2000 TL	117	18.7%
	2001-3000 TL	127	20.3%
	3001-4000 TL	116	18.5%
	More than 4001 TL	178	28.4%

Findings

Construct Validity Analyses

Construct validity refers to the fit between the data obtained by the measures used in the study and the theoretical model (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016) and is assessed by the reliability and nomological, discriminant and convergent validity (Peter, 1981). To test the construct validity, as suggested by Lattin, Carroll and Green (2003), two different samples taken from the overall sample was used to run an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) followed by a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). As a result, half of the sample (n = 319) was selected randomly by SPSS with Bernoulli distribution to explore the underlying item structure in EFA, while a holdout sample (n = 308) was used for CFA to confirm that structure.

EFA was performed with Principal Component Factoring with Varimax Rotation which is an orthogonal rotation method assuming factors uncorrelated throughout the rotation giving a clearer separation of the factors (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tatham, 1998). Four items from the factor "Engagement Knowledge" (EW1, EW2, EW3, EW6)

were eliminated from the analysis due to either double loading or loadings being less than 0.5 (Hair et al., 1998). The results of the final factor analysis confirmed the predicted item structure with significant correlations among variables indicating a sufficient level of shared variance (KMO=0.948, Bartlett test χ^2 (351) = 9371.473, p<0.01). Next, to test the internal consistency of factors, Cronbach's coefficient alpha reliabilities were computed. Reliabilities for all dimensions were above 0.70 threshold suggested by DeVellis (2003). The results of EFA, items under each factor and factor's reliabilities are given in Table 3.

Table 3. EFA and CFA Results

Factor/Items	EFA Factor Loading	Variance %	Alpha	CFA Factor Loading	CR	AVE
Factor 1: Engagement Knowledge						
EW5	0.793			0.915		
EW4	0.784			0.883		
EW7	0.752			0.894		
EW8	0.751	20.195	0.949	0.923	0.961	0.779
EW9	0.710			0.878		
EW10	0.709			0.850		
EW11	0.699			0.832		
Factor 2: Informativeness						
INF5	0.816			0.937		
INF6	0.811			0.946		
INF4	0.763	16.738	0.946	0.935	0.960	0.828
INF3	0.755			0.914		
INF7	0.736			0.811		
Factor 3: Entertainment						
ENT1	0.795			0.968		
ENT4	0.792			0.956		
ENT2	0.785	15.384	0.965	0.982	0.982	0.933
ENT3	0.769			0.957		
ENT5	0.660			0.854		
Factor 4: Intention to Shop Online						
ITS1	0.816			0.767		
ITS3	0.790	10.706	0.849	0.777	0.869	0.624
ITS2	0.685			0.793		
ITS4	0.612			0.821		
Factor 5: Authoritative Knowledge						
AW6	0.918			0.796		
AW5	0.900	10.346	0.905	0.757	0.812	0.591
AW8	0.812			0.752		
Factor 6: Information Satisfaction						
IS2	0.695			0.962		
IS1	0.670	8.727	0.936	0.938	0.952	0.869
IS3	0.629			0.895		

To validate the factors proposed by EFA and investigate the dimension structure in depth, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted using AMOS Version 23. Goodness of fit indexes indicated a good model fit (χ^2 (284)= 567.427 (p<0.01); CFI= 0.972; TFI= 0.966 RMSEA=0.057) (Hair et al., 1998) with the modification indices not indicating any further improvement in the model. Therefore, no other item was eliminated from the CFA model. Findings further confirmed construct validity in terms of composite reliability (CR), convergent and discriminant validities with the factor loadings of each variable exceeding 0.70 (Table 3) , average variance extracted values (AVE) ranging between 0.591 to 0.933, CR values ranging between 0.812 to 0.982 (Anderson and Gerbing 1988; Fornell and Larcker 1981), the correlations between each factor being less than 0.90 in absolute terms (Table 4) (Klein, 1998) and AVE values being higher than inter-construct correlations (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

Table 4 Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Intention to Shop Online	-					
2. Entertainment	0.630*	-				
3. Informativeness	0.600*	0.693*	-			
4. Engagement Knowledge	0.571*	0.766*	0.673*	-		
5. Authoritative Knowledge	0.356*	0.360*	0.457*	0.557*	-	
6. Information Satisfaction	0.628*	0.740*	0.762*	0.686*	0.487*	-
Mean	3.321	3.488	3.176	3.377	2.593	3.240
Standard Deviation	0.980	1.112	1.065	1.069	1.046	1.103

Structural Model

Next, the hypothesized structural model was tested using AMOS 23.0 with the overall sample (N=627). The initial model generated an acceptable fit, but the influence of vlogger's engagement knowledge on the audience's information satisfaction was turned to be insignificant. Therefore, the analysis was repeated with the vlogger's engagement knowledge being eliminated from the model (Figure 2). The results of this path analysis showed a good fit ($\chi 2$ (153) = 636.234, p<0.01; GFI=0.910; AGFI=0.876; CFI=0.965; TLI=0.956; RMSEA=0.071) and are presented in Table 5. According to the analysis results, it was found that

"Authoritative Knowledge" as one of the dimensions of vlogger personal characteristics explained "Information Satisfaction" significantly (βauthoritative knowledge= 0.181, p<0.01), while the influence of "Vlog Content Value"s sub-dimensions "Entertainment" and "Informativeness" were found to affect "Information Satisfaction" more strongly (βentertainment= 0.429, p=0.000; βinformativeness= 0.497 p<0.01). Results also indicated that "Intention to Shop Online" is significantly influenced by "Information Satisfaction" (β=0.719, p<0.01). Overall, as a summary, hypotheses H1a, H1b, H2a, H3 were supported, while hypothesis H2b was rejected.

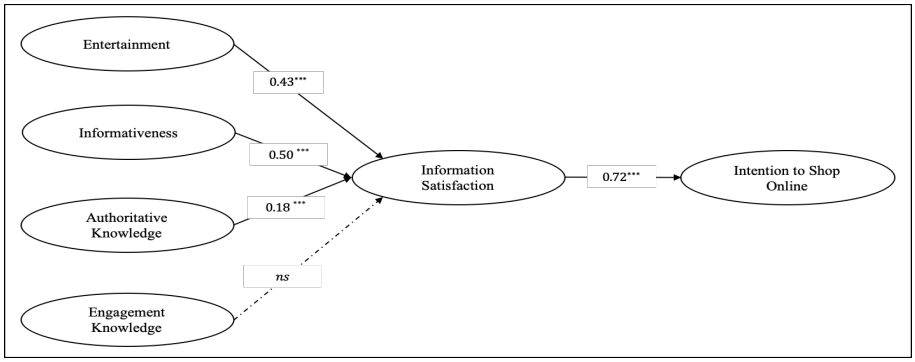


Figure 2 Graphical Representation of the Final Path Model

Table 5 Results of Path Models

	β	t
Entertainment → Information Satisfaction	0.429	12.179 ***
Informativeness → Information Satisfaction	0.497	11.955 ***
Engagement → Information Satisfaction	ns	
Authoritative Knowledge → Information Satisfaction	0.181	6.773 ***
Information Satisfaction → Intention to Shop Online	0.719	15.513 ***

χ^2(153, N=627) = 636.234, p=0.000; GFI=0.910; CFI=0.965, AGFI=0.876, TLI=0.956, RMSEA=0.071
*Note. *** p< .001GFI=Goodness of Fit; AGFI=Adjusted Goodness of Fit; CFI=Comparative Fit Index; TLI= Tucker Lewis Fit Index; RMSEA=Root Mean Square Error Approximation; ns= not significant*

Discussion

As consumers spend more time with social media, it is not surprising that YouTube, which is now one of the most common online platforms

used to be entertained and informed, cultivates the potential to impact consumers' intentions to shop online. For this reason, this study examines the effects of vlogs content value and vloggers' personal characteristics on followers' information satisfaction and further on their intention to shop online.

Our findings illustrate that in terms of video content value, entertainment and informativeness have almost the same positive impact on consumers' information satisfaction. This finding is in line with YouTube becoming a more frequently used tool by the consumers not only to be entertained but also to get information about the latest offerings. In terms of vloggers' personal characteristics, the study provides evidence on authoritative knowledge being an important antecedent in information satisfaction of the vlog viewers. Unlike authoritative knowledge, engagement knowledge is found to exert no influence on information satisfaction. These findings indicate that vlog's informative and entertaining contents and authoritative knowledge as the vlogger personal characteristics are important to explain how to viewers' information satisfaction is generated. Authoritative knowledge refers to how much the vlogger is perceived by the followers as an authority in the field.

Among the important factors that impact the effect and reach of Social Media influencers, expertise increases credibility of the influencer (Hudders et al., 2020) leading them to be perceived more trustworthy by their followers (Biswas et al. 2006). In addition to the listed findings, the results show that vlog characteristics are by far important than vlogger characteristics contradicting previous studies (Hill et al., 2017; Munnukka et al., 2019; Stein et al., 2020), giving rise to the acknowledgment of the importance of the content over the source. Furthermore, in this study, it appears that there is a strong relationship between information satisfaction and intention to shop online. This result is consistent with previous studies indicating a strong link between vlogs and purchase intention (Hsu et al., 2013; Park, Lee and Han 2007; Wang, 2015). As a summary, results indicate that high levels of information satisfaction coming from vlog content value and vlogger's authoritative knowledge intensify consumers' intention to shop online.

Theoretical implications

Theoretically this study advances knowledge in four ways. First, while previous studies investigate vlog content such as being amateur and professional (Stein et al., 2020) or authentic (Cunningham and Craig, 2017), and vlogger characteristics such as popularity, expertise (Ladhari et al., 2020), credibility (Munnukka et al., 2019; Sakib et al., 2020) or physical and social attractiveness (Liu et al., 2019; Sakib et al., 2020) and postulate links between those and consumers' shopping intentions, they are mostly fragmented and do not compare their influence with each other but rather discuss them individually. The results of this research, however, provide evidence that content characteristics are more important than vlogger characteristics in generating satisfaction. Second, while previous research identifies gaining information and being entertained (Liu et al., 2019) as audience motivations, studies do not take the assessment of vlog content based on these factors into consideration. Following the informative/entertaining content dichotomy in advertising and previous research on blog content into consideration, this research parsimoniously evaluates the value viewers gain from the content with respect to its informative and entertaining nature. Third, expertise, credibility (Chapple and Cownie, 2017; Hill et al., 2017; Sakib et al., 2019), trustworthiness (Choi and Lee, 2019) and physical and social attractiveness (Chapple and Cownie, 2017; Liu et al., 2019) of the vloggers have been identified as important factors shaping consumers attitudes and behavior. Yet, this particular study examines the impact of authoritative knowledge on information satisfaction as similar to expertise, credibility and trustworthiness authoritative knowledge has also been suggested in literature to induce trust among blog readers (Doyle et al., 2012). Hence, this study integrates a concept, that has not been taken into consideration before in this context, in the vlogging environment. Forth, although there is vast amount of research in marketing and consumer behavior illustrating that there is a relationship between consumer satisfaction and purchase intention (Anderson and Fornell 1994), the impact of information satisfaction on intention to shop online has not been examined yet. This study is one of its kind to analyze

this relationship and contribute to the understanding of online purchase intention.

Practical implications

As managerial contribution, the findings of the study provide significant information for vloggers and brands that use vlogs to communicate with their consumers. In traditional advertising messages, brands are already aware that consumers are valuing both informative and entertaining content and more so a combination of both (Mark, 1993). With the results of this particular study, apparently both aspects of the vlog content satisfy consumers' expectations, which means that vloggers to create effective content need to look for a balance between fun and information in a similar way as it is in advertising. This finding is inline with the latest development of Social Media influence. Consumers are now not only consuming Social Media content just to be entertained but they would like to get information and be educated, as well. Very good examples are beauty vloggers. Among the most popular vlogger types, they share their own experiences with the products and educate viewers on which products to choose or how to use them. As such, Social Media influencers of any kind but more specifically vloggers need to adjust their content accordingly to keep a balance between fun and information.

The results also shed light to the brands' choice of the vloggers. If the aim of the brand is to assist consumers in their online consumption, brands need to choose vloggers who are perceived as authorities in the topic, rather than just individuals who are using the products and talking about their own experiences. Whilst Social Media content creators are perceived as credible sources of information, with many Social Media channels and many vloggers creating content to be consumed, consumers have become very selective in their choices. The results of this study highlight the fact, that getting the right information from an expert of the field is gaining importance. As a result, vloggers need to thrive a trustworthy and experienced image among their content consumers.

Limitations and Future research

Despite the efforts of the researchers, this study has several limitations. The study, though purposively selected, uses a convenience sample that is leaning toward women and university education. Hence, the generalizability of the study is questionable. For future studies, we suggest employing a more diverse if not a probability sample. Moreover, as in every study in social sciences, the study is prone to several common method biases (Podsakoff, McKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff, 2003), some of which such as measurement context effects can be prevented. Also, we recommend future studies to add other variables such as social competency to the vlogger personal characteristics. As a final limitation, this research only focuses on YouTube. Other scholars can also investigate other social media platforms that also display videos (i.e. Instagram, SnapChat) and compare results.

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