UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ
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THE INTERACTION BETWEEN CONSUMERS DURING THE ONLINE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

Master's Thesis, Marketing

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ABSTRACT

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Abstract	
The examination of the customer experience throughout customer journey is important to the business and academia. Creating a strong and positive experience within the customer journey will lead to better outcome by improving performance in customer travel at multiple touch points and through enhanced customer loyalty and word of mouth. There are a number of studies about interaction and online customer journey, but only a few research have explored social interactions between consumers during the online customer experience. The aim of this study is to explain how interaction between customers emerges during the online customer journey, which describes the overall customer experience from the consumer's point of view. This includes the motives to share and search content that is generated by consumers during the online customer journey, but the study is also interested in how these motives varies at different stages of the online customer journey and in which channels the interaction takes place during the online customer journey. This study is causal in nature. A quantitative research approach was implemented to gather information with a structured online survey questionnaire. The target audience of this study was a Finnish online consumers. Data was collected with an online survey and it yielded 237 responses. Data was analyzed with SPSS and the relationships between the constructs were tested by Amos Graphics 24. Result of this study suggests that the interaction between customers emerges the during online customer journey as sharing and searching word of mouth (WOM) content. The sharing WOM contents is much less common than searching WOM contents during the online customer journey, which is align with research of Bernstein et al. (2013). According to this study, customers are searching WOM contents at every stage of the online customer journey, which is consistent with the research of King et al. (2014). The motives of empirical models to share or search WOM content during online customer journey do not explain the sharing or searching behavior. The motives to search WOM content during online customer journey affect indirectly through opinion seeking behavior and curating skills. Results of this study also suggest that the customers share their WOM content partly in another channels than they are searching WOM content during the online customer journey.	
Keywords	
Customer experience, Online customer journey, Interaction, Word of mouth, WOM, Opinion leadership, Opinion seeking, Curating skills	
Storage	
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1 INTRODUCTION

The first chapter of the introduction presents the background of the study and explains arguments for the choice of the topic. The second chapter of the introduction introduces the aim of the study and defines research problem and the research questions generated on the basis of the research problem. The last chapter of the introduction explains the structure of this research.

1.1 Background and relevance of the topic

This study examines the occurrence of the interactions between customers at the different stages during the online customer journey and in which channels the interaction takes place in an online environment. The research also explores customers' motives to share and search contents that is generated by consumers during the online customer journey, which reflects the total online experience perceived by the customers. In this context all products and services purchased on online by customers are part of this study.

The internet has developed as the primary source of information for both consumers and organizations. The product and brand related information published in online channels is nowadays not only generated by the product manufactures, brand owners, or retailers, but increasingly often by individuals publishing reviews, experiences, and opinions in social media (Klaus & Nguyen 2013, 429). Use of internet, social media, mobile apps and other digital communication technologies are a part of everyday life. People are exposing increasingly themselves to digital and social media when, they are searching information about a products, purchase and consume the products and communicate with each other about their experiences (Stephen 2016, 17). The Web 2.0 features like interactivity, customer-to-customer online recommendations, online word of mouth or user generated content have increased the potential for interactions between e-retailer and customers (Rose et al. 2012, 308), but also customer-to-customer interactions in real time, anytime and anywhere. In recent years, also the dynamics of e-commerce has been changing and more consumers are using the internet by using many devices, which has also changed online shopping behavior as customers have started using Internet-enabled multi-devices (Biligihan et al. 2016, 102.) A fundamental paradigm change in marketing has taken marketing discipline from customer-centric marketing to customer-driving marketing. User-generated content embodies this newly emerged paradigm, which contains aspects such as a strong customer voice and active participation in a new product development (Merrilees 2011, 402.)

The examination of the customer experience throughout customer journey is important to the business and academia (Lemon &Verhoef 2016, 69.) The online retail environment consist of a pure online retailers together with a multi-channel

retailers. The multi-channel context enhances e-retailer opportunities to reach a customers, but it also creates many challenges due to the complexity of the shoppers' behaviors. The Web 2.0 features, multible channels, advances in interactivity and development of hardware, like mobile devices, increases the complexity, because this technological progress enables real time information exchange and anytime, anywhere buying. Customers interact with each other in social media and customer experiences are more social in nature. This emphasizes peer customers impact on customer journey. This accelerated media and channel fragmentation with omini-channel management make it more complicated to control the experience and journey of each customer from the company aspect. However literature suggest that creating strong and positive experience within the customer journey will lead to better outcome by improving performance in customer travel at multiple touch points and through enhanced customer loyalty and word of mouth (Rose et al. 2012, 308; Lemon & Verhoef 2016, 69-70).

Even though, there are a number of studies about interaction and customer journey in online context, only a few research has explored the interaction between customers as a factor that influences on the online customer journey. For example, Yoon and Youn (2016) have examined the interactivity of the website, but not the social interactions between customers. Rose et al. (2012) have examined social interaction in a website context, but have ignored social interaction, that happens in other online channels than on retailer's websites. However, Trevinal and Stenger (2014, 324) have found in their study that the social dimension of the online shopping experience comprises socialization via the companions' direct presence, online social interaction with friends via socio-digital networks and also offline decision-making aid as well as online consumer reviews and ratings. The recent study of Stein and Ramaseshan (2016, 9) suggests that customer experience evolves throughout all touch points and episodes encountered during the customer journey, including indirect interactions with the company's products, service or brands, such as recommendations, criticism conversations, news reports and reviews.

1.2   Research questions and objectives

This study explores interactions between customers during online customer journey. These interactions emerge as a customer generated content, such as word of mouth content. Therefore, as a component of the research problem this study also examines the motives to share and search customer generated content during the online customer journey. The aim of this study is to explain how interaction between customers occurs during the online customer journey. The study is also interested in how the motives behind customer-to-customer interaction vary in the different stages of the online customer journey. Moreover, this study also examines the importance of different online channels at different stages of the online customer journey. In this context all interaction that concerns products and services purchased on online by consumers are part of this study.

At the beginning of the research one main research question and four sub research questions have been formed.

The main research question:

How does customer-to-customer interaction emerge at the different stages of the online customer journey?

Sub research questions:

What are the motives behind the customer-to-customer interaction during online customer journey?

How does the motives behind the customer-to-customer interaction vary at the different stages of the online customer journey?

What are the most important online channels for customer-to-customer interaction at the different stages of the online customer journey?

This study explores customer-to-customer interactions during online customer journey and therefore motives examined in this study must have connection to customers' decision-making process and thus the customer journey in online context. This study also examines interaction from customer and in particular from consumer perspective. Therefore motives that have any kind of company aspect are excluded from the study. The motives tested in this study also must have reliable quantitative measurement scale, which is tested by previous studies and therefore enables reliable and valid research results. This research is interested in Finnish consumers' customer experiences related to interactions during an online customer journey and therefore it examines importance of online and social media channels that are popular among Finnish consumers.

1.3 Structure of the study

The study is divided into six chapters. Introduction explains the motivation for the study, points out research gap in online customer journey and customer-to-customer interaction domain and presents the aim of the study and the research problem. The second chapter presents the previous research related to the themes of the research and the hypotheses that are formed based on the marketing research literature. Finally, this chapter presents the research model of the study. Chapter three describes the research approach, methodology used and data collection and analysis in a more detailed level. Chapter four presents the results of the research and hypotheses examined in a given context. The final chapter six discusses the theoretical conclusions and contributions, managerial implications

and limitations and future research suggestions. The structure of the study is presented in figure 1.

INTRODUCTION
- Background of the research
- Research objectives and problems
- Research structure

ONLINE CUSTOMER JOURNEY AND INTERACTION
- Online customer journey
    - Customer journey approach and customer journey concept
    - Stages of the customer journey
    - Customer journey in online context
    - Touch points of the online customer journey
- Interaction between customers
    - Interaction in social commerce
    - Word of mouth behavior
    - Motives for word of mouth
    - Interaction between customers and online customer journey
    - Opinion leadership and opinion seeking behavior
- Research model

METHODOLOGY
- Quantitative research
- Data collection and practical implementation
    - Questionnaire
- Data analysis

RESULTS
- Demographic and background information
- Online channels to share and seek WOM during online customer journey
- Validation of the measurement model
    - Measurement model
    - Structural model
    - Direct effects

CONCLUSIONS
- Theoretical contributions
- Managerial implications
- Evaluation of the research: reliability and validity
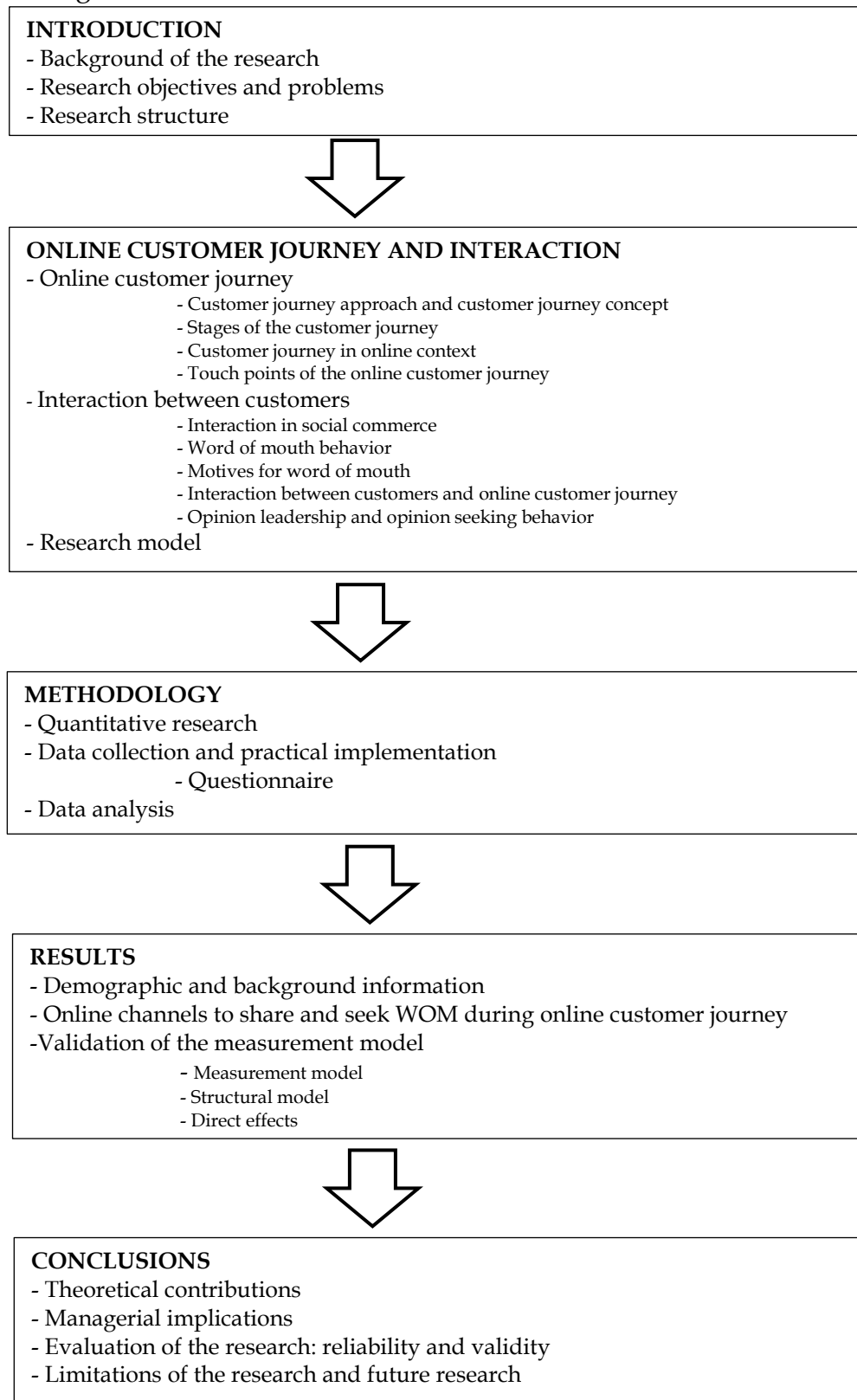- Limitations of the research and future research

FIGURE 1 Research structure of this study

2 ONLINE CUSTOMER JOURNEY AND INTERAC-
TION

This chapter presents the previous research related to the themes of the research and the hypotheses formed based on the marketing research literature. Finally this chapter presents the research model of the study.

2.1 Customer journey

2.1.1 Customer journey approach and customer journey concept

The customer journey approach integrates customer decision-making process and customer experience concepts and explores the entire process that customer goes through when purchasing a product or service, instead focusing on experience of a single event of buying process. The origin of the customer journey is in the 1960s, when initial theories in marketing began focusing on customer decision-making processes and experience, when customers are buying products or services. These theories resulted in the development of integrated models, which describe the buying process. These early consumer decision-making process models have provided the foundation for thinking holistically about the customer experience as a process that consumers go through (Lemon & Verhoef 2016, 71).

According to Lemon & Verhoef (2016, 70-71) customer journey concept describes customer's decision-making process that makes up the customer experience. There are a multiple definitions of the customer experience in online and offline context. According to some scholars this disagreement and lack of the clarity rises from the fact that the concept of experience can be perceived two different manners. Experience as a word can be seen as a noun or verb. As a noun it points out to an object like a thought, emotion, sensation, attitude or even an outcome of experience such as an accumulation of knowledge or skills, emotions, sensations and attitudes, whereas experience as a verb describes the process itself and participation in the activity. Therefore, it is unclear whether experience is active or passive for the participant. It is also obscure whether experience is consequence of particular result or requires interaction (Tynan & McKechnie 2009, 502-503; Bagdare & Jain 2009, 791). Commonly customer experience is defined as a multidimensional construct that is holistic in essence, including the customer's cognitive, affective, emotional, social and physical responses to any direct or indirect contact with company, brand or product, across multiple touch points during the complete customer journey. This means that customer experience is created by the elements that company can control (e.g. price, assortment), but also by elements outside their control such as customer chose and the impact of the other customers. The definition also state that the customer experience emerges

throughout the process of the customer journey that consist of multiple direct or indirect encounters with a company, brand, product or service during the several stages of the decision process (McColl-Kennedy et al. 2015, 431; Lemon & Verhoef 2016, 71; Stein & Ramaseshan 2016, 8). In this study, experience is seen as a verb, which means that it is a process where an individual participates in activities that requires his or her interaction. This happens by sharing or searching content produced by other individuals in online. From this point of view the customer experience is conceptualized as a customer's journey with a company over time during the purchase cycle across multiple touch points.

The process approach of the customer experience offers a basis for the idea that the customer experience is formed via consumer decision-making process that is called the customer journey (Lemon & Verhoef 2016, 74; Klaus 2013, 448; McColl-Kennedy et al. 431.) Generally, the consumer decision-making process has been described by using the metaphor of a funnel, in which consumer has a set of potential brands in mind at the beginning of the journey and then he or she methodically lower the numbers of options while he or she moves along the funnel. At the end of the process, customer occurs with the one brand which he or she has selected to purchase (Court et al. 2009).

2.1.2 Stages of the customer journey

Consumer decision-making process models have led to identification of the general stages of a buying process, which also can be seen as a stages of the customer journey. According to the literature, there are various consumer decision-making models, such as the AIDA model, Howard and Sheth's buying behavior model (Wolny & Charoensuksai 2014, 319; Lemon & Verhoef 2016, 71). One very well-known and often cited consumer buying process model is the five–stage consumer decision-making process. According to that model, there are five stages in a process, which a consumer is expected to go through during the decision-making process. These five stages are need recognition, information searching, evaluation of alternatives, purchase and post-purchase (Wolny & Charoensuksai 2014, 319).

Previously mentioned five-stage consumer decision-making process model represents the traditional view of consumer decision-making process, where the process linearly advances from the pre-purchase stage through the purchase to the post-purchase stage. The pre-purchase stage consists of need recognition, information searching and evaluation of alternatives. Thus it comprises all aspects of the customer's interaction with the brand, category and environment before the purchase operation. Purchase stage encompasses all customer interplays with the brand and its surroundings during the purchase session itself and behaviors like a choice, ordering and payment are characterized to the purchase stage. Post-purchase stage in turn contains customers' interactions with the brand and its environments after the actual buy. This stage comprises behaviors such as a usage and consumption, post-purchase engagement and service requests (Lemon & Verhoef 2016, 76).

The growth of the product choices and digital channels accompanied with well-informed consumers have result in to the situation, where new less linear and more sophisticated approach than the funnel metaphor is needed (Court et al. 2009.) The new consumer decision journey approach, illustrated in figure two, propose that the decision-making process is a more circular journey and it consist of four stages, which are initial consideration, active evaluation, purchase and post-purchase (Court et al 2009; Hudson & Thal 2013, 156.) The new model of customer journey starts at the initial consideration stage, where the consumer begins the process with a small amount of the brands, which are the potential purchasing options and they based on impressions of brands at the touch points like an advertisement, news reports, conversations with family and friends and past product experiences. During the next active-evaluation stage, on the contrary to the traditional funnel metaphor, the amount of the brands under consideration may broaden rather than narrow when the consumers seek information and evaluate what they want (Court et al. 2009; Hudson & Thal 2013, 157). According to Court et al. (2009) two-thirds of the touch points during the active-evaluation phase include consumer-driven marketing activities such as internet reviews and word of mouth recommendations from friends and family as well as in-store interactions and collections of the past experiences. The final third of the touch points includes company-driven marketing. The purchase and post-purchase stages are similar with the traditional consumer decision-making model. The new consumer decision journey approach also expands the traditional decision-making model by adding a "loyalty loop" to the model as a part of the process. This extension of the model proposes that an experiences perceived during the post-purchase stage influence on customers' opinion and therefore either leads to customer loyalty through repurchase and further engagement or begins the process again from the pre-purchase stage in which case the customer starts reconsider alternatives (Lemon & Verhoef 2016, 76, Court et al. 2009; Hudson & Thal 2013, 157).
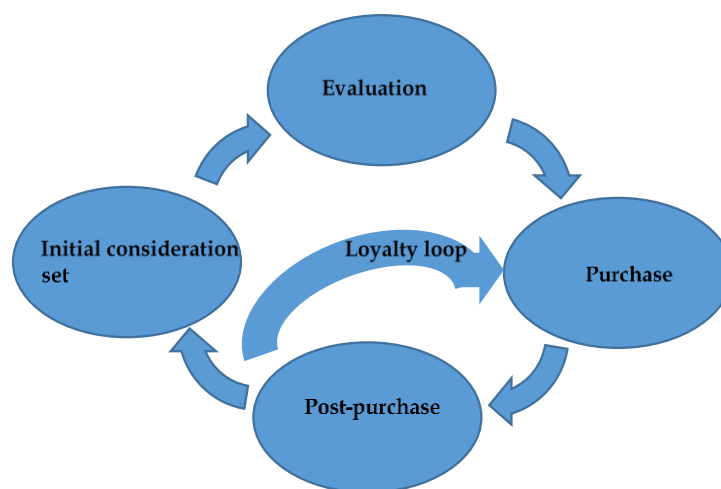

FIGURE 2 New model of customer journey (Hudson & Thal 2013)

2.1.3   Customer journey in online context

In e-commerce context literature proposes that consumers decision-making process and thus also the customer journey consists of the recognition of need, pre-purchase activities, the purchase decision and post-purchase activities. These four interrelated phases may not follow each other in a linear fashion and not all four phases are necessarily linked to each purchase transaction. During the pre-purchase activity, consumers use their time to find information and estimate different choices. At the same time, consumers are increasingly building their intent to buy a product or service. The development of the buying intent is a process across which a consumer chooses, organizes, interprets, and compares the information received from numerous shopping platforms and channels. After finding an adequate information and appraising the trustworthiness of this information, consumers will recognize the determinants that they will use when they compare different options and make a judgements based on what they have perceived about the product or service. Making a purchase decision is a primary task at the purchase phase. The consumer selects a product or service and retailer, when he or she purchases something. At this point consumers do not only use money to buy a product or a service, but they also spend their time and energy when they estimate the product or service to purchase it. In the post-purchase phase, the consumers may compare their current consumption experience to their expectations that they had before making the purchase. Simultaneously, they may share their consumption experience through the website communication channels, including the web site's evaluation and review mechanisms, tweets, blog posts, or the "like" button on Facebook. Consumers may share their consumption experiences, because they like to talk over the specifics of the product they have purchased or/and they want to recommend the product they like to their friends (Wang and Yu 2015, 4-5).

A consumer behavior has changed due to multi-channel shopping created by technological development. During the multi-channel shopping customer choose the path they take, when they navigate channels in a mode that fits them on any particular shopping situation. The concept of multi-channel shopping means an integration of multiple channels in the consumer decision-making process. Consumers search different benefits at different stages of their decision-making process that might lead to dynamic channel preference during the entire decision-making process. A single channel may reappear during the customer journey and some channels may also be used simultaneously during one stage of the customer journey. Table one presents the channels and information sources that have been identified at each stage of buying process in cosmetics shopping. In multi-channel context, customer journey has been defined as "*a description of customer experience where different touchpoints characterize customers' interaction with a brand, product, or service of interest*". This definition suggest that customer journey often does not follow a linear structure, as described by the traditional decision-making literature and customer journey includes several channels and it reflects the emotional, behavioral and cognitive responses present in the process (Wolny & Charoensuksai 2014, 317-322).

TABLE 1 Channel usage at different buying stages in cosmetics shopping (Wolny & Charoensuksai 2014, 322)

Buying stage	Description	Primary channel used
Orientation/ inspiration/ horizon scanning	At this stage, consumers do not think of themselves as shopping. They are consciously or unconsciously scanning the marketplace and referring to their own previous experience.	Friends, bloggers, product reviews, videos (from YouTube and social networks), magazines, product display (in-store and online), prior experience
Information search	Consumers have intention to shop and search for information prior to shopping. They try to get directed information from product reviews, ratings and swatches	Blogs, videos, review sites and friends
Evaluation	Consumers narrow down the choice of purchase and search more information on price, physical attributes, availability and purchase channels. Trying product in-store and browsing product online are widely reported at this stage	Physical store, online store, mobile channel, as well as friends, social media for confirmation
Purchase	At this stage, consumers make a decision regarding final purchase. Physical store was the most preferred point of purchase for cosmetics product, followed by the online store	Physical store or online store
Post-purchase	Consumers tend to share their shopping experience through word of mouth (WOM). Offline WOM, telling friends about their cosmetics experience, was more widely reported than eWOM through social media	Friends and/or social media

The changes in consumer behavior and connection between experience and decision-making process need to be taken into account. E-commerce research in online environment suggest that interrelated stages of the buying process may

not follow each other in a linear fashion and not all of them are necessarily linked to each purchase transaction. Therefore this study defines online customer journey as a holistic customer experience, which is formed from single experiences based on interactions with a company, brand, product or service in any touch point during the buying process. This process may not proceed linearly and not all of process stages are necessarily connected to the purchase transaction. The single experiences are interpretations of interaction at any touch point during the online buying process.

2.1.4 Touch points of the online customer journey

The numerous researches of the customer experience have based on the stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) paradigm as a theoretical construction to study how a website features influence to the online consumers and their behavior. The S-O-R-model proposes that in the online context person faces incoming sensory information from a variety of stimuli (S) such as text-based information, visual imagery, video or audio content. An individual interprets this information from cognitive and affective viewpoint (O) generating an experience of interaction (R) with the environment (Rose et al. 2012, 309). Hence these experiences are customers' interpretations of the encounters, which constitute a holistic experience and hence a customer journey. The customers have experiences every time they are in contact with any part of the product, service, brand or organization over a multiple channels and numerous points of time. These moments between the customer and any part of company are called touch points. The customer journey that customer takes to achieve a certain shopping task is constructed by series of touch points, and they appear at all stages of the customer journey encompassing the search, evaluation, purchase and post-purchase phases of the customer journey. These touch points can be linked to an organization through direct or indirect interactions (Stein & Ramaseshan 2016, 8-9; McColl-Kennedy et al. 2015, 432).

Studies suggest that different customer touch points can be identified (Lemon & Verhoef 2016, 76.) Stein and Ramaseshan (2016, 17) have identified seven separate customer experience touch point elements: atmospheric, technological, communicative, process, employee-customer interaction, customer-to-customer interaction and product interaction elements. All of these components do not emerge at each touch point. According to the research touch points are made up of varying combinations of the identified elements. In addition, the touch points may include only one or all of the touch point elements. It seems that the components which are relevant to the customer at the certain touch point, together constitute each touch point experience. Definitions of the touch point elements by Stein and Ramaseshan (2016) are presented in the table two.

TABLE 2 Definitions of the touch point elements (Stein & Ramaseshan 2016, 12)

Touch point elements	Definition
Atmospheric	The physical characteristics and surrounding customer observe when interacting with any part of the retailer
Technological	A customer's direct interaction with any form of technology during an encounter with retailer
Communicative	One-way communication from retailer to customer, including both promotional and informative messages
Process	The actions or steps customers need to take in order to achieve a particular outcome with retailer.
Employee-customer interaction	The direct and indirect interactions customers have with employees when interacting with any part of retailer.
Customer-customer interaction	The direct and indirect interactions customer have with other customers when interacting with any part of the retailer.
Product interaction	The direct or indirect interactions customers have with the core tangible product offered by retailer

In their study Lemon and Verhoef (2016, 76) recognized four categories of customer experience touch points: brand-owned, partner-owned, customer-owned and social/external/independent. The customer might interact with each of these categories at each stage of the experience. Depending on the nature of product/service or the customer's own journey, the strength or importance of each touch point category may differ at each stage.

The brand-owned touch points are customer interactions that are planned and managed by the company and under the company's control. They include all brand-owned media and brand-controlled components of the marketing mix. Partner-owned touch points are customer interactions that are together planned, managed or controlled by a firm and one or more of its partners. These partners can comprise marketing agencies, multichannel distribution partners, multivendor loyalty program partners and communication channel partners. Sometimes the limit between brand-owned and partner-owned touch points may become blurred. Customer-owned touch points are customer actions, which are a part of the overall customer experience, but the company, its partners or others do not affect or control them. The customer-owned touch points are the most critical and predominant in post-purchase stage, when personalized consumption and usage are at the focal point. The social/external touch points identify the important roles of the others in the customer's experience. Throughout the entire experience, the customers are surrounded by external touch points, for example other customers, peer influences, independent information sources, and environments, that may influence to the process. Peers may influence on experience at a request or without a request, at all stages of the experience. These effects can be significant and comparable to or even greater than an advertising effects. There is some

evidence that the social context also affects to the experience. Third-party information sources, such as review sites and social media, also use influence on customers. Sometimes such sources are independent, sometimes more closely aligned with the brand or firm and sometimes they may be seen as partner touch points (Lemon & Verhoef 2016, 77-78).

The touch point category of Lemon and Verhoef (2016, 78) has some overlap with the paid, owned and earned media model. In that model, the paid media would be considered as a touch points that are brand-owned or partner-owned, whereas the earned media would typically be the social and external touch points. Other researches have made the difference between firm-initiated and customer-initiated touch points. In this classification, the brand-owned and partner-owned touch points would be more firm-initiated, while the customer-owned and social/external touch points would be more customer-initiated.

2.2 Interaction between the customers

The consumers' need for interactive, collaborative and personalized interactions has been influenced a lot by the rapid increase of the social media. The social media offers a new way of communication and interaction among consumers and it has transformed the nature and practice of the online communication into an extensive two-way dialog among users that can comprise private/or social topics and issues as well as conversations about companies products, brands and services (Baumöl et al. 2016, 199). The Customer-to-customer (C2C) interaction occurs interpersonally as well as through an electronic channels like recommendation sites, social networking sites, online communities, blogs and chat rooms (Meuter et al. 2013, 242). C2C-interaction has been defined as *the transfer of information from one customer or group of customers to another customer or group of customers in a way that has the potential to change their preferences, actual purchase behavior, or the way they further interact with others* (Libai et al. 2010, 269; Meuter et al 2013, 242.)

2.2.1 Interaction in social commerce

According to research of Wang and Yu (2015, 2-4), a social commerce is a synthesis of shopping and social networking activities that promote the customer's interaction activities in the purchasing and selling of products and services in online environments. Therefore the social commerce can be described as *"an exchange-related activities that occur in, or are influenced by, an individual's social network in computer-mediated social environments, where the activities correspond to the need recognition, pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase stages of a focal exchange"*. In the social commerce context particular characteristics like recommendations, referral mechanisms, ratings and reviews produce valuable information that influences on customer's behavior and purchasing decisions.

In the social commerce environments, a social interactions that influence on customers can be categorized into two forms: WOM communication and observant of other consumers' purchases. The emergence of the social media allows improvement of WOM theory from the linear marketer impact to network co-production. The concept of network co-production postulates that customers are active co-producers of value and meaning and WOM communications are co-produced in customer networks, groups, and communities. The observational learning means learning through observing the behavior of other people, which might influence on the individual's behavior in various manners. These impacts can be either positive or negative. In a case of observational learning people appreciate other person's information more than their own information. The observations concerning other people's purchases, can be seen as the information that can be taken into consideration in the purchasing decision-making process, because that kind of information as a heuristics permits consumers to simplify their decision making and get rid of information overload (Wang & Yu 2015, 2-3).

The research also indicates that the positive valence of the WOM and the content of the WOM are the primary drivers that enhance consumers' purchase intention. This is equivalent to the outcomes, which indicates that the rise in the volume of peer consumer reviews will increase the probability of consumer purchase decision. The literature also suggest that consumers will monitor their peers, who share purchase decisions and experiences, and thus they learn to make appropriate selections (Wang & Yu 2015, 8).

2.2.2 Word of mouth behavior

The customers interchange information from their experiences and affect each other's attitudes and behaviors. A customer's decision making is rarely based on their own judgement (Blazevic et al. 2013, 294-295). The term "word of mouth" (WOM) has been used to reflect interactions among the customers (Libai et al. 2010, 268.) The WOM process has been a component of human conversation for as long as people have engaged in discussions. The technological progress have eased the ways by which people are connected to each other and it also has emphasized the impact of the social networks and interpersonal communication (Kimmel & Kitchen 2014, 5). The research literature has used concept of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) to describe word of mouth that happens in a computer-mediated environment. However, the increasing overpowering of the social media and dynamic interplay between numerous social media platforms have obscured the boundary between online and offline WOM, therefore these concepts cannot be seen anymore as distinct and unattached entities. The debates overlap between online and offline participants, which indicate social media integration to mundane life as a basic ingredient (Kimmel & Kitchen 2014, 14). For those reasons, in this study the term word of mouth (WOM) means any unpaid interpersonal communication between people both on online and offline context. Even though word of mouth in an online context has become important part of our lives, the interpersonal contacts among people has still substantially stronger impact than electronic communication between consumers (Meuter et al. 2013, 251.)

On the offline context the word of mouth behavior usually occurs in a face-to-face or one-to-one contact between participants who know each other (Meuter et al 2013, 242; King et al. 2013, 169) and are so near each other that they are able to obtain richly social and contextual cues (King et al. 2013, 169), but it also can emerge as literal word of mouth (Berger 2014, 587). Word of mouth includes product related discussions and sharing product related content, but it also comprises direct recommendations and mere mentions (Berger 2014, 587). Often these offline discourses are private in nature (King et al. 2014, 169.) The rise of the social media has brought a new facet to online WOM, because it enable internet users to communicate with people that they know while the other online platforms allow WOM to occur between anonymous users (Erkan & Evans 2016, 2.)

According to literature, there are three streams of research to rationalize the antecedents and effects of the WOM. The first stream of research concentrates on the facts that force a consumers to proactively share the WOM about their direct shopping experiences. The ultimate satisfaction or dissatisfaction, novelty of the product and consumer's commitment to the firm have been associated to such behavior. The another research stream process consumer information-seeking behavior and concentrates on the conditions that results in consumers to rely stronger on word of mouth communications than official information sources, when they make buying decisions. The research indicates that the consumers are more likely to search opinions of others when they have little know-how in the product category or when the buying decision is characterized by high perceived risk and high involvement. The last research stream tries to find out why some personal information sources have a greater influence on some consumers than other consumers. Things like source expertise, strength of social ties and demographic similarity have emerged as important antecedents to underlying WOM influence (Kimmel & Kitchen 2014, 9).

The comparative influence of the positive and negative word of mouth on the consumer behavior is complex and depends on the selection of the mediating factors. In a case of the familiar brands, positive WOM has a greater effect than negative WOM to the probability of purchase. The receivers make resistance to negative WOM with brands they are likely to select and resist positive WOM with brands they are unlikely to select. The studies have also found evidence of resistance effect, whereby people become more devoted to favored brand when confronted with negative counsel. Under the particular circumstances people may also communicate both positive and negative advice or recommendations about same product or service to different persons, depending on the characteristics of the receiver (Kimmel & Kitchen 2014, 12-13).

2.2.3 Motives for word of mouth behavior

For a long time the studies has assumed that the typical motivation factor of positive and negative word of mouth behavior leads to the customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction. This assumption is rooted in the research that show higher frequencies of the WOM, when satisfaction or dissatisfaction is at its highest rates.

However, a growing number of the research propose that the opportunities may be important drivers of WOM beside the customer satisfaction/dissatisfaction and other social- and ego-related motivations, such as dissonance reduction and self-enhancement. The customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction may serve as an antecedent for the production of WOM, but they seems to be less significant than other factors in promoting informal consumer conversations (Kimmel & Kitchen 2014, 10).

The study of Jonah Berger (2014, 586-590) suggests that the word of mouth is goal-oriented and serves five key functions, which are impression management, emotion regulation, information acquisition, social bonding, and persuasion. The starting point of these motivations is selfish, and it guides to what people speak about even without their own awareness. The interpersonal communication eases impression management in three means: self-enhancement, identity signaling, and filling conversational space. The self-enhancement means that people like to be noticed positively and show themselves in ways that they achieve such an impression. People share issues about themselves and the others, when they communicate particular identities. Thereby people can also speak about certain subjects to signal that they have a specific characteristics, intelligence, or skills in a certain field. People can also engage in chat, sharing almost anything to fill up the conversational space. The impression management stimulate people to spread entertaining, useful, self-concept relevant, status related, unique, common ground, and accessible things which same time also result in occasional arousal and foster sharing and influencing the valence of the content shared.

The word of mouth also assists the consumers to regulate their emotions, which means the practices that people use to handle which emotions they have, when they have them, and how they experience and display them. The external factors affect the emotions that people experience, but emotion regulation characterizes the processes through which consumers handle their emotions. The social sharing of emotions generates a significant channel for sharers to regulate their emotion. Sharing with others ease the emotion regulation in a many ways, for instance generating social support, venting, facilitating sense making, reducing dissonance, taking vengeance, and encouraging rehearsal. The emotion regulation makes people to share more emotional content, influence on the valence of the content shared, and direct people to share more emotionally arousing content (Berger 2014, 592-593).

Often consumers are unsure about what to purchase or how to solve a certain problem and therefore they approach others for getting help. The sharing enables information acquisition via seeking advice and resolving problems. Information acquisition make people discuss about risky, important, complex, or uncertain decisions and decisions where reliable information is missing. A one of the functions of the word of mouth is the social bonding. People have a basic urge for social relationships and interpersonal communication helps to satisfy that hunger. The sharing appears to ease social bonding via strengthening shared opinions and decreasing loneliness and social exclusion. The social bonding gives

reason to people to discuss about issues that are common base or are more emotional in essence. Another function of the WOM is persuasion that appears on sales context but also on a more interpersonal level. The persuasive advices occurs when one customer's selection influences another's satisfaction, and thereby takes place, when someone wants others to give him or her something, to agree with he or she, or to do something he or she desires. The persuasion motives are the reason to the people to share the issues, which are more emotionally polarized and arousing (Berger 2014, 594-597).

According to study of Henning-Thurau et al. (2004, 45-50) social benefits that followed by extraversion/positive self-enhancement and concern for other consumers had the strongest positive impact on consumers' platform visiting. Customers, who are motivated by venting negative feelings and platform assistance tend to visit platforms less often. The motives, which had significant impact on the number of comments written, were concern for other consumers, extraversion/positive self-enhancement, social benefits, economic incentives and advice seeking. The other motives such as platform assistance, venting negative feelings and helping the company did not affect the writing comments on opinion platforms. Based on motives, the consumers can be classified into four segments according to the drivers that the most likely to promote them to share WOM on online. Those categories are self-interested helpers, multiple-motive consumers, consumer advocates and true altruists. Self-interested helpers are driven primarily by economic incentives. Multiple-motive consumers in turn are motivated by a large number of motives, whereas consumer advocates are motivated by their concern about others. The true altruists in turn are motivated to help other consumers as well as companies. According to the literature, the multiple-motive consumers segment was the most likely to engage in the WOM communication, whereas true altruists and consumer advocates the least contributed the WOM. King et al. (2014, 172) propose that the three key result of the WOM sharing process are learning and enhanced use of focal brands, impression management and social capital and reputation.

The consumers are looking for the opinions of others on online for different reasons (Goldsmith & Horowits 2006, 11.) These opinions are content of WOM shared by other consumers. The motivation in itself is an inner phenomena that direct an individual's behavior toward attaining his or her needs. A motives substantially define behavior of the consumers and therefore are helpful in rationalizing, why customers seek content produced by other customer (Henning-Thurau & Walsh 2003, 53.) The literature assume that the physiological and psychological themes are behind the shopping motives. According the research some motives are personal such as role playing, diversion, self-gratification, learning about new trends, physical activity, and sensory stimulation. In addition, there are social motives, like social experiences outside the home, communication with others with similar interests, peer group attraction, a feeling of status and authority and pleasure of bargaining. However, motives to search information from

online environment differ from motives of buying process. Therefore the motivations above do not necessarily drive the searching of information from online. (Burton and Khammash 2010, 232).

Hennig-Thurau and Walsh (2003, 54-63) have identified five motives to look for content shared by other consumers from online opinion platforms, which were: to get buying-related information, social orientation through information, community membership, remuneration and to learn to consume a product. The obtaining buying-related information is composed of risk reduction and reduction of search time, because they both are related to making a buying decision. The determination of social position and dissonance reduction indicate that a social orientation take place through information. The community membership consist of the belonging to a virtual community and learning what products are new in the marketplace. The remuneration as a motive describes the characteristics of economic incentives. According the research getting buying related information and social orientation through information explained 35 percent of changes in buying behavior. From these two factors, getting buying related information was more powerful motive than social orientation. The consumer learning, community and social orientation factors explained 18 percent of changes in consumers' communication behavior.

Khammash (2008, 80-83) has identified 22 motives to read online customer reviews shared by other consumers. These motives are presented in more detail in table three. These motives are presented in table three. According to the study, the motives, such as unique customer experience, non-expert opinion, risk reduction, learning what products are new in the marketplace, reading for high involvement product, reduction of search time and enjoyment and fun, were the most important reasons to read online customer reviews from opinion platforms. However, the motives, such as unique customer experience, risk reduction, learning what products are new in the market and non-expert opinions were strongly linked to the influence of the positive reviews concerning buying behavior, whereas the influence of the negative reviews concerning buying behavior was strongly connected to motives, like unique customer experience, risk reduction and compulsive habit.

TABLE 3 Motives for reading online customer reviews (Khammash 2008)

The motive for reading online customer reviews
Reading for high involvement product
Risk reduction
Reduction of search time
Dissonance reduction
To learn how a product is to be consumed
To learn what products are new in the market place
Determination of social position
Belonging to a virtual community
Remuneration
Enjoyment and fun
Curiosity and broadening of horizons
Trusted opinions
Preferred authors
Compulsive habit
Non-expert opinion
Unique customer experience
Examining review status to write about products
Help the site
Mediated advisor
Improving langue skills
Understanding people
Reading responsively

The case study of Khammash and Griffiths (2011, 85) have classified the motives identified by Khammash (2008, 80-83) to decision-involvement motives, product-involvement motives, social-involvement motives, economic-involvement motives, self-involvement motives, consumer empowerment motives, new social-involvement motives and site administration motives. The classified motives are presented in more detail in table four. The loyal members of opinion platforms are more likely to read online customer reviews, because it produces enjoyment and fun. They also read these reviews in order to seek trusted opinions and encourage other members to read their own reviews. The reading behavior of the members is also motivated by curiosity and the intention to learn what products are new in the marketplace. The members who behave like opinion leaders are more likely to read online customer reviews in order to act as mediated advisors to other online and offline customers. Also their own curiosity motivates them to broaden their horizon and seek trusted opinions from online. The novelty seeking behavior is more likely behind readers, who act as mediated advisors for other online and offline customers. The opinion platform users also read the reviews to satisfy their own curiosity, to broaden their horizons and to learn about the new products. Their reading behavior tends to turn into a compulsive habit. The consumers who use their independent decision-making behavior are more likely to read reviews to reduce their dissonance after buying a product.

TABLE 4 Classification of motives for reading customer reviews (Khammash & Griffiths 2011)

Original motives	Emergent motives
Decision-involvement motives:	**Self-involvement motives:**
- Risk reduction	- Fun and enjoyment
- Reduction of search time	- Curiosity and broadening of horizons
- Dissonance reduction	- Compulsive habit and boredom
	- Improving writing style and langue skills
Product-involvement motives:	**Consumer empowerment motives:**
- Learning how a product is to be consumed	- Trusted opinions
	- Non-expert opinions
- Learning what products are new in the marketplace	- Unique experiences
Social-involvement motives:	**New social-involvement motives:**
- Determining social position	- Preferred authors
- Belonging to a virtual community	- Mediated advisors
	- Understanding people
	- Reading responsively
Economic-involvement motive	**Site administration motives:**
	- Examining reviews accuracy and availability
	- Offering general help to the site management team

Goldsmith and Horowitz (2006, 3-12) have examined motivations for online opinion seeking and found out that consumers seek content shared by other consumers on online to reduce their risk, because others do it, to secure lower prices, to get information easily, by accident, because it is cool, because they are stimulated by offline inputs and to get pre-purchase information. According to the research, risk reduction, securing lower prices, getting information easily, by accident and getting pre-purchase information were positively related to online buying. The study indicates that the most important motive to seek content shared by other consumers, is to get information easily, the second is to secure lower prices and third is to get information. The risk reduction is the fourth most important reason to seek opinion of others. However, the results also propose that the factor "it is cool" is not important to consumers, when they are searching content shared by other consumers. In addition, the study discovered that information generated by other consumers is more significant than advertising. The preference of the consumers to seek WOM from online, reinforces WOM's importance in ecommerce.

2.2.4 Interaction between customers and online customer journey

The recent development of the online environment has allowed companies to interact socially with their customers, but in a similar manner, it has enabled the customers to interact with each other. Today's online environment is a humane space where people are associated and interacting with other people in an emotional way. The online social interactions makes it possible to customers to understand themselves as members of a community, and the social features of such as interaction construct the sociability experience of the customer. Therefore, the social interaction emphasize the significance of the community dialogue. The social networks in the online context as a channels provides many advantages to improve the experience on online context and thus customer journey (Bilgihan et al. 2016, 110-111).

Person does not only receive experiences in a multi-sensory manner, but also corresponds to and reacts to them, and therefore interaction is a major part of the experience and therefore influences on customer journey. Many consumption experiences are shared rather than personal. The social and relational origin of the value can be achieved through a consumption experiences with other people. Therefore, the value can be generated to consumer through interaction with other people, like friends or family members in the form of a collective consumption experience (Tynan & McKechnie 2009, 506). Therefore, one can assume that social interactions are linked to perceived value perceived of the customer journey.

In a retail and service exchanges, customers interact directly or indirectly with other customers. These kind of social interactions of the other customers influence on customer experience (Stein & Ramaseshan 2016, 15; Klaus 2013, 448). This influence could be due to the fact that, when customers are searching for and/or evaluating a particular retailer, they often rely on word of mouth feedback from the personal and familiar sources or seek feedback from individuals who have the prior experience of the retailer (Stein & Ramaseshan 2016, 15). On the other hand, the ability to explore the experiences of the other customers help customers to overcome the unfamiliarity and the lack of physical presence associated with online interactions (Klaus 2013, 448.) The literature suggest that the interactions between the customers occur during the post-purchase and across different physical and digital retail channels (Stein & Ramaseshan 2016, 15) but also during the initial-consideration, active evaluation and purchase stage of consumer journey (Court et al. 2009).

The recent social media research has strengthened the meaning of the social dimension in the internet users' experience and thus a part of online customer journey. The study of Trevinal et al. (2014, 323-324) proposes that the online shopping has three different characteristics: direct online social interaction with friends in socio-digital networks, the companions' presence and online consumer reviews. Some consumers appear to chat online through social media with others at the same time, when they are surfing on e-commerce websites. This way they can make a comments and crosscheck the products they consider to buy. In this

case, other's opinions via social media impact on consumers' decision-making process and thus also to online customer journey. Generally, this process is restricted to a few best friends, who are connected to each other through social media. Sometimes consumers do shopping in online together with their friends or family members. According to research this is consistent with the research that is focused to traditional shopping, but has not been considered for research of online shopping experience. Mentioned above highlights online customer journey's omnichannel nature in a contemporary world. The third characteristic of the social dimension is customer reviews and product ratings.

2.2.5   Opinion leadership and opinion seeking behavior

The consumers affect each other in many ways. They imitate each other's behavior, exchange information through informal discussions and seek and share opinions to each other. The last format of interpersonal communication, is recognized among researchers as one of the most significant word of mouth influences on product sales and brand choice (Bertrandias & Goldsmith 2006, 25). The concept of opinion leadership makes an essential input to models of consumer decision making (Flynn et al. 1996, 137.) The concepts of opinion leadership and seekers were introduced in Katz and Lazardsfild's research on mass media effects of political campaigns in 1955 (Jung & Kim 2016, 4440.) These concepts appear when consumers influence on each other or seek opinions from others (Flynn et al. 1996, 137.) The concept of opinion leadership represents a particular format of word of mouth communication (Vigar-Ellis et al. 2015, 305) and it has been defined many ways, but it is linked systematically to influence, with information sharing or both (Bertrandias & Goldsmith 2006, 27.) Vigar-Ellis et al. (2015, 305-306) have proposed that opinion leadership is "*the informal influence that one person has on actions of opinion seekers or receivers*". The opinion leaders can generate communication, which might be positive, negative, factual as well as subjective experience-based opinions. As a result, opinion leaders seems to be trustworthy and can reduce the perceived risk or anxiety that opinion seeker experiences when addressing oneself to the sophisticated purchasing decision.

The opinion seeking has received less notice than the opinion leadership in marketing literature. Nonetheless, the essence of opinion leadership proposes the being of opinion seekers (Vigar-Ellis et al. 2015). Flynn et al. (1996, 138) define opinion seeking as "*occurring when individuals search out advice from others when making purchase decisions*". Searching information and recommendations from others is one way to lower perceived risk, which is connected to purchase (Vigar-Ellis et al. 2015, 306.) Opinion seekers get information to assist the purchase decision, but also because wish to be a member of a group is a motivating point, when they adopt the values and beliefs of the group's leader (Flynn et al. 1996, 138.)

The outcomes in preceding researches give confused answers concerning relationship between the opinion leadership and opinion seeking. Some studies have found positive correlations between the opinion leadership and opinion seeking behavior, whereas the other studies have noticed negative correlations

between the two factors (Jung & Kim 2016, 4441). The positive correlation between the opinion leadership and opinion seeking have questioned the commonly held idea that these two concepts are at opposite ends of a scale. Therefore some research propose that it is possible for person to be both an opinion leader and an opinion seeker across different product categories as opinion leadership has been reported to be domain- or product-specific (Vigar-Ellis et al. 2015, 306).

The changes in a social and communication environments have reinforced the confusion in the relationship between the opinion leadership and opinion seeking. The individual's practices to form and maintain their social networks has changed. The membership and belonging to a social communities have lessened. A social networks are less defined by clear membership in specific communities and there are more by volatile relationships with various groups. The practices to search and find information have also changed. The internet and mobile technologies make it possible that people can be more selective when they seeking opinions from various sources, including new and old media and other people. This has brought two main changes to the flow of opinion. The difference between the news and opinions has been blurred and it has become more difficult to clearly separate real news from opinions. People are mixing up social media together with news and opinions produced and shared by mainstream media and independent media. This tendency has been intensifying as more and more people get the news, information and opinions from mobile media. Another change in media context is increased interactivity and diversity of channels in the news flow. Many recent studies have claimed that the role of opinion leaders have weakened in the current media environment because the most people now have direct access to diverse information sources. The other researches have suggested that the opinion leaders on the online environment are those who observe various information sources and choose the news and opinions, which they want to share with others. Therefore the effective opinion leadership requires active and selective following of the news and opinions (Jung & Kim 2016, 4441-4442).

The recent study of Jung and Kim (2016, 4439-4444) suggests that the active opinion leaders are also likely to be effective opinion seekers, which indicates ability to observe other people's opinions and include them into one's own decision-making and opinion-formation processes. The interactions between the opinion leadership and seekers range between four categories: opinion givers/seekers, opinion givers, opinion seekers and non-discussants. The study outcome suggests that those who both give and search opinions are more connected with various types of media and they have higher curating skills, which means "*the ability to critically choose content from extensively available sources and share the chosen content with people in social networks*". The curating skills are defined by critical seeking and active sharing. Critical curating skills include monitoring content from the numerous channels available and critically selecting and evaluating the content appropriate for decision-making decisions in a particular topic or issue. The networked essence of the online environment has made it much more effortless for people, who have skills and motivations, to choose and share content with others.

2.3   Research model

The research model of this study is based on previously presented theories that describe customer journey and interaction between consumers. Based on previous research, this study assume that interactions between customers, which are connected with online customer journey, emerge as a sharing and searching behavior of word of mouth content. The quantitative research of Henning-Thurau et al. (2004) offers good foundation to explore a motives to share word of mouth content during online customer journeys. According to that study the motives to share WOM are: venting negative feelings, vengeance, concern for other consumers, social benefits, economic incentives, helping the company, advice seeking, platform assistance and extraversion/positive self-enhancement. However, the results of the research indicate that, as a motive to share WOM, social benefits have the strongest positive impact to visit frequency at consumers' platform followed by extraversion/positive self-enhancement and concern for other consumers. Helping the company has no impact on visit frequency whereas venting negative feelings and platform assistance have negative impact on visit frequency. Social benefits followed by economic incentives, concern for other consumers and extraversion/positive self-enhancement have the strongest impact on the numbers of comments written on opinion platforms. Based on this, social benefits, concern for other consumers, economic incentives and extraversion/positive self-enhancement are selected to motives to share word of mouth content during online customer journey. The other motives identified by Henning-Thurau et al. (2004) are left outside this study, because they do not play a significant part of the consumers' WOM content share-out. Based on above-mentioned, in this study the hypotheses of motives that concern sharing word of mouth content during the online customer journey has been formed as follows:

H1a. Concern for other consumers increases consumers' tendency to share word of mouth content in online channels during online customer journey.

H1b. Social benefits increases consumers' tendency to share word of mouth content in online channels during online customer journey.

H1c. Economic incentives increases consumers' tendency to share word of mouth content in online channels during online customer journey.

H1d. Extraversion/Self-enhancement increases consumers' tendency to share word of mouth content in online channels during online customer journey.

The research literature suggest that there are number of motives that concern searching for other people's opinions as a part of word of mouth behavior. These opinions can be seen as an interaction that emerges during the online customer journey and therefore are part of a holistic customer experience. In a many

studies a risk reduction, dissonance reduction, to get information easily and determination of social position have been described as a strong motives to search other consumers' opinions. Information acquisition has also been found to be a significant motive for seeking other customers' opinions (Henning-Thurau and Walsh 2003; Goldsmith and Horowitz 2006). In addition to this the price awareness combined with the decision-making process seems to be a strong motive to seek opinions of others (Goldsmith and Horowitz 2006). However, the motives identified by Burton & Khammash (2010), Khammash (2008) and Khammash & Griffiths (2011) are excluded from the study, because the qualitative research does not offer reliable and valid measurement scales. Based on above-mentioned, in this study the hypotheses of motives that concern searching word of mouth content during the online customer journey has been formed as follows:

H2a. Risk reduction increases consumers' tendency to search word of mouth content from online channels during online customer journey.

H2b. Getting information easily increases consumers' tendency to search word of mouth content from online channels during online customer journey.

H2c. Determination of social position increases consumers' tendency to search word of mouth content from online channels during online customer journey.

H2d. Dissonance reduction increases consumers' tendency to search word of mouth content from online channels during online customer journey.

H2e. Price awareness increases consumers' tendency to search word of mouth content from online channels during online customer journey.

H2f. Information acquisition increases consumers' tendency to search word of mouth content from online channels during online customer journey.

The opinion leadership has been associated systematically with influence, or with information sharing or with both (Bertrandias & Goldsmith 2006, 27). Hence, it can be assumed that the opinion leadership impact on people's tendency to share their opinions. In this study the opinion leadership is seen as a factor that increases person's tendency to share WOM content during online customer journey. Based on this the hypothesis of this study has been formed as follows:

H3. Opinion leadership increases consumers' tendency to share word of mouth content in online channels during online customer journey.

The study of Jung and Kim (2016, 4452) indicates that the people with good curating skills are the opinion givers as well as opinion seekers. For that reason, it can be assumed that people with high curating skills more likely share their customer experiences and also more probably they search experiences of other

customers during the online customer journey. The concept of curating skills means the ability to critically select and actively share contents, which refers to both the opinion leadership and the opinion seeking behavior. Therefore there have to be connection between opinion leadership, opinion seeking and curating skills, which in turn affect the tendency to share and seek WOM content during online customer journey. Based on this the hypotheses of this study has been formed as follows:

H4a. Curating skills increases consumers' tendency to share word of mouth content in online channels during online customer journey.

H4b. Curating skills increases consumers' tendency to search word of mouth content from online channels during online customer journey.

H5a. Curating skills increases consumers' opinion leadership tendency.

H5b. Curating skills increases consumers' tendency to seek other people's opinions.

The opinion seekers acquire information to assist the purchase decision (Flynn et al. 1996, 138) suggesting that consumers actively search for word of mouth content shared by others. It can be assumed that the opinion seeking behavior has a positive impact on individual's activity to search WOM content during the online customer journey. Based on this, the hypothesis of this study has been formed as follows:

H6. Opinion seeking increases consumers' tendency to search word of mouth content from online channels during online customer journey.

Based on the arguments in the preceding paragraphs, a research model has been established in this study and it is presented in figure three. In this study, the motives to share and search consumer generated WOM content, describe the reasons for interactions between customers during online customer journey. These interactions take place in various channels on online context. The motives to share WOM in online channels during online customer journey are concern for others, social benefits, economic incentives and extraversion/positive self-enhancement, whereas motives to seek other consumers' experiences are risk reduction, to get information easily, dissonance reduction, prices awareness, determination of social position and information acquisition. Opinion leadership propensity and curating skills increases customers' tendency to share a word of mouth during online customer journey and thus engage in interaction with each other. The opinion seeking behavior and curating skills in turn increases customers' tendency to seek WOM content shared by other customers. The WOM content is shared through various online channels, while the customers also search word of mouth content from multiple online channels during online customer journey.
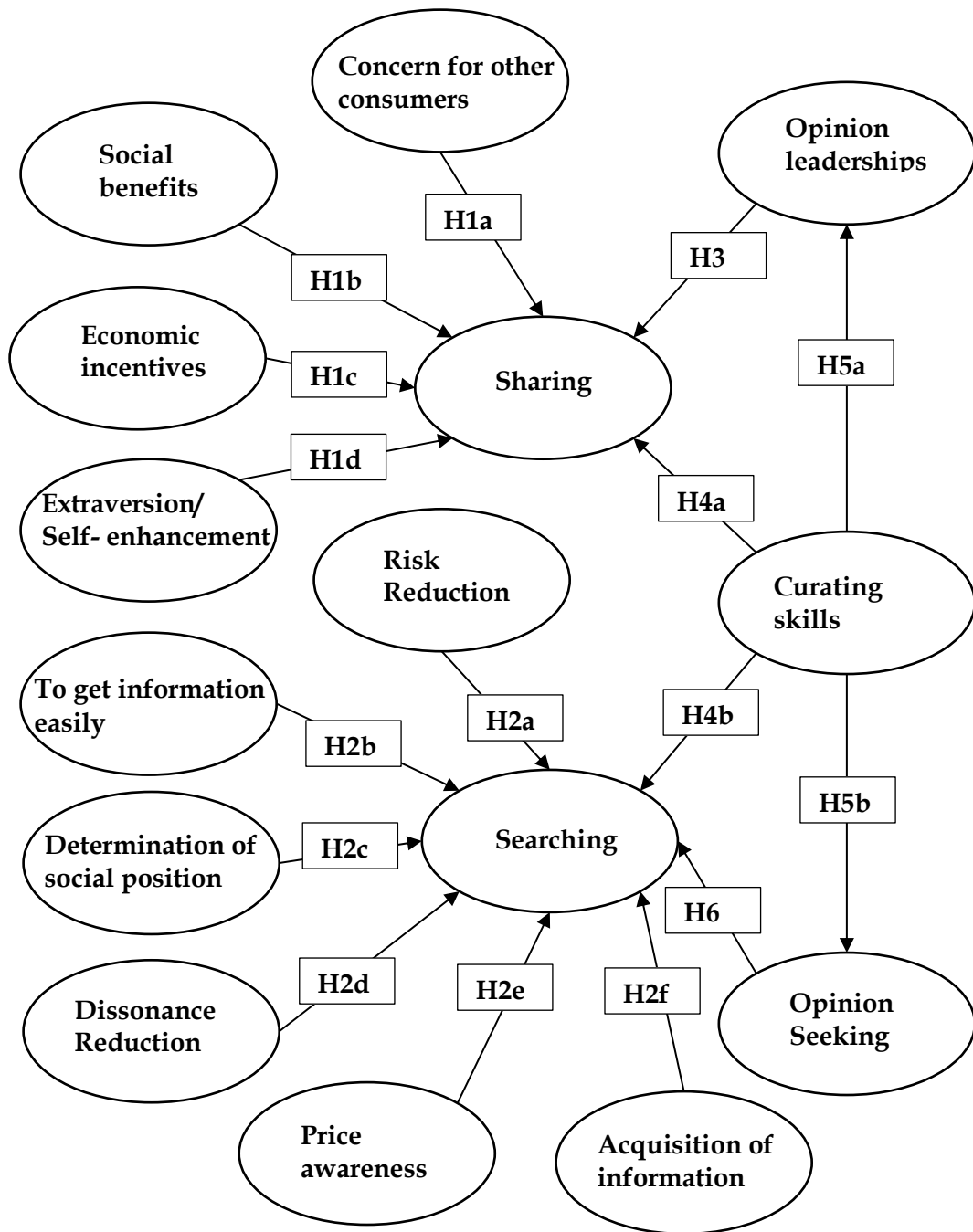
FIGURE 3 Research model

3 METHODOLOGY

The methodology consider a general approach to research problem. It includes the theoretical and philosophical presumptions upon which research is constructed and the impacts of these for the method or methods chosen. Method in turn comprises the techniques and procedures used to obtain and analyze research data (Saunders et al. 2011, 674). The aims of the study has an influence on methodological choices. Hence, it is important that chosen research method fits theory, hypotheses, and methodology. Study objectives can be classified into four categories: explorative, explanatory, descriptive and predictive. This research has an explanatory nature, because it attempts to find a causal relationships in order to explain the relationships between variables (Saunders 2011, 170-173).This chapter presents the methodological choices that were discovered the most suitable for this research. For a start, quantitative research method is considered. Methods about data collection and practical implementation are discussed next and finally data analysis processes are explained.

3.1 Quantitative research

Research design of this study is quantitative, and it is implemented by using a survey strategy. The quantitative research is generally connected with a deductive approach, where the focal point is on using data to test theory. The quantitative research examines relationships between variables, which are measured numerically and analyzed, by using a range of statistical techniques. Survey research is a traditional quantitative research strategy and it is generally associated with the deductive research approach. The survey research is a hot and generalized strategy in business and it is the most often used to correspond what, where, how much and how many questions. That is why it tends to be utilized for the exploratory and descriptive researches. The surveys using questionnaires permit the collection of standardized data from sizeable population in a very economical way, permitting facile comparison. The survey strategy permits researcher to gather quantitative data, which can be analyzed quantitatively by utilizing descriptive and inferential statistics. Furthermore, the data gathered exploiting survey strategy can be utilized to propose potential causes for a certain relationships between variables and to generate the models of these relationships. The data collected by the survey strategy is improbable to be as extensive as those collected by other research strategies. The data collection techniques included to the survey are questionnaire, structured observation and structured interviews (Saunders et al. 2011, 162-178).

3.2   Data collection and practical implementation

This study utilizes survey as a method of data collection, which is the best manner to gather information from a large sample of individuals, and therefore it suits well in this study as a method of data collection. The disadvantage of a survey method is that respondents are conscious how the information about their behavior is being gathered and this consciousness may affect their answers and create response bias. Survey data collection methods can be classified into three broad categories: self-completion methods, interviewer-completed methods and observation. Due to tight schedule and small budget of this study the self-completion method was selected as method to gather a data in this research. This self-completion survey uses structured questionnaires to gathering data. A structured questionnaire consist of a standard set of questions with answers to questions limited to a few predetermined, mutually exclusive and exhaustive outcomes. The respondents answer the questions without the presence of researcher or interviewer. The assumption is that the respondents have the knowledge and motivation to answer the questionnaire on their own. The greatest problem with any kind of self-completion questionnaire is the loss of researcher control. Also low response rate is disadvantage of this quantitative survey data (Hair et al. 2015, 208-218).

Self-completion questionnaires are delivered to respondents in many manners. In this case online survey was used and the questionnaire was delivered to the respondents by website link through the Facebook and by e-mail. This survey, like most online surveys nowadays, was completed via standardized online platform offered by company. Usually online surveys provide quick responses and high quality data. The other advantages of online surveys are that they are easy to administer, costs are low, respondents can be reach globally, data collection and analysis phase is fast, there are no interviewer bias and missing data in survey responses is eliminated. The disadvantage of the online survey is that the internet access limits the respondents (Hair et al. 2015, 213-216.)

In this study one questionnaire was constructed by using Finnish language and Webropol 3.0 online survey platform. The data was collected from two sources: the Facebook social media platform users by using snowball sampling and the students of the University of Jyväskylä by using convenience sampling. The background information, such as the purpose of the survey, who conducts the survey and how long it takes and some other instructions to complete was included at the start of the survey. In addition, respondents were motivated to participate via a raffle in which two gift certificate of ticket master ticket agency worth 75.00 euros could be won. The data was gathered during 21.4.-5.5.2017. In total, 237 responses were received.

3.2.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of 16 different question groups, including total 111 potential questions or claims. Moreover, the questionnaire included three demographic questions at begin of the questionnaire asking about the respondents sex, age and occupation. The questionnaire was created by using mostly structured claims. Only one question was open question concerning the most recent significant online purchase. Multi-item scale measures were applied to ensure reliability. A multi-item scale consist of number of closely related individual statements, whose responses are combined into a composite score or summated ratings to measure a concept. The statements (items) need to be closely related, represent only a single construct, and must completely represent the construct, which is measured with the multi-item scale. (Hair et al. 2015, 247). In addition all items were measured via established and validated scales adopted from prior per-reviewed journals. Established scales are those that have been used in the past by researcher and their reliability and validity are acceptable (Hair et al 2015, 250.) All of the questions can be found from the last page of this study (APPENDIX).

The measurement scale to the motives to share word of mouth: concern for other consumers, social benefits, and extraversion/positive self-enhancement consisted of four items, which were adopted from Henning-Thurau et al. (2004). The measurement scale of economic incentives concerning motives to share WOM consisted of two items, which were adopted from Henning-Thurau et al. (2004). Even though the scale has only two items concerning economic incentives, acceptable reliability required were proven in a study of Hennin-Thurau et al. (2004). The multiple-indicator items were measured using an unbalanced five-point Likert scale to the positive end: 1= strongly disagree, 2= slightly agree, 3= somewhat agree, 4= agree 5= strongly agree. Likert scale is suitable to measure variables that meter an internal subjective feeling, for which person more or less agrees with and which corresponds more or less to individual's opinions (Metsämuuronen 2011, 110.)

Measurement scales, which concerned motives to search WOM such as risk reduction, to get information easily, price consciousness and information acquisition were adopted from Goldsmith and Horowitz (2006). Measurement scales, which concerned motives such as determination of social position and dissonance were adopted from Henning-Thurau and Walsh (2003). The studies of Goldsmith and Horowitz (2006) and Henning-Thurau and Walsh (2003) both offered previously tested measurement scale for motives to search opinions of other consumers. The measurement scale of Goldsmith and Horowitz (2006) contains three to six items per motive while the measurement scale of Henning-Thurua & Walsh (2003) contains only two items per motive. However, the reliability of the scales used in study were proven by Henning-Thurua & Walsh (2003), although scales have only two items. The length of the survey placed limitations to number of statements and for that reason to the amount of items concerning, risk reduction, to get information easily, price awareness and information acquisition, were limited to three items. The multiple-indicator items were measured using

an unbalanced five-point Likert scale to the positive end: 1= strongly disagree, 2= slightly agree, 3= somewhat agree, 4= agree 5= strongly agree.

Opinion leadership was measured with six items derived from Flynn et al.'s (1996) measure of opinion leadership. For each item, respondents indicated their positions on a five-point Likert scale: 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. Opinion seeking was measured with six items derived from Flynn et al.'s (1996) measure of opinion seeking. For each item, respondents indicated their positions on the same five-point Likert scale as was used to measure opinion leadership. Curating skills was measured by ten items derived from Jung and Kim (2016) measure of curating skills. For each item respondents indicated their positions on a five-point Likert scale: 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

To ensure that the items suited to the research context, some modifications in the wording were made. The items regarding opinion leadership, opinion seeking, curating skills, motives to share and search word of mouth were translated from English to Finnish. The translation of the items was done in a manner that conserved the original meaning, even though this meant insignificant changes in diction.

3.3   Data analysis

The quantitative data analysis, calculations and chart drawing were performed by using IBM SPSS Statistics analysis software. Before the data analysis, the data had to be transferred from Webropol 3.0 to IBM SPSS Statistics form and prepared so the data analysis could be done. The data was inspected to ensure their completeness and consistency. Insufficient responses were located. The missing data was replaced by using mean substitution. However, 13 responses were eliminated as most of the answers had not been answered. Next, basic statistical analysis of the data was done, including calculating central tendencies, dispersions, frequencies and percentages of distributions. Many of these results are included in the section that concerns demographic factors.

After basic analysis, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was done by using IBM SPSS Statistics 24. The purpose of the exploratory factor analysis was to reveal different combinations of responses and categorize them into latent factors. Expressed in another way, distinct variables are categorized into factors by evaluating how strongly the responses load to a certain factor. Exploratory factor analysis is very suitable for situations in which researcher has idea, how some of these variables are supposed to be related to each other (Metsämuuronen 2011, 667.) Exploratory factor analysis was done as a pre-analysis of confirmatory factor analysis in order to eliminate unsuitable variables.

The next analysis was confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), which was performed by using Amos 24 Graphics software. Confirmatory factor analysis ex-

plore research model or the theory and confirm that data supports model. Confirmatory factor analysis is suitable for situations, in which researcher has a theory how the variables should connected to each other (Metsämuuronen 2011, 686). In a final stage of analysis, Structural Equation Model (SEM) was formed and research hypotheses were tested.

4   RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of this study, which were found by using the methods introduced in the previous chapter. For a start, demographic and other background information of the respondents are introduced so that the reader is able to form perception about the respondents and the sample in general. Next the results of confirmatory factor analysis are introduced in two stages. First, the measurement model is viewed and after that the structural model is presented.

4.1   Demographic and background information

The most of the respondents were women 128 (57.1%) whereas male respondents were total 96 (42.9 %). Majority of respondents were under the age of 55. The largest age group in this study was 18 - 25 years old who made up 39, 7% of the respondents. The next largest age group was 26 - 35 years old (36.2%) and the third largest age group was 36 - 45 years old (12.5%). The most of the respondents were students (60.3%) and more than third of the respondents were working persons (36.6%). Table five present these results more specifically.

More than one-third of the respondents purchased products and services through online a few times per year and 29.0% of the respondents made online shopping once a month whereas 25.0% of the respondents bought something via online 2-3 times per a month. Almost a third of the respondents (28.3%) reported that their most recent significant online purchase cost 50 to 100 euros while only 3.1 percent of the respondents used more than thousand euros to their latest most significant online purchase. Table five present these results in more detail.

The majority of the respondents (63.8%) had never shared word of mouth content during their online customer journey while 31.3 % of the respondents had shared WOM contend only a few times per year during their online customer journey. However, according the results of this study everyone is sometimes looking for other consumers' word of mouth content during their online customer journey. Over twenty percent of the respondents (21.0%) were searching word of mouth content, shared by other customers', from online 2-3 times per month, 23.7% of the respondents searched WOM content from the other customers once a month and 25.9% of the respondents were looking for word of mouth content from online a few times per year during their online customer journey. Table five present these results more specifically.

According to the respondents, a piece of clothing or footwear was the most recent popular significant online purchase (23.9%). The next most popular significant online purchase was a travel tickets and accommodation (19.4%). The respondents also reported that the third most popular online shopping category was a household appliances and electronic devices (14.9%). Table five presents these results in greater detail.

TABLE 5 Demographic and background factors of the respondents.

	N	%
Gender		
Male	96	42.9
Female	128	57.1
Total	224	100.0
Age		
18-25	89	39.7
26-35	81	36.2
36-45	28	12.5
46-55	23	10.3
56-65	2	0.9
Over 65	1	0.4
Total	224	100.0
Career		
Student	135	60.3
Working person	82	36.6
Taking care of children at home	2	0.9
Retired	1	0.4
Unemployed	3	1.3
person is absent from work for any other reason	1	0.4
Total	224	100.0
Frequency of online purchase		
Daily	1	0.4
A few times a week	4	1.8
Once a week	19	8.5
2-3 times per month	56	25.0
Once a month	65	29.0
A few times per year	79	35.3
Total	224	100.0
Price of the most recent significant online purchase		
Less than 20 euros	18	8.1
20-50 euros	48	21.5
51-100 euros	63	28.3
101-250 euros	39	17.5
251-500 euros	36	16.1
501-800 euros	8	3.6
801-1 000 euros	4	1.8
More than 1 000 euros	7	3.1
Total	223	100.0
Latest significant online purchase		
Clothing and footwear	53	23.9
Household appliances and electronic devices	33	14.9
Pet food and supplies	8	3.6
Travel tickets and accommodation	43	19.4

Books, e-books and DVD recordings	15	6.8
Music recordings and musical instruments	5	2.3
Food, health food and nutritional supplements	7	3.2
Games and gaming	8	3.6
Sports and leisure	15	6.8
Channel subscriptions and other licenses	4	1.8
Event, cinema, museum and theater tickets	8	3.6
Decoration and renovation	4	1.8
Cosmetics and skin care products	3	1.4
Optician products	4	1.8
Other products and services	12	5.4
Total	222	100.0
Sharing WOM during online customer journey		
A few times a week	1	0.4
Once a week	2	0.9
2-3 times per month	3	1.3
Once a month	5	2.2
A few times per year	70	31.3
Never	143	63.8
Total	224	100.0
Seeking WOM during online customer journey		
Daily	5	2.2
A few times a week	31	13.8
Once a week	30	13.4
2-3 times per month	47	21.0
Once a month	53	23.7
A few times per year	58	25.9
Total	224	100.0

4.2 Online channels to share and seek WOM during customer journey

According to the respondents, the most important online channel, where customers shared word of mouth content during online customer journey was Facebook (mean of rankings 1.67). The next most important channel of sharing WOM content during online customer journey were forums (mean of rankings 2.33) and the third most important channel of sharing word of mouth content during online customer journey was WhatsApp (mean of rankings 2.67) whereas the least important online channel of sharing WOM content during online customer journey was blog (mean of rankings 7.00). According to the results, the relationship between online channels, in which customers share and search word of mouth content, is problematic, because customers are searching WOM content shared by the other customers partly from different online channels compared to

channels, where they share their word of mouth content during online customer journey. The most important channel from which respondents were searching word of mouth content during online customer journey were forums (mean of rankings 1.3), the next most important online channel to search WOM content during online customer journey, were product comparison sites (mean of rankings 1.8) and the third most important online channel to search word of mouth content during online customer journey, were a blogs (mean of rankings 3.0) whereas the least important channel to search WOM content during online customer journey was snapchat (mean of rankings 9.0). The results also indicated that the customers are sharing and searching word of mouth content at every stage of their online customer journey. However, there were hardly any differences between the channels, which customers are looking for WOM content during online customer journey. The respondents placed the forums in the first place at the information searching stage, in the second place at the evaluation of alternatives stage and in the first place at the purchase transaction and post-purchase consumption stages during online customer journey. For example, the respondents ranked forums in the first place at information searching stage, in the second place at evaluation of alternatives stage and in the first place both purchase transaction and post-purchase consumption stages. Table six and seven presents these results in greater detail.

TABLE 6 Sharing WOM through different channels during online customer journey

	Ranking						
	The most important		The second important		The third important		Mean of the rankings*
Channel	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Facebook	24	29.6	12	14.8	18	22.2	**1.67**
WhatsApp	19	23.5	18	22.2	8	9.9	**2.67**
Instagram	3	3.7	7	8.6	6	7.4	5.33
Twitter	0	0.0	5	6.2	3	3.7	6.67
Snapchat	2	2.5	3	3.7	6	7.4	6.33
Blog	0	0.0	3	3.7	3	3.7	7.00
Product comparison sites	19	23.5	9	11.1	9	11.1	3.33
Forums	12	14.8	16	19.8	17	21.0	**2.33**
e-mail	2	2.5	8	9.9	11	13.6	4.33
Total	**85**	**100.0**	**85**	**100.0**	**85**	**100.0**	

*) The ranking of importance is calculated: 1 = the most important, 2 = the second important …9= the least important

TABLE 7 Searching WOM from different channels during online customer journey

	Information searching		Evaluation of alternatives		Purchase transaction		Post-purchase consumption		Mean of rankings
Channel	N	Ranking*	N	Ranking*	N	Ranking*	N	Ranking*	
Facebook	65	4	46	4	48	4	58	4	4.0
WhatsApp	16	6	22	5	18	5	31	5	5.3
Instagram	22	5	12	6	11	6	29	6	5.8
Twitter	8	7	4	7	7	8	10	7	7.3
Snapchat	1	9	1	9	1	9	6	9	9.0

Blog	99	3	70	3	50	3	75	3	3.0
Product com-parison sites	178	2	183	1	126	2	93	2	1.8
Forums	183	1	173	2	153	1	156	1	1.3
e-mail	5	8	3	8	9	7	8	8	7.8
Total	**577**		**514**		**423**		**466**		

*) 1 = the most important channel, 2= the second important channel …9=the least important channel.

The results of the study revealed that according to the respondents to get information easily (1. ranking) was the most important motive to search word of mouth content at the information searching stage during online customer journey. At next stage of the online customer journey, when consumers evaluate alternatives, the most significant motive to search WOM content during online customer journey was risk reduction (1. ranking). According to the respondents, the most significant motive to search word of mouth content at the purchase transaction stage during online customer journey was to get information easily (1. ranking). Respondents also reported that the most important motive to search WOM content at the post-purchase consumption stage during online customer journey was the determination of social position (1. ranking). These results suggest that the motives to search word of mouth content vary at the different stages of the online customer journey. Table eight presents these results in greater detail.

TABLE 8 Rankings of motives to search WOM content at the different stages of the online customer journey in order of importance

	Information searching Ranking	Evaluation of alternatives Ranking	Purchase transaction Ranking	Post-purchase consumption Ranking	Total Ranking
Determination of social position	3	3	3	1	3
Risk reduction	2	1	2	3	2
To get information easily	1	2	1	2	1

4.3 Validation of the measurement model

In this study, the explorative factor analysis was used as pre-analysis of confirmatory factor analysis in order to eliminate unsuitable variables. In explorative factor analysis the motive that measured concern for other consumers loaded into the same factor with Extraversion/self-enhancement motive, which suggest that these both variables measure the same concept. Jonah Bergen has suggest that sharing of word of mouth is self-serving and drive what people share even outside their awareness and therefore concern for other consumers can be seen as self-enhancement (Berger 2014, 588.) Therefore, these two motives were combined as one factor.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) examines the measurement model or theory and confirms if the data supports the measurement model whereas the exploratory factor analysis explores the structure of correlation matrix and search

an explanation for a model or theory from the combinations of variables. Essentially, the analysis includes five stages. In the first stage, the measurement model is specified, which means defining and clarifying the theoretical model. In the next step, the identifiability of the measurement model is examined. If all the parameters in the model are identifiable, the model is also identifiable. In the third phase, the values of the parameters in the model are estimated and in the fourth stage the hypothesis of the model are tested. In the last step the adequacy of the model is examined through key indicators (Metsämuuronen 2011, 684).

4.3.1 Measurement model

Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted with Amos 24.0 Graphics based on the results derived from the explanatory factor analysis with reduced amount of items. This way the factor structure was modified to form better to fit with theory. Confirmatory factor analysis was carried out in two parts. Firstly, the measurement model about sharing word of mouth content during the online customer journey was tested and then the measurement model about searching WOM content during the online customer journey was tested. In order to explain better how the motives to share and search word of mouth content during online customer journey influence on their searching frequency, also connections between opinion leadership, opinion seeking and curating skills were tested.

The first stage of confirmatory factor analysis was to examine the measurement model. In order that the measurement model can be considered functional, certain requirements must be met. First, the goodness of the model was evaluated with factor loadings. According to Karjaluoto and Munnukka (2016, 10) the basic rule for evaluation of factor loadings is that they must be over 0.60 and correlations between factors under 0.80. The most items of the measurement model of sharing word of mouth content during online customer journey loaded satisfactorily on factors, since the loadings exceeded the limit of 0.6. However, five items, CFOC1, SB2, OL2, OL4 and CS 8 were slightly below the limit. Almost all items about the measurement model of searching WOM content during online customer journey also loaded satisfactorily on factors. Only loadings of the items DOSP1 and TGIE3 were slightly below the limit of 0.6. However, the items, which were slightly below the limit 0.6 were kept in the model in order to achieve better construct validity and capture better theorized and hypothesized nature of the measured constructs. The factor loadings of the confirmatory factor analysis are presented in more detail in table nine and ten.

TABLE 9 Factor loadings and Cronbach alphas concerning sharing WOM content

Factor	Cronbach alphas	Item	Standardized loadings
Self-enhancement (SE)	0.801	EVSE3	0,682
		EVSE1	0,778
		CFOC3	0,942
		CFOC1	0,527
Social benefits (SB)	0.732	SB3	0,802
		SB2	0,557

		SB1	0,734
Economic incentives (EI)	0.846	EI2	0,761
		EI1	0,964
opinion leadership (OL)	0.662	OL2	0,560
		OL4	0,551
		OL6	0,828
Curating skills (CS)	0.821	CS8	0,555
		CS9	0,814

TABLE 10 Factor loadings and Cronbach alphas concerning the searching WOM content

Factor	Cronbach alphas	Item	Standardized loadings
Determination of social position (DOSP)	0.647	DOSP2	0,837
		DOSP1	0,575
Risk reduction (RR)	0.741	RR3	0,687
		RR2	0,869
To get information easily (TGIE)	0.592	TGIE3	0,575
		TGIE2	0,689
Opinion seeking (OS)	0.855	OS1	0,735
		OS4	0,827
		OS5	0,855
		OS6	0,689
Curating skills (CS)	0.821	CS8	0,678
		CS9	0,883
		CS10	0,772

The reliability of the model and also the reliability of the factors can be examined through a Cronbach alpha. The closer to number one the Cronbach alpha value is, the more uniform indicator is. In the literature there are different opinions about limit-value of Cronbach alpha. Metsämuuronen (2011, 547) suggest that only values under 0.60 should not be considered whereas Bagozzi & Yi (2012, 14) state that the acceptable level to Cronbach alpha is 0.70. In this study, all Cronbach alpha values concerning the measurement model of sharing word of mouth during online customer journey exceeded the limit of 0.60 (table 9). Cronbach alpha values about the measurement model of searching WOM content during online customer journey exceeded the limit of 0.60 except the item of to get information easily (0,592), which indicates the low reliability of that factor (table 10).

The validity of the measurement model is evaluated through Average Variance Extracted (AVE), factor correlations and the squire root of AVE. The convergent validity can be considered to be good if AVE value is over 0.5 (Karjaluoto & Munnukka 2016, 13.) In this study, almost all AVE-values about sharing word of mouth content during online customer journey exceeded limit of 0.50, however AVE-values about social benefits (0.497) and opinion leadership (0.434) were below 0.50 limit and for that reason the measurement model does not meet the convergent validity criteria for the whole measurement model. The AVE-values about the model of searching WOM content during online customer journey met the requirements of the 0.50 limit, except motive to get information easily (0.442)

and therefore the model does not either meet the convergent validity criteria for the whole measurement model. The criterion of discriminant validity by Fornell-Larcker criterion is that the square root taken from AVE value must be greater than the correlation between the latent construct and other latent constructs in all of the cases. In this study, all square root AVE values in both measurement exceeded the values of factor correlations clearly. On this basis, discriminant validity was achieved. Average Variance Extracted (AVE), factor correlations and the squire root of AVE that concern sharing word of mouth content during online customer journey are displayed in table 11, whereas Average Variance Extracted (AVE), factor correlations and the squire root of AVE that concern searching WOM content during online customer journey are displayed in table 12.

TABLE 11 AVE values and squired AVE-values about measurement model of sharing WOM content during online customer journey

	AVE	CS	SE	SB	OL	EI
Curating skills (CS)	0.512	0,716				
Self-enhancement (SE)	0.547	0,153	0.740			
Social benefits (SB)	0.497	0,071	0.191	0.705		
Opinion leadership (OL	0.434	0,178	0.167	0.371	0.659	
Economic incentives (EI)	0.754	0,012	-0.167	0.092	0.167	0.868

TABLE 12 AVE values and squired AVE-values about measurement model of seeking WOM content during online customer journey

	AVE	OS	CS	DOSP	RR	TGIE
Opinion Seeking (OS)	0.609	0.780				
Curating skills (CS)	0.612	0.012	0.783			
Determination of social position (DOSP)	0.521	0.351	0.276	0.722		
Risk reduction (RR)	0.614	0.604	-0.013	0.292	0.784	
To get information easily (TGIE)	0.442	0.479	-0.032	0.381	0.621	0.665

4.3.2 Structural model

The explanatory power of the theoretically suggested model is typically analyzed with multiple indexes that measure the goodness-of-fit of the model. Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) measures the overall adequacy of the structural model and it is the most important indicator of the goodness-of-fit of the model. According to Metsämuuronen (2011, 697) RMSEA value should be under 0.06 so that the model can be accepted. Normed Fit Index (NFI), In-cremental Fit index (IFI) and Comparative Fit Index (CFI) also describe model's functionality and their values should be as follows NFI and IFI over 0.90 and CFI over 0.95 (Metsämuuronen 2011, 697). The proposed model of sharing word of mouth content during online customer journey was accepted, because RMSEA value (<0.000) was under 0.06 limit. In the other hand, the model of sharing word of mouth during online customer journey is weak in some respects, because NFI

(0.794) is under 0.90. However, Metsämuuronen (2011, 697) states that the measurement model may be weak in some respects, although it would generally be reasonably good. The indexies' values of the model that concern sharing WOM content during online customer journey are presented in more detail in figure five. The proposed model that concern searching word of mouth content during online customer journey was also accepted, because RMSEA value (0.042) was under 0.06 limit. Other indexes, that describe the goodness of the model, were also good and therefore model has a good fit. The indexies' values that concern the model of searching WOM content during online customer journey are presented in more detail in figure six.

Relationships between the factors were evaluated with path coefficients (β) and R^2 values as well as with the significances of these values. R^2 indicates how many percentages variables together account for a dependent latent variable (Metsämuuronen 2011, 694). If the R^2 values are under 0, 3, it indicates that the variables do not explain the latent variables (Metsämuuronen 2011, 698.) In this study, the opinion leadership and motives that concern sharing word of mouth content during online customer journey do not directly influence on sharing frequency of the WOM content. Also in a case of searching word of mouth content during online customer journey, the motives do not directly affect the frequency of search WOM content, but they have an indirect impact on searching frequency through opinion seeking and curating skills. Motives that concern searching word of mouth content during online customer journey explain 41 percent of opinion seeking behavior and ten percent of curating skills. R^2 values of the structural models that concern sharing and searching WOM content during online customer journey are presented in more detail in figures five and six.

The path coefficients indicate the strength of the connection between the factors attached to each other (Bagozzi & Yi 2012, 12.) The path coefficient can have values ranging from -1 to 1, and the farther the value is from 0, the stronger the correlation is between the variables (Hair et al. 2014, 170.) In the case of sharing word of mouth content during online customer journey, the path coefficient values were low and the p values were high. Therefore self-enhancement ($\beta=0.102$, $p> 0.05$), social benefits ($\beta=-0.119$, $p> 0.05$), economic incentives ($\beta=0.033$, $p> 0.05$) and opinion leadership ($\beta=0.025$, $p> 0.05$) had no effect on sharing frequency of WOM content. Also, curating skills ($\beta=-0.242$, $p> 0.05$) had no significant impact on sharing frequency of WOM content. Curating skills ($\beta=0.176$, $p> 0.05$) also had no significant effect on opinion leadership. The path coefficients of the model that concern sharing WOM content during online customer journey are presented in more detail in figure four.

In the case that concern searching word of mouth content during online customer, journey risk reduction ($\beta=-0.084$, $p> 0.05$), to get information easily ($\beta=0.012$, $p> 0.01$) and determination of social position ($\beta=-0.065$, $p> 0.05$) had no impact on searching frequency of WOM content. Instead, opinion seeking ($\beta=-0.340$, $p< 0.001$) had significant impact on searching frequency of WOM content and curating skills ($\beta=-0.155$, $p< 0.05$) had significant effect on opinion seeking propensity. In addition to above, determination of social position ($\beta= 0.345$,

p<0.05), as a motive to search word of mouth content during online customer journey, had significant impact on curating skills. Risk reduction (β= 0,485, p>0.001), as a motive to search WOM content during online customer journey, had significant impact on opinion seeking. The path coefficients that concern the searching WOM content during online customer journey are presented in more detail in figure five.
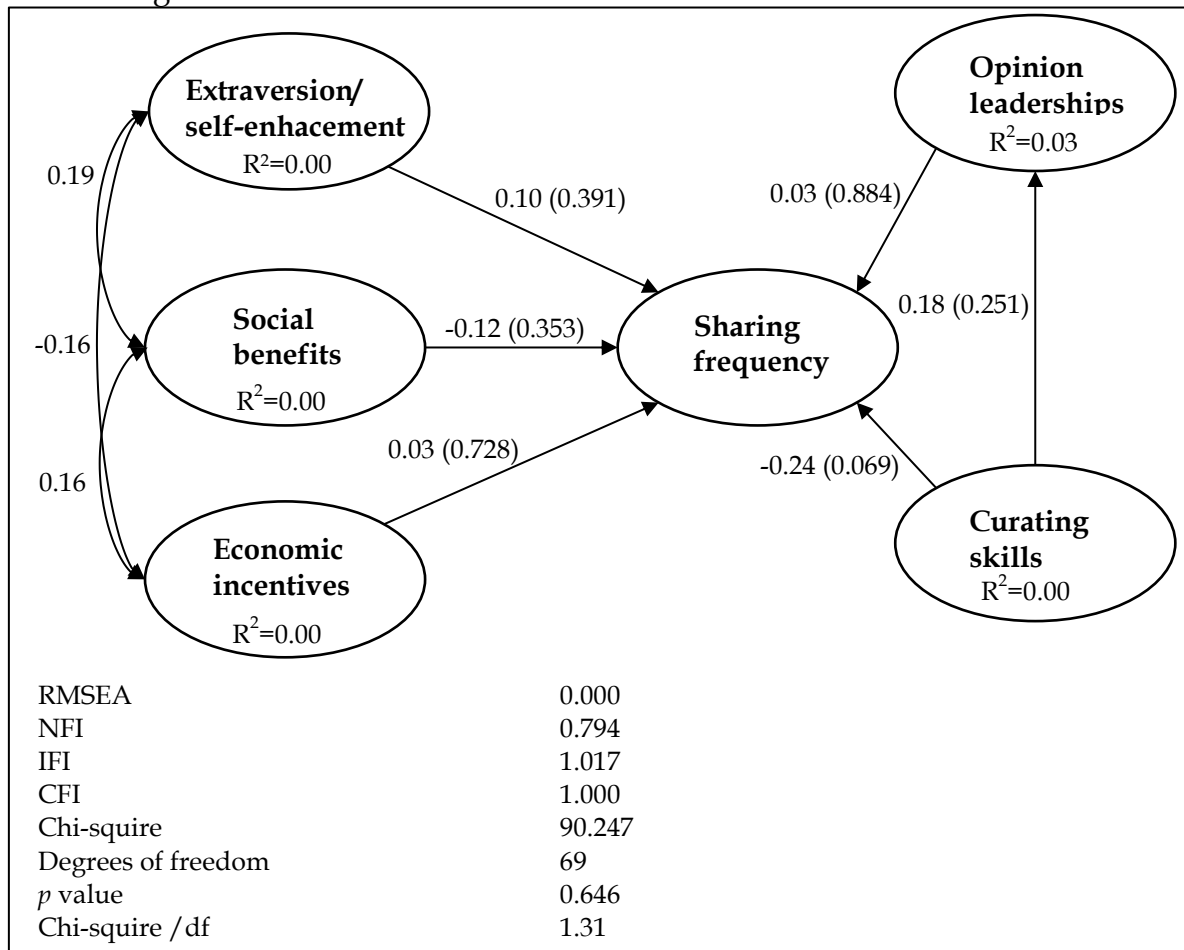
Figure 4 Empirical model of sharing WOM during online customer journey (p-values in parentheses)
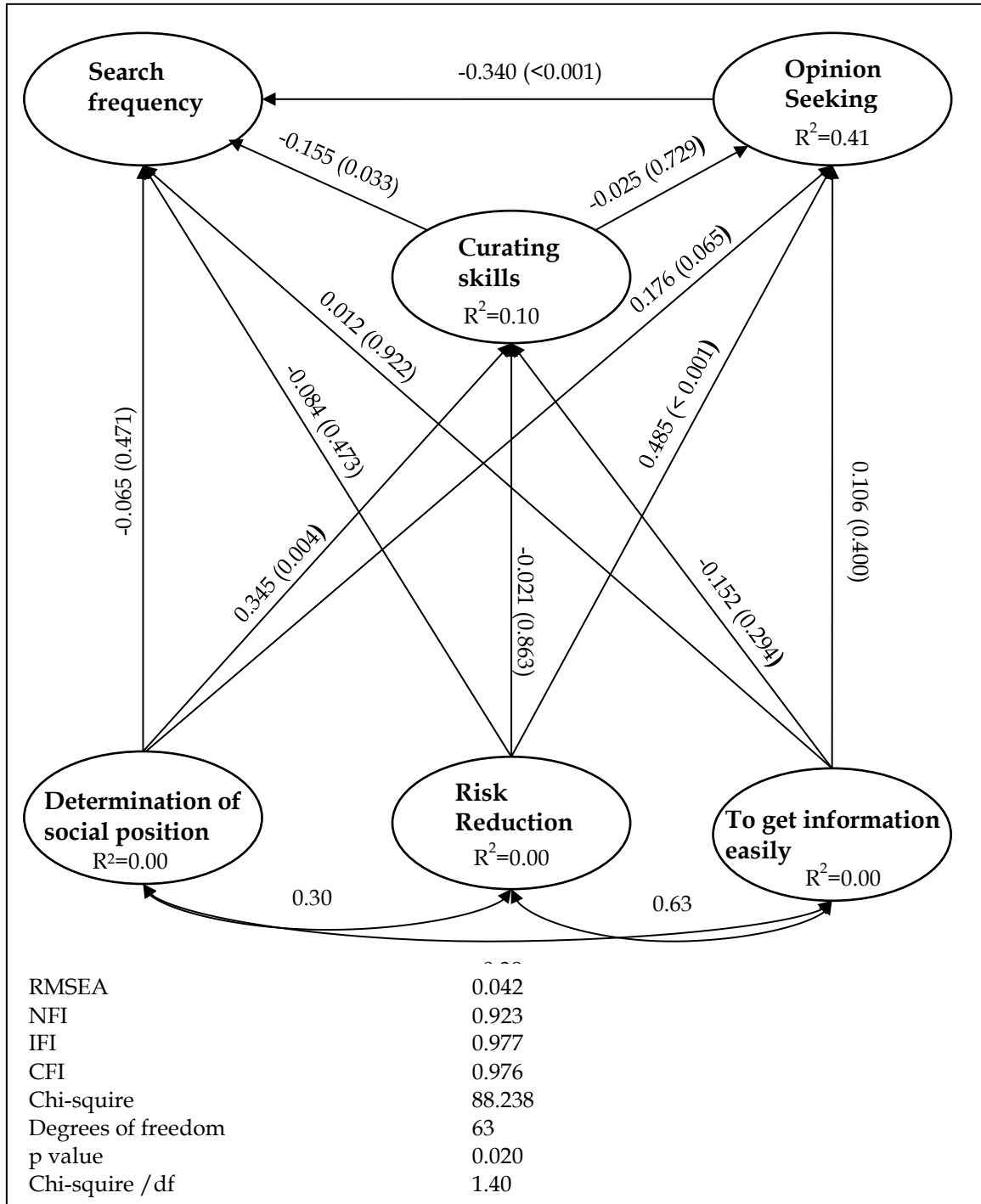
Figure 5 Extended empirical model of searching WOM content during online customer journey (p-values in parentheses)

4.3.3 Direct effects

Based on the results, one can evaluate which hypotheses were supported and which were not.

H1a. Concern for other consumers increases consumers' tendency to share word of mouth content in online channels during online customer journey.

The hypothesis H1a was not supported in this study, because the concern for other consumers loaded to the same factor with Extraversion/self-enhancement during explorative factor analysis. This suggest that these both variables measure the same concept. Jonah Bergen has suggest that sharing of word of mouth is self-serving and drive what people share even outside their awareness and therefore concern for other consumers can be seen as a part of self-enhancement (Berger 2014, 588.)

H1b. Social benefits increases consumers' tendency to share word of mouth content in online channels during online customer journey.

The hypothesis H1b was not supported in this study. The impact of social benefits on frequency of sharing a word of mouth content was not significant in this study (β=-0.119, p= 0.353).

H1c. Economic incentives increases consumers' tendency to share word of mouth content in online channels during online customer journey.

The hypothesis H1c was not supported in this study. The path coefficient between the economic incentives and the frequency of sharing a word of mouth content was 0.033 and p-value 0.728. Therefore there is not significant relationship between variables.

H1d. Extraversion/Self-enhancement increases consumers' tendency to share word of mouth content in online channels during online customer journey.

The hypothesis H1d was not supported in this study. Path coefficient between extraversion/self-enhancement and frequency of sharing a word of mouth content was 0.102 and p-value was 0.391, which indicated that the relationship between these two variables is weak, but not significant.

H2a. Risk reduction increases consumers' tendency to search word of mouth content from online channels during online customer journey.

The hypothesis H2a was not supported in this study. Path coefficient between the risk reduction and the frequency of searching word of mouth content was -0.084 and p-value was 0.473, which indicate that there is no significant relationship between these two variables.

H2b. Getting information easily increases consumers' tendency to search word of mouth content from online channels during online customer journey.

The hypothesis H2b was not supported in this study. Path coefficient between getting information easily and frequency of searching word of mouth content was 0.025 and p-value was 0.922, which demonstrated that there is no significant relationship between these two variables.

H2c. Determination of social position increases consumers' tendency to search word of mouth content from online channels during online customer journey.

The hypothesis H2c was not supported in this study. Path coefficient between determination of social position and frequency of searching word of mouth content was -0.065 and p-value was 0.474, which demonstrate that there is no significant relationship between these two variables.

H2d. Dissonance reduction increases consumers' tendency to search word of mouth content from online channels during online customer journey.

The hypothesis H2d was not supported in this study, because during the exploratory factor analysis items (DR1 and DR2), which measure dissonance reduction, loaded to different factors and they had to be removed for further analysis.

H2e. Price awareness increases consumers' tendency to search word of mouth content from online channels during online customer journey.

The hypothesis H2e was not supported in this study, because during the exploratory factor analysis items (PA1 and PA3), which measure price awareness, loaded to different factors and they had to be removed for further analysis.

H2f. Information acquisition increases consumers' tendency to search word of mouth content from online channels during online customer journey.

The hypothesis H2f was not supported in this study, because during the exploratory factor analysis items (IA1 and IA3), which measure information acquisition, loaded to different factors and they had to be removed for further analysis.

H3. Opinion leadership increases consumers' tendency to share word of mouth content in online channels during online customer journey.

The hypothesis H3 was not supported in this study. Path coefficient between the opinion leadership and the frequency of sharing word of mouth content was 0.025 and p-value was 0.884, which demonstrate that there is not significant relationship between these variables.

H4a. Curating skills increases consumers' tendency to share word of mouth content in online channels during online customer journey.

The hypothesis H4a was not supported in this study. Path coefficient between curating skills and frequency of sharing word of mouth content was -0.242, but p-value was 0.069, which indicate that the negative relationship between these two variables is not significant

H4b. Curating skills increases consumers' tendency to search word of mouth content from online channels during online customer journey.

The hypothesis H4b was supported in this study. Curating skills have a week significant negative effect on frequency of searching word of mouth content, because path coefficient between them was -0.155 and p-value was 0.033.

H5a. Curating skills increases consumers' opinion leadership tendency.

The hypothesis H5a was not supported in this study. Path coefficient between curating skills and opinion leadership was 0.176, but p-value was 0.251, which indicate that the relationship between these two variables was not significant.

H5b. Curating skills increases consumers' tendency to seek other people's opinions.

The hypothesis H5b was not supported in this study. Path coefficient between curating skills and opinion seeking was 0.025 and p-value was 0.729, which demonstrate that there is not significant relationship between variables.

H6. Opinion seeking increases consumers' tendency to search word of mouth content from online channels during online customer journey.

The hypothesis H6 was supported in this study. Path coefficient between opinion searching behavior and frequency of searching word of mouth content was -0.340 and p-value was <0.001, which indicated that opinion searching behavior has a significant negative effect on searching word of mouth content during online customer journey.

5   CONCLUSIONS

The final chapter of this study brings together the empirical findings and presents their connections with the previous studies. Simultaneously, the research questions set at the beginning of this particular study are answered and based on this a managerial implications are proposed. Next, the evaluation and limitations of this study are discussed and finally the opportunities for future research are proposed.

5.1   Theoretical contributions

This study examined interaction between customers during online customer journey, including stages that customers go through during their online buying process and various online channels in which interaction takes place. The theoretical framework for the research was shaped from the theories of the online customer journey and interaction, including word of mouth behavior. There were one main research problem, which is described below.

How does customer-to-customer interaction emerge at the different stages of the online customer journey?

Three assisting research problems are described below:

What are the motives behind the customer-to-customer interaction during online customer journey?

How does the motives behind the customer-to-customer interaction vary at the different stages of the online customer journey?

What are the most important online channels for customer-to-customer interaction at the different stages of the online customer journey?

The interaction between customers occurs during the online customer journey by sharing and searching word of mouth content. This study revealed that sharing WOM content during the online customer journey is much less common than searching WOM content from online shared by other customers. This is align with the research of Bernstein et al. (2013, 27-28) which state that only a small fraction of users audiences in the social media provide feedback over the month and therefore it is difficult to estimate the size of the audience regarding the publication of the social media.

According to Henning-Thurau et al. (2004) concern for other consumers, social benefits, economic incentives and positive extraversion/self-enhancement are significant motives to share the consumer generated content. In this study

however the items that measured concern for other consumers and extraversion/self-enhancement loaded for the same factor, which suggest that these items measure the same concept. This support the study of Jonah Berger (2014) which suggest that sharing of word of mouth is self-serving and guide what people share even outside their awareness and then it can be concluded that concern for other consumers may be a part of person's impression management and thus self-enhancement.

Henning-Thurau and Walsh (2003) and Goldsmith and Horowitz (2006) have suggest that the risk reduction, dissonance reduction, price awareness, information acquisition, to get information easily and determination of the social position are the motives for searching the word of mouth content. In this study, risk reduction, to get information easily and determination of the social position found to be the motives to search WOM content during online customer journey. The other motives such as dissonance reduction, price awareness and information acquisition were not identified as a motives for searching word of mouth content during online customer journey, because the items that measured these motives loaded to different factors, which refers to the overlapping of concepts.

According to results of this study, customers are interacting with each other at every stage of the online customer journey by sharing and searching WOM content. These findings are consistent with the research of King et al. (2014) that suggests that searching WOM content during online customer journey does not happen only at the stage of evaluation of alternatives during purchase decision-making process but WOM conversations occur throughout the customer journey. The results of this study also suggest that the motives to search word of mouth content vary at the different stages of the online customer journey. To get the information easily is the most important motive to search WOM content at the information searching and purchase transaction stage during the online customer journey, whereas at the stage of evaluation of alternatives risk reduction is the most significant motive to search word of mouth content. The determination of social position is the most important motive to search WOM content at the post-purchase stage of the customer journey, while the risk reduction is the least important motive to search word of mouth content. These outcomes of this study may indicate that at the early stages of the online customer journey easy access to information and risk reduction serve customers' need to get the information about the product and seller while they also estimate the risks associated with the buying. After the purchase, it seems to be important to customers to compare their consumption status to other consumers' consumption status. The thought of interaction between customers at every stage of online customer journey challenges the research of Philipp Klaus (2013) which argues that the customer's virtual interactions as a social presence are mostly relevant at the evaluation of alternatives stage during the customer journey.

The relationships between the motive variables and the frequency to share or search a word of mouth content in the empirical models of this study, revealed that the motives to share or search WOM content do not explain frequency of sharing or searching, which suggests that the motives do not influence directly

to the frequency of sharing or searching word of mouth content. Instead, the extended empirical model of searching word of mouth content during online customer journey propose that the motives to search WOM content affect indirectly through the opinion searching and curating skills and thus explain 41 percent of the opinion seeking behavior and ten percent of the curating skills. The results of the study also show that the determination of social position has a significant relationship with curating skills and the risk reduction has a significant relationship with opinion seeking behavior. Hence, the motives to search word of mouth content do not necessarily affect the frequency of searching word of mouth content through the same factor. In a case of sharing word of mouth content, the opinion leadership does not influence to the frequency of sharing WOM content and curating skills do not affect the opinion leadership. These findings suggest that research literature may not have yet revealed the mechanism by which motives to share WOM affect the sharing behavior. The findings of this study are not consistent with the research of Henning-Thurau et al. (2004), Henning-Thurau and Walsh (2003) and Goldsmith and Horowitz (2006), which suggest that motives to share and search word of mouth directly affect the behavior.

The channels where interactions between the customers happen, can be classified to the customer-to-customer touch point identified by Stein and Ramasseshan (2016) or to the customer-owned touch point recognized by Lemon and Verhoef (2016). According the results of this study, customers share WOM content partly on different online channels compared to that whereof they search WOM content during their online customer journey. Therefore there is some kind of contradiction between the channels of sharing word of mouth content and channels of searching WOM content. The results of this study suggest that the customers share their word of mouth content during their online customer journey mostly in Facebook, forums and in WhatsApp while they search WOM content mostly from forums, product comparison sites and blogs during their online customer journey. The customers share word of mouth content between friends and the people that are interested in same things or are members of the same community during their online customer journey, whereas they search WOM content to assist in the decision-making from peer experts or platforms that are specialized to product or service. This is align with the study of Lim & Chung (2014, 42) which note that trustworthiness and expertise are significant and lasting elements of source credibility. Customers are probably to use the source expertise to appraise the validity of the product estimations that other consumers generate. Therefore a message from an expert tends to be more convincing for the customers because a high level of perceived expertise demonstrates that the message being given is a valid one.

5.2 Managerial implications

It is important for the companies to know that only a few customers share word of mouth content about their online customer journey in online but almost everyone is searching a WOM content during their online customer journey. Therefore achieving viral effect in a social media is difficult, because almost everybody is searching WOM, but only few people share or, according to Bernstein et al. (2013), even respond to the content. Therefore it is difficult for a marketer to be aware of the overall size of the audience, whose content has reached. A positive word of mouth contents concerning customer's online customer journey, which are shared to other consumers in online are valuable to the marketers because customers trust to WOM sender who is independent of the seller and is not trying to persuade the WOM recipient. (Lim & Chung (2014, 42.)

Customers are interacting with the each other through the different online channels during the whole online customer journey. Therefore every direct and indirect touch point between the company and the customer affect the customer's journey, and can cause WOM content. Therefore, it is important that the companies manage company-owned and partner-owned touch points so that they create a unified and positive impressions to their customer concerning their products and services. In order to reach a successful customer experience companies have to monitor conversations between the customers on online in right channels. According to this study, customers mostly share word of mouth content during their online customer journey on online through the Facebook, Forums, WhatsApp and in product comparison sites.

From a marketers' point of view, it is essential to know the channels, where customers are looking for peer information about the products or services offered by a marketer. This helps marketers to target their campaigns to the right channels. According to results of this study, forums, product comparison sites, blogs and Facebook are important channels to the consumers to search peer evaluations about the products and services, which makes them a significant channels for a marketer as well. The results of this study especially emphasize the significance of blogs as a one important marketing instrument. The research literature has noted that the bloggers' perceived credibility eventually results in customers' adoption of WOM recommendation, and perceived usefulness of the bloggers' recommendations and trust has a substantial impressive influence on blog users' attitude towards and intent to buy online (Hsu et al. 2013, 69.) This supports the idea that the bloggers' WOM seems to be a promising marketing strategy for increasing sales proposed by Hsu et al. (2013).

The results of this study indicate that customer search word of mouth content for different reason at different stage of the online customer journey. To get information easily and risk reduction are motives to search WOM content during the information searching, evaluation of alternatives and purchase transaction stage, whereas determination of social position is the most important reason to

search WOM content at the post-purchase stage during the online customer journey. Therefore it would be wise for marketer to create cooperation with bloggers that produce WOM content that contains information about product or service, helps to reduce risk associated with company, product or service and offers examples about other consumers' consumption experiences.

5.3   Evaluation of the research

Usually, the quality of the study is estimated by examining the reliability and validity of the study. The reliability describes repeatability of the study. In other words, it explains how the study is able to produce non-random results. The validity in turn explains ability of indicator to measure the concept it was supposed to measure. The validity consist of external and internal validity. The external validity describes the generalizability of the study and the internal validity evaluates whether the research is measuring concepts, what it is supposed to measure (Hirsijärvi 2009, 231, Metsämuuronen 2011, 74-125; Bagozzi & Yi 2012).

In order to ensure the validity and reliability of this study, all items and measurement scales were adopted from the prior peer-reviewed research, which had confirmed the reliability and validity of the indicators and measuring scales. To ensure the external reliability, a large sample size was sought, but this was not quite achieved. Despite the fact that the sample size settled over 200, over 60 percent of respondents could not answer the questions about sharing word of mouth content, because they had never shared WOM content on online during the online customer journey. Therefore the sample size of sharing customer experiences was only 81.

As a part of the confirmatory factor analysis, the reliability and validity of the both measurement models were analyzed. The reliability of the measurement model was examined by checking indicator reliability and internal consistency. Indicator reliabilities were evaluated by examining factor loadings. The most items of the measurement model of sharing a WOM content during online customer journey loaded satisfactorily on factors, since the loadings exceeded the limit of 0, 6 (Karjaluoto & Munnukka 2016, 10.) However, five items were slightly below the limit. Almost all items of the measurement model of searching a WOM content during online customer journey also loaded satisfactorily on factors. Only loadings of two items were slightly below the limit of 0.6. These items, which were slightly below the limit 0.6 were kept in the model in order to achieve better construct validity and capture better theorized and hypothesized nature of measured constructs. However, these slightly weak factors might have influenced on reliability of the both measurement models.

In this study, the internal consistency reliability was evaluated by checking Cronbach's alpha values. In this case all alpha values concerning measurement model of sharing a word of mouth content during online customer journey were above the recommended value of 0.60 (Metsämuuronen 2011, 547.) In a case of

measurement model of searching a WOM content during online customer journey Cronbach's alpha values exceeded the limit of 0.60 except the item of get information easily (0.592), which indicated the low reliability of the factor.

The validity of the measurement model was evaluated through convergent and discriminant validities. The convergent validity was analyzed by calculating the average variances extracted (AVE). In this study, almost all AVE-values concerning the measurement model of sharing a WOM content during online customer journey exceeded recommended value of 0.50 (Karjaluoto & Munnuka 2016, 13.) However, AVE-values about social benefits (0.497) and opinion leadership (0.434) were below 0.50 limit and for that reason the measurement model of sharing a WOM content did not meet the convergent validity criteria for the whole measurement model. The AVE-values concerning the model of searching a WOM content during online customer journey met the requirements of the 0.50 limit, except to get information easily motive (0.442) and therefore the measurement model of searching a WOM content does not meet the convergent validity criteria for the whole measurement model. The discriminant validity was evaluated by Fornell-Larcker criterion matrix, in which none of construct correlations did exceed the square root of AVE. The criterion of discriminant validity by Fornell-Larcker criterion is that the square root taken from AVE value must be greater than the correlation between the latent construct and other latent constructs in all of the cases. On this basis, discriminant validity was achieved for both models.

5.4   Limitations of the research

Some limitations are associated with this study. This study is limited by its scope and depth. Large sample size is important for improving the validity and generalizability of the study. In this study, the sample size remained low with regard to questions of sharing word of mouth content, because most of the respondents had never shared WOM content during online customer journey. The sample size 81 can be considered adequate for purpose of the factor analysis performed in this study, but it is not sufficiently large to support larger-scale generalization of the results of this study.

Both measurement models of the study has some problems with reliability and validity. Therefore the results concerning these models have to be considered carefully as the reliability and validity of both measurement models are questionable to some extent. Although this study applied measurement scale used in the prior peer-reviewed researches, there are problems with reliability in the study that are associated with the number of scale items per motive used in study, because in some cases there were only two items per motive. Despite the problems, measurement models can be considered as directional when planning further studies.

The scale items adopted from the previous studies were over ten years old, but widely used in research until today. However, the online environment has

changed a lot since then and especially a rise of social media has changed people's behavior in the online context. Therefore the motives to share or search WOM content might have changed, which questions the validity of these motives.

This study has also limitations concerning number of online channels examined. It includes only some of the online channels used by customers. For example, a popular online channel Youtube is missing from the study due to the researcher's human error. Therefore study may not correspond to reality and more research is needed on the subject.

The original language of the scales was English and as the study was accomplished in Finland, the scales had to be translated in Finnish. Careful translation and reviewing were executed to make sure the validity of the translation. However, there are always some problems when translating thoughts from one language to another, as some expressions do not exist in the other language or are differing from original language. Therefore, it is hard to display the thoughts in the same way as they were originally intended. Interpretation of things is also differing in distinct cultures and increases the difficulty of the translation. These are matters that have to be taken into notice when analyzing results of this study.

5.5   Future research

People are exposing themselves increasingly to digital and social media when they are searching information about the products, purchase and consume the products and also communicate with each other about their customer journeys (Stephen 2016, 17) Therefore it is important to find out which triggers sharing and searching behavior of word of mouth during the online customer journey Although this study has revealed some underlying motives of the sharing behavior those motives do not explain directly the frequency of searching the WOM content. Therefore future research could focus to find out mediating factors between motives and sharing behavior.

According to this study, opinion seeking behavior seems to influence the frequency of searching WOM content during online customer journey. The risk reduction also seems to influence the opinion seeking behavior. Therefore future research could examine the relationship between opinion seeking and searching frequency and also relationship between risk reduction and opinion seeking at a more detailed level. It could also be fruitful to explore more the relationship between curating skills and determination of social position, because there seems to be a significant connection between these two.

In this study, the sample size remained low on questions about sharing the word of mouth content during online customer journey. Therefore future research could examine with a larger sample size the relationship between the motives to share word of mouth content and the frequency of sharing to confirm the research results of this study. The scale items adopted from the previous studies were over ten years old, but widely used in research until today. However, the online environment is changing rapidly. For that reason, motives to share and

search WOM, which have been significant ten years ago, may have changed. Therefore future research could examine, if any new motives to share and search word of mouth have arisen since then.

Youtube is one of the most popular social media channels in Finland (ebrand Suomi Oy, 2016) A one of the limitations of this study is that Youtube was missing from the study due to researchers' human error. Therefore future research could correct this mistake and include Youtube among the other channels and examine whether it is a relevant channel to share and search word of mouth content during the online journey.

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Appendix 1. Questionnaire
Arvoisa tutkimukseen osallistuja

Tämä tutkimus tutkii sähköisen asiakaskokemuksen ja kuluttajien välisen vuorovaikutuksen yhteyttä asiakkaan ostoprosessin eri vaiheissa. Tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on saada uutta tietoa tästä kuluttajakäyttäytymisen tärkeästä osa-alueesta. Kyselylomakkeella kysyttyjä tietoja hyödynnetään Jyväskylän yliopiston kauppakorkeakoululle tehtävässä markkinoinnin pro gradu tutkielmassani. Kyselylomakkeeseen vastaaminen suoritetaan nimettömästi, eikä kyselyn vastauksia voi yhdistää vastaajan henkilöllisyyteen. Näin ollen kyselyyn vastaaminen on teille täysin turvallista.

Tutkimuksen onnistumisen kannalta on tärkeää, että täyttäessänne kyselyä luette kysymykset huolellisesti ennen niihin vastaamista ja vastaatte jokaisen kysymyksen kaikkiin kohtiin. Kysely koostuu 16 kysymyksestä ja siihen vastaaminen kestää noin 15 minuuttia.

Mikäli haluatte, voitte kyselyn lopuksi osallistua kaikkien kyselyyn vastanneiden kesken suoritettavaan arvontaan, jonka palkintona on kaksi ticketmaster lippupalvelun lahjakorttia arvoltaan 75 euroa/kpl. Arvonnan yhteystiedot eivät ole yhteydessä kyselyn vastuksiin, eikä sitä kautta voida yhdistää arvontaan osallistuneiden henkilöllisyyttä ja kyselyyn vastauksia. Kyselyn vastausaika kestää 5.5.2017 saakka. Lahjakorttien voittajalle ilmoitetaan voitosta viikolla 19/2017.

Ystävällisin terveisin
Päivi Nieminen
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1. Sukupuoli
○ Mies
○ Nainen

2. Ikä
○ Alle 18 vuotta
○ 18–25
○ 26–35
○ 46–55
○ 56–65
○ Yli 65 vuotta

3. Olen
◯ Opiskelija
◯ Työssäkäyvä
◯ Hoidan lapsia kotona
◯ Eläkkeellä
◯ Työtön
◯ Muusta syystä poissa työelämästä

4. Ostan tuotteita tai palveluita verkosta
◯ Päivittäin
◯ Useamman kerran viikossa
◯ Kerran viikossa
◯ 2-3 kertaa kuukaudessa
◯ Kerran kuukaudessa
◯ Muutaman kerran vuodessa
◯ En koskaan

5. Mikä tuote tai palvelu oli viimeisin merkittävä verkko-ostoksesi?

_____

_____

_____

6. Maksoin viimeisimmästä merkittävästä verkko-ostoksestani
◯ Alle 20 euroa
◯ 20–50 euroa
◯ 50–100 euroa
◯ 100–250 euroa
◯ 250–500 euroa
◯ 500–800 euroa
◯ 800–100 euroa
◯ Yli 1000 euroa

7. Verkko-ostosten kommentointi ja niihin liittyvä sisällön jakaminen
◯ Päivittäin
◯ Useamman kerran viikossa
◯ Kerran viikossa
◯ 2-3 kertaa kuukaudessa
◯ Kerran kuukaudessa
◯ Muutaman kerran vuodessa
◯ En koskaan

8. Verkko-ostokokemuksen kommentointi ja siihen liittyvä sisällön jakaminen

Arvioi viimeisimmän merkittävän verkko-ostoiksesi perusteella seuraavia väittämiä ostokokemuksesi komennoinnin ja muun sisällön jakamisen osalta.

Kommentoin tai laitan sisältöä tuotteista ja palveluista verkko-ostokokemukseeni liittyen koska…

	ei lainkaan samaa mieltä	vain hieman samaa mieltä	jonkin verran samaa mieltä	melko paljon samaa mieltä	täysin samaa mieltä
…haluan säästää muut kokemasta samoja negatiivisia kokemuksia kuin minä.	O	O	O	O	O
…voin kertoa muille mahtavasta kokemuksesta.	O	O	O	O	O
…tällä tavalla on hauskaa kommunikoida muiden ihmisten kanssa yhteisössä.	O	O	O	O	O
…panokseni näyttää muille, että olen taitava kuluttaja.	O	O	O	O	O
…tapaan mukavia ihmisiä tällä tavalla.	O	O	O	O	O
…haluan varoittaa muita huonoista tuotteista.	O	O	O	O	O
…haluan auttaa muita positiivisilla kokemuksillani.	O	O	O	O	O
…olen sitä mieltä, että keskusteleminen samanhenkisten ihmisten kanssa on mukavaa.	O	O	O	O	O
…saan palkkion kirjoittamisesta.	O	O	O	O	O
…haluan antaa muille mahdollisuuden ostaa oikea tuote.	O	O	O	O	O
…koska saan taloudellista etua siitä.	O	O	O	O	O
…minusta tuntuu hyvältä, kun voin kertoa muille onnistuneesta ostamisesta.	O	O	O	O	O

9. Kanavat, joissa verkko-ostokokemukseeni liittyen kommentoin tai jaan sisältöä

Valitse verkko-ostokokemuksesi kannalta 1-3 tärkeintä kommentoinnin tai sisällön jakamisen kanavaa paremmuusjärjestykseen. 1= tärkein kanava, 3= vähiten tärkein kanava.

- ◯ Sähköposti
- ◯ Facebook
- ◯ Keskustelupalstat
- ◯ WhatsApp
- ◯ Tuotevertailu sivustot
- ◯ Instagram
- ◯ Blogi
- ◯ Twitter
- ◯ Snapchat

10. Mielipiteiden jakaminen

Arvio seuraavien väittämien perusteella omien mielipiteidesi jakamista verkko-ostamiseen liittyen.

	täysin eri mieltä	jokseenkin eri mieltä	ei samaa eikä eri mieltä	jokseenkin samaa mieltä	täysin samaa mieltä
Mielipiteeni tuotteista ja palveluista verkossa eivät näytä olevan merkityksellisiä muiden ihmisten keskuudessa.	○	○	○	○	○
Kun muut ihmiset valitsevat tuotteita tai palveluita verkosta, he eivät käänny puoleeni kysyäkseen neuvoani.	○	○	○	○	○
Muut ihmiset harvoin kyselevät minulta neuvoa verkossa valitsemistani tuotteista tai palveluista.	○	○	○	○	○
Ihmiset, jotka tiedän valitsevat tuotteita tai palveluita verkossa kertomani perusteella.	○	○	○	○	○
Suostuttelen usein toisia ihmisiä ostamaan verkosta tuotteita tai palveluita, josta pidän.	○	○	○	○	○
Vaikutan usein ihmisten mielipiteisiin tuotteista tai palveluista verkossa.	○	○	○	○	○

11. Muiden kuluttajien tuottaman sisällön ja mielipiteiden etsiminen

◯ Päivittäin
◯ Useamman kerran viikossa
◯ Kerran viikossa
◯ 2-3 kertaa kuukaudessa
◯ Kerran kuukaudessa
◯ Muutaman kerran vuodessa
◯ En koskaan

12. Muiden tuottaman sisällön jamielipiteiden etsiminen osana verkko-ostosprosessia

Arvioi viimeisimmän merkityksellisimmän tuotteen tai palvelun verkko-ostosprosessin perusteella seuraavia väittämiä, jotka koskevat muiden kuluttajien tuottaman sisällön ja mielipiteiden etsimistä verkko-ostoprosessin aikana. Verkko-ostoprosessi koostuu tiedon etsinnästä, vaihtoehtojen arvioinnista, ostotapahtumasta ja oston jälkeisestä käytöstä.

Tuotteen tai palvelun verkko-ostoprosessiin liittyen etsin muiden kuluttajien tuottamaa sisältöä ja mielipiteitä, koska…

	ei lainkaan samaa mieltä	vain hieman samaa mieltä	jonkin verran samaa mieltä	melko paljon samaa mieltä	täysin samaa mieltä
…voin nähdä, olenko olen ainoa, joka ajattelee tuotteesta tietyllä tavalla.	O	O	O	O	O
… voin saada tietoa joltakulta, joka ei yritä myydä minulle jotakin.	O	O	O	O	O
… haluan verrata omaa arviotani muiden arvioihin.	O	O	O	O	O
… kuulin jotakin uutta ja haluan tietää siitä enemmän.	O	O	O	O	O
… en halua päätyä katumaan tekemääni päätöstä.	O	O	O	O	O
… tarvitsemani tiedon löytämisestä ei koidu minulle vaivaa.	O	O	O	O	O
…saadakseni parhaan arvon rahoilleni.	O	O	O	O	O
…verkkoon meneminen on helpoin tapa saada tietoa.	O	O	O	O	O
…verkossa saamani tiedon avulla voi saada vahvistuksen siitä, että olen tehnyt oikean päätöksen.	O	O	O	O	O
…voin saada erilaisia tietoja ihmisiltä, joilla on positiivisia tai negatiivisia mielipiteitä.	O	O	O	O	O
…minusta tuntuu paljon paremmalta lukiessani, että en ole ainoa, jolla on tietty ongelma.	O	O	O	O	O
…mahdollisuuteni tehdä huono päätös vähenee.	O	O	O	O	O
… löytääkseni halvimmat hinnat.	O	O	O	O	O
…vaivan määrä tiedon löytämiseksi on pieni.	O	O	O	O	O
…saadakseni saatavilleni parasta laatua olevia tuotteita.	O	O	O	O	O
… koska tiedon saaminen sähköisesti vähentää huonon valinnan tekemisen riskiä.	O	O	O	O	O

13. Kanavat, joista etsin muiden kuluttajien tuottamaa sisältöä ja mielipiteitä

Valitse jokaisen verkko-ostoprosessin vaiheen kohdalla 1-3 sinulle tärkeintä ka-
navaa, joista etsit muiden kuluttajien tuottamaa sisältöä tai mielipiteitä tuottei-
siin ja palveluihin liittyen kyseisen ostoprosessin vaiheen aikana. Huomio vasta-
tessa, että voit valita useamman kanavan yhden verkko-ostoprosessin vaiheen
osalta.

	Face-book	WhatsApp	Twitter	Snapchat	Blogi	Tuote-vertailu sivustot	Keskus-telu palstat	Sähkö-posti
Tiedon etsintä	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Vaihtoehtojen arviointi	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
ostotapahtuma	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Oston jälkeinen käyttö/kulutus	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

14. Mielipiteiden ja sisällön etsimisen motiivit verkko-ostoprosessin eri vai-heissa

Arvioi jo aiemmin esitettyjen väittämien soveltumista verkko-ostosprosessisi eri
vaiheisiin viimeisimmän merkityksellisimmän verkko-ostoksesi perusteella.
Merkitse ne verkko-ostosprosessin vaiheet, jota väittämä koskee. Huomio, että
voit valita usemman verkko-ostoprosessin vaiheen yhtä väittämää kohti.

Tuotteen tai palvelun verkko-ostamiseen liittyen etsin muiden kuluttajien tuot-
tamaa sisältöä ja mielipiteitä seuraavissa

	tiedon etsintä	vaihto-ehtojen arviointi	osto-tapah-tuma	oston jälkeinen käyttö	en osaa sanoa
…voin nähdä, olenko olen ainoa, joka ajattelee tuotteesta tietyllä tavalla.	○	○	○	○	○
… voin saada tietoa joltakulta, joka ei yritä myydä minulle jotakin.	○	○	○	○	○
… haluan verrata omaa arviotani muiden arvioihin.	○	○	○	○	○
… kuulin jotakin uutta ja haluan tietää siitä enem-män.	○	○	○	○	○
… en halua päätyä katumaan tekemääni pää-töstä.	○	○	○	○	○
… tarvitsemani tiedon löytämisestä ei koidu mi-nulle vaivaa.	○	○	○	○	○
…saadakseni parhaan arvon rahoilleni.	○	○	○	○	○
…verkkoon meneminen on helpoin tapa saada tie-toa.	○	○	○	○	○
…verkossa saamani tiedon avulla voi saada vahvis-tuksen siitä, että olen tehnyt oikean päätöksen.	○	○	○	○	○
…voin saada erilaisia tietoja ihmisiltä, joilla on po-sitiivisia tai negatiivisia mielipiteitä.	○	○	○	○	○

…minusta tuntuu paljon paremmalta lukiessani, että en ole ainoa, jolla on tietty ongelma.	o	o	o	o	o
…mahdollisuuteni tehdä huono päätös vähenee.	o	o	o	o	o
… löytääkseni halvimmat hinnat.	o	o	o	o	o
…vaivan määrä tiedon löytämiseksi on pieni.	o	o	o	o	o
…saadakseni saatavilleni parasta laatua olevia tuotteita.	o	o	o	o	o
… koska tiedon saaminen sähköisesti vähentää huonon valinnan tekemisen riskiä.	o	o	o	o	o

15. Mielipiteiden etsiminen

Arvioi omaa taipumustasi etsiä muiden kuluttajien mielipiteitä verkosta seuraavien väittämien perusteella.

	täysin eri mieltä	jokseenkin eri mieltä	ei samaa eikä eri mieltä	jokseenkin samaa mieltä	täysin samaa mieltä
Kun harkitsen ostavani verkossa tuotteita tai palveluita, etsin muiden ihmisten mielipiteitä asiasta.		o	o	o	o
Minun ei tarvitse keskustella muiden kanssa ennen kuin ostan verkossa tuotteita tai palveluita.	o	o	o	o	o
Kysyn harvoin muilta ihmisiltä neuvoa tuotteiden tai palveluiden ostamisesta verkossa.	o	o	o	o	o
Haluan nähdä muiden mielipiteitä ennen tuotteen tai palvelun ostamista verkossa.	o	o	o	o	o
Minusta on mukavampi ostaa verkossa tuote tai palvelu, kun tiedän muiden mielipiteen siitä.	o	o	o	o	o
Kun valitsen verkossa tuotteita tai palveluja, muiden ihmisten mielipiteet eivät ole tärkeitä minulle.	o	o	o	o	o

16. Kyky valita sisältöä useista lähteistä sekä jakaa valittua sisältöä sosiaalisissa verkostoissa

Arvioi kykyäsi valita sisältöä sekä jakaa valittua sisältöä sosiaalisissa verkostoissa, kuten esim. Facebookissa, seuraavien väittämien pohjalta.

	täysin eri mieltä	jokseenkin eri mieltä	ei samaa eikä eri mieltä	jokseenkin samaa mieltä	täysin samaa mieltä
Halutessani viitata muiden näkemyksiin tietystä asiasta, se johon viittaan riippuu asian luonteesta.		O	O	O	O
Tehdessäni päätöstä tietystä asiasta, yritän kuunnella eri henkilöiden erilaisia mielipiteitä asiasta.	O	O	O	O	O
Tarkastellessani jonkun henkilön käsitystä asiassa, otan huomioon hänen asiantuntijuutensa sen suhteen.	O	O	O	O	O
Tarkastellessani jonkun henkilön käsitystä asiasta, huomioin hänen vilpittömyytensä sen suhteen.	O	O	O	O	O
Riippuen asiasta, osaan valita sopivan henkilön, johon viitata sen suhteen.	O	O	O	O	O
Suositellessani tuotteita tai palveluita verkossa viittaan muiden näkemykseen kyseisessä asiassa.	O	O	O	O	O
Osaan helposti tunnistaa henkilön, jonka mielipidettä kuuntelen.	O	O	O	O	O
Jos jonkun mielipide verkko-ostoksesta on ollut avuksi, ilmaisen tukeni tuolle henkilölle.	O	O	O	O	O
Havaitessani hyödyllisen lausunnon verkko-ostamisesta, jaan sen muiden kanssa.	O	O	O	O	O
Jos en ole tyytyväinen jonkun näkemykseen tietystä verkko-ostoksesta, ilmaisen tyytymättömyyteni.	O	O	O	O	O

Arvontaan osallistuminen

Mikäli haluat osallistua kahden ticketmaster lippupalvelun lahjakortin (arvo 75 euroa/kpl) arvontaan jätä yhteystietosi alla olevaan yhteystietokenttään. Osallistuminen on vapaaehtoista. Osallistujien kesken arvottavilla ticketmaster lippupalvelun lahjakorteilla voi ostaa ticketmaster Suomen välittämiä lippuja erilaisiin tapahtumiin ja tuotteita verkkokaupasta www.ticketmaster.fi sekä ticketmaster Suomen lippukaupoista ja noutopisteistä. Onnea arvontaan!

17. Arvonnan yhteystiedot

Etunimi   _____
Sukunimi   _____
Sähköposti   _____
Puhelinnumero   _____