

The Relations Between Information Quality, Source Credibility, and Information Usefulness in Beauty Online Community

Mentari Anugrah Imsa

Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Indonesia

Abstract: *Current technological developments provide opportunities for internet users to be creative in content creation and uploading content on digital platforms. One of the developments that have occurred is the number of platforms that allow User Generated Content. On this platform there are many sources of information, but it cannot be seen based on the source and how the quality of the information provided. Therefore, this article aims to see whether the quality of the information provided by internet users and the credibility of sources on one beauty platform, Female Daily Network, has a relationship with the information usefulness for other users. This study uses a positivistic paradigm by applying deductive logic and a quantitative approach to prove existing conjectures. The sample in this study was taken purposively with the characteristics of being a member or reader of information in the courageous community of the Female Daily Network. Primary data was taken by an online survey technique using Google Form which was sent to Instagram and twitter followers from the Female Daily Network account. The research design used is a cross sectional study. The results showed that the quality of information has a significant positive relationship with the information usefulness on members of the Female Daily Network. In addition, the source also has a positive relationship with the information usefulness on members of the Female Daily Network.*

Keywords: *Information usefulness, information quality, source credibility, user-generated content, information adaption model*

Introduction

Current technological developments provide opportunities for internet users to be creative in content creation and freely upload their content on digital platforms. One of the developments is the increased number of platforms that allow User-Generated Content. User-generated content or UGC is information that comes from general people who voluntarily contribute data, information, or media that will appear before others and be found to be valuable and entertaining, usually on websites such as restaurant ratings, wikis, and videos (Krumm, Davies, & Narayanaswami, 2008). UGC provides a lot of information as well as opinions and thoughts from internet users on specific topics, products, or services. UGC in communication and language aspects has several characteristics that must be considered, such as noisy texts, language variations, relevance and boilerplate, and target identification (Petz et al., 2013).

¹ Correspondent Author E-Mail: mentari.anugrah@unj.ac.id

Noisy texts on UGC indicate that the available content tends to be less precise in terms of language structure. The information provided is written informally and allows for spelling errors. Then related to language variation, the text on UGC generally contains sarcasm and irony where the information is contextually invisible but information with specific knowledge about the topic being discussed. Information from UGC is usually surrounded by irrelevant elements such as advertisements, component navigation or previews of other articles; discussion and comment threads can divert to irrelevant topics. Then UGC allows the topic of the information sought does not match with the object mentioned on the website (Petz et al., 2013).

In addition, sources of information at UGC can come from various backgrounds, both experts, ordinary people, the institution, companies and perhaps activists (Betsch et al., 2012). Due to the nature that allows information from various sources with different backgrounds, the credibility of sources and information needs to be a concern on the UGC platform. Research from Biggs, Bird, Harries, & Salib, (2013) shows that one of the UGC platforms on research is considered as an unreliable source for health topic. This research conducted to measure the accuracy content and information about specific illness that available on the Youtube and was uploaded by various users. Surprisingly this research show that a half of available information contain little or no useful facts, and 27 per cent contained potentially misleading or even dangerous information. And patient tend to have trouble in deciding what information is accurate or reliable from available content. This research implicates internet users have to be wise and careful to adopt the information related to sensitive topics like health. However, another study from Jonas, (2010) shows a different thing, that internet users with easy age say that UGC sources such as bloggers, video uploaders and forum posters are more credible than companies. UGC sources is considered give honest review about products or services than the companies that considered usually give positive information of products as marketing strategic.

The UGC platform itself is used in countries of the world, including Indonesia. In Indonesia, several digital UGC platforms are widely used by the public, such as Youtube, Instagram, Twitter, and news platforms such as IDN Times. These platforms certainly provide a lot of information on various topics. For specific UGC platform for the topic of beauty, then Indonesia has one online community, the Female Daily Network. Female Daily Network (FDN) is an online community and forum that allows its members to provide cosmetic and skin care product reviews (Ambadar, 2016). This FDN even creates content that is taken from the overall reviews and recommendations of its members which is then made as videos and uploaded on the Youtube platform. The interactions that occur in the online community can facilitate users in obtaining information about reviews online and recommendations regarding beauty products.

BrightLocal (2019) states that 9 out of 10 consumers as internet users trust online reviews such as personal recommendations from fellow internet users. However, internet users will also select information before adopting and consider that information in subsequent decisions (Pitta & Fowler, 2005). The information adoption process in this study will be explained using the Information Adoption Model from Sussman & Siegal, (2003). The Information Adoption Model explains that the information obtained can influence a person

through two ways: the middle route such as information quality and the peripheral route such as source credibility. Adopting this model, this study aims to examine the relationship between source credibility and the quality of the information in the online beauty community, the Female Daily Network, which is also considered a UGC Platform with the perceived information usefulness among members of the community. The research objectives then formulated into two research questions as follows:

RQ 1: Does the source credibility of online reviews on the Female Daily Network website have a relation with the information usefulness for other community members?

RQ 2: Does the information quality of online reviews on the Female Daily Network website have a relation with the information usefulness for other community members?

Literature Review

Information Adoption Model (IAM)

Information Adaption Model is based on the incorporation of Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) (Wang, 2016). TAM explains the formation of intentions to adopt a technology, or a behavior based on perceptions of the consequences (Wang & Chen, 2017). TAM emphasizes more on information systems and individual use of computers, but does not explain social processes (Wang, 2016). While ELM is very useful in complementing TAM to explain how recipients are influenced by information in messages and can be used to explain changes in attitudes and to explain the processes that underlie the effectiveness of persuasive communication. The influence of information occurs at the level of elaboration of the receiver and two different routes of influence. If the individual has a deep and careful attention, then the influence of information will occur in the middle route. On the other hand, if the individual has little attention to information, then a low level of elaboration is obtained and the influence of information occurs in the peripheral route (Wang, 2016). IAM can explain how individual adapt information and change intentions and behavior in computer-based communication platforms.

a. Information Adoption

Adoption is defined as the overall use of information to make the best available action (Sahin & Rogers, 2006). Adoption is also associated with the term implementation, use, utilization, or satisfaction (Al-Jabri & Sohail, 2012). Rogers (1983) in Gary C. Moore; Izak Benbasat (2001) mentions that there are five attributes that influence a person's adoption: relative advantage, suitability, complexity, observation, and trialability. The information adoption process is the internalization phase of knowledge transfer, where explicit information is transformed into internalized knowledge and meaning (Rabjohn, Cheung, & Lee, 2008). When it comes to information adoption, there are two key prepositions. The first says that information adoption considers information quality as a middle influence and source credibility as a peripheral influence that can affect the process of information being received useful (Cheung, Lee, & Rabjohn, 2008). Information adoption measures whether the information obtained by a person will be approved and followed, whether someone will consider the information obtained to contribute to his knowledge and whether the information obtained helps decision making and facilitates the process.

b. Information usefulness

Information usefulness is a situation in which a person thinks that using new information will improve their performance. The information usefulness is considered as a determinant when considering whether to adopt an information and whether to make a purchase (J Xue, YC Lee, & HL Mu, 2018). Information that is considered useful refers to the instrumental/basic value obtained by using the information obtained (Yan & Huang, 2014). Information considered useful can be seen from the level of the message received is valuable, provides information and helps (Yan & Huang, 2014). Information usefulness sees how far a person perceives the information obtained is new and helps in finding relevant information and purchasing decisions.

c. Information Quality

Information quality refers to the persuasive power inherent in information messages (Cheung et al., 2008). The quality of the information will be evaluated regarding the information content, accuracy, format, and timing of the information. Information quality can be measured by information richness and media wealth (Yan & Huang, 2014). Information richness refers to the number of concepts inherent in information. Information wealth will increase a person's buying behavior because the higher the wealth of information, the lower the uncertainty that a person feels to make decisions (Yan & Huang, 2014). Media richness is related to how messages contain many types of media such as images, videos, music, emoticons, hashtags, and mentions (Yan & Huang, 2014). Information quality sees how far someone thinks the information obtained is objective, clear and easy to understand, accurate, up to date, credible, and fulfills one's information needs.

d. Source Credibility

Source credibility refers to the perception of someone who receives the message about the credibility of the message source, does not reflect on the content of the message itself (Cheung et al., 2008). Source credibility is defined as the extent to which the source of information can be accepted as reliable, competent, and trusted by the recipient of the message (Cacioppo, Petty, Chuan, & Rodriguez, 1986). Information that is considered to have high source credibility will be considered useful and reliable which can facilitate the transfer of knowledge (Cheung et al., 2008). Someone often processes information by looking at the source credibility (Yan & Huang, 2014). This occurs when someone receives a lot of information so that when someone feels information is redundant, someone will use the peripheral route, namely source credibility as a quick way to evaluate the usefulness of the message (Yan & Huang, 2014). Information credibility measures how far a person perceives that the available information comes from an expert, can be trusted, can be relied on, and expands knowledge.

Figure 1
Information Adoption Model Framework



Source: Sussman & Siegal, (2003)

Methodology

This study uses a positivistic paradigm that views reality as something regular, patterned, observable, and measurable which seeks to prove presumptions that have been compiled based on previous theories or studies. These presumptions will be confirmed by collecting data on the appropriate sample. This study uses a quantitative approach to find evidence of the relationship that has been formulated. Then this study uses an explanatory approach to understand further previous studies to investigate a conceptual model of the effect of source credibility and information quality on information usefulness in online community.

Moreover, data collection of this study uses a survey method to collect primary data such as data on respondent characteristics, push factors, pull factors, mooring factors, and the switching intention using different beauty products from the previous product. The survey was taken for approximately 3 weeks starting on May 13, 2020, until June 2, 2020. In this study, the research design a cross-sectional study where data were taken at a current time point in a short period (Levine, 2005). Data collection by interview technique is done using a questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of 3 parts, namely the profile of the respondent, the membership of the respondent, and the measurement of variables (source credibility, information quality, and information usefulness). The questionnaire to measure information usefulness, source credibility and information quality were adopted from Cheung et al., (2008); Erkan & Evans, (2018); J Xue et al., (2018) who also went through a process of modification and adjustments. This study measures the switching intention in the online community of Female Daily Network, which provides broad opportunities for its members to obtain the cosmetic information they need. The population in this study were all members of the Female Daily Network online community. Sampling using non-probability sampling method with purposive sampling technique with criteria that have been determined by the researcher.

Findings & Discussion

Based on the results of the Pearson relationship test, it shows that the quality of information has a significant positive relation with the information usefulness with a correlation coefficient of 0.438. These results indicate that the higher the quality of information, the

greater the usefulness of the information perceived by members of the Female Daily Network online community. The results of the correlation coefficient can be seen in Table 1.

The results of this study are in line with research from Rabjohn, Cheung, & Lee, (2008) which shows that the quality of information does have a relation with the information usefulness. Moreover, research from Monteiro, Vale, Silva, & Pereira, (2021) also found that the information quality of a report has a significant relationship with the information usefulness on the report. The quality of information relates to several criteria such as the use of citation of facts, data, or evidence (Haralabopoulos, Anagnostopoulos, & Zeadally, 2016). However, internet users tend to ignore these criteria in creating messages on digital platforms (Haralabopoulos et al., 2016). Morris, Counts, Roseway, Hoff, & Schwarz, (2012) also argue that credible content is very strongly related to the trustworthiness of sources.

Table 1
Pearson Relationship test

Independent variables	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Relationship	Significant Value	Direction Relationship
Information Quality	0,438	Strong	0,00	Positive
Source Credibility	0,431	Strong	0,00	Positive

Source: processed data by researcher

Then this study also wants to see whether there is a relationship between the source credibility of the message conveyed on the online community Female Daily Network has a relation with the information usefulness for other members. The results of the Pearson relationship test show that the source credibility has a significant positive relationship with the information usefulness with a correlation coefficient of 0.431. These results indicate that the greater the source credibility, the more useful the information perceived by members of the online community of the Female Daily Network.

This study is in line with the results of research from Hussain et al., (2016) which shows that source credibility has a positive relation to the information usefulness. Other research from (Cheung et al., 2008) also shows that the source credibility makes a major contribution in influencing the perception of the information usefulness. BrightLocal, (2019) notes that 8 out of 10 consumers read reviews to see a local business. The survey on the Consumer Review is also mentions that 91 percent of consumers trust online reviews like personal recommendations.

This research was conducted in an online beauty community, the Female Daily Network where most of the goals of a person joining an online community are to collect mutual benefits between group members, for example strengthening social ties, distributing information, seeking experiences, and exchanging opinions (Lee & Lee, 2010). The interaction carried out by members in the online community aims to fill the need for information to achieve goals or complete certain tasks (Alavi, Ahuja, & Medury, 2010).

Online community allows its members to continuously show and get the opinion of other members, with overall preference as well as trust. Online Community provides sufficient and easily accessible resources to evaluate and adjust a thought and action as an input from the social friends concerned in a community (Miller, Fabian, & Lin, 2009).

This research proved that information quality and source credibility in beauty online community have a positive strong relation with information usefulness of members. This research did not measure further about information adoption as an independent variable in Information Adoption Model. This research could not explain more about next decision form audience. For next research, information adoption could be added to get broader insight about online community and UGC phenomenon as a part of technological development.

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About the Author:

Chief Researcher
Mentari Anugrah Imsa <i>Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Indonesia</i>
Researcher Member
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