

# **THE EFFECT OF AGE, GENDER AND CONSUMER SUSCEPTIBILITY IN PURCHASE RECOMMENDATIONS: AN ANALYSIS OF THREE DIFFERENT RECOMMENDATION SETTINGS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

In today's world people have a variety of communication options. Nowadays, people do not communicate solely face-to-face, but look for information in many "packages", specifically in the online environment, where in terms of recommendations for purchases, mostly rely on online forums and online social networks. Studies have shown that recommendations on a face-to-face level significantly influence purchase decisions. A recommender's credibility and integrity are salient factors and more amendable to assessment when word-of-mouth information is transmitted on a face-to-face level, but it is uncertain what are the implications for new forms of communication that are transmitted online. The purpose of this paper is twofold: first, the authors seek to develop a better understanding of how different communication mediums influence a persons' perception of the importance of information received. Second, the authors seek to better understand the impact of various factors on the perceptions of information received through various communication mediums. For this research, the authors assess how age, gender, and consumer susceptibility affect involvement with the associated information, in the three setting mentioned above: face-to-face, online social networks, and online forums, in purchase recommendation scenarios. The results of the pilot study suggest that online environments represent an important source of recommendation, but face-to-face interaction remains more important. Moreover, the results suggested that the older the person the more involved one is with the information received, regardless of the setting. Females are shown to be more involved in the information received then men are, and lastly the higher the level of susceptibility to interpersonal influence the higher the involvement with the information received. The results of the pilot study confirmed the author's prediction, and therefore a larger study will follow.

References Available on Request.