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WORD-OF-MOUTH INFLUENCE ON PURCHASE INTENTION: THE IMPACT OF SOURCE EXPERTISE AND TIE STRENGTH ON HEDONIC AND UTILITARIAN PRODUCTS.

SÃO PAULO

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Gustavo Viegas Rodrigues

Influência da comunicação boca-a-boca na intenção de compra: o impacto do expertise e da força do laço social da fonte para produtos hedônicos e utilitários.

Word of mouth influence on purchase intention: the impact of source expertise and tie strength on hedonic and utilitarian products

Dissertação apresentada ao Programa de Pós-Graduação em Administração da Universidade Nove de Julho – UNINOVE, como requisito parcial para obtenção do grau de **Mestre em Administração**.

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Por

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Dissertação apresentada ao Programa de Pós-Graduação em Administração - PPGA da Universidade Nove de Julho – UNINOVE, como requisito parcial para obtenção do título de Mestre em Administração, sendo a banca examinadora formada por:

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São Paulo, 25 de Junho de 2015.

Aos meus pais pelo estímulo, ao
meu irmão pelo exemplo e à Bruna
pelo companheirismo e carinho.

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RESUMO
(Obrigatório)

Este trabalho investigou a interação de dois fatores ligados ao emissor de comunicação boca-a-boca com a intenção de se comprar produtos, sejam eles hedônicos ou utilitários. A interação entre expertise e o laço social da fonte da comunicação com o receptor da recomendação do produto e o tipo do produto foi analisada por meio de experimentos. Os resultados permitem concluir que, independentemente do tipo de produto, apenas a recomendação vinda de um expert tem capacidade de aumentar a intenção de compra de quem recebe a recomendação. O mesmo não acontece se a pessoa que recomenda tem um laço social mais forte com quem recebeu a recomendação. A contribuição deste estudo auxilia gestores de marketing a repensarem suas estratégias de comunicação boca-a-boca, enfocando-as nos experts; e auxilia acadêmicos ao oferecer mais uma evidência de que expertise é o fator mais importante nesse tipo de comunicação.

Palavras-chave: comunicação boca-a-boca, expertise, laço social.

ABSTRACT

(Obrigatório)

This work has investigated the interaction between two word-of-mouth's-source-related factors with products' purchase intention, either hedonic or utilitarian products. The interaction between communication source's expertise and social ties with the receptor of the communication and product type was analyzed using an experiment. The results allow for the conclusion that, regardless of product type, only the recommendation given by an expert is capable of increasing the receptor's purchase intention. The same does not apply if the person whom recommends has a stronger (or weaker) social tie with the one receiving the recommendation. This study's contribution may support marketing managers to rethink their word-of-mouth communication strategies, focusing on experts; and it may help academics, by offering another evidence that expertise is the most relevant factor in that kind of communication.

Keywords: word-of-moth communication, expertise, social ties.

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1 Introduction

Ed Keller and Brad Fay are two academic researchers who have developed WOM tracking into a business: their TalkTrack tool offers a broad and deep perspective of what, when, how, by whom, to whom, where something is said about any brand ("TalkTrack," 2014). In an article from 2007, Keller approaches the issue of the importance of WOM for businesses, including testimonials by P&G and consulting companies that stressed how much WOM would matter in the future. The absolute importance to business would vary from "driving two-thirds of business" to being "one of the best predictors of top-line growth" (Keller, 2007). In a different article, there had been already support for word of mouth (hereafter, WOM) driving growth of businesses depending on the valence of the recommendations of consumers (Marsden, Samson, & Upton, 2005).

More recently, the editors of the Journal of Marketing Communications prepared a special edition dedicated to the subject – "Word of Mouth and Social Media". In that edition, it covers the influence on both online and offline communications and a more broad discussion about eWOM (electronic WOM), including source credibility, and negative WOM dynamics within social media. However, the most relevant article in that issue is possibly the one with the title "WOM and social media: Presaging future directions for research and practice" (Kimmel & Kitchen, 2014). In that article, the journal editors discuss what should be the focus of WOM research in the future, stressing the importance of understanding more in depth the role of social ties, among other research.

The understanding of the forces that lead an expert source of WOM to move the opinions of the people for whom they express any information about products or any other content have been well studied within literature (Alba & Hutchinson, 1987; Homer & Kahle, 1990; Boon Chong Lim & Chung, 2014, 2014; Reinstein & Snyder, 2005; Woodside & Davenport, 1974). However, there are still studies concerned about understanding the possibilities of interactions of expertise with other variables affecting the dynamics of WOM (K. T. T. Chang et al., 2012).

The proposal hereby presented is to address how consumers' purchase intention is affected by different combinations of source profiles and product types. Hence, the research question is: how is the purchase intention toward different types of products affected by WOM source's expertise and social tie strength?

More specifically, it will be analyzed whether an expert source of WOM has stronger influence when a utilitarian product is assessed, whilst the variation of tie strength should have no influence over that type of products. . When it comes to hedonic products, strong social ties should indicate higher purchase intent versus weak ties and varying the expertise would lead to similar results. In addition, secondary objectives involve measuring products' purchase intention for each manipulated scenario.

The importance of the present proposition of study goes beyond the academic field. Researchers have already demonstrated the importance of WOM for businesses, either by their final effect on profit (Marsden, Samson, & Upton, 2005) or by its effects on passing along the message to other customers (Technical Assistant Research Programs, 1981). The power of person-to-person communication is also measured by a North-American research institute, which provides companies with a thorough assessment of their reputation amongst WOM communications (Keller, 2007).

The research about WOM communication has been developed along the last sixty years or so, and it has been boosted in the last ten years with the advent of social media networks. When it comes to purchase decisions, consumers rely not only on their own opinions, but in many occasions they prefer to have a trust advisor to help them making their choices, especially when the categories are too complex (Friedman & Friedman, 1979).

The conclusion of this study allows moving one-step further on the corroboration of previous investigations. The confirmation about the importance of one of the most studied product recommender's characteristics, their expertise, is one of the contributions. Although the proposed hypothesis could not be confirmed, the role of social ties and other inflicting variables are also investigated and their impact is relativized to the present research.

This project is organized as following: first, a review of the theoretical background of the most important concepts is presented, including WOM communication, negative WOM, source expertise, social ties and product types, as well as the proposed hypothesis. Next, the methodological procedures are introduced, describing how the investigation was conducted, including the research design, the data collection and analysis procedures. Finally, the results are presented and discussed, as well as the study's conclusions and recommendations.

2 Theoretical review and hypothesis

In the next sections, a review of the main theoretical background of this study is presented.

2.1 Word-of-mouth communication

Word-of-mouth communication is part of a much more complex decision making process, specifically focused on product choice. As proposed by Duhan et al. (1997), individuals search for decision heuristics when making whichever decisions regarding product choice. Duhan proposes there is a continuum, with own-based decision making at one end and a kind of surrogate process, in which people would totally transfer their decision processes towards others at the other end. In between, there are all the levels of recommendation-based processes, with individuals using others' opinions to make their decisions (Duhan et al., 1997).

The definition of word of mouth as a marketing communication tool has received a broad range of attributions by different authors and institutions (Kimmel & Kitchen, 2014).

A general collection of authors' definitions to WOM is presented on table 1 below:

Author (year)	**Definition of WOM**
(Arndt, 1967, p.295)	"Word of mouth process […] may be best explained as seeking social support for adoption or non-adoption and as risk-reduction by group action."
(Higie, Feick, & Price, 1987, p.263)	"One type of conversation likely to be important to retailers is that based on salient retail or product experiences."
(Westbrook, 1987, p.261)	"In a post-purchase context, consumer word-of-mouth transmissions consist of informal communications directed at other consumers about the ownership, usage, or characteristics of particular goods and services and/or their sellers."
(Anderson, 1998, p.6)	"Word of mouth refers to informal communications between private parties concerning evaluations of goods and services."

("WOMMA," n.d.)	"Word of mouth is the act of a consumer creating and/or distributing marketing-relevant information to another consumer"

Chart 1 **– WOM definitions.**

However, many authors end up exaggerating on the possible effects of WOM as a way of persuading consumers, presenting hyperbolic definitions that surpass the expectable power of WOM (Kimmel & Kitchen, 2014). Nevertheless, the discussion proposed by Sweeney et al. (2012) remains: is WOM any conversation in which any random comment about a product is made or should it conceive an actual recommendation about a product to be given.

The historic evolution of WOM could be confused by the evolution of oral communications itself. The fact that someone would make a decision of buying – or not buying – something based only, or also, on the opinion of someone else was subject to academic interest as of sixty years ago. Whyte (1954) is considered to be one of the first authors to have studied the WOM phenomena. In an attempt to find an explanation to something he noticed in his neighborhood, Whyte stressed the power of WOM: "practically everyone agrees that the American consumer is immensely susceptible to word of mouth" (Whyte, 1954 apud Arndt, 1967). What Whyte observed was that the distribution of air conditioning devices and TV antennas out of apartments would follow a pattern of a few installed next to each other and a lot of blank spots next to those clusters, instead of a random pattern, as it would be expected.

Festinger was an author concerned with social groups influences (1950; 1954) while theories of communication started to be impacted, specially upon the proposal of the two-step flow of communication (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955). At that same period, an application of the two-step flow of communication came up on the investigation of the influence of "face-to-face" communications in the decision process within a sample of professional experts (Menzel & Katz, 1955).

Not long after the further development of those social theories, a few authors began investigating the influence that WOM could have on the consumer with the first empirical studies. Thus, in the mid-1960's WOM was already a theme that intrigued the experts. One of the earlier investigators of WOM as a marketing tool was the polemic Ernest Dichter, founder of the Institute for Motivational Research. Known for proposing that Freudian techniques were applied into product development and advertising ("Retail therapy," 2011), Dichter dove into the subject. His findings regarded the psychological findings, which included speaker and listener motivations, consumers' involvement toward the product, themselves and the

conversation per se, as well as the conditions and the influential groups involved (Dichter, 1966). He even risked a few propositions in terms of how to create or stimulate WOM.

Instead of discussing psychological ideas and approaches, Arndt took a more empiric approach. In the first study found on this research to use empiric data, the author studied how the launch of a new food product would have its message transmitted across a few hundreds of housewives that lived in a university housing. His conclusions allowed for the proposal of a conceptual framework for WOM, which included the confirmation that positive WOM (PWOM) drove more sales and negative WOM harmed sales (Arndt, 1967). Arndt also investigated the role of perceived risk and time of product adoption and their relation with WOM (1967). The perception of risk and the need to search for external information to mitigate it end up creating the necessity of relying on personal sources of information (Murray, 1991).

The evolution of studies about WOM pointed to a diversity of aspects related to that form of communication, a few of which took part in this study. A significant portion of WOM research focuses on its antecedents. Consumer satisfaction, for instance, is a broad researched construct, with over 110,000 articles registered under the "consumer satisfaction" expression on Google Scholar, within WOM studies. The research on consumer satisfaction began concentrated on the post-purchase evaluation process (Day, 1977), including its psychological and physical influences (Swan & Combs, 1976), as well as the complete spectrum of antecedents and consequents (Oliver, 1980).

The stream of research about satisfaction soon led to understanding the effects over WOM, which was a derivative of the studies about consumer complaints at the time (Oliver, 1980). Hence, consumers' dissatisfaction was proven to be a direct link towards negative recommendations (Richins, 1983) – negative WOM will be further covered on the next chapter. A little later, the comparison of satisfied and dissatisfied consumers was carried out and proven right by those who believed that dissatisfaction impacts WOM more heavily (Anderson, 1998). The concern of management with the treatment given to complaints was beginning to be subject to scrutinizing and it was suggested to affect companies' image and reputation (Richins, 1983) and part of the variables that drove complaints – or compliments – were under the control of the company itself (Curren & Folkes, 1987).

On a different stream, researchers found affective responses (Westbrook, 1987) and purchase involvement (Lau & Ng, 2001; Venkatraman, 1988) also to impact the extent and the intentions of communicate about a product.

However, when it comes to antecedents of WOM, an important share of the academic research is associated with the performance of products and services and its consequences. For instance, Dick and Basu proposed a framework for customer loyalty that presented WOM as one of the consequences for relative attitude and repeat patronage, components of the loyalty relationship (Dick & Basu, 1994). Different concepts that work as antecedents of WOM and are directly associated with customer satisfaction were also proposed: regret (Zeelenberg & Pieters, 2004), service quality (Babin, Lee, Kim, & Griffin, 2005) and service recovery (Kau & Loh, 2006) are a few examples.

Other authors took different approaches in terms of proposing antecedents of the intention to recommend – or not – a product or service to someone else. Batra, Ahuvia and Bagozzi, in an extensive study that proposed a structural model for Brand Love, included WOM as one of the outcomes (2012). Bringing it closer to one of the objectives of this study, product's usefulness and originality were also investigated as potential antecedents for generating WOM: whilst originality creates the conditions for more WOM spreading, product's usefulness affects the valence of what is being said by consumers (Moldovan, Goldenberg, & Chattopadhyay, 2011). Aspects such as personality traits were not left apart, with the conclusion that emotional instability, loveliness and awareness drive the sending of more products and services information, while emotional instability and awareness affect information receiving (Basso, Reck, & Rech, 2013). Even more recent theories such as the Construal Level theory (Bar-Anan, Liberman, & Trope, 2006; Trope & Liberman, 2003, 2010) has been involved as an antecedent of WOM, by concluding the construal level mediates the perceived quality and satisfaction relation with PWOM intentions (Wien & Olsen, 2012).

Anticipating Kimmel and Kitchen's editorial regarding the future of WOM research (2014), De Bruyn and Lilien proposed an interesting schematics about the streams of research of WOM (2008). The first stream focuses on *why* consumers provide recommendations of products or services they have experienced before. As mentioned previously, satisfaction or dissatisfaction could be such factors (Anderson, 1998; Dichter, 1966; Maxham & Netemeyer, 2002; Richins, 1983). Other antecedents, such as novelty of the product (Bone, 1992) and loyalty of the consumer towards the firm (Dick & Basu, 1994) were also part of that first stream, concentrated on the antecedents and their justifications on why they generated WOM communications. The variances of intensity of WOM with different product categories, due to the changes in involvement (Giese, Spangenberg, & Crowley, 1996) were also included in that stream and its role on this study will be further developed on chapter 2e.

The second stream of De Bruyn and Lilien's proposal refers to the circumstances that lead consumers to rely on WOM (De Bruyn & Lilien, 2008). The authors enumerate the risk perception on the decision making to buy or not a given product by the consumer (Murray, 1991) or depending on their involvement on the purchase decision. De Bruyn and Lilien also refer to consumer expertise on this second stream, arguing that consumers might borrow expertise when they believe they lack it in a given purchase (Gilly, Graham, Wolfinbarger, & Yale, 1998).

Finally, the third proposed stream of research of WOM is associated with why certain profiles of people transmit more influence than others. Specifically, it concerns the studies of source of WOM expertness (Bansal & Voyer, 2000; Gilly et al., 1998), tie strength (Jacqueline Johnson Brown & Reingen, 1987) and other similarities, such as homophily and demographic similarity (Jacqueline Johnson Brown & Reingen, 1987). The importance of source expertness and tie strength will also be covered on chapters 2c and 2d, respectively.

Finally, as much as WOM has been approached from different perspectives, especially as personal recommendations, interpersonal influence and informal communication (Gheorghe, 2012), the comparison to traditional advertising allows the pinpointing of WOM qualities in terms of persuasiveness and resources invested on acquiring the customer (Villanueva, Yoo, & Hanssens, 2008). The role of negative WOM on the diffusion of new products was also promptly incorporated, reflecting the importance of that construct to business development in varied industries, as in movie and other novelty products (Mahajan, Muller, & Kerin, 1984).

A very intense theme of research in the last decade regarding WOM is the "electronic word of mouth", or eWOM, which refers to online peer-to-peer recommendations. Although the first studies began appearing on top journals at the beginning of the century, up until the last years the paths of research and the possibilities of extending the theory were not clear. Breazeale (2009) made the point of gathering the eWOM research and proposing directions for future investigations, stressing the increment on consumer's power thanks to eWOM growth.

However, on their recent book about WOM called "The Face-to-Face Book", Keller and Fay showed that only 8% of all WOM communication about products take place online, leaving 92% to the offline world, with face-to-face adding up to 76% (Keller & Fay, 2012, p. 43). Thus, the choice of environment for this study remains at offline conversations.

Another approach to analyzing WOM relates to its valence. On their meta-analytic review of WOM studies, Matos and Rossi used the valence of WOM as a moderator of the impact of satisfaction, commitment, trust and other antecedents with WOM activity (de Matos & Rossi, 2008). WOM valence, as posited by Harrison-Walker (2001) could be positive, negative or neutral. Researchers had already proposed that the peaks of WOM activity would be reached under extreme levels of satisfaction (Anderson, 1998). Herr, Kardes and Kim, stated that negative information could even be the higher diagnostic or informative than positive (or neutral) information. East, Hammond and Wright developed a series of fifteen empirical studies with five categories to demonstrate an average ratio of three positive communications for each negative communication (East, Hammond, & Wright, 2007). This data conflicts somehow previous findings about the reach of negative WOM (hereafter NWOM) being more preponderant relatively to positive WOM (Technical Assistant Research Programs, 1981).

Richins (1983) was one of the first authors to investigate deeper into the reasons why some consumers would start talking about a product or service negatively and other would not. She concluded that discouraging complaints would be an escape that could ultimately harm the one's brand image, as consumers would still report their experiences to other consumers and the company would not know what was happening, urging companies to respond to dissatisfaction.

In fact, the complaining behavior has been directly associated with NWOM. Blodgett et al. (1994) proposed a dynamic and complex complaining behavior, dependent of the post-complaint perception of justice and with NWOM as one of the derivate behaviors by dissatisfied consumers. The perceived worthiness of complaining (Lau & Ng, 2001) and the importance of complaints for advertising efforts (Cronin & Fox, 2010) are other examples of studies about customer complaining behavior that culminated on NWOM. Those personal communications may harm companies' images (Richins, 1983), although the potential loss to the companies will depend on whether the NWOM is attributed towards the company brand or the source of the message (Laczniak, DeCarlo, & Ramaswami, 2001). On a more specific perspective, retail companies have seen their evaluation based on NWOM to be moderated by their own image (DeCarlo, Laczniak, Motley, & Ramaswami, 2007).

Despite there does not seem to exist a consensus on which valence is more impactful, the WOM literature presents studies that associated either different antecedents or effects (de Matos & Rossi, 2008; de Matos, 2011; Palmer, Edison, Haliemun, & Wiewel, 2011).

Depending on WOM valence, purchase intention (Floh, Koller, & Zauner, 2009), effects on sales within a period of time (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006) or ratings of credence or search attributes (Boon C. Lim & Chung, 2011) could vary. Nonetheless, either valence approach would seem suitable for this study, or even investigating the moderating effects of each extreme would be appropriate.

2.2 Source expertise

In order to understand the importance and breadth of studying a source of communication's expertise, it is necessary to correctly place expertness within the studying of social sciences. Since mid-20th century, social psychologists began to investigate aspects of credibility and expertise among communication processes (Griffin, 1967; Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1953). More precisely, opinion leadership and personal influence researchers were pioneers on understanding the effects of source credibility and expertise (Griffin, 1967; Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955; Kelman, 1961).

Once expertise was established as an important contributor to processes of personal influence, social psychologists began understanding peculiarities and special cases of those processes. That investigation included types of experts (Alba & Hutchinson, 1987; Huang & Chen, 2006), message recipients' active seeking (De Bruyn & Lilien, 2008; Boon Chong Lim & Chung, 2014; Sweeney, Soutar, & Mazzarol, 2008) and the role played by the opinion leaders themselves (Feick & Higie, 1992; Leonard-Barton, 1985; Martin & Lueg, 2013).

Defining the characteristics of expertise should be an adequate starting point as the academic literature dealt with some uncertainty and mixed evaluations on that matter not up until long ago (Braunsberger & Munch, 1998). Friedman and Friedman defined experts endorsers according to their knowledge of a product class, obtained by experience, study or training (Friedman & Friedman, 1979), on a clear reference to advertising expert endorsers. On a more task-oriented definition, Alba and Hutchinson point to "the ability to perform product-related tasks successfully" (Alba & Hutchinson, 1987, p.411). Huang and Chen (2006) present a collection of adjectives associated to expertise from previous research, comprising authoritativeness (McCroskey, 1966), competence (Whitehead, 1968) and expertness (Applbaum & Anatol, 1972). Other definitions are more straight-to-the-point in terms of associating expertise with a specific knowledge (Bristor, 1990; Gilly et al., 1998), while others are more associated with cognitive processes related to making decisions (Homer & Kahle,

1990; Boon Chong Lim & Chung, 2014). Subsequent authors adopt either one of the definitions (see Lim & Chung, 2014 as an example of the "skills and knowledge" stream).

Another source of confusion regarding the definition of expertise is the concept of experience. Some authors propose that expertise is a composition of both knowledge and experience, inferring it would be possible to differentiate the expertise based on experience from expertise based on knowledge (Alba & Hutchinson, 1987). Braunsberger and Munch noted that previous publications were mixing both constructs (Braunsberger & Munch, 1998). Thus, the authors made an effort to differentiate those two constructs, as "both involve the acquiring of skills and/or knowledge" (Braunsberger & Munch, 1998, p.24). Based on the definition from Jacoby et al. that experience and expertise are "conceptually orthogonal" (Jacoby, Troutman, Kuss, & Mazursky, 1986), the authors propose the definitions below:

> Experience is defined as displaying a relatively high degree of familiarity with a certain subject area, which is obtained through some type of exposure (e.g. a consumer who went through the process of information search, decision-making, and/or product usage would be considered to be experienced).
>
> Expertise is defined as having a high degree of skill in/knowledge of a certain subject area, which is obtained through some type of formal training (e.g. an auto mechanic who went through vocational training would be considered to be an expert). (Braunsberger & Munch, 1998, p.25)

The investigation of the source expertise's antecedents has shown that source credibility and trustworthiness are recurring aspects on social psychology studies (Griffin, 1967; Wilson & Sherrell, 1993). It seems reasonable to take in that the predisposition of the receiver of WOM to listen to, interpret and act on the message will rely a lot on how credible he or she believes the sender of the message is. Nonetheless the opinion of the message receiver matters (Harmon & Coney, 1982; Homer & Kahle, 1990), source credibility was already described as a key aspect for acceptance of WOM (Sweeney et al., 2008). On what regards trustworthiness, its relation with source credibility has long being debated and made possible to conclude that a person will only be credible as long as they are also trusted (Griffin, 1967; Ohanian, 1990; Wilson & Sherrell, 1993).

Although interrelated, the concepts of source credibility and expertise do not present equivalent effects on the literature, whereas expertise is easier to be identified by the receiver of the message, what has driven stronger and more consistent results in terms of strength to generate opinion change (Wilson & Sherrell, 1993). However, the importance of

source credibility is relevant as a mediator of long-term memory retrieval to process new message communication, there included WOM (Sternthal, Phillips, & Dholakia, 1978).

Expertise has also been investigated on its connection with involvement. Based on Petty and Caciopo's model of Elaboration Likelihood (1986), Wilson and Sherrel studied the cognitive nature of the message passed on by an expert and its stronger effects on persuasion, as source characteristic of expertness occupies no longer a peripheral but a central route towards persuasion (Wilson & Sherrell, 1993). Other authors came up to the same conclusions in environments other than WOM, as in print media (Homer & Kahle, 1990) and the investigation of how WOM usage would affect attitudes toward products brought up involvement's key role on determining that the receiver of WOM messages by experts (Martin & Lueg, 2013). In the specific environment of blogs, despite being on the online world, the results point that for high-involvement products the expertise of the blogger will be useless in terms of advertising effectiveness (Zhu & Tan, 2007).

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of experts as source of WOM, at least the most relevant for this study, is its more effective role on persuasion. Early studies on the matter were more concerned with persuasion in any situation. Psychologists investigated the behavioral compliance of parents regarding psychologists' recommendations relative to the education of their children and the professionals labeled "Dr." obtained higher results (Crisci & Kassinove, 1973). In a comparison for influencing consumer behavior through similar or expert salespeople, the latter proved more efficient results (Woodside & Davenport, 1974). As mentioned before, the very own cognitive nature of the WOM message sent by an expert leads to a stronger effect on persuasion (Wilson & Sherrell, 1993). Based on the diagnosticity/accessibility theory (Feldman & Lynch, 1988; Lynch Jr, Marmorstein, & Weigold, 1988), the information provided by an expert could be interpreted as more diagnostic and thus be more influential (Bone, 1995). The strength of expertise to impact the seeker of an opinion's decision was already cemented, but researchers kept offering new empirical data to support that expert sources of WOM represented stronger persuasion results in terms of influence on opinion about products (Gilly et al., 1998) or services purchase intention (Bansal & Voyer, 2000). Wilson and Sherrel's meta-analysis (1993) about source effects in communication and persuasion showed a 15.5 percent effect for source expertise explaining persuasion variance. As an exception note on the regard of expert's influence power, there has also been reported the possibility of expertness being impacted by exogenous variables (Reinstein & Snyder, 2005). However, expertise has been also positively related to enhancing

attitudes towards endorsed products, even together with consumers' endorsement (Wang, 2006).

The relationship between the expertise of a WOM source and specific products or categories is quite intimate. The very fact of being an expert is usually connected with dominating an area of knowledge (Braunsberger & Munch, 1998). Thus, researchers have covered the interconnectedness field of product-expertise recommendations, aiming at defining which kind of products, services and categories would watch greater impact by experts WOM. Friedman and Friedman (1979) approached the matter by affirming complex categories would respond better to expert endorsers on advertising, whilst Gilly et al. (1998) called the attention to the possible influence of gender over specific product categories' experts. The ability to organize the information about products and to know product alternatives was presented as additional competences of experts (Mitchell & Dacin, 1996). However, it must be emphasized the difference of an expert to an experienced consumer: while the former owns the knowledge described by Mitchell and Dacin, the latter may not be able to provide differentiated and analytical information about a product, as proposed by Alba and Hutchinson (1987).

Additional situations and scenarios where products' characteristics will interact with recommendations given by experts will be presented on chapter 2-e (Product Characteristics).

2.3 Social tie strength

The theory on social ties and its influences on social psychology studies came from sociological theories from the first part of the 20th century. It was not until Granovetter proposed the incursion onto the strength of the weak ties (Granovetter, 1973) that social psychologists could begin investigating the communication processes through those lenses. According to Granovetter, "the strength of a tie is a (probably linear) combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services which characterize the tie" (Granovetter, 1973, p. 1361). Granovetter opened an argumentation that weak ties could be relevant to certain fields of knowledge with diffusion processes. Thus, it would be a matter of time before word-of-mouth communication (i.e. a communication diffusion process per se) was approached theoretically through Granovetter's strength of ties theory. Bristor (1990) did so by proposing a definition of social ties within WOM literature, stating that WOM network is "a social network consisting of a set of people who engage in word of mouth, plus the relationships between them" (Bristor, 1990, p. 65).

Granovetter also reviewed his theory and opened the field for diversifying its application by other authors on a subsequent paper, in which he also affirms that "…individuals with few weak ties will be deprived of information from distant parts of the social system and will be confined to the provincial news and views of their close friends" (Granovetter, 1983). Such alert would have a clear impact on WOM.

Hence, it seemed natural the WOM literature would board on the most recent streams of social studies. Amongst those, it could be cited not only the interpersonal ties theory evolution, but also studies concerning homophily (i.e. communication between similar consumers). One of the first studies to suggest the incorporation of those theories to WOM, which has done so by recognizing the absence of social science studies within WOM approach, was Brown and Reingen's "Social Ties and Word of Mouth Behavior" (1987). In that paper, the authors aimed at demonstrating Granovetter's proposition that weak ties create bridges, which work as channels of communication between different groups, enabling the diffusion of products and the exchange of information about them. On the other hand, strong ties were activated more often, due to the nature of the social relations supervening those connections, and also induced higher influence on the receptors of communication (Brown & Reingen, 1987).

Duhan et al. (1997) personified the figure of the strong tie recommender as the "purchase pal", whilst the weak tie is a person "who is a mere acquaintance or one who does not know the decision maker" (Duhan et al., 1997, p.284). Moreover, the authors proposed a model that made possible to infer the factors used by decision makers to choose between a strong tie and a weak tie when searching for a recommendation, although both were often concomitantly used. Whilst the former would be based on task difficulty and prior decision maker knowledge, the latter would derive from the importance of instrumental cues and subjective prior knowledge. (Duhan et al., 1997).

The initial testing done by Brown and Reingen inspired other authors to investigate deeper into the power of social ties with regard to generating WOM. A regressive model assembled by Bone (1992) obtained the "surprising" result of weak ties generating a stronger effect on WOM than strong ties, as it had been hypothesized. On a more recent study, Bansal and Voyer (2000) confirm higher influence of stronger ties on WOM receiver's purchase decision. Innovation diffusion research has revealed the intrinsic trustworthiness and credibility relation between strong ties (Rogers, 1995), whereas social theorists show how tie

strength could operate through trust (Coleman, 1994) or the characteristic of strong ties to disseminate more valued information (Frenzen & Nakamoto, 1993). De Bruyn and Lilien also found out the more important role of tie strength as a facilitator of new information awareness among individuals in an online context (De Bruyn & Lilien, 2008). Finally, the rapport between sender and receiver of WOM, as well as their non-strained relationship and social closeness were verified on another study (Sweeney et al., 2008).

2.4 Product type

There are several product classifications: hedonic or utilitarian, search or experience, differences between products and services, categories, etc. This research is concerned with the impacts of hedonic and utilitarian classification of products (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). The impact of WOM over product judgments was first explained through the accessibility-diagnosticity theory, as face-to-face conversations make information more accessible, although WOM information might be overcome if more diagnostic information is available (Herr, Kardes, & Kim, 1991).

Sidney Levy wrote an article stating "…the science and practice of marketing have been infused with new life" (Levy, 1959, p. 117). The new life mentioned by Levy was the incursion of social sciences into the business world. As an attempt to show the new era for consumer behavior studies, Levy stated "[p]eople buy things not only for what they can do, but also for what they mean" (1959, p.118) and made it clear that the ideas were surpassing the needs when it comes to choosing. However, before the research on hedonic consumption response started, the behavior research was occupied with the motivational research, "focused on the emotional aspects of products and all the fantasies that products could arouse or fulfill" (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982, p.93), during the 1960's and 1970's. Due to issues with rigor and validity, motivational research contribution has not gone forward on a long-term basis.

On their 1982 article, Hirschman and Holbrook pioneered on integrating the emerging hedonic consumption literature, whose most thematically related field of investigation with consumer research had been on product symbolism (Levy, 1959), by providing new insights to improve and allow the extension of the applicability of the consumption theories. The work of Hirschman and Holbrook was presented in an article that summarized concepts, methods and propositions (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982).

The authors began by comparing traditional and hedonic approaches on products, pinpointing there was no room for evaluating products by their ability to satisfy emotional needs of consumer or acknowledging consumers new ways of perceiving products, rather than measuring only tangible attributes. Those insights were in line with previous theories about product studies, which led Hirschman and Holbrook to make theoretical propositions that covered the higher emotional involvement and mental activity towards hedonic products, as well as patronage decisions connected to symbolic rather than tangible attributes of those products (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). The emotional states based on different levels of hedonic/utilitarian superiority/inferiority directly interfere on the loyalty levels of consumers, what leads straightly into WOM behavior (Chang et al., 2014)

The hedonic responses would also revolutionize the way researchers should approach product usage, as its perspective would demand the overview of the permeating psychological experiences. Hedonic consumption research could perhaps predict emotional responses to product usage, reinforcing the studies on decision-making processes. Those emotional responses were appointed to represent a sort of emotional expenditure, which would expand the traditional view of money expenditure (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). Chitturi, et al. also found evidence that the "type and the intensity of the emotional experience arising from the consumption of hedonic benefits are qualitatively different from those of utilitarian benefits" (Chitturi et al., 2008, p. 57). That difference led to different levels of WOM, among other consequences (Chitturi et al., 2008)

Preference for either hedonic or utilitarian products varies with the situation and decision task of consumers. An acquisition situation, for instance, may determine a product with prominent utilitarian aspects to make it preferable over a hedonic product (Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000). Moreover, Dhar and Wertenbroch assess that if hedonic relationships are stronger than utilitarian, that would lead consumers to value the former options longer. Whether a product is more strongly hedonic or utilitarian could also impact how much affect would influence on judging that product (Adaval, 2001). Hedonic and utilitarian preferences are even affected by the probability of buying – the higher the chance, the lower the preference for a hedonic prize – and the mode of acquisition – either on a hurry or normal pace (O'Curry & Strahilevitz, 2001), as well as proven to be affected by self-regulation, with prevention-focused individuals more keen on utilitarian-based products (Chernev, 2004).

On a more focused note on how does product type affects WOM, studies usually involve other psychological or product attribute-related aspects to make the connection. For instance, the concept of brand love is connected more strongly with hedonic values over more utilitarian aspects and their consequences include higher levels of WOM, due to higher consumer satisfaction, among others (Batra et al., 2012). WOM is also enhanced for more self-expressive brands. (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006). Previous research has also investigated the negative bias of eWOM: people pay more attention to negative information and trusts it more than on positive information. It was hypothesized and confirmed that there is a moderation of product type involved, with utilitarian products being more affected by negative information (Sen & Lerman, 2007). The intention to spread positive WOM was found to be more likely to happen when hedonic premiums are in place for products rather than utilitarian ones (Palazon & Delgado-Ballester, 2013).

At the late 1970's, Friedman and Friedman already stated that "Experts (…) should be most effective for (…) complex products" (Friedman & Friedman, 1979, p.64). Cooper-Martin affirmed that for hedonic products consumers relied more on subjective than objective aspects (Cooper-Martin, 1992). Those conclusions will be key for the development of this work's hypotheses.

2.5 Conceptual Framework proposed

WOM Studies usually measure the strength of WOM's influence over business results (Keller, 2007; Marsden et al., 2005; Reichheld, 2006; Villanueva et al., 2008), attitudes or purchase decisions (Bansal & Voyer, 2000; Martin & Lueg, 2013; Reinstein & Snyder, 2005). Thus, the objective of this research is to understand a few of the possible effects within the interaction among WOM's source type (expert/non-expert), social tie strength (strong/weak) and the type of product involved (hedonic/utilitarian). The evaluation of the effects of WOM will be based on the results of two dependent variables: attitudes toward products included in the research and purchase decision of the same products.

Chang et al. (2012) investigated effectively the same variables: product type, tie strength and source of WOM's expertise. However, a few differences are noted. First, the authors restricted their research on the social networking sites. As showed by TalkTrac research, only 2% of all WOM activity takes place in the social media environment (Keller & Fay, 2012, p.34). Thus, restricting research to that environment seems narrowing it too much. Second, the authors point out a few gaps in literature that are non-existent, such as "…the

literature has been lacking on the topic of friends as endorsers as compared to expert endorsers, an area that this study will address" (K. T. T. Chang et al., 2012, p.635). There are a number of articles that cover the subject of understanding the consequences of having an expert or non-expert source (Bansal & Voyer, 2000; Duhan et al., 1997; Gilly et al., 1998).

Previous research has already focused on how the opinion of experts could be more influential on consumers with more utilitarian goals (Smith, Menon, & Sivakumar, 2005), due to the level of expertise working as a cue to judge trustworthiness, the main aspect that drive purchase decision in that specific case. Therefore, the influence of expert recommenders is expected to have a major effect on utilitarian products, regardless of the strength of the tie between the recommender and the person receiving the recommendation:

H1 – For utilitarian products, recommendations given by expert strangers will lead to similar purchase intentions versus expert friends' recommendations.

H2 – For utilitarian products, recommendations given by non-experts strangers will lead to similar purchase intentions versus non-expert friends' recommendations.

H3 – For utilitarian products, recommendations given by expert friends will lead to higher purchase intentions versus non-expert friends' recommendations.

H4 – For utilitarian products, recommendations given by expert strangers will lead to higher purchase intentions unknown non-expert strangers' recommendations.

As hedonic products relate in a stronger manner with the emotional drive of consumers (Chitturi et al., 2008; Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982), the need for an expert could be discarded and the role of recommender could be the usual purchase pal, which is more commonly a family member or a friend (Duhan et al., 1997). The relationship between WOM sender and receiver's social ties was analyzed by Sweeney et al (2008), who concluded that WOM could be more effective if there is a strong tie, although a weak tie could also be as effective. Hence, when it comes to hedonic products, it is hypothesized that tie strength will be stronger, so recommendations given by close friends should reflect on stronger purchase intentions and attitudes towards hedonic products:

H5 – For hedonic products, recommendations given by expert friends will lead to higher purchase intentions versus expert strangers' recommendations.

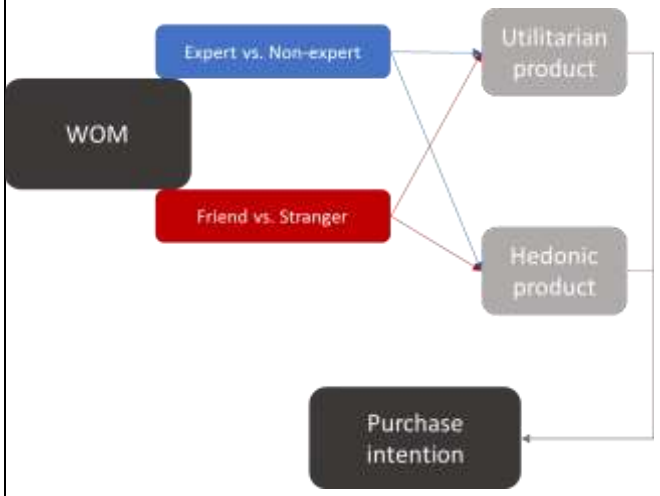
H6 – For hedonic products, recommendations given by non-expert friends will lead to higher purchase intentions versus non-expert strangers' recommendations.

H7 – For hedonic products, recommendations given by expert friends will lead to similar purchase intentions versus non-expert friends' recommendations.

H8 – For hedonic products, recommendations given by expert strangers will lead to similar purchase intentions versus unknown non-expert strangers' recommendations.

Finally, in order to offer a synthetic view of the conceptual analysis being proposed in the present research, by organizing the information in a way to be able to better visualize its structure and coherence, the instrument known as 'Matriz de Amarração' (Tying Matrix) (Telles, 2001) is presented on chart 2 below:

Chart 2 – 'Matriz de Amarração'

Theoretical model	Research problem	Hypothesis	Analysis techniques
	How consumers purchase intention is affected by different combinations of source profiles and product types.	H1 – For utilitarian products, recommendations given by expert strangers will lead to similar purchase intentions versus expert friends' recommendations	General Linear Model – Full Factorial ANOVA
		H2 – For utilitarian products, recommendations given by non-experts strangers will lead to similar purchase intentions versus non-expert friends' recommendations	
		H3 – For utilitarian products, recommendations given by expert friends will lead to higher purchase intentions versus non-expert friends' recommendations	
		H4 – For utilitarian products, recommendations given by expert strangers will lead to higher purchase intentions unknown non-expert strangers' recommendations	
		H5 – For hedonic products, recommendations given by expert friends will lead to higher purchase intentions versus expert strangers' recommendations	
		H6 – For hedonic products, recommendations given by non-expert friends will lead to higher purchase intentions versus non-expert strangers'	
		H7 – For hedonic products, recommendations given by expert friends will lead to similar purchase intentions versus non-expert friends' recommendations	
		H8 – For hedonic products, recommendations given by expert strangers will lead to similar purchase intentions versus unknown non-expert strangers'	

3 Methodological procedures

In this section, it will be presented how the research study was designed, which were the procedures for collecting data and how the data was analyzed.

3.1 Research design

This research was organized as a controlled experiment, in which participants were split into different groups and respond to a series of questions. The experimental design allow "to compare responses achieved at different settings of controllable variables" and "to determine the principal causes of variation in a measured response" (Dean & Voss, 2000, p.1). The experimental design also supported the interest of understanding the interactive variation of the three research variables: product type, source of WOM's expertness and strength of ties. Hence, it is a 2 x 2 x 2 experimental design.

Following Dean and Voss's recommendations on how to plan and implement experiments (Dean & Voss, 2000, p.8, chap.2), a few steps were taken in order to assure the experiment would be suited for the investigation of the proposed hypothesis. First, the experiment had the clear objective to test if different types of recommenders had different effects on purchase intention, according to the type of products. Next, the sources of variation, such as the treatment factors, experimental units and noise factors were clearly identified.

The independent variables were manipulated on eight different scenarios, each one reflecting one combination of the independent variables, as shown on chart 3 below:

Scenario	Expertise	Tie strength	Product type
Scenario 1	Expert	Strong	Utilitarian
Scenario 2	Expert	Strong	Hedonic
Scenario 3	Expert	Weak	Utilitarian
Scenario 4	Expert	Weak	Hedonic
Scenario 5	Non-expert	Strong	Utilitarian
Scenario 6	Non-expert	Strong	Hedonic
Scenario 7	Non-expert	Weak	Utilitarian
Scenario 8	Non-expert	Weak	Hedonic

Chart 3– Scenarios

Each scenario presented the respondent a simulated purchase situation. In which the respondent would be advised by a person whom could either be a close friend or a stranger.

This person was presented as either a specialist in the same field of the product being tested or a first-time shopper. Finally, each scenario was either about a utilitarian or about a hedonic product. Full version of the scenarios are on the appendix (in Portuguese).Continuing on Dean and Voss's recommendations, the participants in the experimental design were randomly assigned to the conditions (scenarios). Important to say, a number of classrooms took part in each part of the study and every classroom, no matter how big or small in terms of number of students, had all versions of the scenarios randomly assigned to each participant in that classroom.

As it will be described in this section, a pre-test was run before the actual data collection to identify if the respondents would correctly assess the questions and if there were any difficulties. Completing the pre-test, a test run of the analysis was conducted, with the objective of understanding if there were any issues or lack of information and if the model had been specified correctly.

Moving on with the design of the experiment, the decision on which products to use on the study was taken in another pre-test made with 55 respondents. Each participant evaluated a list of four products and a total of five links of research were sent. Thus, twenty products were evaluated in total. Each respondent filled both the Hedonic and the Utilitarian scales of Voss, Spangenberg and Grohmann (2003), called Attitudes Toward Products (Hedonic/Utilitarian). Each of those scales requests respondents to rate five aspects of the products. The list of the twenty products to be included in this part of the research was defined after a analyzing a list of seventy products studied in five different articles that involved hedonic and utilitarian testing of some sort (Batra & Ahtola, 1991; Crowley, Spangenberg, & Hughes, 1992; O'Curry & Strahilevitz, 2001; Palazon & Delgado-Ballester, 2013; Voss et al., 2003)

Based on the above evaluation, the utilitarian product was defined as a school backpack, with an average rate for the utilitarian scale of 6.76 (out of 7). The same analysis for the hedonic scale indicated a movie ticket, with an average of 6.08 points in the same range. The complete list of products and their scores on Voss's scale can be found on table 1:

Product	Hedonic score	Utilitarian score
Beach towel	4.49	5.11
Car	5.29	6.24
Cereal bar	4.42	5.15
Concert ticket	6.00	5.54
Digital camera	5.75	5.49
Earphone	4.88	5.34
English course	5.47	6.35
Flash drive	4.56	6.46
Football team jersey	5.15	6.44
Jeans	5.60	5.28
Laptop	4.62	6.04
Movie ticket	6.08	5.54
Running shoes	5.60	6.20
School backpack	5.44	6.76
Scientific calculator	3.98	5.23
Smartphone	5.33	6.33
Social shoes	4.24	5.18
Sports shirt	4.86	6.30
Vacation resort	5.84	5.58
Wallet	4.24	6.35

Table 1 – Product scores

However, as it will be further described in the data collection procedures, there was a need to redefine the hedonic product to be included in this experiment three times. The second attempt was made with a tablet, which was defined based on the recommendation of two specialists. For the last round of data collection, eighteen students helped by brainstorming which products could be considered hedonic, what lead to a list of fifteen products. After voting for their preferred ones, perfume was chosen as the selected product to take part in this research. Despite presenting things that escape the definition of product in this study, such as services, they did not have any impact on the research.

Table 2 presents the list of products on the last round of choosing products and their respective voting score.

Product	Votes
Perfume	9
Music	4
Photo album	1
Wine	1
Chocolate bars	1
Trip	1
Car	1
Toys	0
Jewels	0
Beauty saloon	0
Massage	0
Books	0
Restaurant	0
Woman's purse	0
Smartphone	0

Table 2 – Product ranking

After reading the scenario, each respondent was asked to fill a questionnaire (also in the Appendix). The first two questions covered the dependent variables. The first question was about the respondent's intention to purchase the product presented in the scenario. This question was made using a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 – Definitely would not buy until 7 – Definitely would buy. The next question was about the respondent's attitude toward the product, by Peracchio and Meyers Levy (1994), which used 5-point Likert scaling, with respondents being asked to agree or disagree with each sentence. Two control variables were also measured, the respondent's purchase involvement, using Zaichowsky's (1985) scale and the susceptibility to interpersonal influence, by Bearden and Netemeyer (1989). Both used 5-point Likert scales.

The next step on the questionnaire were the checks for manipulation, as this is a necessary condition for this kind of research to be considered an experiment (Hernandez, Basso, & Brandão, 2014). The objective of that section was to confirm that respondents correctly perceived the respective level of each scenario. For example, one of the scenarios included an expert friend recommending a hedonic product, so the manipulation check questions should verify each one of those perceptions.

The first verification made regarded the perceived closeness of the person recommending the product (social tie), using an adaptation of Chang, Chen and Tan's experiment that used the same stimulus (K. T. T. Chang et al., 2012). To verify if the expertise of the message source was correctly perceived, an adaptation of Martin and Lueg's manipulation check instrument was used (Martin & Lueg, 2013). Expertise needed to avoid the familiarity effect, which could lead subjects to mistakenly believe a recommender would be an expert (Alba & Hutchinson, 1987). Finally, the verification for the level of how utilitarian or hedonic the products were was made with Voss, Spangenber and Grohmann's scale for measuring utilitarian/hedonic attitudes toward products (Voss et al., 2003).

At the end of the questionnaire, the respondents answered a series of demographic questions about themselves. The questions included their gender, age range, marital status, grocery shopping responsibility and usage frequency of the respective product in the experiment.

The questionnaire was then pre-tested with a sample of 24 people chosen by convenience of the author. Each questionnaire (eight scenarios) was sent to three people, whom were asked to fill them out and provide feedback about the clarity of texts, if there were any grammar or spelling mistakes and if the questions were understandable. Besides fixing minor mistakes, the need to reinforce the manipulation messages emerged, both because of poor results in the manipulation checks of some of the scenarios and also based on respondents' feedback about the role of the recommending person in a couple scenarios. Thus, each description of the recommending person, especially the expert and the friend, was done with more emphasis, to leave no doubt about their extreme behaviors.

3.2 Data collection procedures

After the questionnaires were fixed according to the learning from the pre-testing, the first attempt of data collection was implemented. The questionnaires were printed out and 341 questionnaires were filled. The sample was divided in two parts. The first part was composed by students from a private university in a medium city of the west of São Paulo state. 225 Psychology, Biology and Medicine students participated in the research. Another part of the study was done with 116 students from a public university in the Great São Paulo area, all students from Business courses. Out of the 341 questionnaires returned, 63 were promptly excluded (18.55%) due to missing answers in any of the questions.

The questionnaires were applied by professors and/or assistants trained on the methodology of experiments and familiar with the intention of the research. The instructors were oriented not to give details about any of the information requested and attain only to explaining how each question should be assessed. All participants filled their questionnaires in their classrooms and had to return the questionnaire to the instructor. The answers were then typed in specific analyzing tables so the results could be input into the SPSS software.

For reasons that will be further explained in the results section, a second sample had to be collected. On this second sample, 335 university students were asked to participate in the research. The same application conditions applied to this second sample: instructors were trained, students filled out their questionnaires in their classrooms using paper-and-pencil, on a controlled environment. The only difference was a reinforcement from the instructors to minimize the number of missing answers, what has being effective as only 30 questionnaires had any missing answers (8.95%).

As this was the actual sample used to analyze the results, a further description of the sample will be presented below.

The majority of the respondents were women (69.2%) and between 18 and 24 years-old (58.4%), as shown on tables 3 and 4.

Gender	**Quantity**	**%**
Male	94	30.8%
Female	211	69.2%

Table 3 – Gender

Age range	**Quantity**	**%**
Under 18 y.o.	9	3.0%
Between 18 and 24 y.o.	178	58.4%
Between 25 and 34 y.o.	92	30.2%
Between 35 and 54 y.o.	25	8.2%
More than 54 y.o.	1	0.3%

Table 4 – Age range

The respondents were also requested to inform whether they were responsible for the grocery shopping of their households. As it can be verified on table 5, most of the respondents are responsible for grocery shopping on the majority of times or always (40%), although an even larger share of respondents is shopping for groceries with less responsibility or never (46.2%). Hence, it is a rather diverse sample on that matter.

Frequency of grocery shopping	**Quantity**	**%**
Never	28	9.2%
Minority of events	113	37.0%
Half of the events	42	13.8%
Majority of events	61	20.0%
Always	61	20.0%

Table 5 – Grocery shopping

On a direct consequence of the sample's average age, most of the respondents are single (72.8%) and have no children (83%), as shown on tables 6 and 7.

Marriage status	**Quantity**	**%**
Single	222	72.8%
Married	74	24.3%
Separated / Divorced	8	2.6%
Widow	1	0.3%

Table 6 – Marriage status

Children	**Quantity**	**%**
No children	253	83.0%
Yes, but they do not live with me	12	3.9%
Yes, and they live with me	40	13.1%

Table 7 – Children

In terms of monthly income, the research requested the respondents to place their household income into ranges made available in the questionnaire. Although asking for ranges and not the actual income has its disadvantages in terms of precision regarding what is the actual income, it avoids a lot of missing information, given how sensitive people usually are to provide it. So, in this research the income criteria was based on the book Estratificação Socioeconômica e Consumo no Brasil (Social Economical Stratification and

Consumption in Brazil) (Kamakura & Mazzon, 2013), but the ranges were created using the medians of each one of the seven segments proposed by Mazzon and Kamakura's study.

Hence, using that approach to segments, the distribution of the sample is concentrated on the intermediate segments, with a few more respondents with upper income rather than lower ones, as it can be seen on table 8:

Household income	**Quantity**	**%**
Less than R$ 850	1	0.3%
From R$ 851 to R$ 1.100	13	4.3%
From 1.101 to R$ 1.500	45	14.8%
From 1.501 to R$ 2.700	72	23.6%
From R$ 2.701 to 4.700	100	32.8%
From R$ 4.701 to R$ 10.000	65	21.3%
More than R$ 10.000	9	3.0%

Table 8 – Household income

Finally, respondents also provided information about their current enrollment on their university courses (table 9). The great majority of respondents are students up until sixth semester, with high concentration of studies from the first two years.

Course tenure	**Quantity**	**%**
1st/2nd semester	90	29.5%
3rd/4th semester	76	24.9%
5th/6th semester	135	44.3%
7th/8th semester	1	0.3%
9th/10th semester	3	1.0%

Table 9 – Course stage

3.3 Analysis procedures

As described before, this study had two data collection waves. Each wave's analysis started with checking if respondents properly interpreted the manipulation of the independent variables. Following on, the analysis was made using a general linear model (GLM), factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) between groups, as the study had more than one independent variable (Field, 2005). After understanding the effects that were significant in the proposed model, further analysis were conducted to understand if any external variables –

included in the data collection – were affecting the model. This section will describe how each analysis was carried out, and the next section will describe the results. All analysis were made using IBM SPSS Statistics 20.

The first step of the analysis was checking if the intended manipulations worked. As stated by Hernandez, Basso and Brandão (2014), the intention was to show that different levels of the independent variables would lead to different levels of the dependent variable. As this research used scenarios with specific levels of the independent variable, it is first important to check whether the respondents properly interpreted each scenario.

The first manipulation checking covered the level of expertise of the person who was recommending the product. Again, according to chart 3, respondents of scenarios 1 through 4 should recognize a high level of expertise on the recommender, whilst respondents of the remaining scenarios should attribute a low level of expertise to that recommender. The same rational was followed to analyze if the manipulation worked for how close the respondents recognized the source of recommendation to be – and this social bond was expected to be understood as strong for scenarios 1, 2, 5 and 6, and as weak on scenarios 3, 4, 7 and 8. Finally, respondents filled out Voss, Spangenberg and Grohmann's scale about hedonic/utilitarian products, which allowed to analyze whether the school backpack was recognized as an utilitarian product and if the tablet or perfume was interpreted as a hedonic product by the respondents.

After grouping the respondents according to each independent variable, a couple of independent sample T-tests were done, comparing the average obtained for the dependent variable for each one of the two levels of the independent variables. Thus, the average purchase intention of the group of respondents in which the scenario had an expert recommending the product was compared to the average purchase intention of the group that had a non-expert recommending the product. Another comparison of the resulting purchase intention was made with the group of respondents that had read about a close friend suggesting a product to be purchased versus the group a stranger making the same recommendation. Finally, each product – the school backpack and the tablet (on the first round of data collection) or perfume (second round) – had their average hedonic/utilitarian value analyzed using the hedonic/utilitarian scale.

Given the design of the experiment presented on the research design section, this is an experimental design that involved a three-way independent ANOVA for its analysis, configuring a GLM full factorial (Field, 2005). Both Levene's test of homogeneity of variances

and the tests of between subjects' effects were analyzed. The analysis also covered the value of the F's and the significance of each main effect and the interaction two-by-two and full factorial of the independent variables. The objective of the analysis would be finding the three-way interaction effect, what would pave the way to confirm – or not – the study's hypothesis. If not a three-way, but any of the two-way interactions would be significant, maybe some of the hypothesis would not be rejected. Any remaining effect (i.e. any independent variable main effect) would only confirm what had been found in the current literature of word-of-mouth communication and its effect given different types of sources of recommendation.

The study also included measuring two control variables (or extraneous variables), with the objective of understanding if they would influence the result of the experiment. In the words of Hernandez, Basso and Brandão: "extraneous variables are the ones that might influence the result of an experiment, or those that provide alternative explanation to the independent variable" (Hernandez et al., 2014, p. 102). On what regards controlling for those variables, Tabachnik and Fidell state:

> "In experimental design, 'holding all else constant' is accomplished through several procedures. One of them […] is to measure the influence of extraneous variables and hold their influence constant by statistically adjusting for differences on them" (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2006, p. 382, chap.8).

As the WOM process lies within the studies of social relations, it was then important to understand which are the relevant constructs that interfere on the relationships involved in this study. The first control variable to be measured was purchase involvement, as it had been demonstrated that different levels of WOM could affect product involvement (Giese et al., 1996), so that could be the case in the manipulation created on this study. In addition, levels of involvement might affect how much WOM is communicated about a given product (Lau & Ng, 2001), hence purchase involvement could have also affected how the respondent would perceive the attempt to recommend a product.

Another control variable was susceptibility to interpersonal influence. In an early study on the subject, Price and Feick suggested the interpersonal influence role on external searches processes (Price & Feick, 1984). Interpersonal susceptibility was defined by Bearden and Netermeyer (1989, p.474) as:

> "the need to identify or enhance one's image with significant others through the acquisition and use of products and brands, the willingness to conform to the expectations of others regarding purchase decisions, and/or the tendency to learn about products and services by observing others and/or seeking information from others."

Finally, as stated by Field, there are two objectives by including the control variables: reducing the within group error variance and eliminate cofounds (2005, p. 364).

4 Analysis and interpretation of results

As the results of the first data collection were not considered in the study, the manipulation checks will be the only results presented regarding that first wave, given the reason why that sample was not able to be used resides in that criteria – one of the independent variables was not properly interpreted.

4.1 Results

First, the results for the manipulation checks of the first round of data collection. On tables 10 through 13, the manipulation checks for the Expertise and the Social Ties are presented. Both tests consider the difference of the averages for each respective manipulation check question.

Group Statistics

Perfil_expertise		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Expertise	Expert	*150*	*4,0340*	*,85073*	*,06946*
	Não-expert	*128*	*2,7125*	*1,09062*	*,09640*

Table 10 – Manipulation Check – Expertise – Statistics

Independent Samples Test

		Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Interval of the Lower	Interval of the Upper
Expertise	Equal variances assumed	*16,304*	*,000*	*11,339*	*276*	*,000*	*1,32150*	*,11654*	*1,09208*	*1,55092*
	Equal variances not assumed			*11,122*	*238,351*	*,000*	*1,32150*	*,11882*	*1,08743*	*1,55557*

Table 11 – Manipulation Check – Expertise – T-test

As expected, there was a significant difference between the average on the manipulation check question for the expertise of the person recommending the products. The group that had received a recommendation by a person described as an expert gave a significantly higher average response ($\bar{x}$ = 4.0340, on a 5-point Likert scale) versus the group that participated in the non-expert scenario ($\bar{x}$ = 2.7125), $p<0.000$.

Group Statistics					
Perfil_laço		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Social tie	Friend	*135*	*3,8919*	*,94806*	*,08160*
	Stranger	*143*	*2,2147*	*1,28266*	*,10726*

Table 12 – Manipulation Check – Social Ties – Statistics

Independent Samples Test										
		Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									Interval of the	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Social Tie	Equal variances assumed	*39,055*	*,000*	*12,340*	*276*	*,000*	*1,67717*	*,13592*	*1,40960*	*1,94473*
	Equal variances not assumed			*12,445*	*261,207*	*,000*	*1,67717*	*,13477*	*1,41179*	*1,94254*

Table 13 – Manipulation Check – Social Tie – T-test

Also, according with the intention of the experiment, the group who took part in the scenarios that had a friend indicating the product recognized that person as a closer social tie ($\bar{x}$ = 3.8919, on a 5-point scale) than those who got their recommendation from a stranger ($\bar{x}$= 2.2147), also with p<0.000.

The analysis of each product – the school backpack as a utilitarian product and the tablet as a hedonic product produced unexpected results, however. Whilst the school backpack was correctly assessed as a utilitarian product, scoring 5.77 on a 7-point scale, the hedonic product, the tablet did not perform as expected on the hedonic scale, scoring only 4.4 out of the same 7-point scale.

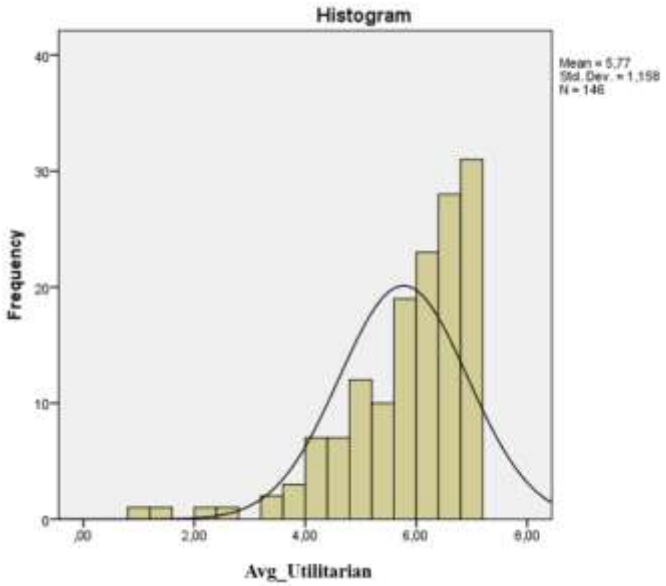


Figure 1 – Manipulation Check – Utilitarian score – Histogram and statistics – School backpack

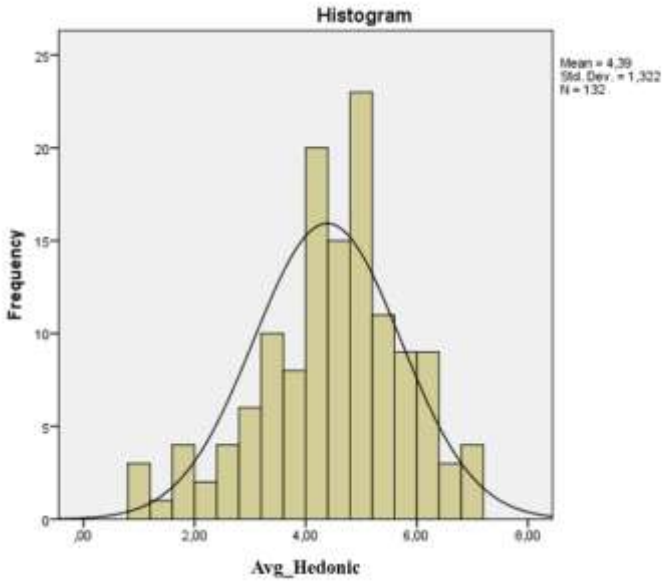


Figure 2 – Manipulation Check – Hedonic score – Histogram and statistics – Tablet

Because this value is too close from the median of the scale (4) and after carefully analyzing the likely consequences of having such a low score for the hedonic product, what would reflect the respondents' perceptions about the product, it was decided to start over the data collection. The hedonic product was replaced (according to the methodology described on Research Design section), with the objective to have both products correctly perceived.

Before moving on to the analysis of the second round of data collection, a comment on normality of data. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2006, p. 87) "with relatively equal sample sizes and two-tailed tests (and no outliers) robustness is expected with 20 degrees of freedom for error". Hence, although the normality tests for each level of the independent variables (tables 14, 15 and 16) were run and showed none of the samples present normal distributions, the analysis of variance was made using GLM full factorial ANOVA, which would usually demand normality of data.

Tests of Normality

Expertise		Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Purch_Int	Expert	*,226*	*139*	*,000*	*,824*	*139*	*,000*
	Non Expert	*,183*	*166*	*,000*	*,911*	*166*	*,000*

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 14 – Normality test – Expertise

Tests of Normality

Social_Tie		Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Purch_Int	Friend	,163	173	,000	,873	173	,000
	Stranger	,165	132	,000	,901	132	,000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 15 – Normality test – Social tie

Tests of Normality

Prod_Type		Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Purch_Int	Utilitary	,153	156	,000	,901	156	,000
	Hedonic	,170	149	,000	,871	149	,000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 16 – Normality test – Product type

With the normality assessment of the data put to rest, the analysis moved with the same milestones conducted for the first round. Therefore, the next step was to check if the respondents correctly perceived the manipulation scenarios.

As no changes were made on the scenarios, it was expected that the perceptions about the expertise and the social ties would not vary if compared to the first round of data collection. In other words, respondents would correctly identify the person presented as being an expert on each product (or no expert at all) as such, as well as recognize the person described as a close friend (or a stranger) as being so.

Thus, results for the expertise manipulation perceptions can be found on tables 17 and 18 below.

Group Statistics

Expertise		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
AvgExp	Expert	139	3,6379	1,10078	,09337
	Non Expert	166	2,5542	1,05445	,08184

Table 17 – Manipulation Check – Expertise – Statistics

Independent Samples Test										
		Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									Interval of the	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
AvgExp	Equal variances assumed	,262	,609	8,762	303	,000	1,08367	,12369	,84028	1,32706
	Equal variances not assumed			8,728	288,891	,000	1,08367	,12416	,83930	1,32804

Table 18 – Manipulation Check – Expertise – T-test

As expected, and corroborating what was found on the first round of data collection, expertise was recognized by the respondents. The person presented as expert obtained a significantly higher average for perceived expertise than the person shown as not an expert on each of the products presented.

Next, the check for the manipulation of the simulated social tie, or how much of a close friend – or a stranger – the respondent perceived the person recommending the product to be. Results are shown on tables 19 and 20 below, confirming the manipulation worked:

Group Statistics					
Social_Tie		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
AvgSocTie	Friend	173	3,4523	1,19146	,09059
	Stranger	132	2,2973	1,18279	,10295

Table 19 – *Manipulation Check – Social Ties – Statistics*

Independent Samples Test										
		Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									Interval of the	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
AvgSocTie	Equal variances assumed	1,669	,197	8,414	303	,000	1,15496	,13726	,88485	1,42507
	Equal variances not assumed			8,423	283,119	,000	1,15496	,13713	,88504	1,42488

Table 20 – *Manipulation Check – Social Tie – T-test*

Finally, it was time to check again if the products exerted the expected effect: the school backpack was expected to be perceived again as a utilitarian product and this time the perfume, product chosen to play the role of hedonic product, was expected to obtain a high average on the hedonic scale. Results for each product's evaluation on the respective scale (utilitarian for the school backpack and hedonic for the perfume) can be found on figures 3 and 4 below:

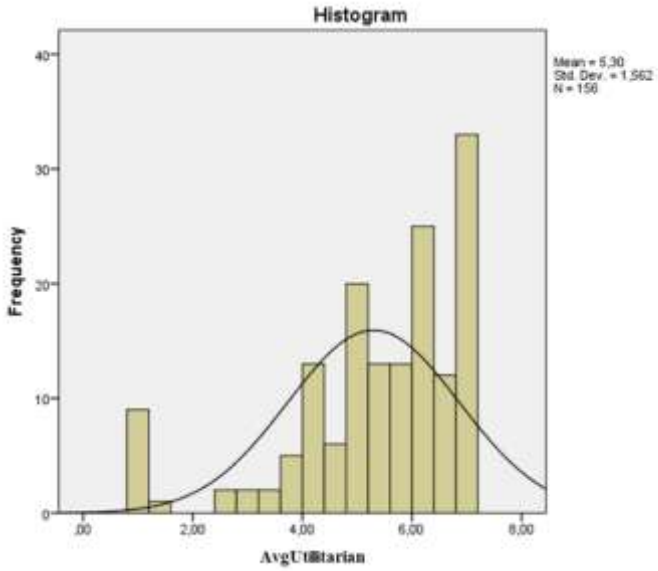


Figure 3 – Manipulation Check – Utilitarian score – Histogram and statistics – School backpack

On a repetition of the first round of data collection, the school backpack was adequately recognized as a utilitarian product, obtaining an average score of 5.3 on the utilitarian scale.

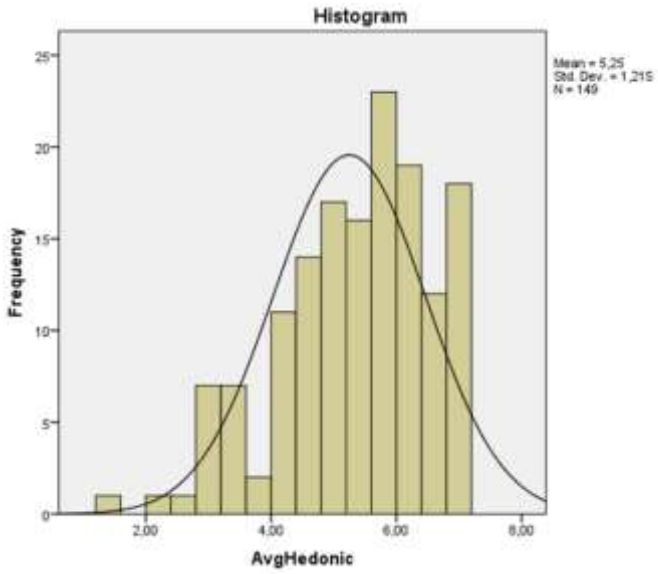


Figure 4 – Manipulation Check – Hedonic score – Histogram and statistics – Perfume

This time the hedonic product was also recognized as such and played the role it was expected from it: respondents attributed scores that averaged 5.25 on the

hedonic scale, allowing for the evaluation that the product was indeed perceived as a hedonic product.

Having analyzed the manipulations, the next step was to run the GLM full factorial model and understand whether the actual effects did take place for this study. First, it is presented on table 21 the size of each factors' samples:

Between-Subjects Factors

	Value Label	N
Expertise	*Expert*	*139*
	Non Expert	*166*
Social_Tie	*Friend*	*173*
	Stranger	*132*
Prod_Type	*Utilitarian*	*156*
	Hedonic	*149*

Table 21 – Samples sizes

Before showing the model's results, Levene's test of equality of error variances showed the full factorial model did not have significant differences on its variances, as shown on table 22:

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances[a]

Dependent Variable: Purch_Int

F	df1	df2	Sig.
,372	*7*	*297*	*,918*

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept + Qexp + QSocT + QProdTy + Qexp * QSocT + Qexp * QProdTy + QSocT * QProdTy + Qexp * QSocT * QProdTy

Table 22 – Levene's test of equality of error variances

The results for the full factorial ANOVA can be found on table 23 below:

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Purch_Int

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power[b]
Corrected Model	89,336[a]	7	12,762	5,224	,000	,110	36,567	,998
Intercept	7454,608	1	7454,608	3051,288	,000	,911	3051,288	1,000
Qexp	67,100	1	67,100	27,465	,000	,085	27,465	,999
QSocT	4,001	1	4,001	1,638	,202	,005	1,638	,247
QProdTy	1,769	1	1,769	,724	,395	,002	,724	,136
Qexp * QSocT	,557	1	,557	,228	,633	,001	,228	,076
Qexp * QProdTy	6,906	1	6,906	2,827	,094	,009	2,827	,388
QSocT * QProdTy	3,758	1	3,758	1,538	,216	,005	1,538	,235
Qexp * QSocT * QProdTy	,336	1	,336	,138	,711	,000	,138	,066
Error	725,601	297	2,443					
Total	8621,000	305						
Corrected Total	814,938	304						

a. R Squared = ,110 (Adjusted R Squared = ,089)

b. Computed using alpha = ,05

Table 23 – ANOVA Full factorial – Results – Purchase intention

Differently from what was expected, only the main effect of the expertise of the source of recommendation was significant. The main effects for the social tie and the product were not significant, as well as none of the interactions. More on the reasons and consequences of those outcomes will be discussed on the next section.

The comparisons of the purchase intention for each level of the factors can be found on figures 5 and 6:

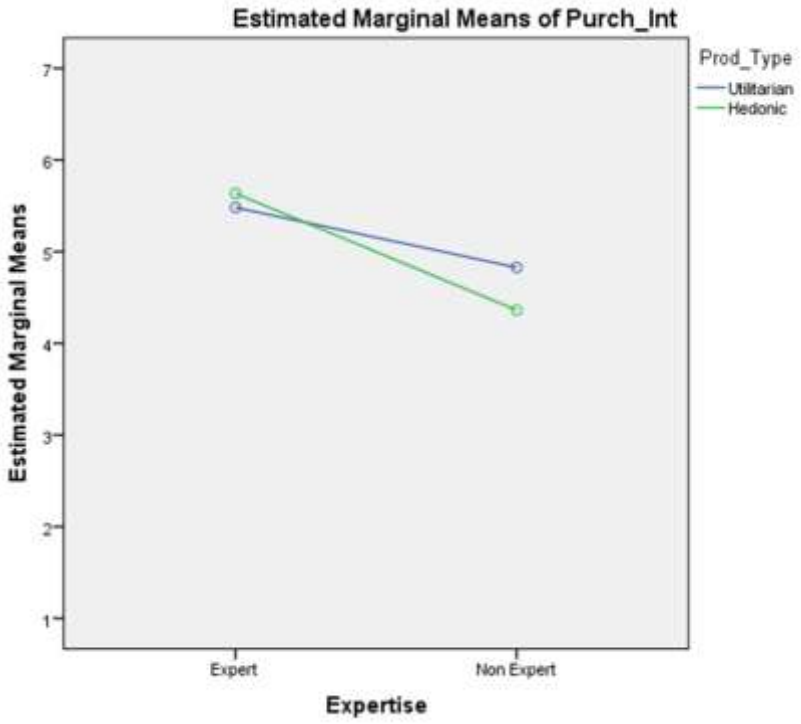


Figure 5 – Purchase intention of expert vs. non-expert for the utilitarian and the hedonic products

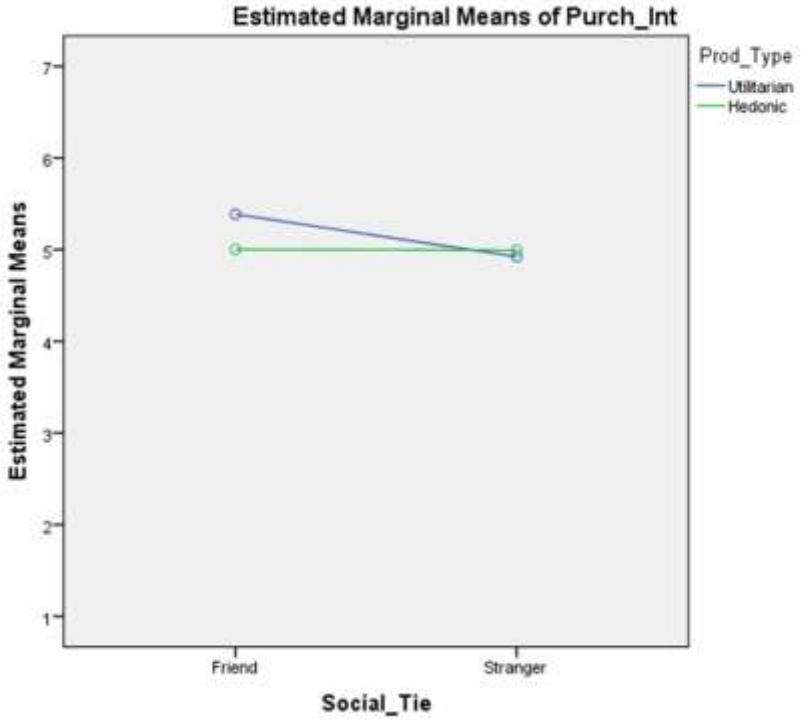


Figure 6 – Purchase intention of friend vs. stranger for the utilitarian and the hedonic products

Despite the fact that the lines cross on both graphs, what could indicate an interaction between the variables, both interactions were non-significant, according to the ANOVA results, what invalidates the interaction (Field, 2005). In addition, any attempt to demonstrate that there was a significant difference between the results of each product on a given factor and level (i.e. social tie, friend) would not be valid, since the interaction was not found significant.

Using a different perspective for displaying results, figures 7 and 8 also illustrate the results for each factor. That could provide visual support that there was no surmountable difference between the levels of the social ties comparison (Figure 7 – friend vs. stranger) for any of the products. On the other hand, the difference between the expert and the non-expert recommending a product is possible to be perceived on the graphs (Figure 8 – expert vs. non-expert).

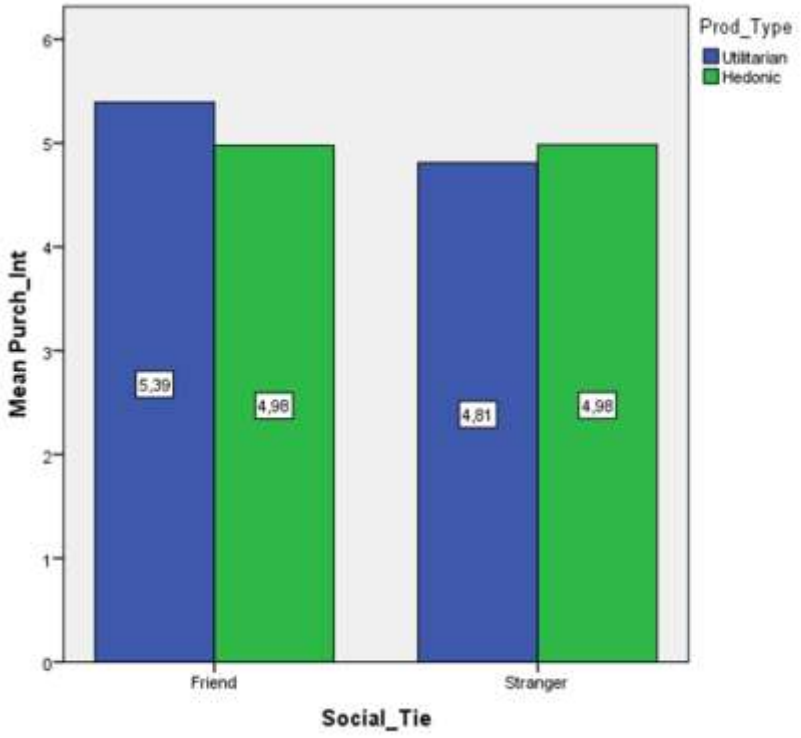


Figure 7 – Purchase intention of friend vs. stranger for the utilitarian and the hedonic products

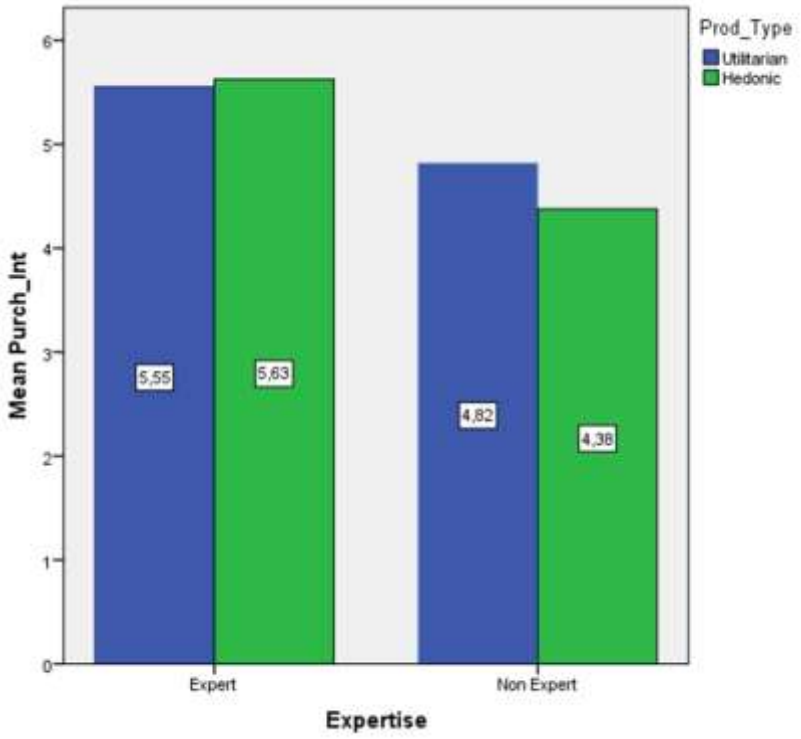


Figure 8 – Purchase intention of expert vs. non-expert for the utilitarian and the hedonic products

As it was mentioned on the research design section, this study also requested the respondents to fill out the scale attitudes toward the product (Peracchio & Meyers-Levy, 1994). The initial intention would be reinforcing the result, by understanding if not only their purchase intention, but also their attitude toward the product would vary according to the scenario in which the respondent was allocated. However, the only significant main effect was for the type of products involved – what could be explained by the intrinsic nature of the scale. Other than that, no interaction effects were significant for that dependent variable. Hence, all the discussion of results and conclusions will be based on the purchase intention as the dependent variable. The summary of results for attitude toward the product are shown on table 24.

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Avg_Att_AFE

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power[b]
Corrected Model	101,432[a]	7	14,490	23,338	,000	163,369	1,000
Intercept	3234,057	1	3234,057	5208,860	,000	5208,860	1,000
Qexp	,385	1	,385	,620	,432	,620	,123
QSocT	1,000	1	1,000	1,610	,205	1,610	,244
QProdTy	91,853	1	91,853	147,942	,000	147,942	1,000
Qexp * QSocT	,035	1	,035	,056	,813	,056	,056
Qexp * QProdTy	1,060	1	1,060	1,707	,192	1,707	,256
QSocT * QProdTy	,104	1	,104	,167	,683	,167	,069
Qexp * QSocT * QProdTy	,583	1	,583	,938	,334	,938	,162
Error	184,400	297	,621				
Total	3679,167	305					
Corrected Total	285,832	304					

a. R Squared = ,355 (Adjusted R Squared = ,340)

b. Computed using alpha = ,05

Table 24 – ANOVA Full factorial – Results – Attitude toward the product

The final variables to be analyzed are the control variables: purchase involvement and susceptibility to interpersonal influence. As stated on the analysis procedures, the intention was to verify if any of those variables were significant in the current model. Neither purchase involvement nor susceptibility to interpersonal influence had any influence on the model, as none has presented significant main effects. Results are shown on tables 25 and 26:

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Purch_Int

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power[b]
Corrected Model	96,262[a]	8	12,033	4,956	,000	39,647	,999
Intercept	83,359	1	83,359	34,333	,000	34,333	1,000
Avg_Involv	6,926	1	6,926	2,853	,092	2,853	,391
Qexp	69,160	1	69,160	28,485	,000	28,485	1,000
QSocT	4,544	1	4,544	1,872	,172	1,872	,276
QProdTy	3,370	1	3,370	1,388	,240	1,388	,217
Qexp * QSocT	,471	1	,471	,194	,660	,194	,072
Qexp * QProdTy	6,296	1	6,296	2,593	,108	2,593	,362
QSocT * QProdTy	3,022	1	3,022	1,245	,265	1,245	,199
Qexp * QSocT * QProdTy	,236	1	,236	,097	,755	,097	,061
Error	718,675	296	2,428				
Total	8621,000	305					
Corrected Total	814,938	304					

a. R Squared = ,118 (Adjusted R Squared = ,094)

b. Computed using alpha = ,05

Table 25 – ANOVA Full factorial – Results – Purchase involvement as covariate

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Purch_Int

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power[b]
Corrected Model	89,692[a]	8	11,211	4,576	,000	36,607	,997
Intercept	664,092	1	664,092	271,041	,000	271,041	1,000
Avg_SII	,355	1	,355	,145	,704	,145	,067
Qexp	67,404	1	67,404	27,510	,000	27,510	,999
QSocT	3,870	1	3,870	1,580	,210	1,580	,240
QProdTy	1,902	1	1,902	,776	,379	,776	,142
Qexp * QSocT	,626	1	,626	,255	,614	,255	,080
Qexp * QProdTy	7,016	1	7,016	2,863	,092	2,863	,392
QSocT * QProdTy	3,743	1	3,743	1,528	,217	1,528	,234
Qexp * QSocT * QProdTy	,313	1	,313	,128	,721	,128	,065
Error	725,246	296	2,450				
Total	8621,000	305					
Corrected Total	814,938	304					

a. R Squared = ,110 (Adjusted R Squared = ,086)

b. Computed using alpha = ,05

Table 26 – ANOVA Full factorial – Results – Susceptibility to interpersonal influence as covariate

After presenting the results, the next section will discuss what the consequences of the findings in this research are and how they interact with previous and current literature.

4.2 Discussion of Results

As shown on the previous section, only the main effect for the expertise (over recommending products) was significant, whilst the main effects of social ties and product type were not significant. Reflecting those results on the hypothesis for this study and considering all eight hypothesis predicted a three-way interaction to be happening among the three variables, none of the hypothesis were confirmed. The expectation that experts would be more effective on recommending utilitarian products and that close friends on recommending hedonic products was not conclusive in this study.

Based on the data collected for this study, it reverberates previous investigation about how experts are more effective on recommending products (of any sort) (Bansal & Voyer, 2000; de Matos & Rossi, 2008; Martin & Lueg, 2013). Previous conclusions about the strength of strong ties (Jacqueline J. Brown & Reingen, 1987; Duhan et al., 1997; Ryu & Han, 2009) could not be confirmed on this study. On top of that, any suspicion about the interaction between the type of the product and the effectiveness of WOM (an example can be found on Chitturi et al., 2008) are also out of the scope of this investigation's results.

The confirmation of the expert importance on recommending products was already of plenty of knowledge in the literature about WOM. As Marting and Lueg (2013) had shown, the expertise of the source of WOM is a significant influencer towards how the communication about the product will be used, although the source's trustworthiness and experience were more strongly correlated to WOM usage. One fact that is likely to have offered support to the importance of the expertise on recommending products in this study is the lack of brand associated with the products, as "consumers may rely on the expertise of the WOM sender to evaluate unfamiliar brands, but not for familiar brands" (Boon Chong Lim & Chung, 2014, p. 47). Hence, the absence of brand attached to the school backpack and the perfume ended up reinforcing the part played by the expert source of recommendation.

The fact that respondents understood the presented source was indeed an expert on what was being recommended, as confirmed in the manipulation checks, contributed to the effectiveness of the experiment for that variable. That effect is understandable given the conditions used to present experts in the experiment. Regardless of being a friend or a stranger, the expert was always presented with a positive image, one that could also reinforce the expert's credibility, as this is a key driver of expert effectiveness when recommending a product (Harmon & Coney, 1982)

In fact, the higher effect on purchase intention provoked by the expert is a consequence of known factors about persuasion and social influence. Based on Kelman's social influence studies (1961), the experiment proposed on this study are likely to have stimulated both identification and internalization processes on the respondents. While the former is "associated with a satisfying self-defining relationship to [a] person or group" (Kelman, 1961, p. 63), the latter is related to one "[accepting] influence because the induced behavior is congruent with his value system" (Kelman, 1961, p.65).

Credibility was also induced along with a few aspects that reinforced the expert's knowledge and experience with the product being recommended. Reinforcing both experience and knowledge was important to cover both aspects suggested by Braunsberger and Munch (1998), which stated that the two characteristics were important to define an expert and, as defended by Jacoby et al, were also "conceptually orthogonal" (Jacoby et al., 1986).

Finally, it is important to understand the role the products chosen had on determining how much influence the expertise of the source would generate. A few researchers had already demonstrated the complexity or even casual circumstances of the categories or

products involved in the research would be key to reinforce the role of the expert recommending a product (Bone, 1995; Friedman & Friedman, 1979; Gilly et al., 1998). As expert recommenders were recognized as such, it is likely that the respondents saw the products as of mid to high complexity, what worked as supporting evidence for the effect of the expertise to be at play.

On what regards the main effect for the social ties – and considering the main effect is the confirmation that depending on the stimulus received by the respondent, he or she would manifest a higher or lower purchase intention – it was expected that a closer friend would lead to higher purchase intention when recommending a product. If on one hand, the relationship between strength of ties and product recommendation effectiveness had already being proved on the literature, on the other hand it seems some variances could be expected, allowing for the conclusion that any scenario would be acceptable.

Some of the previous studies focused on proving close friends would be more influential, while others were more attentive to the strength of weak ties (Jacqueline J. Brown & Reingen, 1987; Duhan et al., 1997; Granovetter, 1983; Steffes & Burgee, 2009). Other investigations have reached marginal results in terms of significance of the effect of tie strength on the purchase decision (Bansal & Voyer, 2000, reached significance at 10%), while yet other studies, in specific circumstances, as inducing the search for eWOM, have concluded the strength of ties does not hold (Steffes & Burgee, 2009). Part of the previous conclusions about the influence of stronger ties onto WOM covered a smaller piece of the process, as the necessary trust to simply opening an email – with the communication about a product – but failed to provide support to further stages of the decision making, such as generating interest on influencing the decision itself (De Bruyn & Lilien, 2008). Social ties might even play a moderating role between motivation and action in terms of providing eWOM (Tubenchlak, Faveri, Zanini, & Goldszmidt, 2015).

Not confirming the main effect for social ties rose also a hypothesis about the effectiveness of the manipulations in this study. On one hand, the scenarios have been properly tested, reinforced and checking for manipulations has shown a significant difference on the perceptions about the person recommending the product's induced closeness to the respondent. On the other hand, the manipulation would be expected to have led to higher results in terms of perception of the social tie. On Chang et al.'s experiment (2012) – the authors whose social tie scale was used on this study – the manipulation check for the perception of social tie obtained

5.52 and 3.06 as means for strong and weak social ties, respectively, reaching a 't' value of 15.64. On this study, means were 3.45 and 2.30, with a 't' of 8.41. Although both 't' values are highly significant, this study's sample seems to be more skeptical towards the friend manipulation.

Another hypothetical explanation resides on Brown and Reigen (1987) and Duhan et al.'s (1997) conclusions about the likelihood of consumers choosing different types of recommendation sources. One important aspect that define the level of influence each type of social tie will have on one's decision is the own prior knowledge about what is being decided. Hence, any difference on respondent's knowledge about the products could be affecting how much influence the proposed recommender would have on their decision. As this research has not questioned about each individual's knowledge about each products, the frequency of usage was assumed a proxy – the more one would use a product, the more one would know about it.

However, as shown on tables 27 and 28, despite a small difference on usage frequency between people who has seen the scenarios of a friend or a stranger recommending the product, this difference is not significant. Both groups reported using each of the products between once or twice a week and three to six times a week (making the correspondence of the figure shown as 'mean' on table 27 and the questionnaire items).

Group Statistics

Social_Tie		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
FreqUse	Friend	*173*	*2,29*	*1,385*	*,105*
	Stranger	*132*	*2,14*	*1,295*	*,113*

Table 27 – Statistics – Frequency of usage vs. social tie

Independent Samples Test

		Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Interval of the Lower	Interval of the Upper
FreqUse	Equal variances assumed	*,783*	*,377*	*1,018*	*303*	*,309*	*,158*	*,156*	*-,148*	*,465*
	Equal variances not assumed			*1,027*	*290,806*	*,305*	*,158*	*,154*	*-,145*	*,462*

Table 28 – Frequency of usage vs. social – T-test

In a related issue, the more respondents see the task at hand as complex, the more they would rely on a strong tie recommender (Duhan et al., 1997). The outcome of usage

frequency also demonstrates how close the products are to the respondents' daily lives, what also allow to infer that the task of shopping for school backpacks or perfumes is seeing neither as complex nor portraying much difficulty to the respondents. Consumers then engage on what Duhan et al. called "instrumental to weak-tie route", relying less on the source but rather on their own knowledge about the products (Duhan et al., 1997).

There are also specific attributes of strong and weak ties when influencing behaviors that may have played a role on mitigating the social tie effect on purchase intention in this study. As found by Brown and Reigen (1987), strong ties were "less likely to be directly solicited for information than weak ties" (Brown & Reingen, 1987, p. 360), what was explained by more frequent conversations with stronger ties. This behavior relegates to weaker ties the habit of actively requesting information – and both behaviors coexist on a regular WOM process. Hence, by not offering the possibility of requesting information to weaker ties – or, at least, suggest it was not necessary –, respondents might have been demotivated from considering the opinion of a friend more strongly.

An effect not measured on this research was homophily (communication between similar people). The communication between similar people has been proven to at least activating more social ties (Jacqueline J. Brown & Reingen, 1987). Steffes and Burgee (2009) found support that homophily impacts students' decision when searching for eWOM. Thus, it would be crucial to understand whether a low level of homophily would not have affected this research – although there was a clear concern to describe the recommender, specially in the strong tie scenario, as similar to the respondent. However, stating that the recommender had received "international courses" (in the expert scenario) or had strong training background could have been enough to reduce perceived similarity between the recommender and the respondent.

It was already stated that susceptibility to interpersonal influence (SII) was measured as a control variable, but it had no interference over the independent variables effect on the dependent variable. However, the absolute figures for SII were rather low, with a mean of 2.22, as shown on table 29. The median and mode values are also low, considering it was a 5-point Likert scale. The illustration of responses distribution can be seen on the histogram represented on figure 9.

Statistics

Avg_SuscInterpers_Influence

N	**Valid**	***305***
	Missing	***0***
Mean		***2,2191***
Median		***2,1667***
Mode		***1,67***[a]
Percentiles	**25**	***1,6667***
	50	***2,1667***
	75	***2,6667***

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

Table 29 – Statistics – Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence

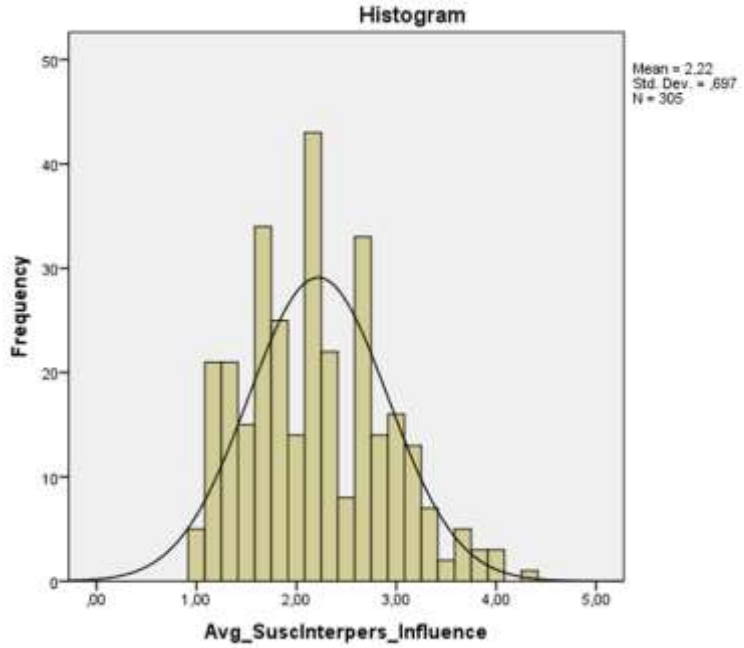


Figure 9 – Histogram – Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence

That distribution of answers shows the participants of this study had low to medium susceptibility to interpersonal influence. Checking for differences among each of the eight groups in this research showed no significant differences between sample cells. Nonetheless, the fact that most of the respondents' scores were so low may have been an important factor to create a kind of resistance to the persuasion attempts from the proposed scenarios. Bone (1995) also did not find support to her hypothesis that interpersonal susceptibility to influence would moderate WOM provided by expert or non-experts on her experiment. However, as Bone's study had no interaction involving product types, investigating

a possible moderating role of interpersonal influence susceptibility made sense to the present study.

The lack of a main effect for each type of product is also object of concern. The fact that the hypothesis were based on the difference between hedonic and utilitarian products and the difficulty it was to find the right products indicate how important this effect was for this investigation. The work of Chitturi et al. (2008) demonstrates how much the consequents of each type of product could vary. As stated by the authors, "the type and intensity of the emotional experience arising from the consumption of hedonic benefits are qualitatively different from those of utilitarian benefits". In that study, the differences resulted in different levels of WOM and repurchase intentions.

Thus, one suspicion for the present study was that the effect of hedonism and/or utilitarianism was not strong enough, or there could be an issue with the way consumers identified each product, despite manipulation checks showing the opposite. One interesting finding was about the utilitarian score for the hedonic product (the perfume): it was as high as the hedonic score, as shown on table 30:

Statistics

		AvgHedonic	AvgUtilitary
N	Valid	*149*	*149*
	Missing	*0*	*0*
Mean		*5,2483*	*5,5396*
Median		*5,4000*	*5,8000*
Mode		*7,00*	*7,00*

Table 30 – Hedonic and utilitarian statistics – hedonic product

That deviated perception about the hedonic product can be the possible cause of the low effect of product type with other variables. Its main effect, on the other hand, was not expected to be as strong, given that the purchase intention had no reason to vary, whilst an interaction with expertise and social ties was necessary for not rejecting the hypothesis. The reason for such high scores of utilitarianism is intriguing, considering the perfume was presented with no information connected with its performance or expected results. A possible explanation resides on the interpretation that respondents gave to the product: even a mix-up with deodorant could have interfered on the respondents' evaluation.

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

This work has provided an empirical support to the theory of WOM, showing that expertise of the source of recommendation helps to convey the message that is being transmitted, resulting in a positive effect on purchase intention. The reasons that allow to further explain this behavior were not directly investigated on this research, but the indications about experience and objective knowledge present in the literature (Braunsberger & Munch, 1998) could also be inferred in this present study, especially because of the way the experts were presented in the stimuli to the respondents.

On the other hand, the role played by strong ties could not be verified in the present study, thus not contributing to clarify whether stronger or weaker ties would be the most relevant to affect purchase decisions. Further on, the expected interaction among expertise, social ties and product types could not be confirmed. If this relation had not been properly tested using offline recommendations, the experiment here conducted also showed home for improvement, what could be fixed on a sequential study. In particular, choosing products that cannot only fulfill the expected hedonic and utilitarian roles is key. The products must also represent a complex purchase, which would then open space for the expertise of the recommender to be needed, as well as generate enough questions on the consumer's mind, so that a trustworthy source of information has a higher influence.

Finally, this study has somewhat confirmed Bone's results about how Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence does not affect WOM intention (1995). As the present investigation had purchase intention as dependent variable and WOM as the underneath mechanism of recommendation, current results could be considered additional to the theory.

The importance of WOM as a source of advertising has been long known to marketing managers, but very few know how to use it well. There are a few companies run by academics that can offer support based on empirical research, such as the Keller-Fay Institute in the USA, but those initiatives are still shy. The WOMMA (Word-of-mouth Marketing Association) also emerges as an attempt to reunite professionals interested on enhancing their brands using the power of WOM.

The present study contributes by, first, offering confirmation about how important experts are to recommend a product, be it recognized as utilitarian or hedonic. That learning can and should be used on communication planning, by choosing spokespeople that

represent a trusted voice to the target audience. As a second learning, besides portraying the difficulties of collecting information in an experiment with three different variables, this study also shows the methodology to conduct such kind of research. Given that different product categories could bring different results, this investigation shows how to do it.

One limitation from this study refers to the categories of products researched. As it was stated on the section about the research design, finding the products to be tested was a difficult task and the preliminary results from other rounds of data collection show the results could vary if other product categories are used.

Another source of concern relates to the susceptibility to interpersonal influence. As shown in the results, the fact the respondents had low levels of susceptibility probably indicate that a different sample, with milder scores for that measurement, would lead to very different results.

As the research gaps previously identified on the theoretical review were not confirmed with the empirical results and given the difficulty to properly execute experiments – reflected on the hedonic product choice process – it is recommendable to repeat this experiment. There is the possibility of switching results if some of the conditions are different (i.e. hedonic product perception, sample's susceptibility to interpersonal influence), allowing to a better analysis of the hypothesis. Thus, a first recommendation is a thorough study about type of products, reaching one with a couple of products with highly distinguishable scores for hedonic and utilitarian perceptions.

A separate recommendation would be researching not products, but services. The reason behind this is the higher appeal of information searching for services, which have inherently less available information and require a more intense process of diagnosticity from the consumer point of view (Sweeney et al., 2008).

Finally, despite the intensive defense for researching the offline environment made on this study's proposition, one cannot deny the increasing role being played by online and especially on the social media networks. Hence, replicating this study on the online environment and assessing actual recommendation behaviors could be an important contribution to WOM theory and practice.

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Appendix A – Stimuli

Stimulus 1

Você percebeu que está na hora de comprar uma mochila. Você fez como sempre: buscou informações na internet, conversou com amigos e familiares a respeito e ficou de olho quando passava por alguma loja. Sua ideia era conseguir comprar o produto que melhor se adaptasse às suas necessidades, por um valor adequado.

Depois de alguns dias pesquisando, você selecionou três produtos favoritos. Todos tinham compartimento separado para notebook, para óculos escuros e vinham com estojo incluso. Ou seja, eram *top* de linha. Na mesma semana, você está conversando com um grande amigo seu e menciona que você está procurando uma mochila para comprar.

Esse amigo é uma pessoa que te conhece muito bem, pois vocês cresceram juntos, moravam na mesma rua, estudaram na mesma escola primária e secundária e continuam saindo juntos sempre que podem.

Além disso, por acaso, ele é especialista em mochilas, pois ele trabalha há alguns anos num fabricante que fornece matéria-prima para vários produtos do mercado. Ele fez faculdade de Engenharia Têxtil e tem cursos internacionais de aperfeiçoamento.

Seu amigo recomenda comprar uma das mochilas que você havia gostado.

Stimulus 2

Você percebeu que está na hora de comprar um perfume. Você fez como sempre: buscou informações na internet, conversou com amigos e familiares a respeito e ficou de olho quando passava por alguma loja. Sua ideia era conseguir comprar o produto que melhor se adaptasse às suas necessidades, por um valor adequado.

Depois de alguns dias pesquisando, você selecionou três produtos favoritos. Todos tinham o seu tipo de aroma favorito, eram importados e de uma marca de destaque. Ou seja, eram *top* de linha. Na mesma semana, você está conversando com um grande amigo seu e menciona que você está procurando um perfume para comprar.

Esse amigo é uma pessoa que te conhece muito bem, pois vocês cresceram juntos, moravam na mesma rua, estudaram na mesma escola primária e secundária e continuam saindo juntos sempre que podem.

Além disso, por acaso, ele é especialista em perfumes, pois ele trabalha há alguns anos numa loja de perfumes importados. Ele fez faculdade de Química e já fez cursos internacionais para entender melhor os aromas.

Seu amigo recomenda comprar um dos perfumes que você havia gostado.

Stimulus 3

Você percebeu que está na hora de comprar uma mochila. Você fez como sempre: buscou informações na internet, conversou com amigos e familiares a respeito e ficou de olho quando passava por alguma loja. Sua ideia era conseguir comprar o produto que melhor se adaptasse às suas necessidades, por um valor adequado.

Depois de alguns dias pesquisando, você selecionou três produtos favoritos. Todos tinham compartimento separado para notebook, para óculos escuros e vinham com estojo incluso. Ou seja, eram *top* de linha. Na mesma semana, você achou um vídeo na internet no qual um especialista em mochilas faz uma análise dos produtos disponíveis no mercado. Você nunca tinha ouvido falar desse especialista.

O especialista, contudo, tem bastante conhecimento no assunto, pois ele trabalha há alguns anos num fabricante que fornece matéria-prima para vários produtos do mercado. Ele fez faculdade de Engenharia Têxtil e tem cursos internacionais de aperfeiçoamento.

O especialista recomenda comprar uma das mochilas que você havia gostado.

Stimulus 4

Você percebeu que está na hora de comprar um perfume. Você fez como sempre: buscou informações na internet, conversou com amigos e familiares a respeito e ficou de olho quando passava por alguma loja. Sua ideia era conseguir comprar o produto que melhor se adaptasse às suas necessidades, por um valor adequado.

Depois de alguns dias pesquisando, você selecionou três produtos favoritos. Todos tinham o seu tipo de aroma favorito, eram importados e de uma marca de destaque. Ou seja, eram *top* de linha. Na mesma semana, você achou um vídeo na internet no qual um especialista em perfumes faz uma análise dos produtos disponíveis no mercado. Você nunca tinha ouvido falar desse especialista.

O especialista, contudo, tem bastante conhecimento no assunto pois ele trabalha há alguns anos numa loja de perfumes importados. Ele fez faculdade de Química e já fez cursos internacionais para entender melhor os aromas.

O especialista recomenda comprar um dos perfumes que você havia gostado.

Stimulus 5

Você percebeu que está na hora de comprar uma mochila. Você fez como sempre: buscou informações na internet, conversou com amigos e familiares a respeito e ficou de olho quando passava por alguma loja. Sua ideia era conseguir comprar o produto que melhor se adaptasse às suas necessidades, por um valor adequado.

Depois de alguns dias pesquisando, você selecionou três produtos favoritos. Todos tinham compartimento separado para notebook, para óculos escuros e vinham com estojo incluso. Ou seja, eram *top* de linha. Na mesma semana, você está conversando com um grande amigo seu e menciona que você está procurando uma mochila para comprar.

Esse amigo é uma pessoa que te conhece muito bem, pois vocês cresceram juntos, moravam na mesma rua, estudaram na mesma escola primária e secundária e continuam saindo juntos sempre que podem.

Seu amigo não parece ser especialista no assunto, mas ele disse ele comprou uma mochila desse tipo há pouco tempo e que gostou bastante do modelo que ele escolheu. Foi a primeira mochila que ele comprou.

Seu amigo recomenda comprar uma das mochilas que você havia gostado.

Stimulus 6

Você percebeu que está na hora de comprar um perfume. Você fez como sempre: buscou informações na internet, conversou com amigos e familiares a respeito e ficou de olho quando passava por alguma loja. Sua ideia era conseguir comprar o produto que melhor se adaptasse às suas necessidades, por um valor adequado.

Depois de alguns dias pesquisando, você selecionou três produtos favoritos. Todos tinham o seu tipo de aroma favorito, eram importados e de uma marca de destaque. Ou seja, eram *top* de linha. Na mesma semana, você está conversando com um grande amigo seu e menciona que você está procurando um perfume para comprar.

Esse amigo é uma pessoa que te conhece muito bem, pois vocês cresceram juntos, moravam na mesma rua, estudaram na mesma escola primária e secundária e continuam saindo juntos sempre que podem.

Seu amigo não parece ser especialista no assunto, mas ele disse ele comprou um perfume desse tipo há pouco tempo e que gostou bastante do modelo que ele escolheu. Foi o primeiro perfume que ele comprou.

Seu amigo recomenda comprar um dos perfumes que você havia gostado.

Stimulus 7

Você percebeu que está na hora de comprar uma mochila. Você fez como sempre: buscou informações na internet, conversou com amigos e familiares a respeito e ficou de olho quando passava por alguma loja. Sua ideia era conseguir comprar o produto que melhor se adaptasse às suas necessidades, por um valor adequado.

Depois de alguns dias pesquisando, você selecionou três produtos favoritos. Todos tinham compartimento separado para notebook, para óculos escuros e vinham com estojo incluso. Ou seja, eram *top* de linha. Na mesma semana, você encontra um vídeo na internet no qual uma pessoa desconhecida conta o que achou de uma mochila que ela comprou.

A pessoa no vídeo não parece ser especialista no assunto, pois ela disse que é a primeira vez que ela compra uma mochila desse tipo, mas ela disse que gostou bastante do modelo que ela escolheu.

A pessoa no vídeo recomenda comprar uma das mochilas que você havia gostado.

Stimulus 8

Você percebeu que está na hora de comprar um perfume. Você fez como sempre: buscou informações na internet, conversou com amigos e familiares a respeito e ficou de olho quando passava por alguma loja. Sua ideia era conseguir comprar o produto que melhor se adaptasse às suas necessidades, por um valor adequado.

Depois de alguns dias pesquisando, você selecionou três produtos favoritos. Todos tinham o seu tipo de aroma favorito, eram importados e de uma marca de destaque. Ou seja, eram *top* de linha. Na mesma semana, você encontra um vídeo na internet no qual uma pessoa desconhecida conta o que achou de um perfume que ela comprou.

A pessoa no vídeo não parece ser especialista no assunto, pois ela disse que é a primeira vez que ela compra um perfume, mas ela disse que gostou bastante do modelo que ela escolheu.

A pessoa no vídeo recomenda comprar um dos perfumes que você havia gostado.

Appendix B – Research Instrument

1) **Qual seria a sua intenção de comprar o perfume que a pessoa no vídeo indicou?**
   Assinale com um "X" abaixo da opção escolhida, sendo que "1" indica que você definitivamente não compraria o produto, "7" indica que você definitivamente compraria o produto e "4" indica que você está em dúvida ou é indiferente. As opções intermediárias "2" e "3" indicam probabilidades menores de não comprar, enquanto que as opções "5" e "6" indicam probabilidades menores de comprar.

1- Definitivamente não compraria	**2**	**3**	**4 – Não sei/ Indiferente**	**5**	**6**	**7 – Definitivamente compraria**

2) **Tratando-se de perfumes em geral, o quanto cada afirmativa abaixo representa sua opinião sobre eles:**

Assinale com um "X" o seu grau de concordância com cada frase.

	Discordo totalmente	**Discordo parcialmente**	**Não concordo nem discordo**	**Concordo parcialmente**	**Concordo totalmente**
Eu gosto muito de perfumes.					
Perfumes estão entre as minhas coisas favoritas.					
Acho legal usar um perfume.					
Perfumes permitem que bons momentos sejam melhor aproveitados.					
Perfumes me dão confiança.					
Sempre que estou com um perfume me sinto melhor.					
Perfumes me ajudam a resolver problemas.					
Eu me sinto mais preparado sabendo que estou com um perfume.					
Com um perfume pequenas preocupações desaparecem.					

3) Ainda pensando em perfumes em geral, marque para cada par de palavras abaixo a sua opinião sobre esse produto.

A célula onde você marcar o X indica o seu grau de concordância com o fator mais próximo, ou, ao marcar a célula "4", indica dúvida entre os dois fatores.

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	
Essencial								Não essencial
Benéfico								Não benéfico
Desnecessário								Necessário
Eu não acho prazeroso								Eu acho prazeroso
Não emocionante								Emocionante
Divertido								Não divertido
É a minha cara								Não é a minha cara
Serve para os outros me julgarem								Os outros não o usariam para me julgar
Não passa uma imagem minha para os outros								Passa uma imagem minha para os outros
É irritante fazer uma compra inadequada								Não é irritante fazer uma compra inadequada
Uma escolha ruim não seria um transtorno								Uma escolha ruim seria um transtorno
Pouco a perder por escolher mal								Muito a perder por escolher mal
Ao comprá-lo, estou certo(a) da minha escolha								Ao comprá-lo, não estou certo(a) da minha escolha
Nunca sei se estou fazendo a compra certa								Eu tenho certeza de estar fazendo a compra certa
Eu me sinto um pouco perdido(a) ao escolher isto								Eu não me sinto perdido(a) ao escolher isto

4) Pensando em como você se comporta quando faz uma compra qualquer, indique seu grau de concordância com cada frase abaixo:

Assinale com um "X" o seu grau de concordância com cada frase.

	Discordo totalmente	**Discordo parcialmente**	**Não concordo nem discordo**	**Concordo parcialmente**	**Concordo Totalmente**
Eu raramente compro a última moda até ter certeza da aprovação dos meus amigos					
Quando compro produtos, em geral, adquiro as marcas que acho que as pessoas vão aprovar					
Sinto-me integrado quando compro os mesmos produtos e marcas que as outras pessoas compram					
Se quero ser como as outras pessoas, então procuro comprar as mesmas marcas que elas compram					
Frequentemente identifico-me com as outras pessoas comprando os mesmos produtos e marcas que elas compram					
Se tenho pouca experiência com um produto, muitas vezes pergunto aos meus amigos sobre eles					

	Discordo totalmente	**Discordo parcialmente**	**Não concordo nem discordo**	**Concordo parcialmente**	**Concordo Totalmente**
Consulto, com frequência, outras pessoas para me ajudar a escolher a melhor alternativa disponível de uma categoria de produtos					
Frequentemente coleto informações dos amigos e da família antes de fazer compras					
É importante que outras pessoas gostem dos produtos e marcas que eu compro					
Se as pessoas poderão me ver usando um produto, eu frequentemente compro a marca que eles esperariam que eu comprasse					
Eu gosto de ter conhecimento sobre que marcas e produtos passam uma boa impressão às outras pessoas					
Para ter certeza que eu vou comprar o produto ou a marca certa, eu frequentemente observo o que as outras pessoas estão comprando ou usando					

5) **A respeito de quem te indicou a compra do perfume mencionado no texto, assinale seu grau de concordância com as frases abaixo:**
Assinale com um "X" o seu grau de concordância com cada frase.

	Discordo totalmente	**Discordo parcialmente**	**Não concordo nem discordo**	**Concordo parcialmente**	**Concordo Totalmente**
A pessoa recebeu educação formal em seu campo profissional (graduação, cursos).					
A pessoa foi bem treinada em sua área de atuação					
A pessoa tem conhecimento profundo a respeito de perfumes					

6) **Ainda sobre quem te indicou a compra do perfume mencionado no texto, assinale novamente o quanto você concorda com cada frase abaixo:**
Assinale com um "X" o seu grau de concordância com cada frase.

	Discordo totalmente	**Discordo parcialmente**	**Não concordo nem discordo**	**Concordo parcialmente**	**Concordo Totalmente**
É uma pessoa com quem eu convivo					
Essa pessoa sabe coisas sobre mim que poucas pessoas sabem					
Somos amigos próximos					
Às vezes fazemos grandes favores um ao outro					

7) Agora, indique qual adjetivo descreve melhor sua opinião sobre perfumes em geral.

A célula onde você marcar o "X" indica o seu grau de concordância com o fator mais próximo, ou, ao marcar a célula "4", indica dúvida entre os dois fatores.

Para você, perfumes são:

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	
Sem graça								**Divertidos**
Chatos								**Legais**
Sem emoção								**Emocionantes**
Desagradáveis								**Agradáveis**
Sem prazer								**Prazerosos**
Ineficazes								**Eficazes**
Inúteis								**Úteis**
Não funcionais								**Funcionais**
Desnecessários								**Necessários**
Complicados								**Práticos**

8) Assinale abaixo com que frequência você acredita que utilizaria o perfume descrito na primeira página, se o comprasse:

Marque um "x" abaixo da alternativa escolhida.

Todos os dias	**3 a 6 vezes por semana**	**1 ou 2 vezes por semana**	**2 ou 3 vezes por mês**	**1 vez por mês**	**Menos de 1 vez por mês**

Agora, responda algumas perguntas sobre você, por favor.

Lembre-se que a pesquisa é confidencial e anônima. Não usarei as suas respostas de forma indevida, nem compartilharei suas informações pessoais com ninguém.

Assinale a resposta que melhor representa você com um "X"

9) Você é:

a. Homem
b. Mulher

10) Qual sua idade?

a. Menos de 18 anos
b. De 18 a 24 anos
c. De 25 a 34 anos
d. De 35 a 54 anos
e. 55 anos ou mais

11) **Com que frequência você faz as compras de supermercado em sua casa (sozinho(a) ou junto com mais alguém)?**

a. Nunca
b. Na menor parte das vezes
c. Cerca de metade das vezes
d. Na maior parte das vezes
e. Sempre

12) Qual seu estado civil?

a. Solteiro(a)
b. Casado(a) / União estável
c. Separado(a) / Divorciado (a)
d. Viúvo(a)

13) Você tem filhos?

a. Não
b. Sim, mas ele(a)(s) não mora(m) comigo
c. Sim e ele(a)(s) mora(m) comigo

14) Qual a renda familiar do seu domicílio (renda somada de todas as pessoas que moram na sua residência)?

a. Menos de R$ 850,00
b. De R$ 851,00 a R$ 1.100,00
c. De 1.101,00 a R$ 1.500,00
d. De 1.501,00 a R$ 2.700,00
e. De R$ 2.701,00 a 4.700,00
f. De R$ 4.701,00 a R$ 10.000,00
g. Acima de R$ 10.000,00

15) Qual semestre do curso de graduação você está cursando?

a. 1º semestre ou 2º semestre
b. 3º semestre ou 4º semestre
c. 5º semestre ou 6º semestre
d. 7º semestre ou 8º semestre
e. 9º semestre ou 10º semestre