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**Mestrado em Estatística e Gestão de Informação**  
Master Program in Statistics and Information Management

**What drives consumers to spread online book reviews**

Margarida Salomé Martins Mendes

Dissertation proposal presented as partial requirement for obtaining the Master's degree in Statistics and Information Management

NOVA Information Management School  
Instituto Superior de Estatística e Gestão de Informação  
Universidade Nova de Lisboa

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by

Margarida Mendes

Dissertation proposal presented as partial requirement for obtaining the Master's degree in  
Information Management, with a specialization in Marketing Research and CRM

**Advisor: Cristina Galamba Marreiros**

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## ABSTRACT

In the context of cyberspace, consumers are strongly affected by their peers' online opinions. The Internet has allowed for the rapid growth of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and thus, nowadays, we can find numerous product-related reviews and opinions from people around the globe. As a result, we are witnessing the rising of virtual communities, as well as new forms of social interaction.

Regarding the book industry, research has highlighted the importance of online reviews as a reference when selecting and purchasing a book. However, the issue of what drives consumers to write online book reviews is seldom mentioned throughout the literature.

This study focuses on the factors driving consumers to spread online book reviews. As a starting point, a Cheung and Lee's model on what motivates consumers to spread eWOM was analysed, and other motivations that were found to be relevant in the literature were added to said model.

The data was obtained through an online questionnaire published on Facebook and Goodreads book-related groups, as well as sent to the Nova Information Management School students. From the collected data, 225 responses were considered valid and were later analysed using PLS-SEM.

The findings of this study showed that *sense of belonging* is the motivation with the greatest impact on consumer's intention to write online book reviews, followed by *venting negative feelings* and *desire for sharing*, and, to a lesser extent, *reputation*. The results mentioned provide important insights that can be used both in future research and by managers in the book industry.

## KEYWORDS

Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM); online book reviews; online reviews; online communities; consumer motivations; books

## RESUMO

No contexto do ciberespaço, os consumidores são fortemente influenciados pelas opiniões *online* dos seus pares. A Internet permitiu o rápido crescimento do passa-palavra eletrónico (eWOM) e, portanto, hoje em dia podemos encontrar inúmeras opiniões relacionadas com produtos, vindas de consumidores de todo o mundo. Consequentemente, estamos a testemunhar o surgimento de novas comunidades virtuais, bem como novas formas de interação social.

No que diz respeito à indústria dos livros, a literatura tem destacado a importância das críticas *online* como referência para selecionar e comprar um livro. No entanto, a questão das motivações que levam os consumidores a escrever estas críticas *online* de livros raramente é mencionada na literatura.

Este estudo centra-se nas motivações que levam os consumidores a escrever críticas *online* de livros, tendo como base o modelo de Cheung e Lee sobre as motivações dos consumidores para disseminar eWOM e adicionando a esse modelo outras motivações, que foram consideradas relevantes na literatura.

Os dados foram obtidos através de um questionário disponibilizado em grupos relacionados com livros, no Facebook e no Goodreads, bem como enviado aos alunos da Nova Information Management School. A partir dos dados coletados, 225 respostas foram consideradas válidas e posteriormente analisadas através do PLS-SEM.

Os resultados deste estudo mostraram que o *sentimento de pertença* é a motivação com maior impacto na intenção do consumidor para escrever críticas *online* de livros, seguindo-se as motivações *partilhar sentimentos negativos* e *desejo de partilha* e, em menor medida, a *reputação*. Os resultados mencionados fornecem informações importantes que podem ser usadas tanto em pesquisas futuras como a nível empresarial.

## KEYWORDS

Passa-palavra eletrónico (eWOM); críticas *online* de livros; críticas *online*; comunidades *online*; motivações do consumidor; livros

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this introduction is fourfold. Firstly, the role of eWOM in consumers' purchases and the importance of online book reviews in the book industry are discussed. Afterwards, the objectives of this study are identified. And, finally, the methodology and the organisation of the dissertation are presented

## 1.1 PROBLEM DEFINITION

Traditional word-of mouth plays a major role in customers' purchase decisions, with studies placing its influence as high as 80% (Dichter, 1966). With the advent of the Internet, online feedback mechanisms have achieved the ability to disseminate, collect and aggregate information from large communities, constructing large-scale word-of-mouth networks (Dellarocas, 2003). Described as electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), this process allows consumers to state any positive or negative opinion about a product or company via the Internet, in a ubiquitous way (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler, 2004).

New media channels have allowed for the exponential growth of eWOM (Cheung & Thadani, 2012) and, nowadays, anyone can share their product-related opinions, regardless of geographical location. Thus, virtual communities are being created alongside new forms of social interaction (Duan, Gu, & Whinston, 2008; Munar & Jaconsen, 2014). These developments transform what were previously mainly private experiences, only shared with small circles, into global databases of consumer information (Munar, 2010).

One characteristic of cyberspace is that consumers are strongly affected by online interpersonal influence – online user reviews have become an important source of information to customers, substituting and complementing other forms of WOM (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006; Litvin, Goldsmith, & Pan, 2008; Senecal & Nantel, 2004). For example, eWOM has been found to significantly influence consumer's buying intention (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). A noteworthy example is the fact that, according to a 2013 study from Cisco Internet Business Solutions Group cit. Floyd, Freling, Alhoqail, Cho, & Freling (2014), “online ratings and reviews on retailer websites” were ranked as one of the most important information sources when making a purchasing decision. The former was referred by 52% of the respondents, ahead of “advice from friends and family members” (49%) and “advice from store employees” (12%). Furthermore, according to Nielsen, cit. Cheung & Thadani (2012) Internet users are more likely to trust online reviews as opposed to traditional media. Lastly, studies

show that 66% of consumers read from 1 to 10 reviews before making a buying decision (Power Reviews, 2014).

Regarding the book industry, studies have shown that reading can no longer be disassociated from the eWOM phenomenon (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006; Huang & Yang, 2008, 2010). Huang & Yang (2008) highlighted the importance of online book reviews as a reference when selecting and purchasing a book. As yet another example, a study by Chevalier & Mayzlin (2006) on Amazon and Barnes and Noble, suggests that book sales are influenced by the number of reviews and the star rating of a book.

Those findings imply that eWOM influences purchase decisions regarding books and helps boost their sales (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006; Huang & Yang, 2008). However, despite the discussed role of eWOM within this industry, the issue of what drives consumers' to spread online book reviews is seldom mentioned throughout the literature, having been found only one study related to this topic (Huang & Yang, 2010). Although there are studies regarding eWOM motivations, they disregard online book reviews, and since different products generate different emotions in the consumers (Dichter, 1966), different motivations to spread eWOM can be found on a study about the aforementioned topic.

The necessity to further extend existing work on this field is therefore quite evident. Identifying the motives that lead consumers to spread online book reviews enables its discussion from an informed point of view and provides a better understanding of consumer behaviour, thus allowing marketing professionals to manage eWOM more efficiently.

Cheung & Lee (2012), studied the factors that drive consumers to spread positive eWOM in OpenRice.com, an online consumer-opinion platform focused on food and restaurant guidance. Based on social psychology, the authors identified six motives which might explain why consumers spread online reviews: *reputation; reciprocity; sense of belonging; enjoyment of helping; moral obligation* and *knowledge self-efficacy*.

For its wide range of references along with its fairly recent publication year, the referred model will serve as a starting point to the present study.

## **1.2 STUDY OBJECTIVES**

The investigation question that this study aims to answer is: what are the motives leading consumers to spread online book reviews?

To answer that question, six specific objectives were defined:

- Analyse Cheung and Lee's model on what drives consumers to spread electronic word-of-mouth;
- Understand the motives leading to WOM and eWOM;
- Identify the motives leading to the spread of online book reviews;
- Find in the literature motivations that can be added to Cheung and Lee's model;
- Analyse the new model through the scope of online book reviews.

## **1.3 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH**

To identify the motives that lead consumers to engage in the spreading of online book reviews, a methodology similar to Cheung and Lee's will be applied. A questionnaire will be implemented to a convenience sample, by posting on Goodreads and Facebook groups a URL to the online questionnaire and by sending it to Nova IMS students. A quantitative design is adopted in this work, since, in order to test the research hypotheses, a structural model will be estimated through Partial Least Squares – a technique which, according to Fornell and Larcker (1981), provides a solid explanation for complex relationships.

## **1.4 STUDY'S ORGANISATION**

The following study is organised in five main chapters: introduction, theoretical background, methodology, results and discussion, and conclusion.

The first chapter is used to contextualise the subject, and to present the study objectives and the methodological approach. The second chapter presents a literature review on eWOM motivations, and serves as a basis for the conceptual model of this study. Moreover, the third

chapter describes the different stages of the investigation, as well as the measurement scales, the data collection and the data analysis approach. The sample profile, the measurement scales descriptive statistics and the measurement and structural models are discussed in the fourth chapter. Finally, the last chapter presents the results and the implications of this research, as well as its limitations and recommendations for future research.

## **2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

In this chapter, eWOM within the book industry is explained; Cheung and Lee's model – which will serve as a basis for the present study - is analysed; motives for online book reviews are examined; and finally, the results of the literature research regarding motives that might improve Cheung and Lee's model are discussed.

### **2.1 EWOM COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE BOOK INDUSTRY**

Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004, p. 39) define eWOM as “any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet”.

Online book reviews fall within the spectrum of eWOM. According to the Random House (cit. Lin, Luarn, & Huang, 2005) definition, a book review is “an evaluation, analysis or critique of a newly published book by a critic, reporter or other person in a newspaper or magazine.” However, with the emergence of the Internet and websites such as Goodreads, online book reviews are no longer a task performed only by experts nor only about recent books. Consequently, literature defines online book reviews as “all public reviews of published books by readers on the Websites of bookstores, publishers, or private individuals” (Lin et al., 2005, p. 462).

A study by Huang and Yang (2008) has highlighted the importance of online book reviews as a reference for consumers when selecting and purchasing a book. Their findings revealed that consumers go online to read reviews, whether to look for more information concerning a book, to reduce the risk of a bad purchase or simply to share positive or negative feelings. Furthermore, Lin, Luarn and Huang (2005) have studied the effect of online book reviews on purchase intention. Within the focus-groups, the majority of participants stated that positive reviews increase their interest in a book, while negative reviews, especially on a large scale, might make them rethink a purchase decision. Another study by Chevalier and Mayzlin (2006) on Amazon and Barnes and Noble suggests that the relative sales of a book on both websites could be explained by the differences in the number of reviews and the average star rating of the book, meaning the more reviews and the higher the average star rating, the



higher the sales. In fact, an improvement in a book's reviews often translates to an increase in relative sales.

Goodreads is a testament to the importance of eWOM in the book industry - this book-oriented social network counts with 65 million members, 2 (US) billion books on its database and 68 million reviews. In addition, the social network was created based on the WOM concept. In the words of its CEO and Co-Founder: "... when I want to know what books to read, I'd rather turn to a friend than any random person or bestseller list. So I decided to build a website – a place where I could see my friends' bookshelves and learn about what they thought of all their books" (Goodreads, 2018).

On this platform it is possible to see what one's friends have been reading and to track the users' reading activities – creating shelves for the books already read, for those to be read and for the one's being read. Goodreads also has a system that creates personalized book recommendations and a feature named Community, where groups with the same interests can share reading lists or discuss a certain topic. There are thousands of communities on the website, covering a large number of topics, from classics to paranormal or romance. (O'Leary, 2012) Furthermore, Goodreads also allows its users to review any book on its database – a tool widely used, considering the aforementioned 68 million reviews (Goodreads, 2018).

Online book reviews have also been used to promote books. Websites such as Amazon often provide a space where readers can express their views on a book (Amazon, 2017); while other online bookstores, as is the case of Book Depository, associate the Goodreads rating to a specific book on their Website (Book Depository, 2017) .

The referred examples enable us to conclude that the emergence of the Internet made possible for everyone to disseminate eWOM about books, and consumers are extensively using this feature both to read and write reviews. However, despite the large number of online book reviews written in websites such as Goodreads and Amazon, and the discussed importance of eWOM in purchase intention concerning books, only one study regarding eWOM motivations within the book industry was found in the literature (Huang & Yang, 2010).

As mentioned before, for its topic, comprehensive literature review and recent publication year, Cheung and Lee's (2012) model on the motives that lead consumers to spread eWOM

will serve as a starting point to understand the motivations which lie behind online book reviews. In the next section, this model will be discussed.

### 2.2 CHEUNG AND LEE'S MODEL

Cheung and Lee (2012) developed a model based on the factors that drive consumers to spread positive eWOM on online consumer opinion platforms, which they tested on OpenRice.com, a food and restaurant online guide.

Based on social psychology, Cheung and Lee identified what they named as four main theoretical perspectives - egoism, collectivism, altruism and principlism - and associated them with motivations that might explain why consumers spread online reviews in online consumer-opinion platforms, as shown in figure 1 (Cheung & Lee, 2012).

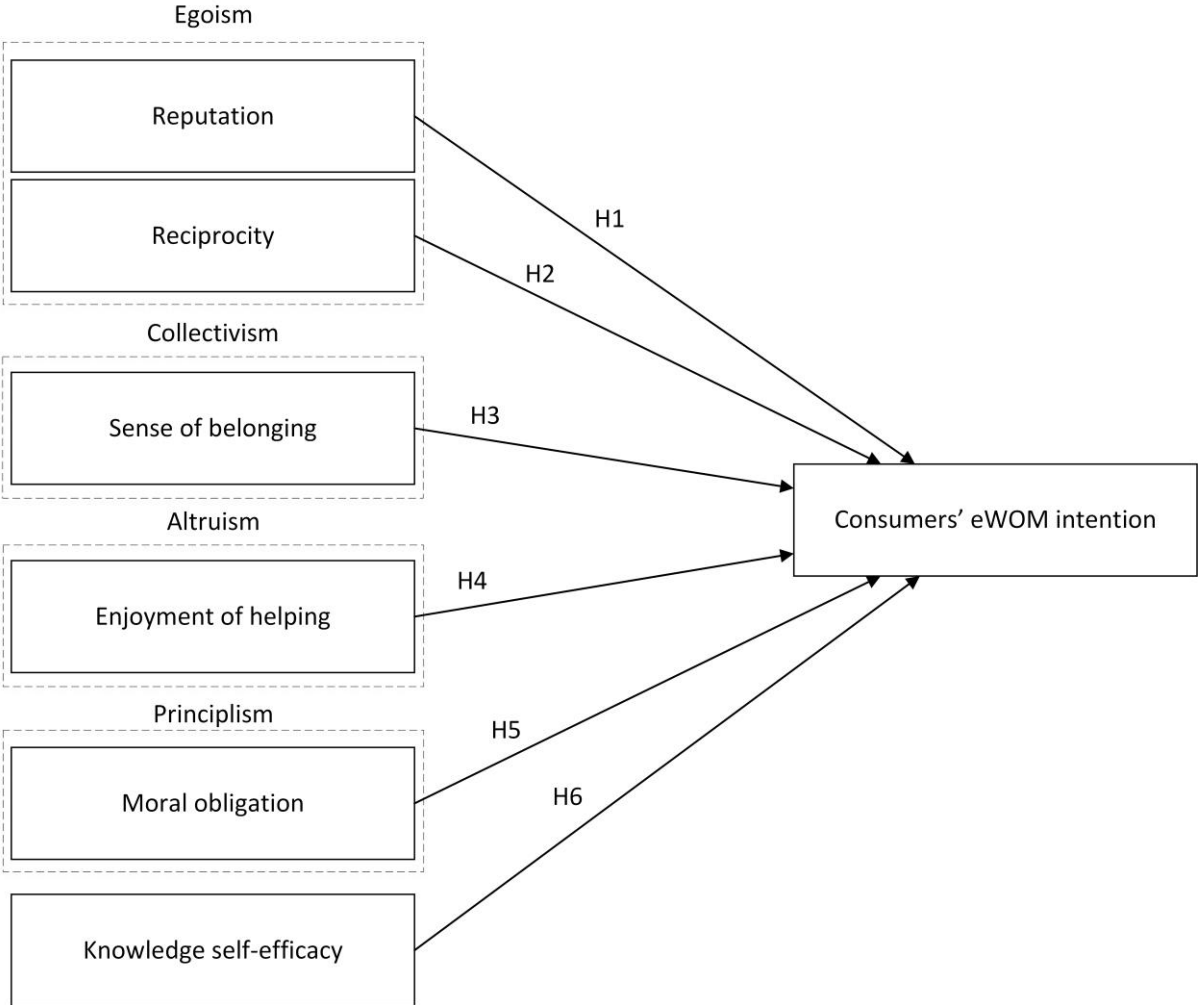


Figure 1 - Cheung and Lee's research model

This section will discuss the four referred perspectives, the motivations associated with each of them, as well as *knowledge-efficacy* – an added motivation to those perspectives.

### **1) Egoism**

Egoism is the action of using the public good to serve one's own interests. Researches in several areas demonstrate that human actions are often directed towards self-interest (Cheung & Lee, 2012).

*Reputation* is often cited as an egoistic motivation for sharing information, being seen as the desire for positive recognition from others. In an online-based context, reputation might mean being perceived as an expert or an intelligent shopper in a certain area (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Sundaram, Mitra, & Webster, 1998).

Another egoistic motivation cited in literature is *reciprocity*, related to the future returns that may arise from writing an online review. The kind of reciprocity relevant in an online context is called “generalised exchange”, and occurs when the ones who provide information do not know each other (Cheung & Lee, 2012). According to Kollock (1999) cit. Lakhani & Hippel (2002), such exchange explains, for example, why strangers help lost motorists: they are expecting to be helped too, when in need (Lakhani & Hippel, 2002).

### **2) Collectivism**

Collectivism refers to serving the public good to assist a group. This occurs due to a *sense of belonging* to a certain group. For example, research has found that identification with a community plays an important role in participating in an open-source project (Hars & Ou, 2002). As so, people might be willing to do something beneficial for the welfare of the group rather than for personal return.

### **3) Altruism**

Altruism can be defined as serving the public good to benefit others without expecting any rewards (Cheung & Lee, 2012; Sundaram et al., 1998). According to Blackwell, Miniard, & Engel (2006), consumers might share both positive and negative experiences in order to help other consumers with their buying decisions. This motivation is defined by Cheung and Lee (2012) as *enjoyment of helping*.

#### **4) Principlism**

Finally, according to Gorsuch and Orberg (1983) cit. Cheung & Lee (2012), principlism consists in serving the public good in order to defend a moral principle. In online communities, the greater the sense of commitment to the community, the greater the *moral obligation* to be helpful and to contribute with knowledge (Wasko & Faraj, 2005).

#### **5) Knowledge self-efficacy**

Beyond these four theoretical perspectives, Cheung and Lee also included *knowledge self-efficacy* in their model. This concept is described as “a personal judgement of one’s capability to execute actions required for designated types of performances” (Cheung & Lee, 2012, p. 221).

*Knowledge self-efficacy* has been proved to be an important motive for the spread of eWOM, as individuals who show a high level of expertise tend to provide eWOM more often (Constant, Sproull, & Kiesler, 1996).

Cheung and Lee’s study has found that *reciprocity*, *moral obligation* and *knowledge self-efficacy* did not have a significant impact on *consumers’ eWOM intention*, meaning there is no evidence of a correlation between those motivations and eWOM intention.

On the other hand, *sense of belonging* was the motivation with the highest impact on *consumer’s eWOM intention*, followed by *enjoyment of helping* and *reputation* (with a marginal significance). These results are consistent with previous literature, which will be discussed in the next section.

### **2.3 MOTIVES TO SPREAD WORD-OF-MOUTH AND ELECTRONIC WORD-OF-MOUTH**

Aiming to analyse the most relevant literature, it was decided to consider the most cited articles on this subject. Thus, this section discusses different studies on the motives to spread both WOM (Dichter, 1966; Sundaram et al., 1998) and eWOM (Cheung & Lee, 2012; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Huang & Yang, 2010; Jeong & Jang, 2011; Yoo & Gretzel, 2008).

Dichter (1966) examined the motivations behind WOM. The research was conducted among 255 consumers from the United States, and the respondents were encouraged to recall “conversations in which products, services or advertising had been discussed, including recommendations made as well as received” (Dichter, 1966, p.149). The findings revealed *product-involvement, self-involvement, other involvement* and *message-involvement* as the motivations to spread WOM.

Sundaram et al. (1998), also studied the motivations behind WOM, collecting data from 390 individuals intercepted in business establishments. The respondents were asked to recall a conversation about a product with someone other than a family member. The authors found that *altruism, product involvement, self-enhancement* and *helping the company*, are motivations to engage in positive WOM communications. On the other hand, *altruism, anxiety reduction, vengeance* and *advice seeking* are motivations to engage in negative WOM communications.

Based on previous literature on WOM and eWOM (Balasubramanian & Mahajan, 2001; Blackwell et al., 2006; Dichter, 1966; Sundaram et al., 1998), Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) created a framework to understand what motivates consumers to spread eWOM. The authors surveyed a German web-based opinion platform and found that the primary reasons to engage in eWOM are: *social benefits, economic incentives, concern for others* and *extroversion/self-enhancement*.

Yoo & Gretzel (2008) conducted a study to find the motivations behind online travel reviews. Using TripAdvisor members as a sample, the authors found *helping the company, concern for other consumers* and *enjoyment/positive self-enhancement* to be the main motives leading to online travel reviews.

Regarding online book reviews, Huang & Yang (2010) adopted two approaches to uncover the motives for their dissemination: focus groups and Internet-based surveys. Within the former, four main motives were identified: *desire for sharing, venting negative feelings, social interaction* and *product involvement*. Those motives served as a basis to design the study’s survey, from which only *venting negative feelings* did not show any significant influence on the dissemination of Internet book reviews.

In a study on the restaurant industry, Jeong & Jang (2011) proposed a model concerning the relationship between restaurant experiences and the motivations to spread positive eWOM. The results of this study suggest that the food quality, satisfactory restaurant experiences with service employees and a superior atmosphere influence customers to engage in positive eWOM, motivated by the *desire to help* the restaurant, to *express positive feelings* and by a *concern for others*.

Table 1 presents a summary of WOM and eWOM motivations which were found to be statistically relevant within the studies discussed above.

Motivations to spread WOM and eWOM							
	WOM		eWOM				
	Dichter (1966)	Sundaram, et al. (1998)	Hennig-Thurau, et al. (2004)	Yoo & Gretzel (2008)	Huang and Yang (2010)	Jeong and Jang (2011)	Cheung and Lee (2012)
Sense of belonging			x		x		x
Enjoyment of helping	x	x	x	x		x	x
Reputation	x	x	x	x			x
Helping the company		x		x		x	
Message-involvement	x						
Economic incentives			x				
Advice seeking		x					
Product involvement	x	x			x		
Express positive feelings						x	
Venting negative feelings		x					
Vengeance		x					
Desire for sharing					x		

Table 1 – Motivations to spread WOM and eWOM

From the analysis of table 1, it can be concluded that the motivations that Cheung and Lee found to be relevant for the spread of electronic word-of-mouth were also present in other studies. *Sense of belonging* was identified by Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) and Huang & Yang (2010) as one of the main motivations for consumers to engage in eWOM; *enjoyment of helping* was also presented as such by Dichter (1966) and Sundaram et al. (1998) for WOM, and by Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004), Jeong & Jang (2011) and Yoo & Gretzel (2008) for eWOM; finally, *reputation* figured in such studies as Dichter (1966) and Sundaram et al (1998), regarding WOM, and Hennig-Thurau et al (2004) and Yoo & Gretzel (2008), regarding eWOM.

From the literature review, other motivations were found relevant to the spread WOM or eWOM: *helping the company* (Jeong & Jang, 2011; Sundaram et al., 1998; Yoo & Gretzel, 2008); *message involvement* (Dichter, 1966); *economic incentives* (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004); *advice seeking* (Sundaram et al., 1998); *product involvement* (Dichter, 1966; Huang & Yang, 2010; Sundaram et al., 1998); *express positive feelings* (Jeong & Jang, 2011); *venting negative feelings* (Sundaram et al., 1998); *vengeance* (Sundaram et al., 1998) and *desire for sharing* (Huang & Yang, 2010).

## 2.4 STUDY'S MODEL

Following the above conclusions and in order to better understand the motives leading to online book reviews, it was decided to add four more motives to Cheung and Lee's model:

- *Product Involvement* and *desire for sharing* were chosen since they were considered relevant in a study with the same topic as the present research (Huang & Yang, 2010).
- Additionally, *venting negative feelings* was also chosen to be part of the model, both for being referenced in the focus groups of the same study and for having been deemed relevant in Sundaram et al.'s study (1998).
- Lastly, *helping the company* was also included in the model of this study since it was found to be statistically significant by three different studies (Jeong & Jang, 2011; Sundaram et al., 1998; Yoo & Gretzel, 2008).

Consequently, the model to be tested in this research can be represented as following (figure 2):

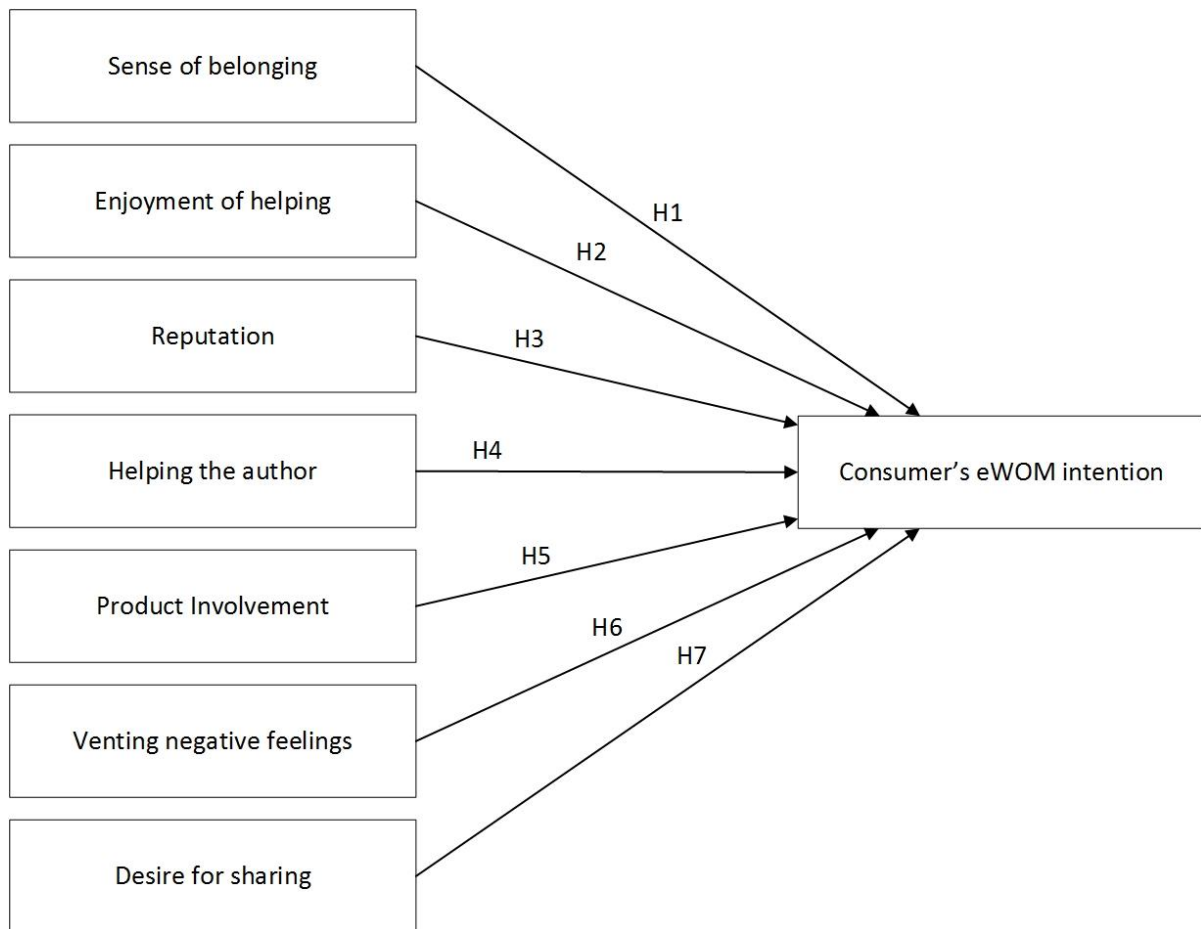


Figure 2 – Conceptual model of the study

For a better understanding of the model, a brief description of the WOM/eWOM motivations follows.

### **Sense of belonging**

Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) and Cheung & Lee (2012) found that participating in and belonging to online communities might be reasons for consumers to engage in eWOM communications. This motivation was named by Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) as *social benefits*, as it concerns the social benefits that might arise from the affiliation with a virtual community.



Furthermore, according to Huang & Yang's study (2010, p. 814) “most consumers believed that it was a pleasure to share or exchange book reviews and information in an anonymous manner with those who shared the same online reading hobbies”.

Thus, the present study follows the hypothesis proposed by Cheung and Lee (2012):

H1: The opportunity for the sense of belonging is positively related to one's eWOM intention.

### **Enjoyment of helping**

Besides Cheung & Lee (2012), *enjoyment of helping* was also referred in other studies (Dichter, 1966; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Jeong & Jang, 2011; Sundaram et al., 1998; Yoo & Gretzel, 2008).

Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) named this motivation *concern for other consumers*. The authors discovered that, whether to recommend a product or to prevent others from engaging in a bad purchase, this motivation might lead customers to publish their experiences online.

Furthermore, Dichter (1966), who referred to this motivation as *other-involvement*, concluded that 20% of WOM addresses the need to give something to the other person. The recommendation is seen as a gift and a way of expressing feelings of friendship, care and love towards the listener.

Lastly, Sundaram, Mitra, & Webster (1998) also address this motivation - which they call *altruism*. They state that doing something for others without expecting anything in return, or the desire to prevent others from having negative experiences are motives for people to share their experiences with others.

Thus, the present study follows, yet again, another hypothesis proposed by Cheung and Lee (2012):

H2: The opportunity to realise enjoyment of helping is positively related to one's eWOM intention.

## Reputation

Apart from Cheung & Lee (2012), there are also studies that identify *reputation* as one of the primary reasons for consumers to share their experiences on online platforms (Dichter, 1966; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Sundaram et al., 1998; Yoo & Gretzel, 2008).

Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) and Sundaram et al. (1998) addressed *self-enhancement* in their study. This concept is related to *reputation*, discussed in Cheung & Lee's (2012) study, as it is defined as the need for positive recognition from others.

Additionally, in his study, Dichter (1966) referred to this motivation as *self-involvement*. In this case the product is less relevant than the person who bought it. In other words, the product is intended to satisfy certain emotional needs, such as the need to enhance one's image among others (Dichter, 1966; Sundaram et al., 1998). The *self-involvement* motivation might entail different goals (Dichter, 1966):

- Gaining attention: a product or service can be seen as a conversation starter.
- Showing connoisseurship: referring certain products in a conversation can be done with the aim of showing knowledge.
- Feeling like a pioneer: consumers might identify themselves with the uniqueness of a product or brand, thereby mentioning them in a conversation.
- Having inside information: consumers might talk about a product or service to show they know more about them than the person they are conversing with.
- Suggesting status: The person might talk about a product or service in order to attain the social status of the other buyers.
- Spreading the gospel: In this particular case, the talker wishes to convince the other person to buy a certain product.
- Seeking confirmation of own judgment: In some cases, the speaker needs to confirm their opinions by talking to others.
- Asserting superiority: This motivation is related to the need to be seen as a leader.

Therefore, the final hypothesis adopted from Cheung and Lee (2012) is the following:

H3: The perception of the opportunity to enhance one's own reputation is positively related to one's eWOM intention.

## **Helping the author**

Another variance of altruism referred in the literature as relevant in the spreading of WOM and eWOM (Jeong & Jang, 2011; Sundaram et al., 1998; Yoo & Gretzel, 2008), yet dismissed in Cheung and Lee's study, is *helping the company*. In this particular case, the will to reward the company for a good experience is the main reason for engaging in WOM communication. Even though this category might fit in altruism motivation, a separate category should be created as the motivation here is to help the company rather than other consumers (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Sundaram et al., 1998). Since the object of this study is online book reviews, this motivation was named *helping the author*.

As a result, the fourth hypothesis can be stated as:

H4: The opportunity to help the author is positively related to eWOM intention.

## **Product involvement**

Sundaram, Mitra, & Webster (1998) state in their study that the purchase of important products leads to excitement, which in turn generates positive WOM. This result is consistent with previous literature that mentions that the tension related to the acquisition of a product does not always decrease with the use of the product itself; instead, talking and showing enthusiasm about it, as well as recommending it, might balance this tension. As so, gratifying and ungratifying experiences tend to assume the form of speech (Dichter, 1966).

Regarding the book industry, *product involvement* was also found to be an important motivation: "if consumers purchase books at reasonable prices or feel gratified by the contents of books, they will express their positive thoughts and recommend such books via Internet book reviews" (Huang & Yang, 2008, p.807). Lastly, Huang & Yang (2010) discovered that consumers are more willing to make an online book review about a book they are deeply interested in.

As so, the present hypothesis is:

H5: The involvement with a certain book is positively related to eWOM intention.

## **Venting negative feelings**

*Venting negative feelings* was also found to be a motive leading to negative WOM. Sundaram et al. (1998) named this motivation *anxiety reduction*. The authors stated that WOM can be seen as a way to express and reduce the anger caused by a negative experience and, in many cases, the consumers want to retaliate against the company that provided a negative experience (Sundaram et al., 1998).

Regarding online book reviews, “when consumers realise that the books they have purchased are not as good as they had imagined or expected, or they disagree with the arguments of the books, to relieve their regret or disappointment, they will express their unpleasant consumption experience via Internet book reviews” (Huang & Yang, 2008, p.806). Sharing their own thoughts on a book has been considered the main reason why the focus-group participants disseminate online book reviews, while *venting negative feelings* is reserved for books considered very bad or for when consumers feel that a book recommended by a bookstore fell short of their expectations (Huang & Yang, 2010).

Consequently, the sixth hypothesis is represented as follows:

H6: The need to vent negative feelings is positively related to eWOM intention.

## **Desire for sharing**

“When consumers want to share their thoughts with others after reading a book, or simply want to forward the comments from others on certain books, they will use Internet book reviews to achieve this purpose and satisfy their desires” (Huang & Yang, 2010, p.806). The authors found that the majority of the participants of the study were very willing to write online book reviews based on this motivation. Furthermore, in the focus-group, four participants stated “that they disseminated Internet book reviews purely to express how they felt or to keep records of their reading” (Huang & Yang, 2010).

As a result, the last hypothesis is stated as:

H7: The desire for sharing is positively related to eWOM intention.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

This chapter aims to present the methodology used to reach the objectives of the study: 1) analyse Cheung and Lee's model on what drives consumers to spread electronic word-of-mouth; 2) understand the motives leading to WOM and eWOM; 3) identify the motives leading to the spread of online book reviews; 4) find in the literature motivations that can be added to Cheung and Lee's model; 5) analyse the new model through the scope of online book reviews.

The first section of this chapter summarises the various stages of the investigation; the second describes the measures used to test the model; the third presents the procedures for data collection; and, finally, the last section discusses the method used to analyse the data.

#### **3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The first stage of this investigation was the literature review, which allowed for the deduction of the hypotheses that served as a basis for the conceptual model to be validated on the present study.

To test those hypotheses, a questionnaire was designed based on previously tested scales, which were adapted in order to fit the context of the study. One of the fundamental steps to ensure the appropriateness of the questionnaire is the pre-test. Therefore, a pilot questionnaire was run by a group of six people, with the aim of collecting their thoughts on the instructions of the questionnaire, on the way questions were formulated and on the comprehension of the measurement scales (Vilares & Coelho, 2011). Following the insights given, some questions were reformulated in order to enable a better understanding of the questionnaire by respondents.

The questionnaire was later posted online on two Facebook groups and two Goodreads groups, as well as sent to Nova IMS students.

In the next step, the data was analysed in order to identify and exclude suspicious response patterns (straight lining and inconsistent answers) and outliers, as further explained in section 3.3 (Data Collection).

Lastly, the descriptive analysis of the data was conducted, as well as the evaluation of the measurement and the structural model, which enable the validation of the model – (see chapter 4).

### **3.2 MEASURES**

As explained previously, the constructs of interest in this study include *sense of belonging*, *enjoyment of helping*, *reputation*, *product involvement*, *venting negative feelings*, *desire for sharing*, *helping the author* and *consumer's eWOM intention*. The measures for these constructs were based on previous literature (see table 2), and employed multi-item, seven-point Likert scales, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7).

*Sense of belonging*, *enjoyment of helping*, *reputation* and *consumer's eWOM intention* were tested by Cheung & Lee (2012). To examine the convergent validity of the constructs, the authors used the following criteria: “the composite reliability (CR) should be at least 0.70, the average variance extracted (AVE) should be at least 0.50, and all item loadings should be greater than 0.707”. The results showed that all the conditions were satisfied (Cheung & Lee, 2012). Regarding discriminant validity, the authors found that the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) of each construct was higher than the correlations between it and all other constructs, meaning that discriminant validity was achieved (Cheung & Lee, 2012).

*Product involvement*, *venting negative feelings* and *desire for sharing* were tested by Huang & Yang (2010). To assess the internal consistency of the constructs, the authors used Cronbach's alpha and the results indicate that all three variables (*id est.* motives) are aligned with the criteria for values greater than 0.7 (Huang & Yang, 2010).

Table 2 presents the items used for the measurement of each construct.

<b>Motivation</b>	
<b>Sense of belonging</b> (modified from Cheung & Lee, 2012)	
Q1	I am very attached to the readers' community.
Q2	Other readers and I share the same objectives.
Q3	The friendship I have with other readers means a lot to me.
Q4	If other readers planned something, I would think of it as something "we" would do rather than something "they" would do.
Q5	I see myself as part of the readers' community.
<b>Enjoyment of helping</b> (modified from Cheung & Lee, 2012)	
Q6	I like helping other readers.
Q7	It feels good to help other readers.
Q8	I enjoy helping other readers.
<b>Reputation</b> (modified from Cheung & Lee, 2012)	
Q9	I feel that writing online book reviews improves my status.
Q10	I write online book reviews to improve my reputation.
<b>Consumer's eWOM intention</b> (modified from Cheung & Lee, 2012)	
Q11	I intend to share my reading experiences with other readers more frequently in the future.
Q12	I will always provide my reading experiences at the request of readers.
Q13	I will try to share my reading experiences with other readers in a more effective way.
<b>Product involvement</b> (modified from Huang & Yang, 2010)	
Q14	I am very interested in the topics discussed in a particular book.
Q15	The content of a particular book is very rich. I have benefited a lot from reading it.
Q16	The argument of a particular book is very powerful. I am deeply impressed after reading it.
Q17	I found a particular book very interesting. I feel happy after reading it.
<b>Venting negative feelings</b> (modified from Huang & Yang, 2010)	
Q18	A particular book disappointed me. I want other people to know that it will disappoint them too.
Q19	I want others to know that I feel sorry that I ever bought a particular book.
Q20	My comment helps to alleviate my frustration with a wrong purchase of a book.
Q21	I want to let out my frustration with a particular book.
<b>Desire for sharing</b> (modified from Huang & Yang, 2010)	
Q22	I want to tell others about my own thoughts on books.
Q23	I want to tell others about the pros and cons of a particular book.
Q24	I want to share my feelings from reading a particular book with others.
Q25	I am very happy with a particular book. I hope more people can get to read it.
<b>Helping the author</b> (modified from Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004)	
Q26	I am so satisfied with a book that I want to help the author to be successful.
Q27	In my opinion, good authors should be supported.

Table 2 – Measurement scales

### 3.3 DATA COLLECTION

The data for this study was collected using a questionnaire based on the measures presented above. All the questions were defined as closed and with mandatory responses, to avoid missing values. The first section of the questionnaire was composed by a filter question which identified the participants belonging to the target population. The second section asked the respondents to rate from 1 to 7 (with 1 representing "strongly disagree" and 7 representing "strongly agree") a set of statements regarding online book reviews. And finally, to characterise the sample, the last section contained four questions regarding the country of residence, gender, age, and education level of respondents. The full questionnaire can be found in attachment 7.1.

According to Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt (2014), the minimum sample size depends on the maximum number of arrowheads pointing at a latent variable anywhere in the PLS path model. Therefore, considering that the study's model features a maximum of 7 arrows per latent variable, the recommended sample size for a significance level of 5% and a minimum  $R^2$  of 0.10, is 166 answers, as can be seen in table 23, attachment 7.2.

To obtain the data, a convenience sample was conducted. With this method, the elements of the population are chosen due to their availability, which has advantages such as low costs and ease of implementation. Nevertheless, this method can lead to a non-representative sample (Vilares & Coelho, 2011).

As the population of this study is constituted by people who have made an online book review, an invitation message with the URL to the online questionnaire was posted on two Facebook groups related to books and reading experiences - Silent Book Club (17 944 members) and Readers Coffeehouse (5 796 members) - and two Goodreads groups - Goodreads Feedback (24 139 members) and Addicted to YA (27 170 members). In addition, the questionnaire was sent to Nova IMS students.

After collecting the data, data quality issues must be addressed. This issues include missing data, suspicious response patterns and outliers (Hair et al., 2014).

Missing data occurs when a respondent fails to answer a question. An observation should be removed either when the missing data on a questionnaire exceeds 15% or when a high



percentage of responses are missing in a particular construct (Hair et al., 2014). In this study, all the questions were marked as required. As so, no missing data issues were encountered.

Therefore, the questionnaires were analysed with the objective of excluding suspicious response patterns – such as inconsistent answers or straight lining, a term used to describe the cases where respondents mark the same answer for a high number of questions – and outliers - defined as extreme answers to a particular question or to all questions (Hair et al., 2014). In this study, only two straight linings were found, which were eliminated.

### **3.4 DATA ANALYSIS**

The data from the questionnaires was analysed through Partial Least Squares Structure Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), a method used to develop theories in explanatory research (Hair et al., 2014).

To develop a path model – a diagram “used to visually display the hypotheses and variable relationships that are examined when SEM is applied” (Hair et al., 2014, p.11) –, two kinds of variables are required: latent variables and manifest variables. Latent variables are not directly observed, being only observed the manifestations of these variables – manifest variables, also named indicators (Vilares & Coelho, 2011).

Measurement theory and structural theory also play an important role when developing a path model. Measurement theory specifies how latent variables are measured, associating each latent variable to a set of empirical indicators, obtained through the questionnaire (Hair et al., 2014; Vilares & Coelho, 2011); while structural theory shows how the latent variables are related to each other (Hair et al., 2014).

Regarding measurement theory, the literature identifies two different ways to measure latent variables: reflective measurement and formative measurement (Hair et al., 2014). Reflective measurement depicts a relationship where the indicators constitute a reflection of the latent variables. As so, the latent variables cause the measurement, as is the case of this study. On the other hand, in the formative measurement, the latent variables values are formed through a combination of indicators. In this measurement the arrows are pointing from the indicator to the latent variable, indicating a causal relationship in that direction (Hair et al., 2014; Vilares & Coelho, 2011).

Regarding structural theory, the latent variables can be exogenous latent variables, when serving only as independent variables, or endogenous latent variables, when serving only as dependent variables or as both independent and dependent variables (Hair et al., 2014).

The first step to assess the quality of the results is the evaluation of the measurement model, which is related to the empirical measures of the relationships between the indicators and the construct. In social sciences, there are many error sources, such as poorly formulated questions, misunderstanding of the scales used and incorrect application of statistical methods. Therefore, the objective is to reduce the measurement errors (Hair et al., 2014).

The assessment of reflective measurement models includes: the Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, to evaluate internal consistency; outer loadings, to evaluate indicator reliability; the average variance extracted (AVE), to evaluate convergent validity; and, lastly, the Fornell-Larcker criterion, cross loadings and Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT), to evaluate discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2014; Henseler, Hubona, & Ray, 2016).

Once the measurement model is validated, the evaluation of the structural model can be performed. The structural model delivers empirical measures of the relationships between the constructs. Therefore, the assessment of this model enables us to determine if the empirical data fits the theory and so, if this theory can be confirmed from an empirical point of view (Hair et al., 2014).

The assessment of the structural model includes: the SRMR, the  $D_G$  and the  $D_{ULS}$  criteria, to evaluate the model fit; the SRMR, to evaluate the approximate model of fit; the VIF, to assess collinearity issues; the coefficient of determination, to evaluate the endogenous variables; the path coefficients, to test the hypotheses; and, lastly, the  $f^2$ , to evaluate the effect size.

The above mentioned statistical tests are summarized in table 3:

<b>Evaluation of the Reflective Measurement Model</b>	
Internal consistency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cronbach's alpha</li> <li>• Composite reliability</li> </ul>
Indicator reliability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outer loadings</li> </ul>
Convergent validity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average variance extracted (AVE)</li> </ul>
Discriminant validity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross loadings</li> <li>• Fornell-Larcker test</li> <li>• Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation of the Structural Model</b>	
Test of model fit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SRMR &lt; 95% bootstrap quantile</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <math>D_G &lt; 95\%</math> bootstrap quantile</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <math>D_{ULS} &lt; 95\%</math> bootstrap quantile</li> </ul>
Approximate model fit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SRMR (Standardized root means square residual) &lt; 0,08</li> </ul>
Collinearity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VIF (variance inflation factor)</li> </ul>
Endogenous variables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coefficient of determination (<math>R^2</math>)</li> </ul>
Hypotheses testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Path coefficients</li> </ul>
Effect Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <math>f^2</math> effect size</li> </ul>

**Source:** Hair et al., 2014; Henseler, Hubona, & Ray, 2016

Table 3 – Evaluation of PLS-SEM results

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter aims to present an in-depth analysis of the data in order to better understand them and to take conclusions from the proposed model. First, the sample is characterized, followed by a descriptive analysis of the measurement scales and, lastly, the measurement model and the structural model are assessed.

### 4.1 SAMPLE PROFILE

Through a questionnaire made available online, 311 responses were collected, 227 of which belonged to the target population. After addressing data quality issues, two straight linings were encountered and eliminated. Therefore, 225 responses were considered valid.

As can be observed in table 4, the sample is mostly constituted by female respondents – 92% - while the male respondents represent only 5% of the sample.

	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Valid</b>	Female	208	92,4
	Male	12	5,3
	Total	220	97,8
<b>Missing</b>		5	2,2
<b>Total</b>		<b>225</b>	<b>100,0</b>

Table 4 – Respondents' gender

As can be seen in figure 3, most of the respondents reside in the USA (76%), followed by a small percentage of respondents who live in Portugal (11%), in Canada (4%) and in the UK (4%).

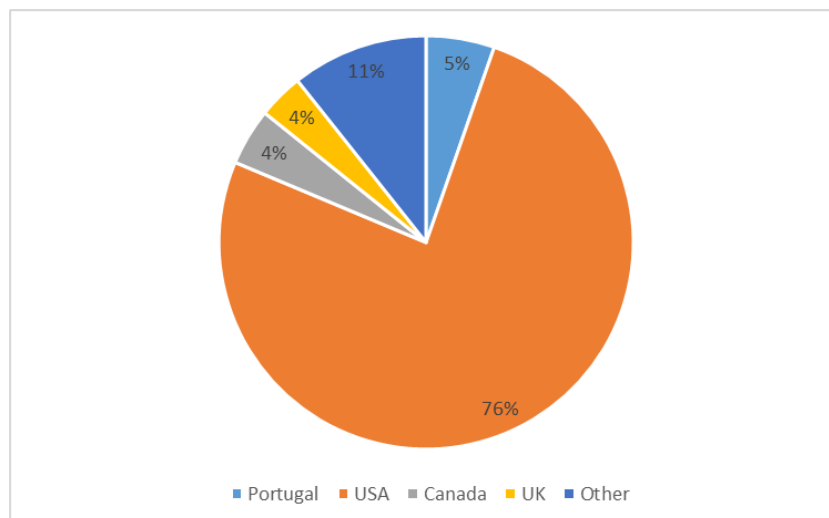


Figure 3 – Respondents' country of residence

Regarding the age group, the sample is well distributed, with people older than 60 years representing the biggest age group (26%) and under 20 representing the age group with the largest discrepancy from the remaining (2%) (figure 4).

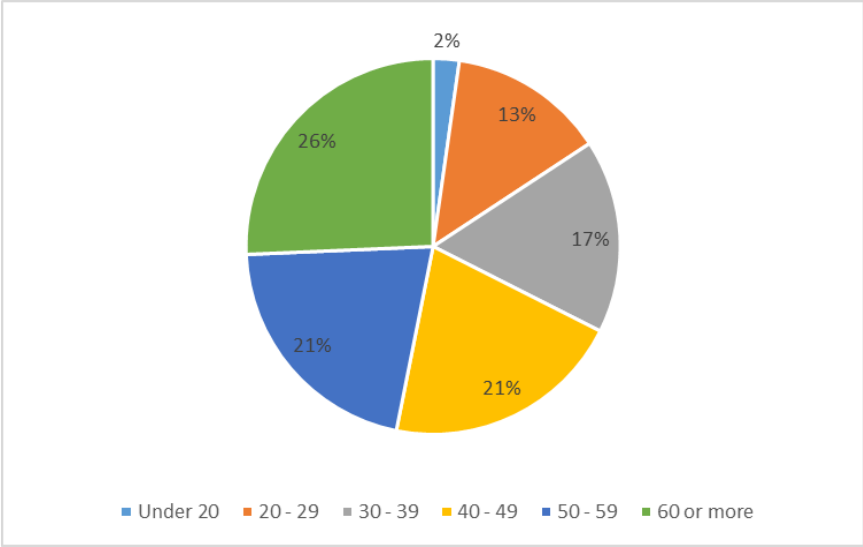


Figure 4 – Respondents’ age

Concerning the education level (figure 5), the majority of the sample holds a degree superior to high school (77%). 27 respondents chose the option “other”, 16 of which stated that they hold an Associate’s degree – “the qualification given to a student by a junior college after successfully finishing two years of study” (Cambridge University Press, 2018).

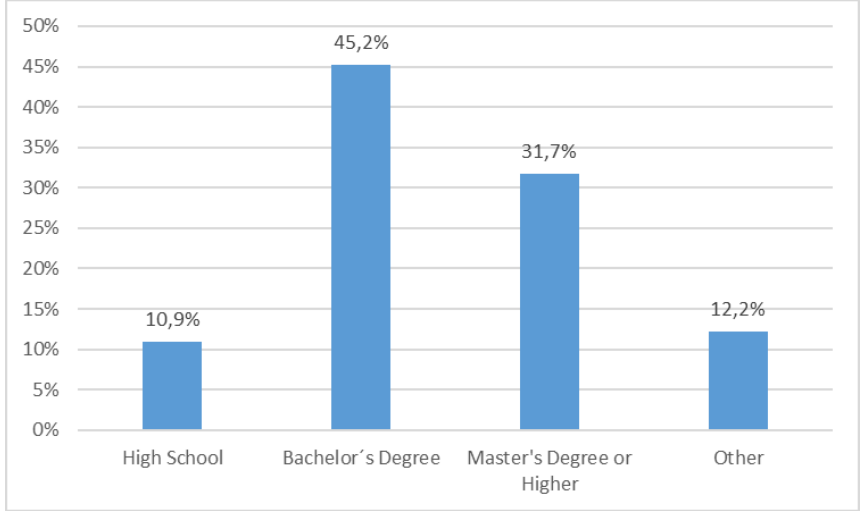


Figure 5 – Respondents’ education level

## 4.2 MEASUREMENT SCALES DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

This section analyses the mean and standard deviation of each indicator. The presented data concern the 225 responses that were considered valid.

The means regarding the items of the *sense of belonging* construct are approximately 5, except for question 4, where the mean is 3.64 – table 5. This result indicates that customers disagree with the statement: “If other readers planned something, I would think of it as something “we” would do rather than something “they” would do.” Questions 1, 3 and 4 have higher standard deviations, meaning that there was a certain level of discrepancy among the answers given by the respondents.

	<b>Sense of belonging</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>Q1</b>	I am very attached to the readers’ community.	4,62	1,85
<b>Q2</b>	Other readers and I share the same objectives.	4,50	1,62
<b>Q3</b>	The friendship I have with other readers means a lot to me.	4,65	1,94
<b>Q4</b>	If other readers planned something, I would think of it as something “we” would do rather than something “they” would do.	3,64	1,93
<b>Q5</b>	I see myself as part of the readers’ community.	5,53	1,65

Table 5 – Mean and standard deviation for *sense of belonging*

*Enjoyment of helping* indicators (table 6) have a mean of approximately 6, which means that the respondents tend to agree that they enjoy helping other readers. The standard deviation of these items is relatively low, indicating that the answers did not vary greatly.

	<b>Enjoyment of helping</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>Q6</b>	I like helping other readers.	5,57	1,47
<b>Q7</b>	It feels good to help other readers.	5,55	1,56
<b>Q8</b>	I enjoy helping other readers.	5,89	1,41

Table 6 – Mean and standard deviation for *enjoyment of helping*

As can be observed in table 7, the mean of *reputation* items is low, which indicates that the respondents do not write online book reviews as a way to improve their reputation/status. Although the standard deviation is high for question 9 and 10, we can conclude, through the analysis of tables 32 and 33 (see attachment 7.3), that the majority of the answers are concentrated in the negative part of the Likert scale – 64 % and 74% of the respondents marked 1 to 3 as an answer, respectively.

	<b>Reputation</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>Q9</b>	I feel that writing online book reviews improves my status.	2,72	1,80
<b>Q10</b>	I write online book reviews to improve my reputation.	2,33	1,72

Table 7 – Mean and standard deviation for *reputation*

The items related to *consumer's eWOM intention* (see table 8) have means of approximately 5, indicating a certain level of agreement with the referred items. However, the standard deviation of questions 12 and 13 is above 1,7, which indicates diversity in the answers.

	<b>Consumer's eWOM intention</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>Q11</b>	I intend to share my reading experiences with other readers more frequently in the future.	4,85	1,63
<b>Q12</b>	I will always provide my reading experiences at the request of readers.	5,17	1,85
<b>Q13</b>	I will try to share my reading experiences with other readers in a more effective way.	4,59	1,70

Table 8 – Mean and standard deviation for *consumer's eWOM intention*

The means of *product involvement* indicators are approximately 5 or higher, as it is shown in table 9. These results indicate that customers write online book reviews when they are deeply interested in a book. The standard deviation is not high, indicating that the respondents' pattern is similar.

	<b>Product involvement</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>Q14</b>	I am very interested in the topics discussed in a particular book.	4,99	1,65
<b>Q15</b>	The content of a particular book is very rich. I have benefited a lot from reading it.	5,62	1,55
<b>Q16</b>	The argument of a particular book is very powerful. I am deeply impressed after reading it.	5,17	1,60
<b>Q17</b>	I found a particular book very interesting. I feel happy after reading it.	6,12	1,39

Table 9 – Mean and standard deviation for *product involvement*

As shown in table 10, *venting negative feelings* items present a mean of 4 or lower, meaning that the respondents disagree that they write online book reviews as a way to express negative feelings towards a book. However, the standard deviation of these items is somewhat high, meaning that there was no consensus among the respondents.

<b>Venting negative feelings</b>		<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>Q18</b>	A particular book disappointed me. I want other people to know that it will disappoint them too.	4,12	2,05
<b>Q19</b>	I want others to know that I feel sorry that I ever bought a particular book.	3,24	1,94
<b>Q20</b>	My comment helps to alleviate my frustration with a wrong purchase of a book.	2,72	1,87
<b>Q21</b>	I want to let out my frustration with a particular book.	3,68	2,06

Table 10 – Mean and standard deviation for *venting negative feelings*

According to table 11, *desire for sharing* indicators have high means, which can lead to the conclusion that the respondents agreed that they write online book reviews to express their opinions and feelings regarding books and when they enjoyed a book and hope more people can read it. However, questions 22 and 23 have high standard deviations, indicating diversity in the answers.

<b>Desire for sharing</b>		<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>Q22</b>	I want to tell others about my own thoughts on books.	5,20	1,71
<b>Q23</b>	I want to tell others about the pros and cons of a particular book.	4,50	1,82
<b>Q24</b>	I want to share my feelings from reading a particular book with others.	5,40	1,61
<b>Q25</b>	I am very happy with a particular book. I hope more people can get to read it.	6,24	1,30

Table 11 – Mean and standard deviation for *desire for sharing*

As indicated in table 12, the mean of each indicator of the motivation *helping the author* is approximately 6, which means the respondents agree that they write online book reviews when they are so satisfied with a book that they want to help the author to be successful, and because they believe that good authors should be supported. However, Q26 has a high standard deviation, indicating diversity in the answers.

<b>Helping the author</b>		<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>Q26</b>	I am so satisfied with a book that I want to help the author to be successful.	5,68	1,73
<b>Q27</b>	In my opinion, good authors should be supported.	6,21	1,31

Table 12 – Mean and standard deviation for *helping the author*



### 4.3 MEASUREMENT MODEL

The measurement model provides empirical measures of the relationships between the indicators and the constructs (Hair et al., 2014). To assess this model, the statistical tests presented in section 3.4 were employed and will be discussed in the present section.

#### 4.3.1. Initial measurement model

##### Internal consistency

Typically, the first criterion to be evaluated is internal consistency – a form of reliability to test the consistency of results across indicators of the same construct, by determining whether they produce similar scores (Hair et al., 2014).

According to Hair et al. (2014), Cronbach's alpha is the traditional criterion for internal consistency. However, it should be used as a conservative measure due to its high sensitivity regarding the number of items in the scale and its tendency to underestimate the internal consistency. As so, Hair et al. (2014) state that composite reliability is more appropriate to measure the internal consistency. This statistical test varies between 0 and 1, with higher values representing higher levels of reliability.

The literature considers 0.7 and above acceptable values for both statistical tests (Hair et al., 2014; Henseler et al., 2016). As can be observed in table 13, the values for both Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability are above this criterion, indicating that the model shows high levels of internal consistency.

	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Composite Reliability</b>
<b>Consumer's eWOM Intention</b>	0,729	0,735
<b>Desire for sharing</b>	0,742	0,749
<b>Enjoyment of helping</b>	0,886	0,886
<b>Helping the author</b>	0,800	0,804
<b>Product Involvement</b>	0,822	0,823
<b>Reputation</b>	0,900	0,904
<b>Sense of belonging</b>	0,819	0,807
<b>Venting negative feelings</b>	0,867	0,862

Table 13 – Internal consistency – initial measurement model

### Indicator reliability

Indicator reliability is measured by the outer loadings - outer loadings with high values within a construct imply that the associated indicators are closely related, being this fact captured by the construct (Hair et al., 2014). Literature states that outer loadings should be 0.708 or higher, nonetheless, 0.70 is also considered an acceptable value (Hair et al., 2014).

Some indicators did not meet the 0.70 criterion, as table 51 (attachment 7.4) shows (DS\_2; DS\_4; Int\_2; NG\_1; SB\_1 and SB\_4), meaning that indicator reliability was not achieved. Research shows that low outer loadings are frequent in social science studies (Hair et al., 2014). As so, rather than eliminating indicators with low outer loadings, the effects of their removal on the composite reliability and on the average variance extracted (AVE) ought to be analysed. Indicators with outer loadings between 0.40 and 0.70 should only be removed when their deletion leads to an increase in both the composite reliability and in the AVE above the respective suggested threshold values. (Hair et al., 2014).

### Convergent validity

Convergent validity refers to the degree to which a measure correlates positively with other measures of the same construct. Consequently, the indicators of one construct should share a high proportion of variance (Hair et al., 2014). To establish convergent validity, average variance extracted (AVE) was analysed. According to the literature, an AVE value of 0.5 or higher indicates that the construct explains more than half of the variance of its indicators, as opposed to an AVE of less than 0.5, which indicates that more error remains in the items than the variance explained by the construct (Hair et al., 2014).

As can be observed in table 14, the construct *desire for sharing* presents an AVE below the needed threshold of 0.5, indicating that convergent validity is not achieved.

	<b>Average Variance Extracted (AVE)</b>
<b>Consumer's eWOM Intention</b>	0,482
<b>Desire for sharing</b>	<b>0,429</b>
<b>Enjoyment of helping</b>	0,722
<b>Helping the author</b>	0,673
<b>Product Involvement</b>	0,539
<b>Reputation</b>	0,825
<b>Sense of belonging</b>	0,461
<b>Venting negative feelings</b>	0,616

Table 14 – Average variance extracted - initial measurement model

## **Discriminant Validity**

Discriminant validity can be defined as the extent to which a construct is distinct from other constructs, meaning that each construct is unique and captures what other constructs do not (Hair et al., 2014). To ensure discriminant validity three measures were assessed – cross loadings, Fornell-Larcker test and Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT) (Hair et al., 2014; Henseler et al., 2016).

Literature states that an indicator's outer loading should be higher than all of its cross loadings with other constructs (Hair et al., 2014). The values of the indicators DS\_4, SB\_3 and SB\_4 did not respect this criterion, as evident in table 51 (attachment 7.4). Thus, according to the cross-loadings criterion, there is no evidence of discriminant validity.

The Fornell-Larcker criterion compares the square root of the AVE to the latent variable correlations. In this test, the square root of the AVE of each construct should be greater than its highest correlation with other constructs. This measure is based on the idea that a construct should share more variance with its indicators than with other constructs (Hair et al., 2014). The square root of the AVE of the constructs *consumer's eWOM intention* and *desire for sharing* is lower than the correlation with other constructs, as is shown in table 52 (attachment 7.4). Thus, discriminant validity was not achieved.

The last criterion to be assessed was HTMT, which should be significantly smaller than 1 (Henseler et al., 2016). This condition is satisfied, meaning that, in light of this criterion, there is evidence of discriminant validity (see table 53, attachment 7.4).

According to the aforementioned measures, the initial measurement model does not show satisfactory results, since the outer loadings, AVE, cross-loadings and Fornell-Larcker criteria are not met for all items and constructs.

In order to more closely satisfy the criteria, the deletion of indicators with outer loadings between 0.40 and 0.70 was analysed, to test if their removal led to an increase in the AVE above the suggested threshold value (0.5). The final measurement model was achieved by removing the indicators DS2; DS4; Int2; NG1; and SB4, which resulted in an increase in the AVE above the 0.5 criterion, as required by the literature.

The discussion of the final results is presented in the next section.

### 4.3.2. Final measurement model

#### Internal consistency

As can be seen in table 15, the values for both Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability are within the 0.7 criterion, indicating that the model shows high levels of internal consistency.

	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Composite Reliability</b>
<b>Consumer's eWOM intention</b>	0,754	0,754
<b>Desire for sharing</b>	0,855	0,855
<b>Enjoyment of helping</b>	0,886	0,887
<b>Helping the author</b>	0,800	0,804
<b>Product involvement</b>	0,822	0,824
<b>Reputation</b>	0,900	0,903
<b>Sense of belonging</b>	0,778	0,774
<b>Venting negative feelings</b>	0,839	0,839

Table 15 - Internal consistency – final measurement model

#### Indicator reliability

In this model, only two indicators do not meet the 0.70 criterion (NG\_2 and SB\_1), in contrast with the six indicators in the initial model (see table 54, attachment 7.5). Nevertheless, it was decided to retain these indicators since they were between 0.40 and 0.70, and their removal did not lead to an increase in the AVE (Hair et al., 2014).

#### Convergent validity

As can be observed in table 16, the AVE of all constructs reach the 0.5 threshold, meaning that convergence validity was achieved. In comparison with the initial model where *desire for sharing* was below the threshold value, the present model has better convergent validity.

	<b>Average Variance Extracted (AVE)</b>
<b>Consumer's eWOM intention</b>	0,606
<b>Desire for sharing</b>	0,747
<b>Enjoyment of helping</b>	0,723
<b>Helping the author</b>	0,673
<b>Product involvement</b>	0,542
<b>Reputation</b>	0,823
<b>Sense of belonging</b>	0,462
<b>Venting negative feelings</b>	0,642

Table 16 - Average variance extracted - final measurement model

## **Discriminant Validity**

The indicators PI\_4, SB\_1 and SB\_3 do not present a loading higher than the cross-loadings with other constructs (see table 54, attachment 7.5). Therefore, according to the cross-loadings criterion, there is no evidence of discriminant validity.

Moreover, as is shown in table 55 (attachment 7.5), the square root of the AVE of the construct *consumer's eWOM intention* is lower than the correlation with *sense of belonging*.

Finally, as can be observed in table 56, the HTMT criterion is satisfied, meaning that, in light of this criterion, discriminant validity was achieved.

Despite not achieving discriminant validity according to the cross-loadings and to the Fornell-Larcker test, it was decided to retain the constructs *consumer's eWOM intention* and *sense of belonging* since there is no theoretical basis for considering them as a unique construct.

This model was considered the one which best suits measurement model fit criteria, showing evidence of internal consistency, indicator reliability, convergent validity and, partially, discriminant validity. As so, the structural model could be further tested.

## **4.4 STRUCTURAL MODEL**

The structural model describes the relationships between the constructs and allows to determine if the empirical data support the theory (Hair et al., 2014). To assess this model, the statistical tests presented in the chapter 3.4 were performed, and will be presented in this section.

### **Test of model fit**

PLS path modeling's tests of model fit are calculated through the bootstrapping technique, which is used to determine the likelihood of having a discrepancy between the empirical and the model-implied correlation matrix (Henseler et al., 2016).

The test of model fit can be done through: 1) the standardised root mean square residual (SRMR), which is the square root of the sum of the squared differences between the model-implied and the empirical correlation matrix; 2) the geodesic discrepancy ( $D_G$ ) and the unweighted least squares discrepancy ( $D_{ULS}$ ) (Henseler et al., 2016).

According to table 18, all the values are within a 95% confidence interval, the established criterion for these measures. This means that the difference between the correlation matrix implied by the model and the empirical correlation matrix is small enough to validate the model fit (Henseler et al., 2016).

Additionally, for the approximate model fit, a value of 0 for SRMR represents a perfect fit and values less than 0.08 are considered an acceptable fit, which is the case in this model, as can be observed in table 17 (Henseler et al., 2016).

	<b>Sample Mean</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>97.5%</b>
<b>SRMR</b>	0,053	0,040	0,096
<b>D<sub>G</sub></b>	0,848	0,645	1,176
<b>D<sub>ULS</sub></b>	0,777	0,399	2,326

Table 17 – SRMR, D<sub>G</sub> and D<sub>ULS</sub>

### Collinearity Assessment

Before conducting the next analyses, the structural model should be analysed for collinearity. Literature states that a variance inflation factor (VIF) above 5 indicates collinearity issues, and the deletion or the merge of specific constructs should be considered, in that case (Hair et al., 2014).

The VIF for all constructs is below the threshold value of 5, as can be observed in table 18. Thus, no collinearity issues were encountered in this model.

	<b>Consumer's eWOM Intention</b>
<b>Consumer's eWOM intention</b>	
<b>Desire for sharing</b>	1,861
<b>Enjoyment of helping</b>	3,880
<b>Helping the author</b>	2,879
<b>Product involvement</b>	3,991
<b>Reputation</b>	1,382
<b>Sense of belonging</b>	3,848
<b>Venting negative feelings</b>	1,151

Table 18 – Variance inflation factor (VIF)

## Endogenous variables

The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$  value) represents the amount of variance of the endogenous construct that is explained by the exogenous constructs linked to it. The coefficient of determination values range from 0 to 1, with higher numbers representing a higher level of explanation of the construct. In the marketing area,  $R^2$  values of 0.75, 0.50 and 0.25 are described, respectively, as substantial, moderate and weak (Hair et al., 2014).

When using this criterion, it should be considered that adding non-significant constructs that are slightly correlated to explain an endogenous latent variable will increase the  $R^2$  value. As so, the adjusted  $R^2$  can be used to avoid bias, since this criterion considers the number of exogenous variables relative to the sample size (Hair et al., 2014).

As can be observed in table 19, both  $R^2$  and  $R^2_{adj}$  present substantial values, meaning that the model presents a high level of explanation of the construct *consumer's eWOM intention*.

	<b>R Square</b>	<b>R Square Adjusted</b>
<b>Consumer's eWOM intention</b>	0,878	0,874

Table 19 –  $R^2$  and  $R^2_{adj}$

## Hypotheses testing

To analyse the structural model relationships (i.e. path coefficients), a bootstrapping with 5000 resamples was performed, which allowed for the calculation of the empirical t value. A coefficient is significant, at a certain significance level, when the t value is larger than the critical value. According to the literature, critical values for two-tailed tests are 2.57 for a significance level of 1%, 1.96 for a significance level of 5% and 1.65 for a significance level of 10% (Hair et al., 2014).

As can be observed in table 20, the relationships between *desire for sharing* > *consumer's eWOM intention*, *reputation* > *consumer's eWOM intention* and *sense of belonging* > *consumer's eWOM intention* are significant at a significance level of 1%. This allows us to conclude that the motivations *desire for sharing*, *reputation* and *sense of belonging* play a significant role in the *consumer's eWOM intention*. Moreover, the motivation *venting negative feelings* can also be considered significant to the *consumer's eWOM intention*, at a significance level of 10%.

	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values
<b>Desire for sharing &gt; Consumer's eWOM intention</b>	0,224	0,218	0,067	<b>3,349</b>	<b>0,001</b>
<b>Enjoyment of helping &gt; Consumer's eWOM intention</b>	0,116	0,114	0,080	1,448	0,148
<b>Helping the author &gt; Consumer's eWOM intention</b>	0,037	0,037	0,061	0,608	0,543
<b>Product involvement &gt; Consumer's eWOM intention</b>	0,039	0,042	0,064	0,610	0,542
<b>Reputation &gt; Consumer's eWOM intention</b>	0,155	0,152	0,045	<b>3,438</b>	<b>0,001</b>
<b>Sense of belonging &gt; Consumer's eWOM intention</b>	0,446	0,450	0,067	<b>6,669</b>	<b>0,000</b>
<b>Venting negative feelings &gt; Consumer's eWOM intention</b>	-0,124	-0,101	0,069	<b>1,791</b>	<b>0,073</b>

Table 20 – Path coefficients

### Effect Size

After assessing the significance of relationships, it is important to analyse their relevance, since a motivation can be significant to the *consumer's eWOM intention*, even though its effect size is not large enough to obtain managerial attention.

The  $f^2$  (effect size) omits a specific exogenous construct from the model, in order to evaluate the impact of this omission on the endogenous constructs. According to Cohen (1988), values of 0.02, 0.15 and 0.35 represent, respectively, small, medium and large effects of the exogenous latent variables (Hair et al., 2014).

From table 21, it is possible to conclude that *sense of belonging* is the motivation that presents the highest effect size on the *consumer's eWOM intention* ( $f^2 = 1,630$ ). *Desire for sharing* ( $f^2 = 0,323$ ) and *venting negative feelings* ( $f^2 = 0,158$ ) have a medium effect size on *consumer's eWOM intention*. And, lastly, *reputation* ( $f^2 = 0,057$ ) has a small effect size, meaning that this motivation has little impact on the *consumer's eWOM intention*.

<b>Consumer's eWOM intention</b>	
<b>Desire for sharing</b>	0,323
<b>Reputation</b>	0,057
<b>Sense of belonging</b>	1,630
<b>Venting n. feelings</b>	0,158

Table 21 –  $f^2$  effect size

Based on the results above, it is possible to present the final conclusions and the implications of this study, which will be addressed in the next chapter.



## 5. CONCLUSION

This chapter aims to present the main results of this study, in order to better understand the motivations that lead consumers to write online book reviews. The results obtained might contain useful insights for marketing managers and for moderators of online consumer-opinion platforms, when attempting to understand consumer behavior.

The limitations of this study are also discussed, as well as directions for future research.

### 5.1 MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

This study aimed to understand the motivations that lead consumers to write online book reviews, a subject seldom mentioned in the literature. To do so, a model was created based on previous research on motivations to spread eWOM within several different areas, and an online questionnaire was implemented.

Based on 225 responses, it was possible to conclude that four hypotheses were supported by this study – H1: the opportunity for the *sense of belonging* is positively related to one's eWOM intention; H3: the perception of the opportunity to enhance one's own *reputation* is positively related to one's eWOM intention; H6: the need to *vent negative feelings* is positively related to eWOM intention; and H7: the *desire for sharing* is positively related to eWOM intention. Table 22 presents a summary of the results of the tested hypotheses.

Hypotheses	Motivation	Results	Conclusion
H1	Sense of belonging	Significant with a large effect size	Supported
H2	Enjoyment of helping	Non-significant	Not supported
H3	Reputation	Significant with a small effect size	Supported
H4	Helping the author	Non-significant	Not supported
H5	Product involvement	Non-significant	Not supported
H6	Venting negative feelings	Significant with a medium effect size	Supported
H7	Desire for sharing	Significant with a medium effect size	Supported

Table 22 – Hypotheses' conclusions

*Sense of belonging* was the motivation with the highest impact on the *consumer's eWOM intention*. This result is consistent with previous studies, where this motivation was also found to be relevant to eWOM intention (Cheung & Lee, 2012; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004), and more specifically, to the intention to write online book reviews (Huang & Yang, 2010). In this

study, consumers with high levels of attachment to the readers' community have a greater intention of sharing their reading experiences. These findings can be used by marketers to encourage online book reviews. For instance, marketers could contact book-related bloggers and communities (i.e Goodreads groups) to promote a book and benefit from this sense of belonging.

*Venting negative feelings* was also considered to be significant to *consumer's eWOM intention*, with a medium effect size. This motivation was also found to be relevant in a Sundaram et al. (1998) study regarding WOM motivations, although it was not considered significant on a Huang & Yang (2010) study on dissemination motives for Internet book reviews. Thus, this result brings new knowledge to the literature, as according to our study, consumers might engage in eWOM conversations through online book reviews to relieve their frustration with a disappointing purchase.

Therefore, not focusing on a book's quality might affect the business and the image of that particular book. Marketing plans should be made bearing this in mind and adopting strategies that help balance the consumer's expectations towards a book. As so, marketers should analyse and take insights from online book reviews in order to better understand which books appeal to each target, and so create a more personalised way to promote their books, tailored to each client's preferences. Another strategy that can be adopted is to write an accurate synopsis to help consumers make a well-informed purchase, that meets their needs and that they consider valuable.

Another motivation that was significant to *consumer's eWOM intention*, with a medium effect size, was *desire for sharing*. This result is consistent with a past study on online book review motivations (Huang & Yang, 2010). Our study shows that consumers might engage in online communications to share their inner thoughts on a particular book. Marketers can take advantage of these findings by adding a link to their websites which directs readers to book-related platforms where they can share their opinions. Therefore, the publishers can benefit from the emergence of websites, such as Goodreads, to create buzz around their books. Furthermore, publishers can also encourage their followers to share their opinions on books on their own social networks and on their own websites.

Although with a small effect size, *reputation* is also a motivation that can lead consumers to write online book reviews. This motivation was found to be relevant in several studies on

WOM (Dichter, 1966; Sundaram et al., 1998) and eWOM (Cheung & Lee, 2012; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Yoo & Gretzel, 2008). However, this is the first time that such a motivation is associated to an online book review study.

According to our study, consumers might write online book reviews to improve their status or their reputation. Book-related platforms and publishers can take advantage of this motivation by offering a gift (i.e. a tote bag related to a specific book) to users who write a specific number of online reviews. This way, the online platforms encourage the participation of its members, the brands increase the eWOM generated around their books, and the users have a way to express their connection to a book they would like others to know they read.

*Enjoyment of helping, helping the author* and *product involvement* did not demonstrate a significant relationship with consumer's intention to write online book reviews. These results differ from previous literature, where *enjoyment of helping* (Cheung & Lee, 2012; Dichter, 1966; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Jeong & Jang, 2011; Sundaram et al., 1998; Yoo & Gretzel, 2008), *helping the author* (or the company, in the case of past studies) (Jeong & Jang, 2011; Sundaram et al., 1998; Yoo & Gretzel, 2008), and *product involvement* (Dichter, 1966; Huang & Yang, 2010; Sundaram et al., 1998) were considered relevant for WOM or eWOM intention. This difference might be explained by the fact that *enjoyment of helping* and *helping the author* (or company) were only studied in categories other than books. Regarding *product involvement*, our result differs from a previous study on book reviews (Huang & Yang, 2010), which might be related to the sample used.

Therefore, according to this study, consumers do not engage in eWOM neither to help other readers, nor because they feel the need to support good authors, nor because they found a particular book interesting.

In conclusion, it is essential for book-related companies to be aware of online reviews written about their books and the motivations behind those, in order to better understand consumers and to better meet their needs.

## 5.2 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

When interpreting the results of this study, there are a number of limitations which should be considered.

Firstly, given the constraints in obtaining a probabilistic sample for this study, the data was obtained through a convenience sample. This method might lead to a non-representative sample and consequently bias the data (Vilares & Coelho, 2011). Moreover, the majority of the respondents are female (92%) and reside in the USA (76%), which might also lead to a bias. Regardless, the sample used was constituted by the target of this study, by having posted the questionnaire on book-related groups, both on Facebook and on Goodreads.

Considering the few scales in literature to measure eWOM intention, it was decided to use Cheung & Lee's (2012), which was found to be statistically reliable. However, another limitation that can be pointed out is the formulation of the indicators of the *consumer's eWOM intention* construct: "I intend to share my reading experiences with other readers more frequently in the future.", "I will always provide my reading experiences at the request of readers." and "I will try to share my reading experiences with other readers in a more effective way.". These indicators only take into account the respondents who intend to write reviews more often, in a more effective way or at the request of others. As so, it does not consider the ones who intend to write online book reviews but do not want to do it more often, or more effectively, or at the request of others.

As aforementioned, the questionnaire of this study was shared on Facebook as well as on Goodreads, which enabled users to leave comments that can be used as recommendations for future research.

In particular, there were two users on Goodreads referring personal benefits as a motivation to write online book reviews. The first user stated that: "(...) the survey options are very much geared toward sharing information and thoughts with others, and connecting with fellow readers. (...) However, there is another less-sharing-oriented motivation for writing reviews that I see expressed fairly often in discussions. (...) One of the biggest benefits I get from writing reviews, and the reason I review every book I read, is that the writing process helps me reflect on what I've read and sort out my own thoughts about it instead of just rushing straight to the next book. This helps me remember more about what I've read, and for longer

than I used to before I started writing reviews. It also gives me something to look back on later when my memory has faded.”

Moreover, there was a second user who stated: “(...) many of my "disagrees" responses are because I do these reviews first for me. I have made a "rule" for myself that I must write a review on the book just finished before I can start the next one. It helps me to better manage the transition from one book to the next. (...)”

Thus, future research might consider as a motivation this type of personal benefits, where the reader writes an online book review to reflect on a particular book and to have something to look back on in the future.

Another comment left on Goodreads referred that the questions of the survey: “(...) reflect the idea that someone is posting a review because they feel happy or unhappy about having *purchased* the book in question. I am a heavy user of my local library system, and I seldom purchase books.” As so, another topic of interest for future research might be to compare the motivations leading library users and book buyers to write online reviews.

Lastly, considering the above mentioned limitation, future research could also adopt a different scale to measure consumer’s eWOM intention to write online book reviews, and compare such results with previous literature.

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## **7. ATTACHMENTS**

### **7.1 QUESTIONNAIRE**

The following questionnaire is part of a master thesis in Marketing Research and Customer Relationship Management, from Nova Information Management School.

The study aims to understand the motivations leading customers to write online book reviews. As so, your insights are extremely important to us.

The average response time is 7 minutes and all the answers are completely anonymous and only used for the purpose of this investigation.

In case you have any questions, please feel free to email me to: m2015166@novaims.unl.pt

Thank you for your collaboration.

#### **I - Filter question**

Online book reviews can be defined as all public reviews of published books by readers on websites.

Q0 – Considering the definition above, have you ever written an online book review?

1. Yes – the respondent is qualified to continue the questionnaire.
2. No – the respondent does not fit the sample. Go to “Profile does not fit the sample”.

#### **Profile does not fit the sample**

Thank you very much for your collaboration and availability. However, your profile does not fit the sample required for this study.

Have a nice day.

## **II – Online Book Reviews**

Within the context of online book reviews, rate from 1 to 7 the following statements, with 1 representing "strongly disagree" and 7 representing "strongly agree".

1. I am very attached to the readers' community.
2. Other readers and I share the same objectives.
3. The friendship I have with other readers means a lot to me.
4. If other readers planned something, I would think of it as something "we" would do rather than something "they" would do.
5. I see myself as part of the readers' community.
6. I like helping other readers.
7. It feels good to help other readers.
8. I enjoy helping other readers.
9. I feel that writing online book reviews improves my status.
10. I write online book reviews to improve my reputation.
11. I intend to share my reading experiences with other readers more frequently in the future.
12. I will always provide my reading experiences at the request of other readers.
13. I will try to share my reading experiences with other readers in a more effective way.

According to your opinion and experience, rate from 1 to 7 the following statements, with 1 representing "strongly disagree" and 7 representing "strongly agree".

### **I write online book reviews because:**

14. I am very interested in the topics discussed in a particular book.
15. The content of a particular book is very rich. I have benefited a lot from reading it.
16. The argument of a particular book is very powerful. I am deeply impressed after reading it.

17. I found a particular book very interesting. I feel happy after reading it.
18. A particular book disappointed me. I want other people to know that it will disappoint them too.
19. I want others to know that I feel sorry that I ever bought a particular book.
20. My comments help to alleviate my frustration with a wrong purchase of a book.
21. I want to let out my frustration with a particular book.
22. I want to tell others about my own thoughts on books.
23. I want to tell others about the pros and cons of a particular book.
24. I want to share my feelings from reading a particular book with others.
25. I am very happy with a particular book. I hope more people can get to read it.
26. I am so satisfied with a book that I want to help the author to be successful.
27. In my opinion, good authors should be supported.

### **III –Profile**

The next few questions will help us to characterise the sample of the study. We recall that all the answers are anonymous and only used for the purpose of this investigation.

Q0 a – What is your country of residence?

Q0 b – What is your gender?

1. Female
2. Male
3. Other
4. Prefer not to say

Q0 c – What is your age?

1. <14 – 19
2. 20 - 29

3. 30 – 39
4. 40 – 49
5. 50 – 59
6. 60 +
7. Prefer not to say

Q0 d – What is your education level?

1. Lower than high school
2. High school
3. Bachelor's degree
4. Master's or higher
5. Other

Prefer not to say

Thank you for your collaboration!

## 7.2 SAMPLE SIZE RECOMMENDATION IN PLS-SEM

Maximum Number of Arrows Pointing at a Construct	Significance Level											
	1%				5%				10%			
	Minimum R <sup>2</sup>				Minimum R <sup>2</sup>				Minimum R <sup>2</sup>			
	0.10	0.25	0.50	0.75	0.10	0.25	0.50	0.75	0.10	0.25	0.50	0.75
2	158	75	47	38	110	52	33	26	88	41	26	21
3	176	84	53	42	124	59	38	30	100	48	30	25
4	191	91	58	46	137	65	42	33	111	53	34	27
5	205	98	62	50	147	70	45	36	120	58	37	30
6	217	103	66	53	157	75	48	39	128	62	40	32
7	228	109	69	56	166	80	51	41	136	66	42	35
8	238	114	73	59	174	84	54	44	143	69	45	37
9	247	119	76	62	181	88	57	46	150	73	47	39
10	256	123	79	64	189	91	59	48	156	76	49	41

**Source:** Cohen (1992).

Table 23 – Sample size recommendation in PLS-SEM for a statistical power of 80%

### 7.3 TABLES OF FREQUENCIES

<b>I am very attached to the readers' community.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	18	8,0	8,0
<b>2</b>	20	8,9	16,9
<b>3</b>	22	9,8	26,7
<b>4</b>	32	14,2	40,9
<b>5</b>	56	24,9	65,8
<b>6</b>	32	14,2	80,0
<b>7</b>	45	20,0	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 24 – Frequencies for Q1

<b>Other readers and I share the same objectives.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	16	7,1	7,1
<b>2</b>	13	5,8	12,9
<b>3</b>	18	8,0	20,9
<b>4</b>	61	27,1	48,0
<b>5</b>	52	23,1	71,1
<b>6</b>	42	18,7	89,8
<b>7</b>	23	10,2	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 25 – Frequencies for Q2

<b>The friendship I have with other readers means a lot to me.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	24	10,7	10,7
<b>2</b>	19	8,4	19,1
<b>3</b>	14	6,2	25,3
<b>4</b>	33	14,7	40,0
<b>5</b>	46	20,4	60,4
<b>6</b>	43	19,1	79,6
<b>7</b>	46	20,4	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 26 – Frequencies for Q3

<b>If other readers planned something, I would think of it as something we would do rather than something they would do.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	50	22,2	22,2
<b>2</b>	23	10,2	32,4
<b>3</b>	21	9,3	41,8
<b>4</b>	60	26,7	68,4
<b>5</b>	27	12,0	80,4
<b>6</b>	24	10,7	91,1
<b>7</b>	20	8,9	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 27 – Frequencies for Q4

<b>I see myself as part of the readers' community.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	8	3,6	3,6
<b>2</b>	7	3,1	6,7
<b>3</b>	13	5,8	12,4
<b>4</b>	26	11,6	24,0
<b>5</b>	37	16,4	40,4
<b>6</b>	43	19,1	59,6
<b>7</b>	91	40,4	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 28 – Frequencies for Q5

<b>I like helping other readers.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	6	2,7	2,7
<b>2</b>	6	2,7	5,3
<b>3</b>	3	1,3	6,7
<b>4</b>	33	14,7	21,3
<b>5</b>	44	19,6	40,9
<b>6</b>	56	24,9	65,8
<b>7</b>	77	34,2	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 29 – Frequencies for Q6

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**It feels good to help other readers.**

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	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	10	4,4	4,4
<b>2</b>	3	1,3	5,8
<b>3</b>	7	3,1	8,9
<b>4</b>	26	11,6	20,4
<b>5</b>	47	20,9	41,3
<b>6</b>	51	22,7	64,0
<b>7</b>	81	36,0	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

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Table 30 – Frequencies for Q7

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**I enjoy helping other readers.**

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	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	5	2,2	2,2
<b>2</b>	4	1,8	4,0
<b>3</b>	2	,9	4,9
<b>4</b>	26	11,6	16,4
<b>5</b>	30	13,3	29,8
<b>6</b>	53	23,6	53,3
<b>7</b>	105	46,7	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

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Table 31 – Frequencies for Q8

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**I feel that writing online book reviews improves my status.**

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	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	92	40,9	40,9
<b>2</b>	26	11,6	52,4
<b>3</b>	25	11,1	63,6
<b>4</b>	46	20,4	84,0
<b>5</b>	15	6,7	90,7
<b>6</b>	13	5,8	96,4
<b>7</b>	8	3,6	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

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Table 32 – Frequencies for Q9



<b>I write online book reviews to improve my reputation.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	119	52,9	52,9
<b>2</b>	23	10,2	63,1
<b>3</b>	24	10,7	73,8
<b>4</b>	29	12,9	86,7
<b>5</b>	16	7,1	93,8
<b>6</b>	7	3,1	96,9
<b>7</b>	7	3,1	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 33 – Frequencies for Q10

<b>I intend to share my reading experiences with other readers more frequently in the future.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	11	4,9	4,9
<b>2</b>	10	4,4	9,3
<b>3</b>	17	7,6	16,9
<b>4</b>	54	24,0	40,9
<b>5</b>	47	20,9	61,8
<b>6</b>	44	19,6	81,3
<b>7</b>	42	18,7	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 34 – Frequencies for Q11

<b>I will always provide my reading experiences at the request of other readers.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	16	7,1	7,1
<b>2</b>	10	4,4	11,6
<b>3</b>	14	6,2	17,8
<b>4</b>	31	13,8	31,6
<b>5</b>	36	16,0	47,6
<b>6</b>	45	20,0	67,6
<b>7</b>	73	32,4	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 35 – Frequencies for Q12

<b>I will try to share my reading experiences with other readers in a more effective way.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	17	7,6	7,6
<b>2</b>	12	5,3	12,9
<b>3</b>	15	6,7	19,6
<b>4</b>	65	28,9	48,4
<b>5</b>	45	20,0	68,4
<b>6</b>	35	15,6	84,0
<b>7</b>	36	16,0	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 36 – Frequencies for Q13

<b>... I am very interested in the topics discussed in a particular book.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	12	5,3	5,3
<b>2</b>	8	3,6	8,9
<b>3</b>	17	7,6	16,4
<b>4</b>	37	16,4	32,9
<b>5</b>	59	26,2	59,1
<b>6</b>	43	19,1	78,2
<b>7</b>	49	21,8	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 37 – Frequencies for Q14

<b>... the content of a particular book is very rich. I have benefited a lot from reading it.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	7	3,1	3,1
<b>2</b>	9	4,0	7,1
<b>3</b>	3	1,3	8,4
<b>4</b>	28	12,4	20,9
<b>5</b>	29	12,9	33,8
<b>6</b>	69	30,7	64,4
<b>7</b>	80	35,6	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 38 – Frequencies for Q15

<b>... the argument of a particular book is very powerful. I am deeply impressed after reading it.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	10	4,4	4,4
<b>2</b>	9	4,0	8,4
<b>3</b>	7	3,1	11,6
<b>4</b>	41	18,2	29,8
<b>5</b>	53	23,6	53,3
<b>6</b>	49	21,8	75,1
<b>7</b>	56	24,9	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 39 – Frequencies for Q16

<b>... I found a particular book very interesting. I feel happy after reading it.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	6	2,7	2,7
<b>2</b>	4	1,8	4,4
<b>3</b>	2	,9	5,3
<b>4</b>	14	6,2	11,6
<b>5</b>	21	9,3	20,9
<b>6</b>	51	22,7	43,6
<b>7</b>	127	56,4	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 40 – Frequencies for Q17

<b>... a particular book disappointed me. I want other people to know that it will disappoint them too.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	37	16,4	16,4
<b>2</b>	21	9,3	25,8
<b>3</b>	29	12,9	38,7
<b>4</b>	41	18,2	56,9
<b>5</b>	22	9,8	66,7
<b>6</b>	39	17,3	84,0
<b>7</b>	36	16,0	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 41 – Frequencies for Q18

<b>... I want others to know that I feel sorry that I ever bought a particular book.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	59	26,2	26,2
<b>2</b>	38	16,9	43,1
<b>3</b>	30	13,3	56,4
<b>4</b>	40	17,8	74,2
<b>5</b>	25	11,1	85,3
<b>6</b>	12	5,3	90,7
<b>7</b>	21	9,3	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 42 – Frequencies for Q19

<b>... my comments help to alleviate my frustration with a wrong purchase of a book.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	89	39,6	39,6
<b>2</b>	37	16,4	56,0
<b>3</b>	28	12,4	68,4
<b>4</b>	29	12,9	81,3
<b>5</b>	16	7,1	88,4
<b>6</b>	14	6,2	94,7
<b>7</b>	12	5,3	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 43 – Frequencies for Q20

<b>... I want to let out my frustration with a particular book.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	49	21,8	21,8
<b>2</b>	33	14,7	36,4
<b>3</b>	22	9,8	46,2
<b>4</b>	41	18,2	64,4
<b>5</b>	23	10,2	74,7
<b>6</b>	32	14,2	88,9
<b>7</b>	25	11,1	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 44 – Frequencies for Q21

<b>... I want to tell others about my own thoughts on books.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	10	4,4	4,4
<b>2</b>	12	5,3	9,8
<b>3</b>	13	5,8	15,6
<b>4</b>	36	16,0	31,6
<b>5</b>	34	15,1	46,7
<b>6</b>	57	25,3	72,0
<b>7</b>	63	28,0	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 45 – Frequencies for Q22

<b>... I want to tell others about the pros and cons of a particular book.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	25	11,1	11,1
<b>2</b>	12	5,3	16,4
<b>3</b>	16	7,1	23,6
<b>4</b>	49	21,8	45,3
<b>5</b>	53	23,6	68,9
<b>6</b>	35	15,6	84,4
<b>7</b>	35	15,6	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 46 – Frequencies for Q23

<b>... I want to share my feelings from reading a particular book with others.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	8	3,6	3,6
<b>2</b>	10	4,4	8,0
<b>3</b>	5	2,2	10,2
<b>4</b>	36	16,0	26,2
<b>5</b>	41	18,2	44,4
<b>6</b>	52	23,1	67,6
<b>7</b>	73	32,4	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 47 – Frequencies for Q24

<b>... I am very happy with a particular book. I hope more people can get to read it.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	7	3,1	3,1
<b>2</b>	1	,4	3,6
<b>3</b>	0	,0	3,6
<b>4</b>	11	4,9	8,4
<b>5</b>	20	8,9	17,3
<b>6</b>	50	22,2	39,6
<b>7</b>	136	60,4	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 48 – Frequencies for Q25

<b>... I am so satisfied with a book that I want to help the author to be successful.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	11	4,9	4,9
<b>2</b>	7	3,1	8,0
<b>3</b>	9	4,0	12,0
<b>4</b>	24	10,7	22,7
<b>5</b>	22	9,8	32,4
<b>6</b>	45	20,0	52,4
<b>7</b>	107	47,6	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 49 – Frequencies for Q26

<b>... in my opinion, good authors should be supported.</b>			
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	5	2,2	2,2
<b>2</b>	2	,9	3,1
<b>3</b>	2	,9	4,0
<b>4</b>	14	6,2	10,2
<b>5</b>	26	11,6	21,8
<b>6</b>	36	16,0	37,8
<b>7</b>	140	62,2	100,0
<b>Total</b>	225	100,0	

Table 50 – Frequencies for Q27

## 7.4 INITIAL MEASUREMENT MODEL TESTS

	Consumer's eWOM intention	Desire for sharing	Enjoyment of helping	Helping the author	Product involvement	Reputation	Sense of belonging	Venting negative feelings
DS_1	0,578	0,675	0,448	0,246	0,438	0,244	0,402	0,206
DS_2	0,455	0,587	0,401	0,118	0,233	0,216	0,380	0,503
DS_3	0,581	0,705	0,473	0,296	0,531	0,237	0,452	0,128
DS_4	0,424	0,646	0,452	0,652	0,721	-0,032	0,313	0,041
EH_1	0,617	0,549	0,837	0,418	0,638	0,171	0,643	-0,052
EH_2	0,724	0,603	0,853	0,344	0,399	0,219	0,659	0,076
EH_3	0,729	0,577	0,859	0,305	0,478	0,189	0,641	-0,038
HA_1	0,367	0,363	0,313	0,762	0,599	0,002	0,294	0,064
HA_2	0,378	0,459	0,371	0,875	0,682	-0,020	0,308	0,027
Int_1	0,746	0,623	0,546	0,256	0,401	0,265	0,710	-0,020
Int_2	0,616	0,529	0,605	0,400	0,368	0,163	0,506	0,113
Int_3	0,714	0,475	0,553	0,307	0,383	0,415	0,662	-0,064
NG_1	-0,065	0,231	0,063	0,007	0,059	0,127	0,007	0,621
NG_2	0,032	0,219	0,006	0,110	0,094	0,158	0,056	0,715
NG_3	0,027	0,288	-0,060	0,036	0,058	0,266	0,027	0,956
NG_4	0,010	0,267	0,002	0,020	0,070	0,193	0,042	0,808
PI_1	0,427	0,531	0,433	0,430	0,686	0,157	0,386	0,060
PI_2	0,420	0,632	0,521	0,648	0,837	0,034	0,384	0,090
PI_3	0,424	0,415	0,438	0,492	0,663	0,197	0,360	0,027
PI_4	0,362	0,584	0,347	0,710	0,739	0,003	0,240	0,074
R_1	0,375	0,232	0,231	0,023	0,121	0,963	0,396	0,256
R_2	0,374	0,233	0,180	-0,050	0,105	0,851	0,334	0,184
SB_1	0,580	0,404	0,457	0,171	0,236	0,243	0,607	0,026
SB_2	0,595	0,399	0,588	0,413	0,467	0,328	0,766	0,039
SB_3	0,745	0,455	0,494	0,219	0,220	0,348	0,721	0,080
SB_4	0,543	0,278	0,302	0,133	0,188	0,338	0,510	0,059
SB_5	0,628	0,457	0,689	0,267	0,419	0,143	0,756	-0,047

Table 51 – Outer loadings and cross-loadings - initial measurement model

	Consumer's eWOM intention	Desire for sharing	Enjoyment of helping	Helping the author	Product involvement	Reputation	Sense of belonging	Venting negative feelings
Consumer's eWOM Intention	<b>0,694</b>							
Desire for sharing	0,782	<b>0,655</b>						
Enjoyment of helping	0,813	0,678	<b>0,850</b>					
Helping the author	0,454	0,504	0,418	<b>0,820</b>				
Product Involvement	0,553	0,742	0,593	0,782	<b>0,734</b>			
Reputation	0,411	0,255	0,228	-0,012	0,125	<b>0,908</b>		
Sense of belonging	0,909	0,592	0,762	0,367	0,465	0,403	<b>0,679</b>	
Venting negative feelings	0,007	0,321	-0,005	0,054	0,088	0,244	0,042	<b>0,785</b>

Table 52 – Fornell-Larcker test - initial measurement model

	Consumer's eWOM intention	Desire for sharing	Enjoyment of helping	Helping the author	Product involvement	Reputation	Sense of belonging	Venting negative feelings
Consumer's eWOM Intention								
Desire for sharing	0,795							
Enjoyment of helping	0,826	0,686						
Helping the author	0,469	0,506	0,420					
Product Involvement	0,563	0,740	0,595	0,781				
Reputation	0,411	0,283	0,227	0,041	0,134			
Sense of belonging	0,897	0,584	0,734	0,351	0,447	0,407		
Venting negative feelings	0,106	0,338	0,075	0,058	0,106	0,235	0,073	

Table 53 - Heterotrait-monotrait ratio - initial measurement model



## 7.5 FINAL MEASUREMENT MODEL TESTS

	Consumer's eWOM intention	Desire for sharing	Enjoyment of helping	Helping the author	Product involvement	Reputation	Sense of belonging	Venting negative feelings
DS_1	0,549	0,840	0,448	0,246	0,437	0,244	0,423	0,222
DS_3	0,560	0,888	0,472	0,296	0,530	0,237	0,486	0,141
EH_1	0,548	0,406	0,838	0,418	0,639	0,171	0,688	-0,064
EH_2	0,598	0,469	0,833	0,344	0,399	0,219	0,713	0,053
EH_3	0,652	0,482	0,879	0,305	0,479	0,190	0,698	-0,058
HA_1	0,310	0,197	0,312	0,760	0,594	0,002	0,311	0,079
HA_2	0,285	0,312	0,370	0,877	0,677	-0,021	0,341	0,027
Int_1	0,797	0,566	0,547	0,256	0,401	0,266	0,728	0,003
Int_3	0,759	0,430	0,552	0,307	0,385	0,416	0,667	-0,037
NG_2	-0,012	0,111	0,005	0,110	0,093	0,158	0,043	0,638
NG_3	0,001	0,197	-0,061	0,036	0,060	0,266	0,022	0,957
NG_4	-0,045	0,183	0,001	0,020	0,070	0,193	0,039	0,775
PI_1	0,423	0,435	0,433	0,430	0,700	0,157	0,398	0,069
PI_2	0,386	0,492	0,521	0,647	0,845	0,034	0,419	0,089
PI_3	0,404	0,332	0,439	0,492	0,686	0,197	0,389	0,053
PI_4	0,279	0,381	0,346	0,710	0,701	0,003	0,263	0,046
R_1	0,398	0,240	0,231	0,023	0,123	0,953	0,382	0,276
R_2	0,392	0,267	0,179	-0,050	0,107	0,860	0,324	0,196
SB_1	0,608	0,353	0,457	0,171	0,238	0,243	0,596	0,036
SB_2	0,502	0,308	0,586	0,412	0,466	0,329	0,703	0,030
SB_3	0,735	0,427	0,494	0,218	0,222	0,349	0,698	0,100
SB_5	0,602	0,349	0,688	0,267	0,420	0,143	0,716	-0,052

Table 54 – Outer loadings and cross-loadings - final measurement model

	Consumer's eWOM intention	Desire for sharing	Enjoyment of helping	Helping the author	Product involvement	Reputation	Sense of belonging	Venting negative feelings
<b>Consumer's eWOM Intention</b>	<b>0,778</b>							
<b>Desire for sharing</b>	0,641	<b>0,864</b>						
<b>Enjoyment of helping</b>	0,705	0,532	<b>0,850</b>					
<b>Helping the author</b>	0,360	0,314	0,417	<b>0,821</b>				
<b>Product Involvement</b>	0,505	0,561	0,594	0,777	<b>0,736</b>			
<b>Reputation</b>	0,435	0,278	0,227	-0,013	0,127	<b>0,907</b>		
<b>Sense of belonging</b>	0,897	0,527	0,823	0,398	0,500	0,390	<b>0,680</b>	
<b>Venting negative feelings</b>	-0,022	0,208	-0,028	0,062	0,089	0,262	0,041	<b>0,801</b>

Table 55 - Fornell-Larcker test - final measurement model

	Consumer's eWOM intention	Desire for sharing	Enjoyment of helping	Helping the author	Product involvement	Reputation	Sense of belonging	Venting negative feelings
<b>Consumer's eWOM Intention</b>								
<b>Desire for sharing</b>	0,640							
<b>Enjoyment of helping</b>	0,706	0,533						
<b>Helping the author</b>	0,365	0,311	0,420					
<b>Product Involvement</b>	0,510	0,559	0,595	0,781				
<b>Reputation</b>	0,440	0,281	0,227	0,041	0,134			
<b>Sense of belonging</b>	0,895	0,525	0,815	0,392	0,494	0,389		
<b>Venting negative feelings</b>	0,027	0,207	0,072	0,072	0,099	0,256	0,078	

Table 56 - Heterotrait-monotrait ratio – final measurement model