The effects of online reviews on the intensity level of consumers’ negative word-of-mouth after service failures
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ABSTRACT

The widespread use of social media has led to many consumers relying on online reviews when searching for information about products or services. Their influential power is due to the fact that consumers still perceive online reviews to be one of the most credible recommendation sources as they are not influenced by firms’ employees. In contrast to existing studies that focus mainly on the extent to which these online reviews influence consumers’ decision-making processes, this study responds to a recent call for more comprehensive consumer research on online reviews from the perspective of the reviewers. In particular, extant literature has not yet examined the emotional side of consumers when posting reviews, specifically how the reading of previously posted reviews may influence the content of their own reviews. This is crucial to understand as reviewers usually express their feelings through their online reviews, and readers can feel these emotions through the valence conveyed by the writing, which later can influence their behaviours.

To fill this gap, this research investigated the extent to which consumers’ exposure to earlier online reviews can influence the intensity level of their negative word-of-mouth (n-wom) following negative service experiences. Intensity of n-wom here is defined as the level of negativity expressed in the written reviews. More specifically, drawing on the narrative transportation theory, this research seeks to investigate the role of consumers’ perceived transportation into the story expressed in online reviews as the underlying explanatory mechanism behind this relationship. Further, this study includes consumers’ prior experience in posting reviews as a moderator in this relationship which explains consumer differences in perceived transportation levels.

Four experimental studies were conducted to address the abovementioned research aims. Findings of these studies consistently showed that, following negative service
experiences, reviewers are influenced by previous reviews when writing their own. Specifically, the pilot study results show that exposing reviewers to earlier online reviews leads them to write reviews with a greater level of n-wom compared to those who were not exposed to any reviews at all. Taking into account the online review valence, Study 1 further suggests that exposing transgressed consumers to negative (positive) valence reviews encourages them to write reviews with a higher (lower) intensity level of n-wom. Study 2 reveals that the underlying explanatory mechanism behind this relationship was the consumers’ level of immersion in the reviews posted previously (i.e., perceived transportation). Reviewers who were exposed to negative (positive) valence reviews were more (less) transported into the presented online reviews which then led to a higher (lower) level of intensity of n-wom. This mediating relationship was further moderated by reviewers’ experiences of posting online reviews. More specifically, the results of the Study 3 moderated mediation analysis indicate that the mediating effect was stronger for novice reviewers than for their expert counterparts.

This study offers several contributions to theory and practice. First, it extends the work on reviewers’ effects on online wom literature by investigating the emotional side of reviewers in a negative service context. Second, this research expands our knowledge of narrative transportation theory in the context of online reviews by validating the mediating role of consumers’ perceived transportation. Most importantly, this study examines one outcome of narrative transportation that has not been largely explored: the affective response. Illuminating the potential affective bias of online reviews, this research suggests that online reviews should not be embraced literally by consumers and service providers, but should be utilised judiciously to enhance their consumption experiences and service quality; moreover, the postings from novice reviewers should be treated with caution.
DECLARATION

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any university or equivalent institution and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

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PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF RESEARCH

As consumers become more digitally empowered, they are increasingly using online review platforms (e.g., Amazon.com, TripAdvisor.com, Yelp.com) to share their product and service consumption experiences with others through the posting of reviews (Verhagen, Nauta, & Feldberg, 2013). These reviews have turned into the most credible information source as their content is generated by real customers and, as such, reading them can affect consumers’ purchase intentions, recommendation intentions, review posting intentions, and language style (Aerts, Smits, & Verlegh, 2017; Floh, Koller, & Zauner, 2013; Park & Lee, 2009; Sparks & Browning, 2011; Wu, Mattila, Wang, & Hanks, 2016; Xia & Bechwati, 2008). Recognising the importance of online reviews in terms of consumer behaviour, an examination of the contemporary literature reveals that the impact of their valence, that is, whether the reviews are positive or negative, has received enormous attention. One common finding of these studies suggests that this factor is particularly influential in the consumer decision-making process for experiential products (Park & Lee, 2009; Purnawirawan, Eisend, De Pelsmacker, & Dens, 2015; Xia & Bechwati, 2008; Zhang, Zhang, & Yang, 2016). This is largely due to the intangibility of these products; that is, the fact that the attributes determining the quality of the experience of these products can be assessed only after purchase or during consumption (Casaló, Flavián, Guinaliu, & Ekin, 2015; Park & Lee, 2009; Park & Park, 2013; Zhu & Zhang, 2010). By reading online reviews, consumers are able to imagine or visualize how these products would work in real life and anticipate their experience with them. Therefore, prior online reviews are often used to reduce uncertainty and perceived risks associated with these product purchases (Bronner & de Hoog, 2010; Park & Lee, 2009). In this regard, in a service purchase context, when prior reviews describe negative service experiences, they may have detrimental effects
on firms as it only takes one to three negative reviews for most people to avoid buying a firm’s product or service (Coppola, 2016). Therefore, it may be important for services managers to investigate the reasons for the consumers’ negativity as expressed through online reviews, and implement strategies to counteract the potential negative impact of such reviews.

Acknowledging the importance of online reviews in the services industry, prior research has used this source of information mainly to investigate their impact from the perspective of consumers and firms in general. Many studies have centred on the question of how online reviews are used by consumers to assist their decision-making process (Chen & Huang, 2013; Filieri & McLeay, 2013; Leung, Law, van Hoof, & Buhalis, 2013; Purnawirawan, De Pelsmacker, & Dens, 2012a; Sparks & Browning, 2011; Vermeulen & Seegers, 2009). Firms have also benefited from utilizing online reviews as tools to better predict their sales (Anderson, 2012; Duverger, 2013; Nieto, Hernández-Maestro, & Muñoz-Gallego, 2014; Phillips, Barnes, Zigan, & Schegg, 2016; Xie, Chen, & Wu, 2012; Xie, Zhang, & Zhang, 2014; Ye, Law, Gu, & Chen, 2011; Zhang, Ye, Law, & Li, 2010) and improve their pricing strategy (Öğüt & Onur Taş, 2012; Yacouel & Fleischer, 2011). Despite the maturity of this research field, studies examining online reviews from the perspective of reviewers - those consumers who write the actual reviews – are still under-explored (Ring, Tkaczynski, & Dolnicar, 2016). This study argues that it is equally important to focus on this aspect given that the reviewers are the ones who produce the source of information that will eventually be used by both consumers and firms to make better-informed decisions. This is even more crucial given the fact that many consumers still perceive online reviews to be the most credible and trustworthy source of information because they are not influenced by firm employees (Sparks & Browning, 2010, 2011). From a customer complaining point of view, and recognising the fact that dissatisfied consumers can read posted reviews prior to conveying their own consumption experiences via social media and review sites, an interesting but yet-to-be-investigated issue is how the content
posted on previous online reviews and other contextual factors may influence subsequent reviewers’ writings regarding a negative service experience. Moreover, extant research has not yet proposed models that take into account the fact that consumers’ review-posting behaviour may be something undesirable for reviewers, particularly when consumers decide to post a review about their negative service encounters. In such cases, consumers may have negative feelings and affective states when embarking on their review writing journey which may be influenced by the way in which they process additional incoming information and engage with previous online reviews. Hence, the interesting question that has so far received little attention and that will be addressed in this research is: Assuming that genuine reviewers are not influenced by pressures from companies, are there any contextual factors that affect the way that transgressed consumers write their actual reviews?

Only few studies have attempted to address the above question. Schlosser (2005), for instance, revealed that reviewers tend to evaluate products less favourably after being exposed to negative reviews posted previously. Wu et al. (2016) showed that, when exposed to reviews that are congruent (vs. incongruent) with what consumers’ experiences, powerful consumers are more likely to write reviews containing experience-incongruity cues, while powerless consumers are more likely to include experience-congruity cues in their reviews. Examining the linguistic pattern of written reviews, Aerts et al. (2017) found that when previously posted reviews contain concrete (abstract) language, a subsequent reviewer would write a review using more concrete (abstract) language. From this limited number of studies, it can be concluded that online reviews are indeed behavioural indicators of the reviewers. Inspired by this stream of research, this study advances the current understanding of the effect of exposure to earlier posted reviews on reviewers’ posting behaviours. It does this in three ways.

First, no studies to date have examined the emotional side of reviewers, specifically how reading earlier posted reviews will influence the intensity with which reviewers spread negative
word-of-mouth (n-wom). It is imperative to understand the emotions being expressed in online reviews as reviewers often use online review platforms as media through which they can express their feelings. Readers of these reviews can feel these emotions through the valence conveyed by the writing, which later can influence their behaviours. Hence, to fill this gap, this research investigates the extent to which the valence (positive vs. negative) of earlier online reviews can influence the intensity of reviewers’ n-wom. Intensity of n-wom here is defined as the level of negativity expressed in the written reviews. To achieve this objective, this research focuses on a context where reviewers post their online reviews following negative service experiences. Hence, it can be safely assumed that reviewers exhibit negative emotions when embarking on their writing review journey. In this way, we can better capture the main variable of interest, that is, intensity of n-wom - a proxy of affective response of reviewers expressed in their written reviews. Moreover, it can be anticipated that this context will contribute to the current literature by providing greater insights in suggesting that negative reviews have a more powerful impact than do the positive reviews (Casaló et al., 2015; Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006; Papathanassis & Knolle, 2011; Xie et al., 2014), and confirming the importance of firms heeding transgressed consumers who publicly express their dissatisfaction online (Grégoire & Fisher, 2008; Grégoire, Tripp, & Legoux, 2009).

Second, the relevant literature on online word-of-mouth (wom) that have contextualized online reviews as stories is in its infancy (Hamby, Daniloski, & Brinberg, 2015; Moore, 2012). This is surprising as Delgadillo and Escalas (2004) suggested that online wom could be perceived as a story. In this research, online reviews are construed as wom stories that consumers share with others on online platforms; moreover, these stories can be so persuasive that they influence consumer behaviours (Green & Brock, 2000). Viewing online reviews as stories is deemed appropriate as most reviews involve storytellers or actors (i.e. reviewers) sharing their product or service consumption experiences at some length in a narrative that
includes a climax or anti-climax (i.e. elements of a plot) and has the potential to capture the readers’ attention and influence their subsequent behaviours. Hence, drawing on the narrative transportation theory (Green & Brock, 2000), this research argues that, when reading online reviews, consumers are transported into a narrative world where they exercise their imaginations to visualize the story plots and at the same time integrate all felt affective content and emotions to empathise with storytellers. These stories may be reflected in consumers’ perceptions, attitudes, beliefs and, ultimately, behaviours. This research, therefore, predicts that the persuasiveness of the narratives of posted reviews may influence how subsequent reviews are written. In other words, this research suggests that the intensity of n-wom shown by reviewers through their written reviews depends on their level of engagement when reading the reviews to which they are exposed, and this engagement is influenced by the valence expressed in these reviews.

Third, prior research has demonstrated that consumers in general perceive reviews written by experts as being trustworthy and useful (Chen & Xie, 2008). Hence, they are more inclined to seek reviews written by expert reviewers and to follow their suggestions (Ashenfelter & Jones, 2013; Hilger, Rafert, & Villas-Boas, 2011; Zhang et al., 2016). Since prior studies have indicated that reviewers’ posts are actually influenced by earlier posted online reviews (Aerts et al., 2017; Schlosser, 2005; Wu et al., 2016), there is a need to investigate the reliability of reviews posted by expert reviewers after they have been exposed to previous online reviews. This research is intended to shed light on the moderating effect of reviewer expertise (experts vs. novice) on the relationship between exposure to earlier online reviews and the intensity of n-wom.

To summarize, this research investigates the impact of previously posted online reviews on the affective responses of transgressed consumers, that is, the intensity level of the n-wom in their own reviews resulting from the mental state generated by the narrative transportation...
process. Further, this research includes an important individual characteristic - reviewers’ prior experience in posting reviews - as a moderator in this relationship. This research argues that the consumer’s prior experience in posting online reviews (Ma, Khansa, Deng, & Kim, 2013; Moe & Schweidel, 2012) is an individual characteristic that may explain consumer differences in perceived transportation. Therefore, the aim of this research is to examine the impact of previously posted online reviews on consumers’ intensity levels of n-wom which is measured through the negativity levels conveyed in the reviews that they write following their negative service incidents.

1.2 RESEARCH GAPS

An extensive examination of the contemporary service marketing literature reveals that there are two aspects of online consumer reviews that have not yet been addressed.

First, as stated previously, the online review phenomenon has been studied mainly from the perspective of those who receive the information conveyed in the reviews; little attention has been given to exploring the effects from the perspective of reviewers - those who write the actual reviews (Ring et al., 2016). In particular, extant literature has not yet examined the emotional side of consumers when writing their reviews, specifically how reading previous reviews will influence the intensity with which they communicate their n-wom following a negative service experience. Existing research investigating the effects of reading prior online reviews has focused on aspects such as the linguistic patterns used by subsequent reviewers (Aerts et al., 2017; Kronrod & Danziger, 2013). For example, reviewers tend to use more concrete (abstract) language after reading reviews that have been expressed in more concrete (abstract) language. Moreover, Wu et al. (2016) investigated reviewers’ message congruency in relation to a forum consensus (i.e., other reviewers’ opinions presented in a forum) and demonstrated that powerful (powerless) reviewers tend to post positive reviews when the forum
consensus is negative (positive). This research suggests that it is imperative to understand the emotions being expressed in online reviews since, when disappointed consumers post their reviews, they are not only complaining through this communication medium, but are also communicating their negative emotions. This contention is supported by the fact that these emotions and the arousal activated by them may affect the subsequent sharing of online word-of-mouth (Berger, 2011; Berger & Milkman, 2012). The intensity of these negative emotions may also differ among consumers as they can elaborate and more freely express their feelings in writing than in verbal communication (Berger, 2014; Berger & Iyengar, 2013). Since prior research also recognises that consumers may experience different levels of negative moods and feelings after a negative service encounter (Alicke et al., 1992), and that these emotions in turn may affect their subsequent behaviour (McColl-Kennedy, Patterson, Smith, & Brady, 2009), this research proposes that readers of online reviews can feel such emotions though the valence conveyed by the writing, which later can influence their posting behaviours. Indeed, current studies have devoted little attention to investigating the role of emotions as a determinant of consumers’ n-wom (Verhagen et al., 2013). Therefore, the scant literature concerning the effects of prior reviews’ textual content and their emotional contagion regarding consumers’ behaviour from the reviewers’ perspective, suggests that further investigation is needed to determine the impact of posted reviews on transgressed consumers.

Second, empirical studies have not yet used the narrative transportation theory in order to investigate the online reviews phenomenon as stories (Green & Brock, 2000). Extant literature on narrative transportation has been conducted using other narrative excerpts such as advertisements (Ching, Tong, Chen, & Chen, 2013; Escalas, 2004a, 2007; Wentzel, Tomczak, & Herrmann, 2010), blog posts (Phillips & McQuarrie, 2010; Tussyadiah, Park, & Fesenmaier, 2010; van Laer & de Ruyter, 2010), books (Vaughn, Hesse, Petkova, & Trudeau, 2009), movies (Batat & Wohlfeil, 2009), and news (Oliver, Dillard, Bae, & Tamul, 2012). Hence, another
The main objective of this research is to explore the effects of online reviews as stories about negative service experiences, employing the narrative transportation theory.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Hence, motivated by the abovementioned research gaps, this research aims to advance our knowledge of the way(s) in which review writers can be influenced by the environment they captivate in by investigating the effect of online reviews exposure on the intensity levels of their n-wom in the context of negative service incidents. In particular, this research seeks to investigate the contextual factors and underlying mechanism affecting transgressed consumers’ intensity of n-wom captured in their written reviews and, therefore, develop a theoretical framework that can explain this phenomena.

The specific objectives of this research are:

a. To develop and empirically test a theoretical framework concerning how transgressed consumers’ exposure to previous online reviews influences the intensity of their n-wom demonstrated in their written reviews.

b. To investigate the explanatory mechanism of perceived transportation into previous online reviews underlying the abovementioned relationship.

c. To determine how transgressed consumers’ prior experience in writing reviews may influence the effect of exposing them to previous online reviews on their perceived transportation levels and, consequently, on the intensity of their n-wom.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Consequently, in line with the research objectives stated in the previous section, the questions to be addressed in this study are:
a. What effect does consumers’ exposure to earlier online reviews have on the intensity of their n-wom in a negative service context?

b. To what extent, if any, does consumers’ perceived transportation into previous online reviews explain the relationship between exposure to online reviews and the intensity of their n-wom following negative service experiences?

c. To what extent do consumers’ prior experiences in posting online reviews moderate the abovementioned relationship?

1.5 Contributions of this Thesis

This research offers several contributions to theory and practice. First, this research extends previous work on prior reviews’ effects on reviewers within the online wom literature as it empirically investigates the emotions of reviewers in a negative service context by exploring the intensity with which they spread n-wom, taking into account the valence effects of previous online reviews. Second, this research contributes to the emerging literature on service reviews by expanding our knowledge of narrative transportation theory in the context of online reviews. In particular, this research contextualises the phenomenon of online consumer reviews as stories using the narrative transportation theory, and examines one of the important outcomes of narrative transportation that has not yet been largely explored: the affective response. Third, this study integrates service marketing and social psychology perspectives to develop a novel theoretical framework of the intensity of n-wom of transgressed consumers. It elucidates how consumers’ exposure to previous online reviews will influence their subsequent reviews’ negative valence intensity through the underlying mechanism of perceived transportation. Fourth, this research sheds light on the moderating effect of reviewer expertise (expert vs. novice); that is, expert reviewers are less susceptible to the exposure of earlier reviews due to their lower level of perceived transportation into the previous reviews. Fifth, this research also
enlightens practitioners on the potential affective bias in consumers’ review writings and indicates that this effect depends on the levels of transgressed consumers’ perceived transportation into the previously posted reviews, and that online reviews should be utilised judiciously to enhance service quality. Firms may need to think of strategies to reduce the impact of the potential affective influence of online reviews. Moreover, service providers should be cautious regarding novice posters as these people, rather than expert reviewers, are more influenced by previous online reviews when writing their posts about their negative service experience. Finally, findings of this research suggest that service providers should show positive reviews to transgressed consumers when they are writing their posts to decrease the intensity level of the reviews’ n-wom.

In the following sections, the literature review, the arguments for hypotheses development and the experimental studies will be presented. Finally, this thesis will discuss the results, present several theoretical and managerial implications, acknowledge the limitations of this study, and provide suggestions for future research directions.

1.6 Thesis Outline

This thesis consists of six chapters. In the first chapter, the background, research objectives and research questions were presented. The second chapter will present a review of the literature pertaining to online reviews, along with the hypotheses development and the conceptual framework of this research project. Chapter Three will describe and present two studies conducted to test the effects of prior online reviews on transgressed consumers’ intensity of n-wom after service failures and their findings. Chapter Four will describe the study conducted to explore the underlying explanatory mechanism of this relationship and its findings. Chapter Five presents the last study conducted to test the boundary condition of consumers’ prior experience in posting reviews. In summary, four experimental studies have been carried out to
address the three proposed research objectives. The final chapter, Chapter Six, discusses the main findings of this research and its contributions to marketing theory and practice.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

2.1 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

The previous chapter gave a comprehensive background of the research problem that this thesis aims to address. It also indicated that the main research aim of this thesis is to integrate services marketing and social psychology perspectives to develop a novel theoretical framework for the intensity of n-wom of transgressed consumers, taking into account: their initial emotions when commencing their review writing journey; the review valence from the earlier reviews; and their prior experience in posting reviews. This chapter will discuss the recent literature pertaining to online reviews and their influence on consumers’ behaviour. Subsequently, this chapter will discuss the development of the hypotheses and the conceptual framework of this research.

2.2 ONLINE CONSUMER REVIEWS

Online consumer reviews have been defined as open-ended textual information that consumers share online through diverse sources such as retailer and review sites (Bickart & Schindler, 2001; Chen, Fay, & Wang, 2011; Mudambi & Schuff, 2010). They have been usually considered as the most predominant form of electronic wom (Chatterjee, 2001). As discussed previously, one of the important characteristics of online reviews is their valence. The impact of review valence on several consumer behavioural variables has received significant attention in the contemporary literature on online reviews. Online review valence in this research is defined as “whether the reviews in a review set are predominantly negative or positive” (Purnawirawan et al., 2015, p. 18). Previous research on the impact of positive online reviews
has found that they positively influence consumers’ purchase intentions, recommendation intentions, willingness to pay, review posting intentions, attitudes towards products, and trust (Floh et al., 2013; Moe & Schweidel, 2012; Purnawirawan, Dens, & De Pelsmacker, 2012b; Sparks & Browning, 2011; Ye et al., 2011). On the other hand, it has been shown that negative reviews significantly affect consumers’ product attitudes and opinions in the same direction (Duhachek, Zhang, & Krishnan, 2007; Schlosser, 2005), and decrease consumers’ purchase intentions (Park & Lee, 2009; Sparks & Browning, 2011; Xia & Bechwati, 2008). More specifically, taking into account the services marketing studies that have investigated the effects of review valence on consumer behaviour, Ye et al. (2011) studied the influence of online review valence on online hotel bookings using their ratings. They found that review ratings had a positive direct impact on sales. In another study, Vermeulen and Seegers (2009) showed how the exposure to online reviews affects consumers’ choices such that negative and positive reviews influence consumers’ awareness of hotel brands but only the latter also improve consumers’ attitudes toward hotels in the same direction. Focusing on hotel reviews, Manganari and Dimara (2017) found that positive reviews with emoticons increase consumers’ attitudes and booking intentions whereas negative reviews decrease these consumer behavioural intentions. From these studies, it can be concluded that online review valence may affect readers’ behaviour in both positive and negative directions, suggesting that it is worthwhile investigating the effects of review valence from the perspective of review writers.

2.3 ONLINE REVIEWS IN SERVICES MARKETING

Although there is ample marketing literature that explores the impact of online reviews in the service domain, it has focused mainly on investigating their effects on readers’ or potential customers’ behaviour such as their retailer evaluations, repurchase intentions, product choice, intentions to recommend, willingness to pay, and perceptions of a service provider performance.
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Chapter 2 – Literature review and hypotheses development

The impact of online reviews on review writers’ behaviour in a service context has received scant attention (for recent exceptions see Wu et al. (2016)). In this regard, it is important to recognise that following a negative service episode, for instance, consumers may display negative affective responses as a consequence of not receiving the service that met their expectations. As these negative episodes are associated with a sense of loss, transgressed consumers may adopt one of two approaches to deal with them: coping or avoiding (Bryant, 1989). When consumers employ coping strategies, they may use several mental, emotional and behavioural resources to reduce the emotional distress generated by these unfortunate encounters (Yi & Baumgartner, 2004). One common strategy acknowledged in the literature is known as ‘expressive coping’ which is the emotional communication employed by consumers to deal with the stressful situation and which is based on support-seeking behaviours (Duhacheck, 2005; Tsarenko & Strizhakova, 2013). Hence, this research proposes that transgressed consumers’ online reviews may be seen as expressive strategies that they may utilise to cope with their negative service encounters. By writing online reviews, they intend to communicate their dissatisfaction to others. Hence, consumers may have different levels of negativity as these would be influenced by their initial negative affective state after the service failure and other contextual factors such as their reading of other online reviews.

A close look at the scant literature that explores the impact of online reviews in the context of service failure reveals that the work of Black and Kelley (2009) seems to be among the first of the few studies that explore the concept of online reviews in a negative service context. The authors examined the elements of the stories described in the online reviews and the service recovery strategies used by service providers that affected prospective consumers’ perceptions of review helpfulness. Using a content analysis approach, they found that consumers perceived online reviews including a service failure as less helpful than reviews that
do not describe any negative service incident at all. However, they also revealed that consumers perceive online reviews describing a service failure with a successful recovery attempt as more helpful in comparison to those reviews not showing any recovery strategy at all.

In one of the first studies regarding online reviews about hotels, Sparks and Browning (2010) investigated negative reviews’ narrative content and motives for posting these reviews. Taking a grounded theory approach, they concluded that online reviews are highly descriptive, persuasive and contain elements of stories as reviewers often set the context, describe the events that took place and actions that occurred during the incident. Furthermore, consumers are often motivated by feelings of revenge, altruism or the need for venting their dissatisfaction.

Levy, Duan, and Boo (2012) moreover, attempted to understand the dynamics of negative consumer online reviews and management’s responses to these reviews through the content analysis of a big data set of online reviews from the hospitality industry. They developed a framework to understand the most common service failures mentioned in the negative reviews such as problems with service desk staff, bathroom issues, room cleanliness and noise. They also described some elements that are frequent in the responses provided by the hotel managers such as apologies and explanations for the problems.

Melián-González, Bulchand-Gidumal, and González López-Valcárcel (2013) used a modelling approach when investigating the valence and volume of online reviews pertaining to the hospitality industry. They found that the first reviews about a service provider tend to be significantly more negative, and that this factor was mitigated as the volume of reviews increased, so that hotels should try to increase the number of reviews that they receive in order to balance the number of negative and positive reviews.

These studies indicate that research works on online reviews in a negative service context have focused mainly on the classification or description of the main elements of these types of reviews and have not attempted to explore the causes and drivers of this type of
behaviour. In other words, there is a lack of research investigating the factors and dynamics of consumers’ online review posting behaviour, or more specifically, the intensity with which they communicate their n-wom following a negative service experience.

2.4 ONLINE REVIEWS AS STORIES

As mentioned in the previous sections, this research uses a storytelling perspective as it proposes that online reviews are stories that consumers share with others about their service consumption experiences and, as such, they express thoughts and emotions (Juralfsky, Chahuneau, Routledge, & Smith, 2014; Moore, 2012). It seems appropriate to consider online reviews as stories because they are narratives that include a character with motives -in this case the reviewers- and an action that occurs in spatial time (Padgett & Allen, 1997; Shapard, 2012). Although they are usually presented in formats comprising a large amount of information, and much of the research on narrative transportation has employed long stories, there is an emerging stream of research calling for more investigation into the use of short stories (Thomas & Shapard, 2006). The relevance and potential effects of short stories on consumer behaviour is due to the fact that they have become more frequent with the increasing penetration and use of the internet. This has reduced the length of the stories that consumers share and to which they are exposed online on a daily basis (Goldhill, 2015). Therefore, this research considers online reviews as stories that are presented in a short format with the purpose of expanding our knowledge of their effects on consumer behaviour.

Previous communication studies have acknowledged the persuasive effects of stories on consumers’ behaviours. Braddock and Dillard (2016) and Bilandzic (2013), for instance, have shown that narratives can influence consumers’ opinions in the same direction such that their beliefs, attitudes and intentions become more similar to the presented stories because readers can engage with these stories and vicariously experience the characters’ feelings described in
them. In the marketing literature, Hamby et al. (2015) is one of the few and first studies that have explored online reviews as stories. They found that reviews in story formats were more persuasive for consumers such that they lead to higher levels of intention to try the reviewed product as they elicit higher transportation levels into them and higher levels of reflection on the message. The findings of these studies suggest that online reviews as stories can be persuasive mechanisms affecting transgressed consumers’ behaviours. Therefore, they would influence the intensity of their readers’ n-wom whose immersion in these stories would be demonstrated in their own written reviews after a service failure.

2.5 THE IMPACT OF ONLINE REVIEWS EXPOSURE ON INTENSITY OF N-WOM

There has been very limited marketing research on the effects of previous online reviews on subsequent reviewers’ posting behaviour. In general, the literature on online reviews reveals that prior research has mainly focused on measuring the effects of reviews on other consumers’ behaviour, using quantitative metrics such as consumer ratings, volume or dispersion (Dellarocas & Narayan, 2006). For example, in one of the first studies exploring the influence of previous reviews on reviewers’ subsequent behaviour, Schlosser (2005) demonstrated that posted negative reviews positively affect more reviewers’ product ratings than do the ratings of consumers who do not want to communicate their opinion in public even when their product experiences were positive. More recently, only a few studies have investigated the effect of the content of previously posted reviews on subsequent reviewers’ writings (Aerts et al., 2017; Hamilton, Schlosser, & Chen, 2017; Kronrod & Danziger, 2013; Wu et al., 2016). In order to determine whether the different linguistic patterns of online reviews content can influence subsequent consumer behaviour, Kronrod and Danziger (2013) and Aerts et al. (2017) examined the impact of previous online reviews’ language type on the language style that
consumers adopt when writing their reviews. The researchers concluded that when reviewers use more concrete (abstract) language, readers also adopt more concrete (abstract) language. Wu et al. (2016) also affirmed that, in a positive service context, powerful (powerless) consumers who read online reviews tend to write reviews that are incongruent (congruent) with a forum consensus. In a recent study, Hamilton et al. (2017) found that how and what consumers write in their responses to a question posted on online discussion forums affect subsequent consumer responses. From these studies, it can be concluded that the textual content of previous reviews may have an important impact on the writings of subsequent reviewers. Moreover, it can be noticed that although prior studies have attempted to investigate the phenomenon of consumers’ online reviews, they have not yet proposed models that consider the fact that this behaviour is not always desired by consumers and may be a consequence of experiencing a negative service encounter. In such cases, this type of behaviour may uncover several initial negative emotions and affective states experienced by the reviewer in response to the negative service incident that may be present when writing their own reviews. This study, therefore, is different from previous studies as it investigates the effects of previous online reviews on subsequent reviewers’ writings in a negative service context. It assumes that these reviewers have encountered a negative service experience and, therefore, they present an initial emotional state prior to embarking on their review writing journey. Subsequently, this would influence the manner in which they express their dissatisfaction through their online reviews. This research, moreover, applied the narrative transportation theory, suggesting that this initial negative affective state influences the extent to which consumers are transported into the online reviews, which subsequently influences the writing of their own reviews.

Traditional services marketing literature has acknowledged that the two most common reactions that consumers may have after experiencing a negative service incident are the tendency to spread n-wom and switch to another service provider (Blodgett, Granbois, &
Walters, 1993; Ferguson & Johnston, 2011; Hoffman, Bateson, Elliott, & Birch, 2010; Richins, 1983; Singh, 1990). In particular, n-wom involves all types of negative valence communication of consumers’ assessments of product and service consumption (Wetzer, Zeelenberg, & Pieters, 2007). In this research, this assessment is represented by the negative feedback that consumers leave online in the form of reviews after experiencing service transgressions. Since negative reviews can have detrimental effects on other consumers’ attitudes (Duhacheck, Zhang, & Krishnan, 2007; Schlosser, 2005) and purchase intentions (Park & Lee, 2009; Sparks & Browning, 2011; Xia & Bechwati, 2008), an investigation of the contextual factors and underlying mechanisms influencing the intensity of the negativity presented in this type of review may be crucial for both consumers and service managers. This research proposes that one of the factors influencing the level of intensity of n-wom could be the reviews written by previous customers.

As suggested previously, the overarching theory guiding this research is the narrative transportation theory (Green & Brock, 2000). This theory postulates that narratives have a strong persuasive power over individuals who are fully immersed when reading them (van Laer, de Ruyter, Visconti, & Wetzels, 2014). For individuals to be immersed in narratives, they first need to process them, that is, interpret them based on their prior knowledge, attention, personality, and demographic characteristics (Fishbein & Yzer, 2003). This narrative reasoning process involves retrieving information readily available from the narratives and creating self-constructed mental stories of the presented narratives to produce a psychological connection with the narratives (Escalas, 2004a; Feagin, 2007; van Laer et al., 2014). Second, individuals then become transported into the narratives through empathy (Slater & Rouner, 2002) and mental imagery (Green & Brock, 2002). In other words, this connection can be established if individuals can associate themselves with the narratives, that is, relate the essential elements of the narratives to their own experiences stored in memory, and to imagine the story plots in a
vivid way. The stronger the connection, the more ‘transported’ the individuals will be, and thus the persuasive impact of narratives on individuals is likely to be long lasting (van Laer et al., 2014).

Prior research examining the persuasive effect of narratives has examined various types of narrative excerpts from books (Green & Brock, 2000; Wang & Calder, 2006), blogs (van Laer & de Ruyter, 2010), TV commercials (Park & Lee, 2014), and pictorial advertisements (Phillips & McQuarrie, 2010). In this research, the narratives are online reviews which convey reviewers’ personal stories about their consumption experiences (Jurafsky et al., 2014; Moore, 2012) which may be highly influential for consumers who read them as they can be better processed than other communication formats (Gerrig, 1993). This research proposes that when consumers read these stories on review sites, they pay particular attention to them and become engaged in the situations described in these stories, are engrossed by them, and then interpret the meaning of such stories as they relate to themselves, as they truly believe what is being described in the narratives. As a result, they will eventually be influenced by these stories through empathy with the reviewers and by imagining the situations as reflected in potential behaviour changes (Appel, Gnambs, Richter, & Green, 2015; Green & Brock, 2000). As transgressed consumers read these stories, they interpret what others have experienced through the process of narrative reasoning (van Laer et al., 2014). That is, since these narratives can exert persuasive effects on readers, they can influence their opinions so that their beliefs, attitudes and intentions become more similar to the presented stories (Braddock & Dillard, 2016).

In this study, reviewers encounter negative experiences and then are exposed to previous online reviews prior to writing their own review. The negative feelings that are elicited are such that the reviewers pay particular attention to and process all the details of the incoming information (Mattila, 2000; Schwarz, 2000). Narrative transportation theory moreover suggests
that there are several personal characteristics and situational factors that may affect the extent to which consumers are transported into the narratives (Green & Brock, 2000). Drawing upon the discussion of the narrative reasoning process, as reviewers read these earlier reviews posted online and try to establish a connection with other consumers’ stories, they engage in a self-referencing process which is when they process incoming information by relating it to their previous experiences (Beynkrant & Unnava, 1995). Here, they compare the experiences of others with what they have themselves experienced, and these stories may or may not differ from their experienced negative service situation. As the self-referencing process influences persuasion, this study proposes that when transgressed consumers’ personal experiences match the experiences presented in the reviews, they will experience high self-referencing and become more immersed (i.e. transported) in the stories, and therefore will be more likely to be influenced by these stories (Green, 2004) when writing their own reviews. However, when their personal experience does not match the experiences shared in prior reviews, they will experience low self-referencing and become less connected with the stories and less likely to be influenced by them. On the other hand, if they are not exposed to any online reviews, they are not able to make any comparison and therefore may rely on their own actual experience when writing their reviews. In other words, if transgressed consumers are exposed to online reviews, they can utilize these stories as their anchor to influence their subsequent behaviour (Furnham & Boo, 2011); however, they have no such anchor if they are not exposed to any online reviews at all. It is therefore predicted that:

Hypothesis 1: Transgressed consumers who are exposed to online reviews will show significantly different levels of intensity of n-wom compared to those not exposed to any online reviews.
Taking into account the valence of online reviews, which in this research is measured by their level of negativity, this study aims to examine the impact of review valence on how transgressed consumers write their reviews after experiencing a service failure, that is, the intensity of their n-wom. As previously suggested, and following the discussion about narrative reasoning and narrative transportation, when transgressed consumers visit review sites to share their negative service experiences by posting a review, they are also exposed to previous consumers’ reviews. As they read these reviews and try to understand the meaning of these stories, they compare what they have experienced with the experiences of others. In doing so, they may perceive the emotions that previous consumers have tried to convey in their reviews after evaluating the service that they have experienced (Bagozzi, Gopinath, & Nyer, 1999). Recognising that online reviews are stories about consumers’ purchase experiences, it is reasonable to assume that they include emotional content which is reflected through the reviewers’ thoughts, motivations and feelings described in the narratives (Bilandzic, 2013). Readers may perceive this emotional content and expressions through the review valence (Kim & Gupta, 2012) and, therefore, it can be assumed that reviewers may assess their consumption stories as positive or negative. Hence, this study brings to light the capability of the online review valence to arouse the writer’s emotions and the extent to which such emotions are transferrable to the reader. This reasoning is supported by emotional contagion theory (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1994) which asserts that individuals are able to ‘catch’ other people’s emotions in several ways. From a sender-receiver point of view, emotional contagion has been defined as a process in which recipients of a message can catch the same feelings as the ones communicated by the sender (Howard & Gengler, 2001). Although an extensive line of research has demonstrated the existence of emotional contagion between the senders and receivers of messages in physical service settings (e.g., (Barger & Gradey, 2006; Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler, 2004; Pugh, 2001)), the influence of emotions on consumer behaviour has received scant attention in the
online review literature (Kim & Gupta, 2012). One reason for the limited work on emotions in online environments could be that it is often assumed that face-to-face communication may express more emotional content than online communication. Contemporary Wom research, however, has shown that electronic communication is just as emotionally engaging as personal communication and, moreover, may contain more intense feelings and negative emotional expressions than verbal communication due to online writers’ anonymity and reduced physical visibility (Derks, Fischer, & Bos, 2008).

Based on the previous reasoning, this research further asserts that when transgressed consumers visit an online review site and read other consumers’ service experiences described in previous online reviews, an emotional contagion process occurs from senders to reviewers. That is, the emotions expressed in the form of review valence could also be transmitted to reviewers who read them during this comparison process, and will influence their subsequent behaviours (Howard & Gengler, 2001). Negative valence reviews generally describe unpleasant experiences, while positive valence reviews communicate pleasant experiences (Anderson, 1998). This suggests that negative valence reviews convey negative emotions, while positive valence reviews express positive emotions. Since reviewers embark on the review writing journey after experiencing negative incidents, their initial emotions are assumed to be negative. The emotions transmitted by the reading of previous online reviews can alter their emotional state, and this will influence how they actually write their reviews. Specifically, when reading negative online reviews, reviewers would feel a high degree of familiarity with other consumers’ stories as they also have encountered negative experiences. When transgressed consumers feel a stronger connection with the stories as well as the negative emotions expressed in these reviews, their initial negative emotions triggered by the experienced service incidents may be intensified. On the other hand, if they read positive online reviews, they would feel a low degree of familiarity as their experience does not match what others have experienced. The
weaker connection with these stories, along with the contrasting emotions reflected in these positive reviews, may attenuate their initial negative emotions following the experienced incidents. Hence, it is reasonable to assert that transgressed consumers reading negative reviews will be more likely to write reviews with higher intensity of n-wom compared to those reading positive reviews. When transgressed consumers are not exposed to any prior reviews before writing their own review, they do not have an anchor or reference point (Furnham & Boo, 2011). In this case, they are not able to make any comparisons; hence, they have to rely solely on their own experience when writing their own reviews. Therefore, this research proposes that consumers affected by negative service incidents who are exposed to negative online reviews will communicate higher negativity when writing their own reviews of their service encounters compared to those exposed to positive reviews or to those not exposed to any reviews at all. Hence, it is hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 2: Transgressed consumers will show significantly higher intensity of n-wom when they are exposed to negative reviews rather than positive reviews or no reviews.

2.6 PERCEIVED TRANSPORTATION AS THE UNDERLYING MECHANISM DETERMINING THE INTENSITY OF N-WOM

As discussed earlier, the narrative transportation process is facilitated by consumers’ attention, mental imagery and emotions (Green & Brock, 2000). When reviewers read and are engrossed in negative reviews, they can relate to other consumers’ experiences because they have had similar negative experiences. When individuals have themselves experienced negative incidents, they are better able to imagine the story plots described in the posted reviews more vividly. On the other hand, if they read positive online reviews that appear to contradict what they have experienced, this may prevent their engagement with these reviews. This
disengagement may reduce their ability to imagine the story plots in a vivid way. All these mental processes and capacities that reviewers exercise to allow them to be absorbed (or not absorbed) into the narrative flow of the online reviews as it unfolds is called ‘perceived transportation’ (Wang & Calder, 2006). One of the consequences of narrative transportation is that when readers are immersed in the stories, they truly believe and accept what is being described. This is supported by the notion that, although readers of the narratives may think that the stories are not real, they can still experience strong emotions when reading them (Gerrig, 1993). The positive and negative emotions expressed in the posted reviews have a strong influence on reviewers’ writing behaviours as they are posited to influence reviewers’ perceived transportation level (van Laer et al., 2014). More specifically, those reading negative valence reviews may develop greater empathy towards other consumers’ experiences as they may be better able to identify themselves with the latter, and are more likely to be immersed in the narratives, compared to those reading positive valence reviews. That is, reviewers may feel a high degree of familiarity when reading negative valence reviews as they also have experienced negative service incidents and, consequently, they may experience a high level of transportation into the review’s narrative. This transportation process results in less critical evaluation of the reviews’ arguments and stronger affective responses (Escalas, 2004a). This may strengthen the persuasive effects of previous online reviews and consumers’ perceived transportation levels, which in turn would increase the intensity level of the n-wom demonstrated in their reviews. On the other hand, if reviewers read positive reviews, they would feel a low degree of familiarity with them and, consequently, they may experience a low level of transportation into them, which in turn would decrease the intensity level of the n-wom demonstrated in their reviews. Hence, this research argues that compared to transgressed consumers exposed to positive online reviews, those exposed to negative online reviews will
experience a higher degree of perceived transportation and will therefore demonstrate a higher intensity of n-wom. Therefore, it is predicted that:

Hypothesis 3: Perceived transportation mediates the relationship between consumers’ exposure to online reviews and the intensity of n-wom such that those exposed to negative reviews will show significantly higher transportation and intensity of n-wom levels than those exposed to positive reviews.

2.7 PRIOR EXPERIENCE IN WRITING REVIEWS AS A BOUNDARY CONDITION TO INTENSITY OF N-WOM

Since the persuasiveness of narratives in predicting individual behaviours depends on the level of individuals’ perceived transportation into the stories presented to them, which can be influenced by their personal characteristics (van Laer et al., 2014), this research proposes that one boundary variable that could potentially influence the perceived transportation level of reviewers towards the earlier posted online reviews is their prior experience in posting such reviews. Specifically, this study suggests that transgressed consumers’ prior experience in posting online reviews could affect the extent to which they are transported into the earlier posted reviews and, consequently, their own reviews’ negative intensity levels.

In this study, prior experience is defined as the consumer’s degree of proficiency in writing online reviews (Vermeulen & Seegers, 2009). Previous research has shown that prior experience in posting reviews is an important factor affecting consumers’ review posting behaviour such that highly experienced (experts) posters are less influenced by others than are the low experienced (novice) posters (Ma et al., 2013; Moe & Schweidel, 2012; Schlosser, 2005). One explanation could be that those consumers with high levels of experience in posting reviews have better knowledge of the online review platforms and thus have more confidence
in utilizing such platforms and in expressing their own opinions. This insight is supported by prior research showing that highly experienced online users tend to have less trust in information provided online (Aiken & Boush, 2006; Brown, Broderick, & Lee, 2007; Cheema & Papatla, 2010; Zhu & Zhang, 2010) and a previous study in the hospitality industry also revealed that more experienced reviewers are less influenced by online reviews as their expertise allow them to easily detect fake online reviews (Filieri, 2016). Consequently, this research suggests that novice posters pay more attention to, and therefore are more immersed in, previous online reviews than are the expert posters. Hence, their perceived transportation level will be higher and will have a stronger influence on the intensity of their n-wom. Hence, this research proposes that prior experience in posting online reviews moderates the mediating effect of perceived transportation on the relationship between exposure to online reviews and the intensity of n-wom. Hence, the following is posited:

Hypothesis 4: The indirect effect of exposure to online reviews on intensity of n-wom through perceived transportation is moderated by prior experience in posting reviews such that its effect is stronger for novice (vs. experts) reviewers.

Four studies were conducted to test the proposed hypotheses which are illustrated in the conceptual framework presented in Figure 2.1. In the pilot study presented in Chapter Three, the prediction of whether transgressed consumers’ exposure to online reviews influences the intensity of their n-wom was tested using the recall technique and an experimental research approach (Hypothesis 1). Study 1, which is also discussed in Chapter Three, extends the pilot study in that it explores the different types of online reviews that may affect transgressed consumers’ intensity of n-wom using a scenario-based experiment. More specifically, in study 1 the types of reviews were manipulated by varying their valence in that positive vs. negative
vs. no reviews were presented to participants (Hypothesis 2). Study 2, which investigates the mediating role of perceived transportation as the underlying mechanism explaining the effect of online review exposure on transgressed consumers’ intensity of n-wom, is discussed in Chapter Four (Hypothesis 3). Study 3 explores the boundary condition of consumers’ prior experience in posting reviews as a moderator in this relationship and is presented in Chapter Five (Hypothesis 4).

![Figure 2.1 Conceptual framework](image)
CHAPTER 3: THE EFFECTS OF ONLINE REVIEWS ON INTENSITY OF N-WOM AFTER SERVICE FAILURE

3.1 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

As explained in the previous chapters, this research investigates the factors affecting online reviews’ negativity levels that consumers intend to convey when writing and posting online reviews in response to an experience of service failure. This chapter describes two experiments that were conducted in order to examine the effects of exposing (vs. not exposing) consumers to previous online reviews on the intensity level of their n-wom in the context of service failure which is conveyed through their review writings. The first experiment (Pilot Study) was intended to determine whether exposing vs. not exposing consumers to previously posted online reviews will have an impact on the levels of intensity of their n-wom after experiencing a negative service incident. The second experimental study (Study 1) was intended to replicate the Pilot Study findings taking into account the valence of the presented online reviews. Results of these experiments consistently found support for the hypotheses that exposing transgressed consumers to online reviews significantly influenced the intensity of their n-wom such that those consumers exposed to negative reviews showed a higher level of intensity of n-wom compared to those exposed to positive reviews or no reviews. The studies were conducted in two different contexts with the purpose of strengthening the internal and external validity of this research.
3.2 RESEARCH METHOD

3.2.1 RESEARCH METHOD FOR EXPERIMENTS

With the purpose of investigating the hypotheses proposed in Chapter Two, a causal research approach was adopted (Aaker, Kumar, Leone, & Day, 2016) to assess the causal effect of consumers’ exposure to online reviews on their intensity of n-wom levels demonstrated in their written online reviews after experiencing a negative service incident.

Sani and Todman (2006) stated that experimental designs assist researchers to test their hypotheses about causal relationships between variables, in other words, to examine how changes in one variable X will produce changes in another variable Y. In particular, experiments are a means by which researchers can establish the causal link between variables, because they are uniquely created for a specific study and allow a variable to be artificially manipulated and the systematic changes in another variable to be observed.

The four experimental studies conducted in this thesis are web-based. This type of experiment offers several advantages: the researcher can recruit participants from a larger population with a variety of backgrounds and demographic characteristics that are more representative of the global population than samples of students from a particular university, thereby increasing the external validity of the study (Birbaum, 2000).

Each of the studies conducted in this thesis also follows the recent development in social science research that suggests the recommendation that any experimental study should include at least 20 samples per manipulated condition as samples smaller than 20 cases are not powerful enough to determine any proposed effect (Sani & Todman, 2006; Simmons, Nelson, & Simonsohn, 2011).

For this research, the popular crowdsourcing web service, Amazon Mechanical Turk (M-turk), was used to recruit participants (Paolacci, Chandler, & Ipeirotis, 2010). This is a
crowdsourcing service through which requesters post a human intelligence task (HITs) that workers (or turkers) can undertake in return for money which is deposited in their bank account. The majority of the population recruited by M-turk is from the US as participants are required to have possess a bank account in the US (Paolacci et al., 2010). One of the advantage of using this platform is that the participants recruited by this type of service are more representative of the real population than are the traditional student pools recruited by the universities (Paolacci et al., 2010). Another advantage is that the recruitment process is fast (Paolacci et al., 2010). Several studies have also acknowledged that M-turk reduces threats to the internal validity of the experiments as participants do not interact with the experimenter, and some of them, do not even notice that they are participating in an experiment (Horton, Rand, & Zeckhauser, 2011; Paolacci et al., 2010).

3.2.2 Research Method for Measuring Intensity of N-WOM

To measure the effects of exposing reviews on transgressed consumers’ intensity of n-wom in the experiments presented in the current study, this research employed a “consensual assessment technique” (Amabile, 1983) which is a popular approach that has been used mainly in studies assessing creativity (Hennessey, 1994; Kaufman, Baer, Cole, & Sexton, 2008) and involves the assessment of experts regarding a specific task. Some of the criteria that these experts or judges should meet are first, that they should be familiarised with the task that participants have performed. For instance, in a study conducted by Kaufman et al. (2008), participants were asked to write a poem about a specific topic and then these poems were assessed in terms of creativity by poets with several years of experience. Second, the raters should make their assessment independently; that is, raters should work separately from one another. Third, raters’ assessments must be reliable; that is, their levels of interrater reliability should be acceptable (Hennessey, 1994). This technique has been used to assess several writing
tasks provided by participants such as poems and stories (Kaufman, Baer, & Gentile, 2004; Kaufman, Gentile, & Baer, 2003).

The four experiments conducted in this research used the abovementioned methods.

### 3.3 Experimental Pilot Study

With the purpose of investigating whether consumers’ exposure to reviews affects the intensity levels of their n-wom when writing their reviews about the experienced negative service incidents, the manipulation used in the pilot study was that consumers were exposed to online reviews vs. none. In other words, this study is an exploratory study that seeks to understand the phenomenon of exposing prior online reviews to transgressed consumers on the intensity of their n-wom. Thus, the experimental pilot study investigated whether exposing vs. not exposing consumers to online reviews previously posted by other customers would influence the levels of intensity of their n-wom after experiencing a negative service incident.

#### 3.3.1 Participants, Design and Procedure

In order to test hypothesis 1 and investigate the impact of transgressed consumers’ exposure to online reviews on intensity of n-wom, a quasi-experiment in the fast food service industry was conducted. A sample of 110 US-based adult participants from Amazon Mechanical M-Turk was recruited. As this study contains two manipulated experimental conditions, this sample size allows us to collect the minimum of 20 participants per experimental condition which is one of the recommendations suggested by recent social science research (Sani & Todman, 2006; Simmons et al., 2011). Only those who had ordered pizza for home delivery and had had a negative experience within two weeks prior to the study invitation were eligible to complete the questionnaire. Six cases were discarded as participants did not follow the instructions of the study as suggested by Oppenheimer, Meyvis, and Davidenko (2009), leaving a total of 104
cases for analysis ($M_{age} = 37.3$, $SD = 11.4$; 54.8% male). The majority of the participants were Caucasian (64%). Participants were paid US$1 for their participation.

After asking participants to recall a negative service incident with a pizza delivery service employing the recall technique followed by Zeelenberg and Pieters (2004) and to write their negative service incidents, they indicated their perceived severity of the experienced negative service incident and were randomly allocated to one of the two conditions. In the condition where they were not exposed to online reviews, they were immediately asked to write a review that they would eventually post on a review website. In the condition where they were exposed to online reviews, prior to asking them to write a review, they were presented with three online reviews (see Appendix 2) adapted from a real restaurant review website. The selected online reviews depicted issues most commonly experienced by consumers in this context and were derived from our content analysis of review websites. A pre-test utilizing 35 participants recruited from Amazon M-Turk ($M_{age} = 38.4$, $SD = 11.1$; 57.1% male) was conducted to ensure that the presented reviews were perceived as being not significantly different in their levels of negativity. Participants rated each review using three items adapted from Floh et al. (2013), Goyette, Ricard, Bergeron, and Marticotte (2010), and Heitmann, Lehmann, and Herrmann (2007): “I think that what the reviewer wrote was…,” “When the reviewer wrote the review, he/she tended to write things that were…,” “In this post, the reviewer mostly said things that were…” (1=extremely positive, 7=extremely negative; $\alpha_{Review#1} = .91$, $M_{Review#1} = 5.17$, $SD_{Review#1} = .93$; $\alpha_{Review#2} = .91$, $M_{Review#2} = 5.01$, $SD_{Review#2} = .73$; $\alpha_{Review#3} = .97$, $M_{Review#3} = 4.82$, $SD_{Review#3} = 1.12$).

One-way repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed that participants perceived the reviews as being not significantly different in their levels of negativity (Wilk’s Lambda = .89, $F(2,33) = 2.09$, $p = .14$). Follow-up comparisons also indicated that each pairwise difference was not statistically significant in terms of negativity levels ($p > .05$). After
concluding the writing task requiring them to write a review about the recalled negative service experience with a pizza shop, participants completed a set of demographic questions.

### 3.3.2 Measures

The dependent variable -intensity of n-wom- was measured by analyzing participants’ written reviews about their recalled negative service incidents with a pizza shop using the consensual assessment technique (Amabile, 1983). To reduce subjective bias of the researcher, three linguistics experts who were unaware of the aim of this study were asked to rate these reviews following Tausczik and Pennebaker’s (2009) recommendations. Using a 7-point rating scale, they indicated the valence of the reviews using the same three items as those for the pre-test ($\alpha = .89, M = 4.90, SD = 1.35$).

To determine whether the three experts were consistent in their assessment of participants’ written reviews, the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) was calculated using a two-way mixed effects ANOVA. Result revealed an ICC(3,3) of .96 ($p<.001$) which indicated optimal intraclass correlation and agreement among these three raters (LeBreton & Senter, 2007) since this is above the acceptable level of reliability for psychological measures (Nunnally, 1978). Then, following Ramani and Kumar (2008), the average of the responses was calculated to achieve a composite measure of intensity of n-wom. That is, we computed the average of scale items obtained from the three linguistics experts for each review and used this index to represent the construct of intensity of n-wom in this study.

Perceived severity of the negative service incident was included as a covariate in this study as prior research shows that it influences transgressed consumers’ reactions such as word-of-mouth behaviour (Swanson & Hsu, 2010; Weun, Beatty, & Jones, 2004). Consumers’ perceived severity of the negative incident was measured using three items adapted from Hess Jr, Ganesan, and Klein (2003). Using 7-point bipolar scales, participants were asked to rate their
perceived severity according to three dimensions: mild-severe, minor-major, and insignificant-significant ($\alpha = .95, M = 4.93, SD = 1.42$).

### 3.3.3 Results

The result of a one-way ANCOVA indicated that participants’ exposure to online reviews has a significant effect on the intensity of n-wom, controlling for their perceived severity of the negative service incident ($F (1,101) = 18.52, p < .001$). In particular, consumers who were exposed to online reviews showed significantly higher intensity of n-wom ($M_{\text{reviews}} = 5.42, SD = 1.14$) than those not exposed to online reviews ($M_{\text{no reviews}} = 4.40, SD = 1.36$). These results are illustrated in Figure 3.1.

Results of a follow-up contrast test also revealed that when consumers were exposed to online reviews, they show significantly higher intensity of n-wom than those who were not exposed to any reviews ($F(1,102) = 17.56, p = .000$). In particular, those who were exposed to online reviews wrote a more negative review compared to those who were not exposed to any review, thereby confirming Hypothesis 1.

This pilot study provided initial support for the prediction of this study by showing that consumer exposure to online reviews indeed influences the intensity of their n-wom as indicated by their written reviews. More specifically, transgressed consumers exposed to online reviews demonstrated a significantly higher level of intensity of n-wom than those consumers not exposed to any reviews at all. One of the reasons for this result might be that the presented online reviews were perceived as more negative reviews. Note that the mean value of each review is around 5 indicating that, even with one positive and one negative comment, participants still perceive each review as a more negative review. This may be due to negativity bias which asserts that negative information is perceived to be more influential and distinct than
positive information, and hence would be better restored (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001; Ofir & Simonson, 2001).

The following study built on this rationale by exploring the effect on the intensity of n-wom of exposing different valences of online reviews (Study 1). In addition, to improve the generalizability of the findings of the Pilot Study, the remaining hypotheses were tested in a different service context: a hotel.

Figure 3.1- Pilot Study: The impact of online reviews exposure on intensity of n-wom
3.4 EXPERIMENTAL STUDY 1

Study 1 is built on the Pilot Study and has two foci: exploring the consumers’ exposure (vs. non-exposure) to online reviews prior to writing their own reviews, and investigating the effect of online review valence (positive vs. negative) on consumers’ intensity of n-wom. As mentioned previously, Study 1 involves service transgressions in the hospitality industry. One of the main reasons for changing the service context in Study 1 compared to the Pilot Study was to increase the conceptual replicability or robustness of the findings of the Pilot Study and to enhance their external validity or generalizability across population group samples (Lynch Jr., 1982; Sani & Todman, 2006).

3.4.1 PARTICIPANTS, DESIGN AND PROCEDURE

To test Hypothesis 2, a scenario-based experiment was conducted. A sample of 131 US-based adult participants was recruited from Amazon M-turk. Study 1 includes three manipulated experimental conditions, and, as such, this sample size allows to collect a minimum of 20 participants per experimental condition as suggested by Sani and Todman (2006) and Simmons et al. (2011). Four cases were discarded as participants failed the attention check questions, leaving a total of 127 cases for analysis ($M_{age}=36.3$, $SD=11.5$; 59.1% male). Around 83% of the participants reported an education level of bachelor degree or above, and about 77% of the respondents were Caucasian. Participants were paid US$1 for their participation.

Participants were first asked to imagine that they had experienced the negative service incident as described in the scenario (see Appendix 3). The scenario depicts a service failure about cleanliness which was based on a critical review of several hotel review websites that showed that this issue was the most common one mentioned by reviewers. This scenario was pretested to determine its realism. 57 participants recruited from Amazon M-turk evaluated the realism of the scenario using four items adapted from Sparks and Browning (2011) and Sparks,
So, and Bradley (2016) and on a 7-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree):
“I could imagine myself experiencing a negative service situation like this when staying at a
hotel,” “I was able to adopt the role of someone who stayed at a hotel and experienced this
negative service situation,” “I think there are negative service situations at hotels like this one
in real life,” “I think the negative service situation at the hotel was realistic”. Results revealed
that participants perceived the scenario as very realistic (α=.88, M = 5.82, SD = 1.11).

After reading the scenario, participants were asked to evaluate the perceived severity of
the service failure described, which was used as a covariate answering the following question:
How would you rate the service incident you experienced at this hotel? Hence, three items were
adapted from Hess Jr et al. (2003) as in the pilot study (α=.97, M = 5.41, SD = 1.49). Participants
were then randomly allocated to one of the three conditions. In the condition where they were
not exposed to online reviews, they were directly asked to write a review that they would
eventually post on a review website. In the condition where they were exposed to online
reviews, prior to asking them to write a review, they were randomly allocated to either being
exposed to all four positive online reviews or all four negative online reviews of the hotel (see
Appendix 3). The online reviews to which participants were exposed were the most common
stories shared by consumers in the hotel review context and were derived from a content
analysis of a prominent hotel review website.

A pre-test utilizing 50 participants recruited from Amazon M-Turk (M_{age} = 38, SD =
11.59; 42% male) was conducted to ensure that the presented positive (negative) reviews were
perceived as being not significantly different in their levels of positivity (negativity). Each
review was rated using one item adapted from Floh et al. (2013) asking whether participants
perceived the review as having a negative or a positive valence (1= negative; 4=neutral; 7=positive).
Findings revealed that no significant differences were found across all positive
reviews and negative reviews in relation to their positivity (M_{valence} = 5.93, F (3, 196) = .69, p =
Chapter 3 – The effects of online reviews on intensity of n-wom after service failure

.56) or negativity ($M_{valence} = 1.68, F (3, 196) = .74, p = .53$). After the writing task, participants completed manipulation check items and answered several demographic questions.

3.4.2 MEASURES

As in the pilot study, the dependent variable was the intensity of consumer n-wom, also measured by three linguistics experts’ assessments of the reviews written by respondents using the same three items. These experts read the participants’ reviews and rated their answers on a 7-point rating scale anchored at 1 = extremely positive and 7 = extremely negative ($\alpha = .81, M = 5.30, SD = .74$). The ICC(3,3) of .81 ($p < .001$) result indicated that the optimal intraclass correlation and agreement among these three raters were achieved (LeBreton & Senter, 2007) since it was above the acceptable level of reliability (Nunnally, 1978). Then, the average of scale items obtained from the three linguistics experts for each review was calculated and this index was used to represent the construct of intensity of n-wom in this study.

The covariate was the perceived severity of the negative service incident and was measured by the same three items used in the pilot study ($\alpha = .97, M = 5.41, SD = 1.49$).

For the manipulation check, participants were asked to indicate the valence of all the presented reviews on one 7-point bipolar item (1 = Negative, 4 = Neutral, 7 = Positive) adapted from Floh et al. (2013). In particular, participants answered the question: “Keeping in mind the four previous reviews, you think that… The reviewers wrote…reviews”.

3.4.3 RESULTS

The analysis of the manipulation check of review valence demonstrated a significant difference between participants who were exposed to all positive vs. all negative reviews ($F(1,81) = 464.19, p < .001, \eta^2 = .85$). Specifically, participants in the positive review condition perceived that the presented reviews were more positive ($M_{valence} = 6.55, SD = .64$) in comparison with
the perceptions of participants in the negative review condition ($M_{valence} = 1.49, SD = 1.35$), confirming the manipulation check.

In order to examine the effect of online review exposure (positive vs. negative vs. no reviews) on intensity of n-wom, controlling for participants’ perceived failure severity of the negative service incident, a one-way ANCOVA test was conducted. As predicted and as indicated in Figure 3.2, ANCOVA showed a significant effect of online review exposure on intensity of n-wom ($F(2,123) = 13.06, p< .001$). The follow-up comparisons showed that participants who were exposed to all negative reviews reported a higher level of intensity of n-wom ($M_{negative} = 5.67, SD = .35$) than participants who were exposed to all positive reviews ($M_{positive} = 4.88, SD = .82$) and participants who were not shown any reviews at all ($M_{no review} = 5.32, SD = .74$). It is also intriguing to see that participants who were not exposed to any reviews at all actually reported a higher level of intensity of n-wom than those who were exposed to all positive reviews, indicating that positive reviews can reduce the motivation to vent n-wom. The exclusion of the covariate from the analysis did not change the patterns of significant results. Hypothesis 2 was thus confirmed.
The results of the two experiments presented in this chapter consistently found support for the hypotheses that exposing transgressed consumers to online reviews significantly influences the intensity of their n-wom levels such that those consumers exposed to negative reviews showed a higher level of intensity of n-wom compared to those exposed to positive reviews or no reviews.
CHAPTER 4: PERCEIVED TRANSPORTATION AS THE UNDERLYING MECHANISM

4.1 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Findings from the two experimental studies described in the previous chapter consistently show that exposing consumers to previously posted online reviews significantly influences the intensity levels of their n-wom as demonstrated in their written posts. Consequently, this chapter presents a third experimental study (Study 2) and its findings regarding the underlying mechanism that explains the proposed relationship. Specifically, prior research suggests that a transformative process occurs when individuals are fully immersed in stories when reading them, and consequently their affective responses, intentions, and attitudes change to reflect that story (Green, 2008). Therefore, Study 2 proposes that the underlying explanatory mechanism of the relationship between consumers’ exposure to previous online reviews and the intensity of their n-wom is their perceived transportation levels into the presented stories. The findings of Study 2 support this argument since they indicate that those exposed to negative online reviews presented higher levels of perceived transportation into them and, consequently, their reviews show higher levels of intensity of n-wom compared to those reading positive reviews. These findings support those in previous literature on narrative transportation which suggest that, after reading narratives, consumers change as a result of their journey which alters their attitudes, beliefs, and affective responses (Ching et al., 2013; Escalas, 2007; Green & Brock, 2000; Wang & Calder, 2006).
4.2 EXPERIMENTAL STUDY 2

The results of the Pilot Study are consistent with the results of Study 1 in that those who were exposed to online reviews demonstrated significantly different levels of intensity of n-wom in comparison to those who were not exposed to any review at all. Study 1 further showed that the different valence of online reviews plays an important role in determining transgressed consumers’ levels of intensity of n-wom. Focusing on the impact of different valence of online reviews (positive vs. negative) on intensity of n-wom, Study 2 extended Study 1 by investigating the mediating role of perceived transportation as the underlying mechanism explaining this relationship. This is because reviews can be seen as stories that transgressed consumers may read about other consumers’ service experiences, and with which they may connect to different extents. Study 2 focuses on service failures in the hospitality industry as does Study 1, and involves the manipulation of the independent variable - exposure to online reviews (positive vs. negative reviews).

4.2.1 PARTICIPANTS, DESIGN, AND PROCEDURE

Employing the same scenario-based experiment as in Study 1, a sample of 110 US-based adult participants from Amazon Mechanical Turk was recruited. Study 2 comprises two manipulated experimental conditions and, therefore, this sample size allows to collect a minimum of 20 participants per experimental condition which is needed to test the proposed effects (Sani & Todman, 2006; Simmons et al., 2011). Seven cases were discarded as participants failed the attention check questions, leaving a total of 103 cases for analysis ($M_{age} = 35.7$, $SD = 10.4$; 42.7% male). Around 82% of the participants reported an education level of bachelor degree or above. Approximately 70% of the participants had an annual income before tax of less than $50,000, and about 75% of the respondents were Caucasian. Participants were paid US$1 for their participation.
Participants were first asked to imagine that they had experienced the negative service incident described in the scenario. They were then asked to evaluate the perceived severity of the service failure presented in the scenario, answering the same three items as those in Study 1. Before being asked them to write a review about the negative service encounter at the hotel, they were randomly allocated to one of the two conditions: either seeing all four positive online reviews or all four negative online reviews. All presented reviews were the same as for Study 1. After the writing task, they completed manipulation check items and answered several demographic questions.

4.2.2 Measures

Similar to Study 1, the dependent variable employed was consumer intensity of n-wom. Three linguistics experts assessed the participants’ written reviews using the same three items. These experts read the reviews provided by participants and rated their answers on a 7-point rating scale anchored at 1 = extremely positive and 7 = extremely negative (α = .83, M = 5.34, SD = .76). The result showed an ICC(3,3) of .82 (p<.001) indicating that the optimal intra-class correlation and agreement among these three raters were achieved (LeBreton & Senter, 2007). Then, the average of scale items obtained from the three linguistics experts for each review was calculated and this index was used to represent the construct of intensity of n-wom in this study.

The mediator variable -perceived transportation- was measured with five items using a 7-point rating scale (1 = not at all, 7 = very much) adapted from Appel et al. (2015). These items assessed the extent to which participants were able to easily imagine and be mentally involved in the service situations described in the reviews, as well as the extent to which the participants were emotionally affected by the service situations described in the reviews: “While I was reading the reviews, I could easily imagine the service situations being described”, “I could imagine myself in the service situations described in the reviews”, and “I was mentally
involved in the service situations described in the reviews while reading them”, “After reading the reviews, I wanted to know how the service situations described in the reviews ended”, “the service situations described in the reviews affected me emotionally” ($\alpha = .76, M = 4.98, SD = 1.10$).

The same covariate used in Study 1 was employed in this study. The perceived severity of the negative service incident presented in the scenario was measured by the same three items adapted from Hess Jr et al. (2003) as in study 1 ($\alpha = .97, M = 5.36, SD = 1.47$).

For the manipulation check, participants were asked to indicate the valence of all the presented reviews on one 7-point bipolar item ($1=$Negative, $4=$Neutral, $7=$Positive) adapted from Floh et al. (2013).

### 4.2.3 RESULTS

An analysis of the manipulation check demonstrated a significant difference between participants who were exposed to all positive reviews vs. all negative reviews ($F(1, 101) = 646.29, p < .001, \eta^2 = .86$). Specifically, participants in the positive review condition perceived than the presented reviews were more positive ($M_{\text{valence}} = 6.54, SD = .63$) in comparison to participants in the negative review condition ($M_{\text{valence}} = 1.52, SD = 1.28$). These results confirmed the manipulation check.

To test Hypothesis 3, a regression-based mediation analysis following Hayes’ PROCESS macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2013), Model 4, was performed. It specified exposure to online reviews ($0 =$ positive reviews and $1 =$ negative reviews) as the independent variable, perceived transportation as the mediator, and intensity of n-wom as the dependent variable. Perceived severity of the negative service incident was included as the covariate. Regression results are presented in Figure 4.1 below. The exclusion of the covariate from the analysis did not change the patterns of significant results.
In support of Hypothesis 3, the bootstrapping analysis \((n=5,000)\) confirmed the significant indirect effect of online review exposure on intensity of n-wom through perceived transportation \((b = .14, 95\% \text{ CI} [.039, .313])\) as zero falls outside of that interval (Hayes, 2015). A close look at the results revealed that participants who read all negative online reviews (vs. all positive online reviews) experienced a higher level of perceived transportation \((b = .81, t = 3.99, p < .001)\) which later led to significantly higher intensity of n-wom \((b = .18, t = 2.51, p < .05)\). These results confirm that the observed differences in transgressed consumers’ intensity of n-wom levels were mediated by the differences in the perceived transportation levels and, consequently, full mediation was found. The findings of Study 2 provide support for the prediction about the role of perceived transportation as the mechanism underlying the relationship between exposure to online reviews and transgressed consumers’ intensity of n-wom.
CHAPTER 5: THE BOUNDARY CONDITION OF PRIOR EXPERIENCE IN POSTING REVIEWS

5.1 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

The previous chapter suggests that perceived transportation is the underlying mechanism affecting the relationship between consumer exposure to online reviews and the intensity of n-wom demonstrated in their review writings. This chapter describes Study 3, conducted in order to establish the boundary condition determining how transgressed consumers’ prior experience in writing reviews may affect their levels of perceived transportation into the presented online reviews and, consequently, the intensity of their n-wom levels when writing their own reviews. In particular, as narrative transportation theory suggests that consumers’ personal characteristics can affect the levels of transportation when consumers read narratives, this research proposes that consumers’ prior experience in posting reviews would be the boundary condition influencing their perceived transportation levels and, consequently, the intensity of their n-wom.

5.2 EXPERIMENTAL STUDY 3

In order to test Hypothesis 4, this study employed the same scenario as Study 2. Specifically, Study 3 builds on and extends Study 2 by examining consumers’ prior experience in posting online reviews as the boundary condition for variations of their perceived transportation levels in predicting the intensity of their n-wom. In addition, Study 3 recognizes potential variations in the situations described in the presented online reviews. While the online reviews presented in Studies 1 and 2 were mostly unrelated to the cleanliness issue (low relevance to the negative service experience described in the scenario), in this study, it was added another level of
presented online reviews that include situations mostly related to cleanliness matter (high relevance to the negative service experience described in the scenario). It was not expected that the degree of relevance to the negative service experience would influence perceived transportation, although the situations described in both low and high relevance negative service experiences had one thing in common: unpleasantness. For the positive service experiences, high and low relevance conditions had one thing in common as well: pleasantness. Nevertheless, this new level of the presented online reviews was added to increase the robustness of the study. In study 3, exposure to online reviews (positive vs. negative), and relevance to the negative service incident (low vs. high) were manipulated. A self-reported measure of consumers’ experience in posting online reviews was used.

5.2.1 PARTICIPANTS, DESIGN AND PROCEDURE

Employing the same scenario-based experiment as in Study 2, a sample of 180 US-based adult participants from Amazon Mechanical M-Turk was recruited. Study 3 includes the manipulation of four experimental conditions and, therefore, this sample size allows to collect a minimum of 20 participants per manipulated condition which is suggested by the social science researchers Sani and Todman (2006) and Simmons et al. (2011). Six cases were discarded as participants failed the attention check questions, leaving a total of 174 cases for analysis ($M_{age} = 40.7$, $SD = 11.9$; 52.9% male). Around 83% of the participants reported an education level of bachelor degree or above. Approximately 62% of the participants had an annual income before tax of less than $50,000, and about 77% of the respondents were Caucasian. Participants were paid US$ 1 for their participation.

Participants were first asked to imagine that they had experienced a negative service incident as described in the same scenario with the hypothetical consumption situation as in Study 2. Then, participants completed a set of items measuring their perceived severity of the
negative service incident. Prior to asking them to write a review about the negative service encounter with the hotel, they were randomly allocated to one of the four conditions. All reviews were the same as those presented in Studies 1 and 2 except for the positive and negative reviews that describe situations highly relevant to the imagined negative service incident. In other words, two different sets of stimuli were prepared for this study. The first set included exactly the same reviews that were used in Study 2 in the positive and negative conditions describing service experiences with a hotel that did not involve cleanliness. In the other set, four positive and four negative reviews containing service experiences involving cleanliness which was the failure described in the scenarios that were presented (see Appendix 5). For these additional reviews, a pre-test utilizing 50 participants recruited from Amazon M-Turk was conducted ($M_{age} = 37.2$, $SD = 12.70$; 70% male). The pre-test was conducted to ensure that the presented highly relevant positive (negative) reviews were perceived as not being significantly different in their levels of positivity (negativity). Following Study 1, each review was rated using one item asking whether participants perceived that the review indicated a negative or a positive valence (1= negative; 4=neutral; 7=positive). Findings revealed that no significant differences were found across all highly relevant positive reviews and negative reviews in relation to their positivity ($M_{valence} = 5.81$, $F(3, 196) = .52$, $p = .98$, $\eta^2 = .01$) or negativity ($M_{valence} = 1.65$, $F(3, 196) = .31$, $p = .82$, $\eta^2 = .005$) respectively. After completing the writing task, participants answered the question related to their experience in posting online reviews, manipulation check items and several demographic questions (see Appendix 5).

5.2.2 MEASURES

Similar to Studies 1 and 2, the dependent variable employed was consumer intensity of n-wom, and was also measured through three linguistics experts’ assessment of the participants’ written reviews, using the same three items. These experts read the participants’ reviews and rated their
answers on a 7-point rating scale anchored at 1 = extremely positive and 7 = extremely negative ($\alpha = .81$, $M = 5.86$, $SD = .69$). The result was an ICC(3,3) of .81($p<.001$), indicating that the optimal intra-class correlation and agreement among these three raters were achieved (LeBreton & Senter, 2007). The average of scale items obtained from the three linguistics experts for each review was then calculated and this index was used to represent the construct of intensity of n-wom in this study.

The mediator variable -perceived transportation- was measured using the same five items as in Study 2 ($\alpha = .75$, $M = 5.07$, $SD = 1.04$). The same covariate was employed in this study. The perceived severity of the negative service incident was measured by the same three items as in Studies 2 and 3 ($\alpha=.97$, $M = 5.21$, $SD = 1.52$). To measure consumers’ prior experience in posting online reviews, participants were asked to rate their experience in writing online reviews using one 7-point rating item adapted from Wu, Shen, Fan, and Mattila (2017): “Prior to completing this survey, how would you rate your experience in writing online reviews?” (1 = no experience at all, 7 = Very experienced; $M = 3.90$, $SD = 1.65$).

For the manipulation check of online reviews’ valence, participants were asked to indicate the valence of all the presented reviews on one 7-point bipolar item (1=Negative, 4 = Neutral, 7=Positive) adapted from Floh et al. (2013). For manipulation check of relevance to the negative service incident described in the scenario, participants were asked to choose one of two options (the presented reviews were mostly related to cleanliness vs. issues other than cleanliness).

**5.2.3 Results**

Participants in the positive review condition perceived that the presented reviews were more positive ($M_{\text{valence}} = 6.30$, $SD = 1.05$) in comparison to participants in the negative review
condition \((M_{\text{valence}} = 1.28, SD = .61)\). This difference was significant \((F(1,172) = 1475.1, p < .001; \eta^2 = .89)\), confirming the manipulation check.

Participants in the high relevance condition were more likely to select that the presented reviews were mostly about cleanliness \((n = 88, 88.6\%)\) and those in the low relevance condition were more likely to select that the presented reviews were mostly about issues other than cleanliness \((n = 86, 93\%)\). The answer patterns differed between the two manipulations, \(\chi^2(1) = 116.151, p < .001\), confirming the manipulation check of relevance to the negative service incident described in the scenario.

A 2 (exposure to online reviews: positive vs. negative) x 2 (relevance to the negative service incident: low vs. high) ANCOVAs was conducted, controlling for the perceived severity of negative service incident. As expected, the two-way interaction effect was not significant: \(F(1, 169) = .364, p = .547\). The exclusion of the covariate from the analysis did not change the patterns of non-significant results. Hence, the data was merged for the purpose of testing Hypothesis 4.

Then, a regression-based moderated-mediation analysis (Preacher, Rucker, & Hayes, 2007) following Hayes’ PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013, Model 7) was performed. Exposure to online reviews \((0 = \text{positive reviews} \text{ and } 1 = \text{negative reviews})\) was specified as the independent variable, perceived transportation as the mediator, consumers’ prior experience in posting reviews as the moderator, and intensity of n-wom as the dependent variable. Perceived severity of the negative service incident was included as the covariate. Regression results are presented in Figure 5.1 below. The exclusion of covariates from the analysis did not change the patterns of significant results.

First, results suggest a significant positive effect of consumers’ exposure to online reviews on perceived transportation \((b = 1.56, 95\% \text{ CI } [1.839, 2.282])\). Second, a significant interaction between exposure to online reviews and prior experience in posting reviews on
perceived transportation was found ($b = -0.20$, 95% CI $[-0.370, -0.030]$). Third, controlling for exposure to online reviews condition, perceived transportation had a significant positive effect on intensity of n-wom ($b = 0.13$, 95% CI $[0.026, 0.230]$). Fourth, controlling for perceived transportation, the direct effect of consumers’ exposure to online reviews on intensity of n-wom was no longer significant ($b = 0.17$, 95% CI $[-0.035, 0.383]$). Next, the moderation of the indirect effect was examined. In support of Hypothesis 4, the findings also indicated a significant index of moderated mediation ($b = -0.03$, 95% CI $[-0.065, -0.003]$) (Hayes, 2015). In particular, to determine the conditions under which this moderated mediation effect exists, the bootstrapping analysis ($n = 5,000$) confirmed the existence of a significant conditional indirect effect of online review exposure on intensity of n-wom through perceived transportation for low level (1 STD below mean) of prior experience in posting reviews ($b = 0.14$, 95% CI $[0.040, 0.279]$) and high level (1 STD above mean) of prior experience in posting reviews ($b = 0.06$, 95% CI $[0.005, 0.173]$), with the effect being significantly stronger in the condition of low level of prior experience in posting reviews. These findings suggest that those consumers who are less experienced in posting online reviews are more likely to be persuaded by exposure to other online reviews, which later increases their intensity of n-wom when posting their own reviews. This suggests that exposure to negative reviews elicits higher levels of perceived transportation in consumers with low prior experience in posting reviews, which in turn increases the intensity of their n-wom in comparison with that of more experienced reviewers. These results provide support for Hypothesis 4.
Chapter 5 – The boundary condition of prior experience in posting reviews

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CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

The findings of our four experimental studies validate the main argument of this research that, following negative experiences, consumers who have been exposed to reviews posted previously show differences in the level of intensity of their n-wom conveyed in their own written reviews.

6.1.1 EXPOSING CONSUMERS TO ONLINE REVIEWS INFLUENCES THEIR INTENSITY OF N-WOM

Previous findings of the current marketing literature on online reviews suggest that several consumers’ behaviours are influenced by their reading of previously posted online reviews. The Pilot Study found evidence that transgressed consumers who are exposed to previously posted reviews showed a significantly higher intensity level of n-wom in comparison to those who were not exposed to any online reviews at all, thereby supporting Hypothesis 1. Further, Study 1 supported this finding by showing that the intensity level of n-wom was influenced by the review valence whereby exposure to negative valence reviews leads transgressed consumers to write more negative valence reviews compared to those who were exposed to positive valence reviews or not exposed to any reviews at all (Hypothesis 2 was supported). To a certain extent, this finding reaffirms an earlier study by Aerts et al. (2017) which found that people mimic other people’s language style when writing their own reviews. However, in this study, the emotional aspect of the written reviews was investigated as prior research on online wom shows that the emotional content and the arousal produced by these emotions influences the sharing of WOM information (Berger, 2011; Berger & Milkman, 2012). That is, Study 1 showed that consumers’ initial negative emotions following their experienced negative incidents can be
influenced by the (positive vs. negative) emotions expressed in earlier reviews, which in turn influences how they write their own reviews. In other words, the emotional aspect of their own reviews can be influenced by the different valences shown in the earlier reviews.

### 6.1.2 PERCEIVED TRANSPORTATION AS UNDERLYING MECHANISM

Narrative transportation theory has not yet been investigated in a service context. A thorough examination of the literature on narrative transportation reveals that this theory has been applied mainly in social psychology, communication and clinical studies, and has focused on exploring how variables such as consumers’ prior familiarity and identification with the story (Green, 2004; Tussyadiah et al., 2010) and message type (Appel & Richter, 2010; Dunlop, Wakefield, & Kashima, 2009; Oliver et al., 2012; van den Hende, Dahl, Schoormans, & Snelders, 2012; van Laer & de Ruyter, 2010) affect consumers’ transportation into stories and, consequently, their evaluations, responses, intentions, beliefs and attitudes.

In Study 2, the role of perceived transportation as the underlying mechanism in the abovementioned relationship was confirmed. More specifically, perceived transportation was found to mediate the relationship between exposure to online reviews and transgressed consumers’ intensity of n-wom (thereby supporting Hypothesis 3). Consumers who were exposed to negative (positive) valence reviews were more (less) transported into the presented online reviews which then led to higher (lower) level of intensity of n-wom. This finding extends our knowledge of narrative transportation theory by helping us to understand the underlying mechanism of perceived transportation into the previous reviews.

### 6.1.3 PRIOR EXPERIENCE IN WRITING REVIEWS AS BOUNDARY CONDITION

An examination of literature on narrative transportation showed that the transportation process is driven not only by the information that consumers read, but also by their personal
characteristics (van Laer et al., 2014). In other words, narrative transportation theory suggests that consumers’ personal characteristics and situational factors may affect the extent to which they are transported into the narratives (Green & Brock, 2000). Consequently, Study 3 focused on testing the role of transgressed consumers’ prior experience in posting reviews as the boundary condition. That is, study 3 was conducted to test whether prior experience in writing reviews would interact with exposure to online reviews, and how this interaction would then influence consumers’ perceived transportation levels.

The findings of Study 3 show that the abovementioned mediating relationship was indeed moderated by consumers’ prior experience in posting online reviews. More specifically, those who were exposed to negative online reviews and perceived themselves as less experienced in posting such reviews, displayed a higher level of perceived transportation which then led to a higher level of intensity of n-wom compared to those who were exposed to negative reviews and perceived themselves as being more experienced (i.e., Hypothesis 4 was supported). This finding suggests that novice posters are more influenced by the review valence presented in earlier posted reviews than are the experienced posters. This finding lends support to prior research which showed that novice posters tend to imitate others’ behaviour in the online forum, while active posters are more independent in terms of their postings (Moe & Schweidel, 2012).

Overall, this research demonstrates that the contextual factors that affect transgressed consumers’ review writing process are: their initial emotions when commencing their review writing journey, the review valence from the earlier reviews, and consumers’ prior experience in posting online reviews. That is, when transgressed consumers are exposed to negative (positive) valence online reviews, they write their own reviews with a higher (lower) intensity level of n-wom. Their level of immersion in these stories (i.e., perceived transportation) is the underlying mechanism that explains this relationship. This mediating effect depends on their
prior experience in posting reviews and the situational context in which they are involved, such that it is stronger for novice (vs. expert) reviewers.

6.2 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

This research contributes to the online wom literature in at least three ways. It also addresses recent calls for more research into the effects of narrative transportation on consumer behaviour (Phillips & McQuarrie, 2010; van Laer et al., 2014), and for more integrated consumer research on online reviews from the perspective of the reviewers (Ring et al., 2016). First, this research extends work on prior reviews’ effects on reviewers within the online wom literature as it provides new insights into the powerful impact of review valence as it affects not only the readers of reviews, but also the writers of reviews. Despite previous findings that one of the main motivations for consumers sharing of n-wom is to vent their negative feelings (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004), this research shows that consumers not only take into account their negative service experiences when writing their own online reviews, but also the valence of previously posted reviews. Specifically, this study demonstrates that reviewers’ initial emotional state prior to writing a review indeed influences the intensity level of the n-wom that they will express online. This occurs after exposure to positive and negative valence reviews, and when reviewers have experienced negative service incidents.

Second, the findings of this study shed light on how transgressed consumers are transported into the previously posted reviews through the narrative transportation process. In particular, the findings validate the role of perceived transportation as the mechanism underlying the relationship between consumers’ exposure to online reviews and the intensity of their n-wom. Previous studies on narrative transportation have investigated the effects of several narrative excerpts such as advertisements (Dunlop et al., 2009), blog posts (Tussyadiah et al., 2010; van Laer & de Ruyter, 2010), and news (Oliver et al., 2012) on consumers’
narrative transportation levels and subsequently on their evaluations, responses, intentions, beliefs and attitudes. However, this research shows the effect of online reviews as the narratives and findings demonstrate that prior online reviews are one of the important factors influencing the levels of negativity that consumers express in their written reviews after experiencing service failure episodes as a result of perceived transportation. In particular, results show that those consumers who are exposed to previous negative reviews are more likely to be transported into them than those exposed to positive reviews, which subsequently influence the intensity of their n-wom. These results may be explained by the self-referencing process (Burnkrant & Unnava, 1995) used by consumers when processing incoming information that is similar to their service experience which increases their level of perceived transportation.

Third, as mentioned earlier, results of this study extend our knowledge of narrative transportation theory in a new context by using online reviews as the narratives but, most importantly, this study examines one outcome of narrative transportation that has largely remained unexplored: the affective response. In particular, showing that emotions can influence the level of perceived transportation indicates the importance of examining the individual’s affective response in addition to the most commonly investigated cognitive responses of perceived transportation (Escalas, 2004b). Specifically, findings reveal transgressed consumers’ affective response by asking them to write reviews which are then assessed by linguistics experts using the consensual assessment technique (Amabile, 1983; Hennessey, 1994), which is probably a better proxy for measuring affective measures than, for instance, using computerized text analysis methods (Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2009). The latter do not allow the reader to identify linguistic expressions such as irony or sarcasm which are commonly used in online reviews, and they also ignore the context and idioms.

Finally, the findings of this research also reveal that expert reviewers are less susceptible to earlier reviews when writing their reviews due to their lower level of perceived transportation
towards these reviews. This provides an alternative explanation of why consumers often have more trust in expert rather than novice reviewers because the general belief is that the comments of expert reviewers are more reliable and trustworthy due to their greater product knowledge compared to novice reviewers (Zhang et al., 2016).

6.3 MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Online consumer reviews are an emergent phenomenon in today’s digitalized environment. Thus, understanding the impact that online reviews have on transgressed consumers’ review writings after being exposed to them is important for services managers.

First, this research provides insights to practitioners regarding the potential affective bias of reviews written and posted on online platforms, and implies that this effect depends on the levels of transgressed consumers’ transportation into the exposed online reviews. Understanding that after having negative experiences, reviewers are likely to write more (less) negative valence reviews when exposed to all negative (positive) valence reviews, online reviews should not be taken at face value by either consumers or service providers. Consumers should utilize online reviews as a precautionary measure to enhance their experiences. Similarly, firms should be cautious when perceiving online reviews as monitoring tools for the continuous improvement of service quality.

Second, firms may need to think of strategies to reduce the impact of the potential affective influence of online reviews. One possible solution may be to allow reviewers to write their reviews without showing the reviews posted previously, and clearly advising readers of this when their reviews are finally posted. However, if reading previous positive reviews mitigates the intensity of the transgressed consumers’ n-wom when writing their reviews through the narrative transportation process, hiding previous reviews could prevent services managers from having the opportunity to identify the type of posted online reviews that can
have greater impact on minimizing the intensity of the negativity that dissatisfied consumers communicate in their reviews, and to take actions such as modifying their website design.

Third, the findings of this research also demonstrate that those with greater prior experience in posting reviews tend to offer more independent reviews as they are less influenced by others’ experiences expressed in online reviews. Hence, service providers should be cautious regarding novice posters as they are more influenced by prior online reviews when writing their posts about their negative service episodes. Hence, firms should find a way to differentiate between novice and expert posters, and establish this categorization on their online review platforms. TripAdvisor, for example, promotes its TripCollective Reviewer Badges to better differentiate between regular contributors and new ones. In this way, service managers could detect whether the person who is going to write a review is an expert or novice poster and subsequently adjust their website to avoid the display of negative reviews.

Finally, findings also suggest that service providers should encourage transgressed consumers to provide online reviews and, when doing this, they could read positive reviews to minimise the impact of their experienced negative situation in their review writings’ n-wom.

### 6.4 Limitations and Further Research

As in any empirical studies, this research has limitations that should be considered. First, Studies 1, 2 and 3 employed scenario-based experiments using a negative service experience in a hotel as the context. While the story and presented reviews have been adapted from actual hotel review websites, the focus on one particular context may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research could replicate this study in different contexts.

Second, this study focuses on presenting only all positive and all negative reviews to transgressed consumers. Future study could consider investigating the effects of showing a combination of several positive and negative reviews in one set of stimuli. This is because prior
research indicates that presenting, for instance, a set of negative reviews with few positive reviews increases their perceived usefulness, and showing a positive review set with few negative reviews influences consumers’ attitudes in the same direction (Purnawirawan et al., 2015). Moreover, the number of positive and negative reviews and the order in which they are presented could be varied as prior research has shown that these factors influence whether readers perceive such reviews to be helpful (Purnawirawan et al., 2012a; Purnawirawan et al., 2012b). This could also show the reviews in a more realistic situation and allow us to understand whether the ratio between positive and negative reviews presented to consumers may influence other consumers’ negativity levels when writing their online reviews, as consumers may be more affected by the first and the last reviews to which they have been exposed.

Third, this study assumes that the presented reviews have not received any response from the service managers. In reality, firms increasingly respond to both positive and negative online reviews posted by their consumers. The involvement of the service manager, whether it be in the form of an apology for the negative service incidents, or an expression of appreciation for positive evaluations posted by the consumers, could be a moderating variable in our mediation relationship, as it has been demonstrated that the different strategies used for handling complaints (e.g., apology) can affect post-complaining behaviour in different ways (Davidow, 2003). In particular, the type of organisational responses to online n-wom, for instance, affects consumers’ evaluations of service by generating more positive attitudes than by not providing any response at all (Lee & Cranage, 2012). Sparks et al. (2016) also showed that consumers rated firms which provided responses to their consumers’ negative valence reviews as more trustworthy and more caring than those who did not respond at all. These findings imply that the way in which firms respond to reviews addressed to them may influence readers’ emotions as well as their ability to identify themselves with the earlier posted reviews.
Hence, future research could investigate whether, in this situation, readers’ level of perceived transportation may be influenced, which in turn determines the intensity of their n-wom.

Finally, further research might consider other types of experiments to further investigate the effects of transgressed consumers’ exposure to online reviews on the intensity of their n-wom in a real situation. Field studies, for instance, might allow consumers who have experienced a real service transgression to visit a real review site specifically designed for the study and write and post a review on it. These types of experiments allow participants to experience real situations which could be a better method of measuring the online review posting phenomenon.
REFERENCE LIST


Coppola, M. (2016). Online reviews can make or break a first impression. from https://repuvue.com/2016/10/online-reviews-make-break-first-impression/


APPENDIX 1: HUMAN ETHICS CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)
Research Office

Human Ethics Certificate of Approval

This is to certify that the project below was considered by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee. The Committee was satisfied that the proposal meets the requirements of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research and has granted approval.

Project Number: CF14/592 - 2014000223
Project Title: The Effects of Online Negative Word-of-Mouth in the Services Industry through Social Media
Chief Investigator: Dr Dewi Tojib
Approved: From: 3 March 2014 To: 3 March 2019

Terms of approval - Failure to comply with the terms below is in breach of your approval and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.
1. The Chief investigator is responsible for ensuring that permission letters are obtained, if relevant, before any data collection can occur at the specified organisation.
2. Approval is only valid whilst you hold a position at Monash University.
3. It is the responsibility of the Chief Investigator to ensure that all investigators are aware of the terms of approval and to ensure the project is conducted as approved by MUHREC.
4. You should notify MUHREC immediately of any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants or unforeseen events affecting the ethical acceptability of the project.
5. The Explanatory Statement must be on Monash University letterhead and the Monash University complaints clause must include your project number.
6. Amendments to the approved project (including changes in personnel): Require the submission of a Request for Amendment form to MUHREC and must not begin without written approval from MUHREC. Substantial variations may require a new application.
7. Future correspondence: Please quote the project number and project title above in any further correspondence.
8. Annual reports: Continued approval of this project is dependent on the submission of an Annual Report. This is determined by the date of your letter of approval.
9. Final report: A Final Report should be provided at the conclusion of the project. MUHREC should be notified if the project is discontinued before the expected date of completion.
10. Monitoring: Projects may be subject to an audit or any other form of monitoring by MUHREC at any time.
11. Retention and storage of data: The Chief Investigator is responsible for the storage and retention of original data pertaining to a project for a minimum period of five years.

Professor Nip Thomson
Chair, MUHREC

cc: Assoc Prof Yelena Tsarenko, Mrs Paulette Rouliez Anaya
APPENDIX 2: PILOT STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for your interest in this survey.

Please complete this survey yourself.

In this survey, you will be asked to recall one service consumption experience and to briefly tell us about this experience.

We will then ask you a number of questions related to this experience.

Please allow 10-12 minutes for this survey.

Please complete this survey in one sitting, without delaying or switching with other tasks/HITs in between.

Thank you,

The research team

Q1- We will start by determining what version of our survey is most suitable for you.

Have you ordered pizza(s) for home delivery in the last two weeks?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

Question displayed if the participant responded NO to the previous question:

Sorry, you cannot participate in this survey as you did not satisfy our selection criteria. Feel free to return/abandon this HIT and it won't affect your ratings.
Q2 - Did you experience any problem with your order?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

Q3 - Did you then write a review or post a comment about your negative service experience with the pizza delivery on some social media websites (e.g. Yelp, Urbanspoon, MyPizza.com, Facebook)?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

Thank you for completing the questions so far.

In the next few pages, we will ask you some questions about yourself.

There are no right or wrong answers, so please answer them honestly.

Click the next button when you are ready.

Q4 - You earlier indicated that you recently had unpleasant experience with pizza delivery services.

Now, please take a moment to recall your negative experience with this pizza delivery services. Then, tell us exactly what happened that made you unsatisfied with their services.

Please write down your experience in the column provided below. Try to be as clear as possible when describing your negative service experience.
Q5 - Considering the problem that happened to you when ordering the pizza delivery, how would you describe the service failure?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mild service failure (1)</th>
<th>1 (1)</th>
<th>2 (2)</th>
<th>3 (3)</th>
<th>4 (4)</th>
<th>5 (5)</th>
<th>6 (6)</th>
<th>7 (7)</th>
<th>Severe service failure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minor service failure (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Major service failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insignificant service failure (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Significant service failure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q6- Keeping in mind the negative experience you described earlier, please imagine yourself in the following situation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Reviews condition:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You decided to post comments online related to your negative service experience with the pizza delivery services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You accessed one of the most popular restaurant review websites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On this website, your pizza shop was listed but there were no reviews.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reviews condition:

You decided to post comments online related to your negative service experience with the pizza delivery services.

You accessed one of the most popular restaurant review websites.

On this website, your pizza shop was listed and there were some existing reviews from previous customers about this place. You then read these reviews:
Q7. Having read the reviews written by other customers, please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements: (Attention check)
Paulette Rouliez – PhD Thesis – The effects of online reviews on the intensity level of consumers’ negative word-of-mouth after service failures

80

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree (3)</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree (4)</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree (5)</th>
<th>Agree (6)</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Previous customers wrote reviews that contain positive and negative information about this pizza shop (1)</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q8- As indicated earlier, you decided to post comments related to your negative service experience with the pizza delivery services.

Keeping in mind your negative service experience and other customers' reviews that you have just read, please write down your own review about the pizza shop below:

________________________________________________________________________

Q9- Thank you for keeping up so far. The main section of this study is now finished. The next pages represent the final section in which we will ask about your demographic data. Thanks.

Q10- Please indicate your gender:

〇 Male (1)

〇 Female (2)

Q11- Please write the year you were born (e.g. 1984):
Q12- What is your racial background?

- Caucasian/White (1)
- Latin (2)
- African (3)
- East Asian (Korean, Japanese, etc.) (4)
- South/West Asian (Indian, Bangladeshi, etc.) (5)
- Middle Eastern (6)
- Southeast Asian (7)
- Chinese (8)
- Other (Please specify) (9) ______________________________________________________
- I would rather not say (10)

Q13- Did you have any problems in doing the study? (i.e., page not loading, text unclear, instructions confusing, etc.)

Q14- Due to the rise of fraud survey takers, we ask that you enter your mTurk ID in the space below. This will be essential to your payment. Your mTurk ID should look something like this: 'A3YS*******25'
Q15- Warning:

Please click 'next' before you close this tab. Otherwise your answers will not be recorded and you cannot get paid.

Thanks for your participation!

Your survey completion code is: XXXX
APPENDIX 3: STUDY 1 QUESTIONNAIRE

Q1 - Thank you for your interest in this survey.

Please complete this survey yourself.

In this survey, you will be asked to:

- Imagine yourself in a service consumption situation and answer questions related to this situation.
- Engage in a writing task in relation to the hypothetical service consumption situation.

Please allow 12-15 minutes for this survey.

Please complete this survey in one sitting, without delaying or switching to other tasks/HITs in between.

Please have your mTurk ID ready.

Thank you

The research team

Q2 - Imagine yourself in the following situation:

You are travelling solo on a holiday.

You have booked several days at a hotel.

After a long flight, you arrive at your hotel close to midnight and check in.

You receive your key and go to your room.

You are about to lie down when you notice stains on the bed sheet.
Q3- How would you rate the service incident you experienced at this hotel?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 (1)</th>
<th>2 (2)</th>
<th>3 (3)</th>
<th>4 (4)</th>
<th>5 (5)</th>
<th>6 (6)</th>
<th>7(7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mild service failure (1)</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>Severe service failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor service failure (2)</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>Major service failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insignificant service failure (3)</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>Significant service failure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q4- Continuing with the situation described earlier…

**No Reviews Condition**

After this incident, you decide to write a review of this hotel.

You log into a popular hotel review website and search for the hotel.

Your hotel is listed on this website but no reviews of this hotel have been posted as yet.

**Positive Reviews Condition**

After this incident, you decide to write a review of this hotel.

You log into a popular hotel review website and search for the hotel.

Your hotel is listed on this website and you find the following reviews posted by previous customers. Prior to writing your own review, you decide to read all of them:
Negative Reviews Condition

After this incident, you decide to write a review of this hotel.

You log into a popular hotel review website and search for the hotel.

Your hotel is listed on this website and you find the following reviews posted by previous customers. Prior to writing your own review, you decide to read all of them:
Q5- Keeping in mind the four previous reviews, you think that... (Note: this question was displayed for positive and negative reviews conditions only).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The reviewers wrote...reviews (1)</th>
<th>Negative (1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>Neutral (4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
<th>Positive (7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q6-As indicated earlier, you decided to post a review about the negative service incident you experienced at the hotel.

Keeping this service incident in mind, please take a moment to write your own review below:

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________
Q7- Considering the other customers' reviews that you have just read ..... (Attention check)

How recently were these reviews posted on the hotel review website?

- They were posted between 1-5 days ago (1)
- They were posted 1 week ago (2)
- They were posted 2 weeks ago (3)
- They were posted 1 month ago (4)
- They were posted 6 months ago (5)
- Do not remember (6)

Q8-Thank you for answering the questions so far.

On the next few pages, we will ask you some questions about yourself.

There are no right or wrong answers, so please answer them honestly.

Click the NEXT button when you are ready.

Q9- Please indicate your gender:

- Male (1)
- Female (2)

Q10- Please write the year you were born (e.g. 1984):

________________________________________________________________

Q11- What is your racial background?

- Caucasian/White (1)
O Latin (2)

O African (3)

O East Asian (Korean, Japanese, etc.) (4)

O South/West Asian (Indian, Bangladeshi, etc.) (5)

O Middle Eastern (6)

O Southeast Asian (7)

O Chinese (8)

O Other (Please specify) (9) ________________________________

O I would rather not say (10)

Q12- Which of the following best describes the highest level of education that you have completed?

O Lower than high school diploma (1)

O High school, diploma, or equivalent (2)

O Associate's degree or 2 years of college (3)

O Bachelor's degree (4)

O Master's degree (5)

O PhD or equivalent (6)

O Other (please specify) (7) ________________________________
Q13- Which of the following categories represents your annual income before tax?

- Less than $15,000  (1)
- 15,000 to $25,000  (2)
- 25,001 to $35,000  (3)
- 35,001 to $50,000  (4)
- $50,001 to $75,000  (5)
- I would rather not say  (6)

Q14- Did you have any problems in doing the study? (i.e., page not loading, text unclear, instructions confusing, etc.). Any other feedback on this study?

________________________________________________________________

Q15- Due to the rise of fraud survey takers, we ask that you enter your mTurk ID in the space below. This will be essential to your payment.

Your mTurk ID should look something like this: 'A3YS*******25'

________________________________________________________________

Q16-Warning:

Please click 'next' before you close this tab. Otherwise your answers will not be recorded and you cannot get paid.

Thanks for your participation!

Your survey completion code is:
XXXX
APPENDIX 4: STUDY 2 QUESTIONNAIRE

Q1- Thank you for your interest in this survey.

Please complete this survey yourself.

In this survey, you will be asked to:

- Imagine yourself in a service consumption situation and answer questions related to this situation.
- Engage in a writing task in relation to the hypothetical service consumption situation.

Please allow 12-15 minutes for this survey.

Please complete this survey in one sitting, without delaying or switching to other tasks/HITs in between.

Please have your mTurk ID ready

Thank you,

The research team

Q2- Imagine yourself in the following situation:

You are travelling solo on a holiday.
You have booked several days at a hotel.
After a long flight, you arrive at your hotel close to midnight and check in.
You receive your key and go to your room.
You are about to lie down when you notice stains on the bed sheet.
Q3- How would you rate the service incident you experienced at this hotel?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 (1)</th>
<th>2 (2)</th>
<th>3 (3)</th>
<th>4 (4)</th>
<th>5 (5)</th>
<th>6 (6)</th>
<th>7(7)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mild service failure (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Severe service failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor service failure (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Major service failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insignificant service failure (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Significant service failure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q4- Continuing with the situation described earlier…

Positive Reviews Condition

After this incident, you decide to write a review of this hotel.

You log into a popular hotel review website and search for the hotel.

Your hotel is listed on this website and you find the following reviews posted by previous customers. Prior to writing your own review, you decide to read all of them:
Negative Reviews Condition

After this incident, you decide to write a review of this hotel.

You log into a popular hotel review website and search for the hotel.

Your hotel is listed on this website and you find the following reviews posted by previous customers. Prior to writing your own review, you decide to read all of them:

Reviewed yesterday
Sam B
The location is good - within walking distance to main city attractions. Enjoyed my stay there.

Reviewed 2 days ago
Alex L
I enjoyed staying at this hotel. The restaurant in this hotel offers good quality food with reasonable price.

Reviewed 3 days ago
Chris R
The room was of a good size and it had been recently renovated. Good hotel.

Reviewed 5 days ago
Pat S
The staff in this hotel was friendly and helpful. Good suggestions for the nearby coffee shops.
Q5- Keeping in mind the four previous reviews, you think that...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The reviewers wrote...reviews (1)</th>
<th>Negative (1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>Neutral (4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
<th>Positive (7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q6- As indicated earlier, you decided to post a review about the negative service incident you experienced at the hotel.

Keeping this service incident in mind, please take a moment to write your own review below:

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
Q7- In relation to the other customers' reviews that you read...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not at all (1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>Somewhat (4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
<th>Very much (7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>While I was reading the reviews, I could easily imagine the service situations being described (1)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could imagine myself in the service situations described in the reviews (2)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was mentally involved in the service situations described in the reviews while reading them (3)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After reading the reviews, I wanted to know how the service situations described in the reviews ended (4)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The service situations described in the reviews affected me emotionally (5)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q8-Considering the other customers' reviews that you have just read .....(Attention check)

How recently were these reviews posted on the hotel review website?

○ They were posted between 1-5 days ago (1)
They were posted 1 week ago (2)

They were posted 2 weeks ago (3)

They were posted 1 month ago (4)

They were posted 6 months ago (5)

Do not remember (6)

Q9- Thank you for answering the questions so far.

On the next few pages, we will ask you some questions about yourself.

There are no right or wrong answers, so please answer them honestly.

Click the NEXT button when you are ready.

Q10- Please indicate your gender:

○ Male (1)

○ Female (2)

Q11- Please write the year you were born (e.g. 1984):

____________________________________________________________________

Q12- What is your racial background?

○ Caucasian/White (1)

○ Latin (2)

○ African (3)

○ East Asian (Korean, Japanese, etc.) (4)
○ South/West Asian (Indian, Bangladeshi, etc.) (5)

○ Middle Eastern (6)

○ Southeast Asian (7)

○ Chinese (8)

○ Other (Please specify) (9) ________________________________________________

○ I would rather not say (10)

Q13- Which of the following best describes the highest level of education that you have completed?

○ Lower than high school diploma (1)

○ High school, diploma, or equivalent (2)

○ Associate's degree or 2 years of college (3)

○ Bachelor's degree (4)

○ Master's degree (5)

○ PhD or equivalent (6)

○ Other (please specify) (7) ________________________________________________

Q14- Which of the following categories represents your annual income before tax?

○ Less than $15,000 (1)

○ 15,000 to $25,000 (2)

○ 25,001 to $35,000 (3)
○ 35,001 to $50,000 (4)

○ $50,001 to $75,000 (5)

○ I would rather not say (6)

Q15- Did you have any problems in doing the study? (i.e., page not loading, text unclear, instructions confusing, etc.). Any other feedback on this study?

Q16- Due to the rise of fraud survey takers, we ask that you enter your mTurk ID in the space below. This will be essential to your payment.

Your mTurk ID should look something like this: 'A3YS*******25'

Q17-Warning:

Please click 'next' before you close this tab. Otherwise your answers will not be recorded and you cannot get paid.

Thanks for your participation!

Your survey completion code is:

XXXX
APPENDIX 5: STUDY 3 QUESTIONNAIRE

Q1 - Thank you for your interest in this survey.

Please complete this survey yourself.

In this survey, you will be asked to:

- Imagine yourself in a service consumption situation and answer questions related to this situation.
- Engage in a writing task in relation to the hypothetical service consumption situation.

Please allow 12-15 minutes for this survey.

Please complete this survey in one sitting, without delaying or switching to other tasks/HITs in between.

Please have your mTurk ID ready.

Thank you,

The research team.

Q2 - Imagine yourself in the following situation:

You are travelling solo on a holiday.

You have booked several days at a hotel.

After a long flight, you arrive at your hotel close to midnight and check in.

You receive your key and go to your room.

You are about to lie down when you notice stains on the bed sheet.
Q3- How would you rate the service incident you experienced at this hotel?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mild service failure (1)</th>
<th>Severe service failure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minor service failure (2)</th>
<th>Major service failure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Insignificant service failure (3)</th>
<th>Significant service failure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (3)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4 (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q4- Continuing with the situation described earlier…

Positive reviews - low relevance condition

After this incident, you decide to write a review of this hotel.

You log into a popular hotel review website and search for the hotel.

Your hotel is listed on this website and you find the following reviews posted by previous customers.

Prior to writing your own review, you decide to read all of them:
Negative reviews - low relevance condition

After this incident, you decide to write a review of this hotel.

You log into a popular hotel review website and search for the hotel.

Your hotel is listed on this website and you find the following reviews posted by previous customers. Prior to writing your own review, you decide to read all of them:

Reviewed yesterday
I stayed in this hotel last summer with a broken air-conditioning in my room. Terrible indeed.

Reviewed 2 days ago
The overall stay was disappointing. The room was small with uncomfortable bed.

Reviewed 3 days ago
The hotel did not inform us that most of their facilities including swimming pool were closed during our stay. It was unpleasant stay.

Reviewed 5 days ago
There was no notification about renovation happening at the hotel during our stay. The noise and dust really made our stay not pleasing at all.
### Positive reviews - high relevance condition

After this incident, you decide to write a review of this hotel.

You log into a popular hotel review website and search for the hotel.

Your hotel is listed on this website and you find the following reviews posted by previous customers. Prior to writing your own review, you decide to read all of them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sam B</td>
<td>Reviewed yesterday</td>
<td>This hotel's room was clean and tidy. Enjoyed my stay here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex L</td>
<td>Reviewed 2 days ago</td>
<td>I enjoyed staying at this hotel. The room and bathroom were spotless.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris R</td>
<td>Reviewed 3 days ago</td>
<td>The room was clean. All furniture was dust free. I was impressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pat S</td>
<td>Reviewed 5 days ago</td>
<td>I was pleasantly surprised by the cleanliness of this hotel's room. I would stay here again.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Negative reviews - high relevance condition

After this incident, you decide to write a review of this hotel.

You log into a popular hotel review website and search for the hotel.

Your hotel is listed on this website and you find the following reviews posted by previous customers. Prior to writing your own review, you decide to read all of them:
Q5-Considering the four previous reviews, you think that...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Negative (1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>Neutral (4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
<th>Positive (7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The reviewers wrote...reviews (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q6-Keeping in mind the four previous reviews, you think that...

All service experiences described in the four reviews are about...

- Cleanliness of the hotel room (1)
- Various issues other than cleanliness of the hotel room (2)
Q7- As indicated earlier, you decided to post a review about the negative service incident you experienced at the hotel.

Keeping this service incident in mind, please take a moment to write your own review below:
Q8- In relation to the other customers' reviews that you read....

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not at all (1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>Somewhat (4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
<th>Very much (7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>While I was reading the reviews, I could easily imagine the service situations being described (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could imagine myself in the service situations described in the reviews (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was mentally involved in the service situations described in the reviews while reading them (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After reading the reviews, I wanted to know how the service situations described in the reviews ended (4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The service situations described in the reviews affected me emotionally (5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q9- Considering the other customers' reviews that you have just read....
How recently were these reviews posted on the hotel review website?

- They were posted between 1-5 days ago (1)
- They were posted 1 week ago (2)
- They were posted 2 weeks ago (3)
- They were posted 1 month ago (4)
- They were posted 6 months ago (5)
- Do not remember (6)

Q10- Thank you for answering the questions so far.

On the next few pages, we will ask you some questions about yourself.

There are no right or wrong answers, so please answer them honestly.

Click the NEXT button when you are ready.

Q11- Prior to completing this survey, how would you rate your experience in writing online reviews?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 (1)</th>
<th>2 (2)</th>
<th>3 (3)</th>
<th>4 (4)</th>
<th>5 (5)</th>
<th>6 (6)</th>
<th>7 (7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No experience at all (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q12- Please indicate your gender:

- Male (1)
- Female (2)
Q13-Please write the year you were born (e.g. 1984):

________________________________

Q14- What is your racial background?

○ Caucasian/White (1)

○ Latin (2)

○ African (3)

○ East Asian (Korean, Japanese, etc.) (4)

○ South/West Asian (Indian, Bangladeshi, etc.) (5)

○ Middle Eastern (6)

○ Southeast Asian (7)

○ Chinese (8)

○ Other (Please specify) (9) __________________________________________

○ I would rather not say (10)

Q15- Which of the following best describes the highest level of education that you have completed?

○ Lower than high school diploma (1)

○ High school, diploma, or equivalent (2)

○ Associate's degree or 2 years of college (3)

○ Bachelor's degree (4)
Q16- Which of the following categories represents your annual income before tax?

- Less than $15,000 (1)
- 15,000 to $25,000 (2)
- 25,001 to $35,000 (3)
- 35,001 to $50,000 (4)
- $50,001 to $75,000 (5)
- I would rather not say (6)

Q17- Did you have any problems in doing the study? (i.e., page not loading, text unclear, instructions confusing, etc.). Any other feedback on this study?

Q18- Due to the rise of fraud survey takers, we ask that you enter your mTurk ID in the space below. This will be essential to your payment.

Your mTurk ID should look something like this: 'A3YS*******25'
Q19- Warning:

Please click 'next' before you close this tab.

Otherwise your answers will not be recorded and you cannot get paid.

Thanks for your participation! Your survey completion code is:

XXXX
APPENDIX 6: LINGUISTICS EXPERTS QUESTIONNAIRE PILOT STUDY

Q1- Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research task.

Please read the instruction carefully prior to completing the task.

Click NEXT when you are ready.

Q2- This task is part of a research study currently being conducted in the Department of Marketing.

Participants of the study were asked to describe negative service encounters they experienced with pizza delivery services.

They were then asked to post comments about their negative service experiences on social media websites.

Your task is to carefully read comments posted by the participants of this study.

Then, using the items provided, indicate the degree of negativity or positivity that participants intended to express through their postings.

Please do keep in mind that the participants who wrote the comments are referred to as ‘the reviewer’ in all items you are expected to respond to.

Click NEXT when you are ready.
(Intensity of Negative Word-of-Mouth (Floh et al., 2013; Goyette et al., 2010; Heitmann et al., 2007) (Note: Responses are based on a 7-point rating scale, anchored by (1) extremely positive and (7) extremely negative)

1) I think what the reviewer wrote was…

2) When the reviewer wrote the review, he/she tended to write things that were...

3) In this post, the reviewer mostly said things that were...

Thank you for completing the research task.
APPENDIX 7: LINGUISTICS EXPERTS QUESTIONNAIRE STUDIES 1, 2 AND 3

Q1- Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research task.

Please read the instruction carefully prior to completing the task.

Click NEXT when you are ready.

Q2- This task is part of a research study currently being conducted in the Department of Marketing.

Participants of the study were asked to imagine themselves in a service consumption situation at a hotel.

They were then asked to post comments about the hypothetical consumption situation with the hotel on social media websites.

Your task is to carefully read comments posted by the participants of this study.

Then, using the items provided, indicate the degree of negativity or positivity that participants intended to express through their postings.

Please do keep in mind that the participants who wrote the comments are referred to as 'the reviewer' in all items you are expected to respond to.

Click NEXT when you are ready.
(Intensity of Negative Word-of-Mouth (Floh et al., 2013; Goyette et al., 2010; Heitmann et al., 2007) (Note: Responses are based on a 7-point rating scale, anchored by (1) extremely positive and (7) extremely negative)

1) I think what the reviewer wrote was…

2) When the reviewer wrote the review, he/she tended to write things that were...

3) In this post, the reviewer mostly said things that were...

Thank you for completing the research task.