



The effect of blog contents on online purchase intention and a research*

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ABSTRACT

Using the integrated framework of the technology acceptance model, flow theory, and theory of reasoned action, this current study examines the effect of blog-based content on consumers' online purchase intention. It was aimed to collect data from the blog readers, the target population of the research, by snowball sampling method. A blog-based text-to-speech scenario was developed for a technological product that has different technical features and therefore requires the consumer to search for more information. Data were collected from 232 participants through the online survey designed based on this scenario. As a result of the statistical analysis, it is seen that perceived ease of use has an effect on reading blog-based content. Reading blog-based content has effects on both flow experience dimensions (sense of control, time distortion, focused attention, intrinsic interest, curiosity, and autotelic experience) and perceived usefulness. In contrast, perceived usefulness and flow experience dimensions reciprocally affect each other. In addition, both perceived usefulness and flow experience dimensions affect attitude. As a result, attitude affects purchase intention. The study provides both theoretical and practical implications and directions for future research.

Blog içeriklerinin online satın alma niyetine etkisi ve bir araştırma

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ÖZ

Teknoloji kabul modeli, akış teorisi ve gerekçeli eylem teorisinin entegre çerçevesini kullanan bu mevcut çalışma, blog tabanlı içeriğin tüketicilerin çevrimiçi satın alma niyeti üzerindeki etkisini incelemektedir. Araştırmanın hedef kitlesi olan blog okuyucularından kartopu örnekleme yöntemi ile veri toplanması amaçlanmıştır. Farklı

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teknik özelliklere sahip ve bu nedenle tüketicinin daha fazla bilgi aramasını gerektiren teknolojik bir ürün için blog tabanlı metin okuma senaryosu geliştirildi. Bu senaryoya dayalı olarak tasarlanan online anket aracılığıyla 232 katılımcıdan veri toplanmıştır. İstatistiksel analiz sonucunda algılanan kullanım kolaylığının blog tabanlı içerik okuma üzerinde etkisi olduğu görülmektedir. Blog tabanlı içeriği okumanın hem akış deneyimi boyutları (kontrol duygusu, zamanın dönüşümü, dikkatin yoğunlaşması, içsel ilgi, merak ve ototelik deneyim) hem de algılanan fayda üzerinde etkileri vardır. Buna karşılık, algılanan fayda ve akış deneyimi boyutları karşılıklı olarak birbirini etkilemektedir. Ayrıca hem algılanan fayda hem de akış deneyimi boyutları tutumu etkilemektedir. Sonuç olarak, tutum satın alma niyetini etkilemektedir. Çalışma hem teorik hem de pratik çıkarımlar ve gelecekteki araştırmalar için öneriler sunmaktadır.

1. Introduction

In the digital age, blogs are web-based dynamic channels for self-expression. Among all the types of blogs, principally corporate blogs are important online information-gathering tools that provide promotional opportunities for briefly produced content about products, brands, services as well as corporate culture. Especially used for marketing activities, businesses can communicate with large masses of the population, through the corporate blogs they set up and can easily have thousands or even millions of followers.

Blogs normally appear as a typical online product presentation tool. The consumer can collect information about a product/brand by reading text on the blog before deciding to purchase. The consumer exhibits the relevant behaviors according to the quantity/quality of the information obtained by reading the blog. This is because the knowledgeable consumer who reads texts through blog publications is in a purchasing mood (Lin, Lu and Wu, 2012; Yazgan, 2012; Saxena, 2011; Hsu and Tsou, 2011).

However, researching consumer purchase intention based on reading blog-themed content has been the subject of few studies (Saxena, 2011; Yazgan, 2012). In addition, it is seen that the intent to purchase has not been the subject of the studies conducted within the framework of TAM, Flow Theory, and TRA. Therefore, this gap must be filled. To fill this gap, this study examines the effect of reading blog-based content on online purchase intention on consumers' reading of blog-based content, considering both perceived usefulness and ease of use, flow experience dimensions (by sense of control, focused attention, time distortion, intrinsic interest, curiosity, and autotelic experience), and attitude towards blog content. Thanks to the study conducted for this purpose, the link between blog reading and online purchase intention can be explained by consumers' online information search processes within the context of technology adoption and flow experience. This study is the first to describe this link, taking into account the literature reviewed. The study is important as it successfully explains the link between reading blog-themed content and online purchase intention. According to the findings to be obtained at the end of the study, it will be possible to explain consumers' online purchase intentions depending on their reading of blog-based content. By referring to the findings obtained in this study, it is thought that more research can be conducted on how online marketing strategies can be developed in the context of blog-based product information presentation and marketing components, thanks to future research with different data and/or additional variables (Çelik, 2021; Çelik and Uslu, 2021).

To summarize the originality and importance of the study, it is important to measure the impact of a blog content on purchase (Shimizu, 2021). It should be noted that it is important to test the effects of product review blog content on online purchase intentions, especially in the context of emerging markets (Raposo Junior, Mainardes and Cruz, 2022). In this direction, it is expected that this study, which is carried out in a developing market like Turkey, will contribute to practice as well as theory. In conclusion, the study provides theoretical and practical implications.

2. Background research

In this section, the theoretical framework of the study is explained. Simultaneously under this heading, hypotheses developed in the context of relevant explanations are included.

2.1. The blog as a tool for information

The term blog (or weblog) was coined in 1997 by John Barger, an internet user (Ostrander, 2007). As a result of the use of blogs becoming free in 1999, they shortly thereafter became widespread (Yazgan, 2012). Additionally, in 1999, Pitas company commercially promoted what was known as, "Blogging-Software" and published what Pyra Labs had created, which was a "Blogger" service (Ostrander, 2007). Consequently, blogs revitalized the internet and became more and more popular (Shiau and Luo, 2013). At the same time, blogs have greatly reduced the cost of disseminating and accessing information (Bidin and Mustafa, 2012). Thus, as consumers search for information about products/brands of companies, blogs can display their tremendous marketing power as an effective means of obtaining information, while concurrently distributing information (Hsu and Tsou, 2011). Consequently, it is possible to use blogs, which act as excellent information centers (Bar-Ilan, 2005), for commercial purposes (Lin et al., 2012).

Readers are exposed to a flow of information while reading blog-themed content (Anjewierden, De Hoog, Brussee and Efimova, 2005). During the reading process, flow is experienced as a subjective experience (Pilke, 2004). Thus, the reader, who is in flux during this process, tends to obtain more information (Skadberg and Kimmel, 2004). Inasmuch as it is possible to obtain more information by reading web-based text content (Fang, Brzezinski, Watson, Xu and Chan, 2004). In this context, H₁ was developed.

H₁: Flow experience dimensions (autotelic experience (H_{1a}), curiosity (H_{1b}), intrinsic interest (H_{1c}), sense of control (H_{1d}), focused attention (H_{1e}), and time distortion (H_{1f})) are positively and significantly affected by reading blog-based content.

2.2. Technology acceptance model (TAM)

TAM, IBM Canada Ltd., was developed for new product development investments within the scope of the arrangement (Davis and Venkatesh, 1996). This model was introduced in a doctoral dissertation completed by Davis in 1985. Davis (1985) presented different versions of this model in his thesis. In the first version, the system covered cognitive response, emotional response, and behavioral response. In the second version, the system showed the relationship between perceived output quality, perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, expected pleasure, attitude towards use, and actual user belief structures. In the third version, he differentiated between numerical and non-numerical graphs for the belief structures of output quality and perceived ease of use at a task-specific level and also examined belief structures similar to the second version, but with a difference. In short, the theoretical origin of this model is within Davis's (1985) dissertation. On the other hand, perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness are two basic components of the TAM, which is one of the leading theoretical models commonly used to predict technology acceptance (Davis, 1989; Davis, 1985).

Perceived ease of use is the measure of how much a person believes in the level of difficulty required to use a particular system, or in other words, the amount of effort needed to use something, such as technology (Venkatesh, 2000; Davis, 1989; Davis, 1985). According to this definition, convenience is related to difficulty in using technology or alternately, not having great effort (Davis, 1985). Perceived ease of use has a motivating aspect for human-computer interaction (Agarwal and Karahanna, 2000; Davis, Bagozzi and Warshaw, 1989). It is an important factor for initial technology adoption and continuous use of systems in the context of human-computer interaction (Venkatesh, 2000). Accordingly, H₂ was developed.

H₂: Reading blog-themed content is positively and significantly affected by perceived ease of use.

However, perceived ease of use according to the TAM is likely to affect perceived usefulness (Davis, 1985). Previous research has empirically proven that perceived usefulness is influenced by perceived ease of use (Chen, Hsu and Lu, 2018; Morgan-Thomas and Veloutsou, 2013; Tsai, Cheng and

Chen, 2011; Tao, 2009; Lee, 2010; Lu, Zhou and Wang, 2009; Yuan, Liu, Yao, and Liu, 2016). There is also empirical evidence that the flow experience is affected by perceived ease of use (Baytar and Yükselen, 2018; Chen et al., 2018; Yang and Lee, 2018; Rodríguez-Ardura and Meseguer-Artola, 2016; Zhou, 2013). Based on this empirical evidence, H₃ and H₄ were developed.

H₃: Perceived usefulness is positively and significantly affected by perceived ease of use.

H₄: Flow experience dimensions (autotelic experience (H_{4a}), curiosity (H_{4b}), intrinsic interest (H_{4c}), sense of control (H_{4d}), focused attention (H_{4e}), and time distortion (H_{4f})) are positively and significantly affected by perceived ease of use.

Perceived usefulness is the measure that one believes that using the system increases performance (Davis, 1985; Davis, 1989), alternately, using technology will increase efficiency (Venkatesh, 2000). According to this definition, advantageous usefulness is related to the use of the system (Davis, 1989). Perceived usefulness is an extrinsic motivation source for technology acceptance and continuous use of systems (Davis et al., 1989). In addition, it has been stated in previous studies that perceived usefulness is related to flow experience (Ahmad and Abdulkarim, 2018; Baytar and Yükselen, 2018; Chen et al., 2018) and behavioral attitude (Mulyani, Najib and Guteres, 2021; Ahmad and Abdulkarim, 2018; Ing and Ming, 2018; Wu and Ke, 2015; Lee, 2010; Lu et al., 2009). In this perspective, H₅ and H₆ were developed.

H₅: Flow experience dimensions (autotelic experience (H_{5a}), curiosity (H_{5b}), intrinsic interest (H_{5c}), sense of control (H_{5d}), focused attention (H_{5e}), and time distortion (H_{5f})) are positively and significantly affected by perceived usefulness.

H₆: Attitude towards blog use is positively and significantly affected by perceived usefulness.

2.3. Flow theory

Flow Theory was first put forward about forty-five years ago in the mid-1970s by a famous psychologist Csikszentmihalyi, (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975a, 1975b). It is possible to define flow with its nine dimensions: the balance between challenge and competence, the confluence of action and awareness, clear goals, loss of self-consciousness, transformation of time (time distortion), sense of control, concentration, immediate feedback, and autotelic experience, (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Despite this definition, the experience of flow, which was first applied to computer-mediated environments in the 1990s, had been characterized inconsistently in the past by researchers in varying degrees, (Çabuk and Kuş, 2019; Yang and Lee, 2018; Liu, Chu, Huang and Chen, 2016; Lee and Wu, 2017; Özkara, 2015; Li and Browne, 2006; Koufaris, 2002; Chen, Wigand, and Nilan, 1999; Ghani and Deshpande, 1994; Webster, Trevino and Ryan, 1993; Trevino and Webster, 1992; Ghani, Supnick and Rooney, 1991). This current study characterizes flow experience with the dimensions of sense of control, time distortion, focused attention, intrinsic interest, curiosity, and autotelic experience. Concentration (focused attention) and autotelic experience are the two most frequently used dimensions of flow (Zhou and Lu, 2011; Hoffman and Novak, 2009; Finneran and Zhang, 2005). However, especially the sense of control (Ghani et al., 1991; Yang and Lee, 2018), curiosity (Trevino and Webster, 1992), intrinsic interest (Trevino and Webster, 1992; Rodriguez-Sanchez, Schaufeli, Salanova and Cifre, 2008) and time distortion (Jackson and Marsh, 1996; Çabuk and Kuş, 2019) are other dimensions of flow that are widely subject to many studies. Intrinsic interest and concentration are used in information system research, cognitive interaction; curiosity, and cognitive engagement. Time distortion, the sense of self-giving and control, are among the control-type of dimensions of flow (Rissler, Nadj and Adam, 2017). When taking part in online communication, intrinsic interest refers to the satisfaction and closeness feeling with the content found on the website. Curiosity refers to the measure in which the individual evokes sensory and cognitive interest during the flow experience towards human-computer interaction (Nel, Van Niekerk, Berthon and Davies, 1999; Agarwal and Karahanna, 2000). The term autotelic completes its evolution as derived from the Greek words auto (essence) and telos (purpose) (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975b; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Jackson and Marsh, 1996). It is possible to translate the term autotelic into English as "self-purpose" and define the core objective in the sense that "the purpose of experience is the experience itself" (Baytar and Yükselen, 2018). According to the related literature, the autotelic experience is accepted as the pleasurable dimension feature of the flow experience (Jackson and Marsh, 1996; Özkara, 2015). When time feels like it moves more quickly than it actually does, hours become

minutes, minutes become seconds, and seconds become milliseconds, all while the user is having the best possible experience, this is referred to as time distortion (ransformation of time) (Baytar and Yükselen, 2018; Csikszentmihalyi, 1975a, 1990). Focused attention, (concentration) is when a person concentrates on activity and closes his consciousness to the information that is not related to the experience, forgetting the conditions and situations that create dissatisfaction, as in the case of flow experience. (Baytar and Yükselen, 2018; Csikszentmihalyi, 1975a, 1990). The sense of control refers to the perception that the person is in control throughout the flow experience process (Baytar and Yükselen, 2018; Csikszentmihalyi, 1975a, 1990).

Flow Theory provides a valuable framework for investigating particularly voluntary user behavior (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) (Kaur, Dhir and Rajala, 2016). In addition, flow experience was the first subject of marketing research in 1996 by Hoffman and Novak (1996) within the framework of human-computer interaction. As can be seen in the studies conducted, there is significant empirical support for the effect of flow experience on perceived usefulness (Yang and Lee, 2018; Zhou, 2013) and attitude (Chen et al., 2018). Based on these empirical supports, H₇ and H₈ were developed.

H₇: Perceived usefulness is positively and significantly affected by flow experience dimensions (autotelic experience (H_{7a}), curiosity (H_{7b}), intrinsic interest (H_{7c}), sense of control (H_{7d}), focused attention (H_{7e}), and time distortion (H_{7f}).

H₈: Attitude towards blog use is positively and significantly affected by flow experience dimensions (autotelic experience (H_{8a}), curiosity (H_{8b}), intrinsic interest (H_{8c}), sense of control (H_{8d}), focused attention (H_{8e}), and time distortion (H_{8f}).

2.4. Theory of reasoned action (TRA)

Although it began to be developed in the 1950s and the first research was published in 1967 (Davis et al., 1989; Pikkarainen, Pikkarainen, Karjaluoto and Pahlila, 2004), the TRA is a theory that only took its final form in the mid-1970s (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Subjective norms, attitudes towards use, and behavioral intention are included in TRA (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). In fact, for the TAM (Davis, 1985) and the TRA (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975), attitude towards use and the use of behavioral intention are common constructs (Legris, Ingham and Collette, 2003). Davis (1985) first suggested that the subjective norm has an insignificant effect on behavioral user intention. However, this choice was re-evaluated by Venkatesh and Davis (2000). Thus, the second generation of the TAM labeled, 'TAM-2' was introduced by Venkatesh and Davis (2000). As a result, the origin of the TAM is in the TRA, which is one of the basic psychological theories (Pavlou, 2003).

According to the TRA, the attitude towards use is an important precursor to the use of behavioral intention (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). It is supported by empirical evidence in studies that attitudes have significant effects on purchase intention (Richard and Chebat, 2016; Chen et al., 2018; Ing and Ming, 2018; Mulyani, Najib and Guterres, 2021). In this respect, H₉ was developed.

H₉: Online purchase intention is positively and significantly affected by attitude towards blog use.

3. Method

Under this heading, explanations are given for the target population and sample of the research, data collection tool, the analysis used research scales and research model.

3.1. Target population, sampling, data collection tool and analysis

The target population of this study is consumers aged 18 and over who gather information about the product by reading blog-based content while searching for information online, that is, they read blog content written by others about their product and service experiences. However, to avoid common method variance, data were collected from the participants within a scenario. For electronic product information, a blog-based text-reading scenario was designed. Since the technical specifications of electronic products are both comprehensive and vary from product to product, a blog-based text scenario was developed for an electronic product. An online survey was designed based on the framework that had been developed. Participants answered the scale items in the survey after reading the blog-based text.

This study is derived from a doctoral thesis that was unanimously accepted by the thesis defense jury in February 2021. According to the ULAKBİM TR index criteria, it is known that ethics committee approval should be obtained for studies that require ethics committee approval as of 2020. An approval certificate numbered 2020/09-13, dated on 08/09/2020 was received from Van Yüzüncü Yıl University Social and Humanities Publication Ethics Committee.

Thanks to the snowball sampling method, it is possible to collect data from the target population in a chain-directed and cost-effective manner. Surveys were collected using the snowball sampling method from 257 people whose survey link was shared. However, data were entered for only 232 online surveys, as 25 of the 257 surveys were invalid. Considering 11 variables in the study model, the sample size of 232 people provides the minimum sample size criteria of Stevens (1996: p. 72) with 15 subjects per independent variable, and Tabachnick and Fidell (2007: p. 123) of $N > 50 + 8M$ (M =number of independent variables). In addition, statistical analyses of the frequency, factor, reliability, and regression were performed on the data entered into SPSS 25.

3.2. Research scales

Scales that have been tested in prior studies are employed in this study. Five items of the reading blog-themed content scale (Bidin and Mustaffa, 2012), four items of the purchase intention scale (Liu et al., 2016), four items of the autotelic experience scale, three items of the time distortion scale, four items of the sense of control scale (Guo and Pole, 2009), three items of the curiosity scale (Agarwal and Karahanna, 2000), three items of the intrinsic attention scale (Webster et al., 1993), four items of the focused attention scale (Zhou and Lu, 2011), four items of the attitude towards blog use scale (Ho and Kuo, 2010), three items of the perceived ease of use scale, and three items of the perceived usefulness scale (Hong, Thong and Tam, 2006) were adapted from previous studies to this study.

It should be known that the scale items were translated from English to Turkish and applied in Turkish, and then this study was written in English. Scale items were translated from English to Turkish using the translation-re-translation method. First of all, all scale items were translated under the supervision of three marketing academics. Then, the survey link was shared with ten marketing academics and five people from the target population for clarity of scale items. In line with the suggestions regarding the intelligibility of the scale items, the scale items were given their final form. As seen in this study, the reliability and validity of the scales were supported.

3.3. Research model

Model of the Research (Figure 1) was designed for the links among the variables of reading blog-themed content, flow experience dimensions (sense of control, time distortion, focused attention, intrinsic interest, curiosity, and autotelic experience), perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, attitudes towards blog use, and online purchase intention.

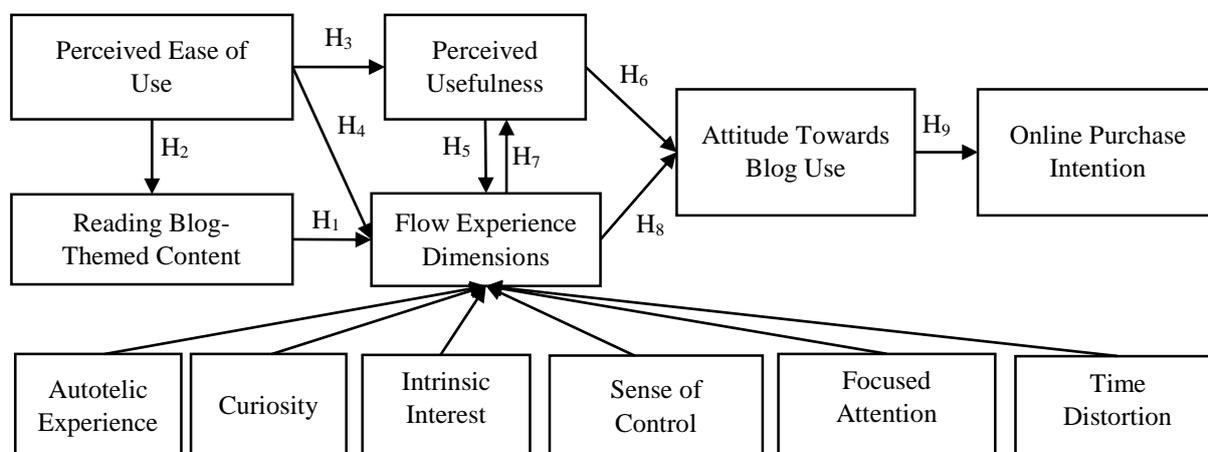


Figure 1. Model of the research

4. Findings

Participants' demographic characteristics are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Participants' demographic characteristics

Demographics	Group	f	%	Demographics	Group	f	%			
Gender	Male	114	49.1	Education Status Graduated	High school	75	32.3			
	Female	118	50.9		Associate Degree	38	16.4			
	Total	232	100.0		Undergraduate	93	40.1			
Postgraduate					26	11.2				
Age	Total	232	100.0	Monthly Income	Total	232	100.0			
					<20	21	9.1	<1000 TL	63	27.2
					20-25	95	40.9	1000-2000 TL	23	9.9
					26-30	55	23.7	2001-3000 TL	42	18.1
					31-35	32	13.8	3001-4000 TL	37	15.9
					>35	29	12.5	>4000 TL	67	28.9

The proportion of participants who are female (n=118; 49.1%), between the ages of 20-25 (n = 95; 40.9%), undergraduates (n = 93; 40.1%) and whose monthly income is over 4000 TL (n = 67; 28.9%) constitute the majority of the total participants (n=232; 100%).

Table 2 shows the findings of factor and reliability analysis.

Table 2

Findings of factor and reliability analysis

KMO	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity			Items	Loadings	Variance Explained	Reliability
	x ²	df	p				
Reading Blog-Themed Content							
.871	572.473	10	.000	Blog2	.860	67.821	.879
				Blog3	.843		
				Blog1	.820		
				Blog5	.797		
				Blog4	.795		
Perceived Usefulness							
.727	272.995	3	.000	PU2	.876	75.568	.838
				PU3	.869		
				PU1	.863		
Perceived Ease of Use							
.721	266.536	3	.000	PEU2	.882	75.053	.833
				PEU3	.860		
				PEU1	.857		
Intrinsic Interest							
.500	90.105	1	.000	Interest3	.886	78.492	.726
				Interest2	.886		
Curiosity							
.669	350.025	3	.000	Curiosity2	.927	76.964	.849
				Curiosity1	.900		
				Curiosity3	.800		

KMO	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity			Items	Loadings	Variance Explained	Reliability
	x ²	df	p				
Autotelic Experience							
.820	436.316	6	.000	Autotelic2	.870	71.206	.865
				Autotelic1	.870		
				Autotelic3	.856		
				Autotelic4	.776		
Time Distortion							
.758	545.136	3	.000	Time2	.944	87.226	.926
				Time3	.937		
				Time1	.920		
Focused Attention							
.831	631.920	6	.000	Attention2	.922	78.722	.908
				Attention3	.892		
				Attention4	.882		
				Attention1	.852		
Sense of Control							
.814	628.273	6	.000	Control2	.901	78.720	.910
				Control1	.891		
				Control3	.886		
				Control4	.871		
Attitude Towards Blog Use							
.812	346.088	6	.000	Attitude3	.844	66.998	.833
				Attitude1	.841		
				Attitude2	.821		
				Attitude4	.765		
Online Purchase Intention							
.833	592.850	6	.000	Intention2	.901	77.911	.905
				Intention4	.889		
				Intention3	.872		
				Intention1	.869		

Note: The item "Interest1" was removed from the analyses because it reduced the scale's reliability.

It was found that the KMO values were at or above the lower limit of 0.50 and at the same time the p values were less than 0.05 (Sipahi, Yurtkoru and Çinko, 2008). Furthermore, while each scale's item load is greater than 0.50, the scale's explained variance is greater than 0.60% (Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson, 2009). Moreover, the reliability value of the "interest" factor dimension is greater than 0.70, and this factor dimension is considered reliable (Nunnally, 1978), while the reliability values of the other factor dimensions are between $0.80 \leq \alpha < 1$ and these factor dimensions are considered quite reliable (Kayış, 2005).

Table 3 shows the findings of the regression analysis for the effects of "reading blog-themed content".

Table 3

Findings of regression analysis for the effects of "reading blog-themed content"

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	R ²	F	t	β	p	VIF	Tole.	Findings
Reading Blog-Themed Content	Autotelic Experience	.396	150.525	12.269	.629	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Curiosity	.279	89.105	9.440	.528	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Intrinsic Interest	.211	61.600	7.849	.460	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Sense of Control	.376	138.346	11.762	.613	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Focused Attention	.448	186.531	13.658	.669	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Time Distortion	.348	122.729	11.078	.590	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported

Autotelic experience ($\beta = .629$; $p < .05$), curiosity ($\beta = .528$; $p < .05$), intrinsic interest ($\beta = .460$; $p < .05$), sense of control ($\beta = .613$; $p < .05$), focused attention ($\beta = .669$; $p < .05$), and time distortion ($\beta = .590$; $p < .05$) are affected by reading blog-themed content.

Table 4 shows the findings of the regression analysis for the effects of “perceived ease of use”.

Table 4

Findings of regression analysis for the effects of "perceived ease of use"

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	R ²	F	t	β	p	VIF	Tole.	Findings
Perceived Ease of Use	Reading Blog-Themed Content	.324	110.484	10.511	.570	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Perceived Usefulness	.382	141.968	11.915	.618	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Autotelic Experience	.323	109.570	10.468	.568	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Curiosity	.205	59.426	7.709	.453	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Intrinsic Interest	.162	44.543	6.674	.403	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Sense of Control	.248	76.026	8.719	.498	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Focused Attention	.337	116.697	10.803	.580	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Time Distortion	.160	43.770	6.616	.400	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported

Reading blog-themed content ($\beta = .570$; $p < .05$), perceived usefulness ($\beta = .618$; $p < .05$), autotelic experience ($\beta = .568$; $p < .05$), curiosity ($\beta = .453$; $p < .05$), intrinsic interest ($\beta = .403$; $p < .05$), sense of control ($\beta = .498$; $p < .05$), focused attention ($\beta = .580$; $p < .05$), and time distortion ($\beta = .400$; $p < .05$) are affected by perceived ease of use.

Table 5 shows the findings of the regression analysis for the effects of “perceived usefulness”.

Table 5

Findings of regression analysis for the effects of "perceived usefulness"

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	R ²	F	t	β	p	VIF	Tole.	Findings
Perceived Usefulness	Autotelic Experience	.398	152.376	12.344	.631	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Curiosity	.267	83.581	9.142	.516	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Intrinsic Interest	.177	49.485	7.035	.421	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Sense of Control	.232	69.367	8.329	.481	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Focused Attention	.438	178.999	13.379	.662	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Time Distortion	.218	64.117	8.007	.467	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Attitude Towards Blog Use	.407	158.004	12.570	.638	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported

Autotelic experience ($\beta = .631$; $p < .05$), curiosity ($\beta = .516$; $p < .05$), intrinsic interest ($\beta = .421$; $p < .05$), sense of control ($\beta = .481$; $p < .05$), focused attention ($\beta = .662$; $p < .05$), time distortion ($\beta = .467$; $p < .05$), and attitude towards blog use ($\beta = .638$; $p < .05$) are affected by perceived usefulness.

Table 6 shows the findings of the regression analysis for the effects of “flow experience dimensions”.

Table 6

Findings of regression analysis for the effects of “flow experience dimensions”

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	R ²	F	t	β	p	VIF	Tole.	Findings
Autotelic Experience	Perceived Usefulness	.398	152.376	12.344	.631	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Attitude Towards Blog Use	.438	179.524	13.399	.662	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
Curiosity	Perceived Usefulness	.267	83.581	9.142	.516	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Attitude Towards Blog Use	.412	160.895	12.684	.642	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
Intrinsic Interest	Perceived Usefulness	.177	49.485	7.035	.421	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Attitude Towards Blog Use	.254	78.250	8.846	.504	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
Sense of Control	Perceived Usefulness	.232	69.367	8.329	.481	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Attitude Towards Blog Use	.456	192.952	13.891	.675	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
Focused Attention	Perceived Usefulness	.438	178.999	13.379	.662	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Attitude Towards Blog Use	.536	265.923	16.307	.732	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
Time Distortion	Perceived Usefulness	.218	64.117	8.007	.467	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported
	Attitude Towards Blog Use	.351	124.538	11.160	.593	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported

Perceived usefulness is affected by autothetic experience ($\beta = .631$; $p < .05$), curiosity ($\beta = .516$; $p < .05$), intrinsic interest ($\beta = .421$; $p < .05$), sense of control ($\beta = .481$; $p < .05$), focused attention ($\beta = .662$; $p < .05$), and time distortion ($\beta = .467$; $p < .05$). In addition, attitude towards blog use is also affected by autothetic experience ($\beta = .662$; $p < .05$), curiosity ($\beta = .642$; $p < .05$), intrinsic interest ($\beta = .504$; $p < .05$), sense of control ($\beta = .675$; $p < .05$), focused attention ($\beta = .732$; $p < .05$), and time distortion ($\beta = .593$; $p < .05$).

Table 7 shows the findings of the regression analysis for the effects of “attitude towards blog use”.

Table 7

Findings of regression analysis for the effects of “attitude towards blog use”

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	R ²	F	t	β	p	VIF	Tole.	Findings
Attitude Towards Blog Use	Online Purchase Intention	.314	105.375	10.265	.561	.000	1.00	1.00	Supported

Online purchase intention is affected by attitude towards the blog ($\beta = .561$; $p < .05$).

5. Conclusion and discussion

In the process of searching for blog-themed online information, it has been observed that reading blog-themed content significantly leads to the occurrence of flow experience in terms of relevant dimensions (sense of control, time distortion, focused attention, intrinsic interest, curiosity, and autotelic experience). Similarly, in the study of Chang and Wang (2008), it was found that the blogger's interaction with the system online communication is an important antecedent leading to flow experience.

It has been found that the perceived ease of use of blog-based content causes them to read blog-based content in the process of consumers' blog-based online information search. Similarly, in the study

of Hsu and Lin (2008), perceived ease of use was found to be an important factor leading to blog use. Therefore, this result of the study is in parallel with other research results.

It has been found that consumers' perception of blog-based content as easy to use causes them to perceive blog content as useful in the process of searching for blog-based online information. This result of the study, Chen et al. (2018), Rodríguez-Ardura and Meseguer-Artola (2016), Yuan et al. (2016), Chang and Wang (2008), Hsu and Lu (2004), and Agarwal and Karahanna (2000) show similarities with the results of their studies.

It has been found that consumers' easy perception of blog content in the blog-based online information search process causes them to experience flow according to the relevant six dimensions. This result is similar to the results of the previous studies (Baytar and Yükselen, 2018; Rodríguez-Ardura and Meseguer-Artola, 2016; Hsu and Lu, 2004; Trevino and Webster, 1992).

It has been found that consumers' perception of blog-based content as useful in the blog-based online information search process causes them to experience flow according to the relevant six dimensions. This result is similar to the results of the previous studies (Baytar and Yükselen, 2018; Hsu, Wu and Chen, 2013; Hausman and Siekpe, 2009).

It has been found that consumers' perception of blog-based content as useful in the blog-based online information search process causes their attitudes towards blog use. Similarly, Rodríguez-Ardura and Meseguer-Artola (2016), Wu and Ke (2015), Lee (2010) and Lu et al. (2009) found that perceived usefulness causes attitude. It is reported that perceived usefulness has an effect on consumers' attitudes towards blogger recommendations (Mulyani et al., 2021; Ing and Ming, 2018).

It has been found that the fact that consumers experience flow according to the relevant six dimensions in the blog-based online information search process causes them to perceive the blog content as useful. At the same time, in this study, it was found that perceiving blog content as useful leads to flow experience according to the relevant six dimensions. In line with these results, it is possible to say that flow experience and perceived usefulness are complementary to each other. These results of the study are similar to the results of Chang and Wang's (2008) study. As a result, the content, design, flow and clarity of blogs should be seen as important factors for blogs to influence consumer behavior (Tran and Nguyen, 2020).

In the blog-based online information search process, it has been found that consumers' experience of flow according to the relevant six dimensions affects their attitudes towards blog use. This result is similar to the results of previous studies (Richard and Chebat, 2016; Van Noort, Voorveld and Van Reijmersdal, 2012).

It has been found that consumers' attitudes towards the use of blogs in the blog-based online information search process affect their online purchase intentions. This result is similar to the results of previous studies (Chen et al., 2018; Richard and Chebat, 2016; Wu and Ke, 2015; Saxena, 2011). As can be seen in an international study, consumers' engagement of blog content has an effect on their purchase intention (Mainolfi and Vergura, 2022). Consumer attitude towards blogger recommendations has an effect on purchase intention (Mulyani et al., 2021; Ing and Ming, 2018).

6. Theoretical implications

This study is a leading initiative that encourages examining consumers' online purchase intentions in the context of reading blog-themed content, perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, flow experience, and attitudes towards blog use in the online blog-based information search process. In other words, based on the theoretical framework of the TAM, Flow Theory, and TRA, this study is the first attempt to successfully explain the link between consumers' reading of blog-based content and their online purchase intentions. This study successfully explained that consumers who find blog content easy and useful to read, go into a stream while reading blog content, and also have an attitude towards blog content, have online purchase intention.

7. Practical implications

Some suggestions can be made in the context of the results of the research. First of all, when producing blog-themed content for product presentation, subjective and personal judgments about the product should be included in the viable information that will independently as well as completely gain the belief and trust of the consumer. Secondly, as far as the use of blogs, practical, understandable, and clear content should be presented that are easy to learn and use, which will provide faster access to information about the product. Thirdly, during the use of the blog, fun, engaging and enjoyable content that will attract the attention and increase the curiosity of the user, should be produced. At the same time, while producing blog-themed content for product information presentation, it should not include indicators that emphasize the passing of time, such as a timepiece or a calendar. Finally, while reading texts, the user should experience the feeling that they are in total control during the absorption of the content.

8. Limitations and future research directions

The data of the study were collected under some constraints. First of all, it is not possible to reach the entire target audience of the research, in terms of time and cost. For this reason, data were obtained for research according to certain sample size. It is possible to reconfirm the hypotheses of this research with future studies in light of the new data, that do not show any similarity or parallels with the results of this study. Moreover, the model can be expanded by adding new additional variables to the conceptual model of this research such as knowledge satisfaction, knowledge quality, a subjective norm, and self-efficacy. Of course, it is important here whether the new research model will work properly, but new hypotheses put forward in the context of the expanded model can be confirmed. On the other hand, in this study, however, it is seen that flow experience is characterized by six dimensions. In addition to these six dimensions of flow experience, dimensions such as telepresence and discovery behavior could be included in future research.

Author statement

Research and publication ethics statement

This study has been prepared in accordance with the ethical principles of scientific research and publication.

Approval of ethics board

Ethics Committee Approval has been obtained for this research with the 08/09/2020 dated and 2020/09-13 numbered decision of Van Yüzüncü Yıl University.

Author contribution

All authors have contributed the study equally.

Conflict of interest

There is no conflict of interest arising from the study for the authors or third parties.

Declaration of support

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