



# Analysis of Online Evaluation of Fashion Boutique Customers

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## Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analysed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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## ABSTRACT

**Aims:** This study is to understand the focus of consumers' evaluation of boutique social marketing.  
**Study Design:** This study employs text analysis to deconstruct the large number of customer reviews collected from IG, followed by semantic network analysis to examine the association with the extracted keywords to understand the focus of consumers' evaluation of boutique social marketing.  
**Place and Duration of Study:** EMBA Department, MingDao University, Taiwan, from June 2022 to December 2022.  
**Methodology:** In this study, content analysis was used to analyze the data, including question formation, sampling, and coding, and then comparing the results. In this study, the questions to be investigated have been described earlier, and the subject matter of the analysis is compiled from the stem, that is, the sentences in the subject matter that are scattered in various paragraphs but have similar meanings are edited to form a unit of analysis that can be processed, which may be a minimal paragraph of one to three sentences, and the sentences with different meanings form different stems. After the stemming is confirmed, a possible classification structure is decided.  
**Results:** In the apparel category, consumers gave positive comments on beauty orientation, time orientation, and value orientation, while negative comments do not seem to be more prominent items. In the jewelry category, the main ones are the positive evaluation of the value orientation

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and beauty orientation, the negative assessment of the quality orientation, communication orientation, and time orientation. In the leather goods category, consumers' positive evaluations were focused on quality orientation, beauty orientation, and value orientation, while negative evaluations were mostly on quality orientation, time orientation, and communication orientation. In terms of consumer response to shoes, the positive assessment is based on beauty, value, and quality orientation, but the negative evaluation is based on quality orientation. From the above, we can see that there is a great difference between the positive and negative consumer opinions of different quality items, and it is impossible to make a uniform statement. This part is in line with Varshneya's [1] study on the value of fashion brand consumers' experience and word-of-mouth, but Varshneya [1] did not further analyze the generated word-of-mouth.

**Conclusion:** This study confirms that price is not the best priority for consumers in the marketing strategy of fashion boutiques, as opposed to previous e-commerce-related studies which suggest that the marketing of fashion boutiques cannot be based on price promotions as the main marketing method for fashion boutiques online shopping. We can see that there is a significant difference between the positive and negative consumer opinions of different quality items, and it is impossible to make a uniform statement.

**Research Proposals:** The merchants should pay attention to their consumers' various evaluations rather than focusing on price-cutting competition at the expense of product quality. For the time factor, the business should strengthen the management of goods, or inform the exact delivery time in advance, so as not to cause consumers to be impatient. In addition, in terms of communication, consumers also value the response time and multiple communication channels for consumers' questions. Product descriptions should be conveyed in a way that consumers can fully understand, and product pictures should not be overly retouched and should be compared to real-life items so that consumers can more accurately understand product information and avoid misunderstandings. For customers who give negative comments, the store can explain the handling situation to increase the confidence of potential customers.

*Keywords: Fashion boutique; social marketing; online evaluation.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

With the development of new trends, fashion is no longer just a social phenomenon, but also an iconic culture. It is undoubtedly one of the most promising and influential industries today [2]. Combining creativity and fashionable design from abroad is a leader in the fashion industry, creating fantastic output. Louis Vuitton, for example, is the leader in the fashion industry, with an annual turnover that exceeds that of TSMC, Taiwan's most profitable company. But in the past, fewer domestic enterprises have focused on this industry this contains a huge business opportunity that is not lost as a great opportunity for Taiwan's industrial transformation. Taking stock of the domestic fashion industry, the overall fashion market in the country as of 2020 shows that the scale of industry distribution falls on appearance as the largest, with women's appearance being the largest, with foreign brands accounting for the majority of the total. In the high-priced fashion boutique market, foreign brands such as GUCCI, Dior, and Louis Vuitton account for more than 90% of the sales, while in the mid-to low-priced apparel market, brands such as H&M, Uniqlo, and ZARA

account for the bulk of the pie, and Taiwan's brands are weak.

The fashion industry has always been competitive, and to gain a foothold in the industry. It is necessary not only to have competitive products and the possibility to create a buzz. It is necessary to have excellent marketing tools, and companies need not only to be backed by a large amount of capital but also to have the best talent to meet the needs of the market [3]. Taiwan's diverse history and culture are the source of inspiration for fashion designers to use local cultural characteristics and historical backgrounds and combine them with design elements, which is a solid foundation for fashion designers in Taiwan. Fashion boutiques are gradually moving towards a new model, no longer symbolizing the exclusivity of celebrities and aristocrats, but becoming the best choice for many young people seeking casual dress without losing their taste [2]. The changes in the fashion industry in the last decade, along with the new era after the epidemic, show that mass media is not satisfied with the traditional retail store mentality of fashion, but tends to influence daily life and change the ecology of the fashion

industry through social media such as IG and Twitter [4]. Sun et al. [5] also found that social media influencers play an increasingly important role in influencing young people and their shopping behavior in online marketing. Jain [6] suggests that the internet has become the fastest-growing channel for luxury goods sales.

Traditionally, word-of-mouth (WOM) from friends has been used to reduce risk, and with the popularity of the Internet, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) has become increasingly important [7] as consumers begin to trust word-of-mouth transmitted through the Internet. Often, consumers want to express or share their opinions and seek information through digital means [8]. E-commerce has a strategic focus for both businesses and consumers, and WOM has been redefined as eWOM as the traditional face-to-face WOM is changing to eWOM as consumers can obtain information about products or services online before making a purchase decision [9,10].

Big data analysis of data generated on the Web to predict consumer behavior and psychology is an emerging topic [11]. It is necessary to extract and transform data from online reviews before analysis, and due to the large and unstructured nature of consumer-generated data, text mining and semantic web analysis play an important role in big data analysis [11]. Therefore, this study employs text analysis to deconstruct customer reviews collected online, followed by semantic network analysis to examine the association with the extracted keywords to understand the focus of consumers' evaluation of boutique social marketing.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Fashion Boutique**

In modern times, most people know which brands belong to the class of boutique, but they cannot define the term "luxury" [12]. Dubois and Paternault proposed that boutique is "Dream Value". In the book "Brand Spell" by Shi [13], a Taiwanese scholar revealed that European boutique could be described in six words: precious, novel, a small amount, artistic, delicate, and durable. Matlack [14] argues that a boutique is an aura, which is inherently subjective.

As the public became aware of the distinction between the apparel industry and fashion boutiques, the concept of fashion boutiques

almost replaced the idea of fashion and became increasingly widespread. The term boutique emerged in the Middle Ages and was defined by Wang [15] as "the majority of people who wore more noble and progressive clothing," while Davis [16] suggests that the origins of fashion culture are closely linked to the fourteenth-century Burgundian court dresses that differentiated between male and female gender identities. In Simmel's [17] fashion philosophy, fashion life is a combination of "social conformity" and "individual differentiation" of human beings. Fashion boutiques are essentially imitations of established patterns, meeting the need for social adaptation, and guiding people along a path that provides a universal rule that turns individual behavior into a model, but fashion boutiques also meet the need for differentiation and individuality [15]. Such changes give fashion a differentiation that can be made over time and in terms of class, with higher-class clothing deliberately differentiated from lower-class clothing, and the higher class discarding the boutique when the lower class begins to imitate it [17,18].

The consumption of fashion boutiques is not only economic but also shows the position of the buyer in the social class [3]. A fashion boutique is a style that is prevalent at a particular time, including the current form of dress, speech, and behavior. Based on the above-mentioned conceptualizations of a fashion boutique, this study argues that a fashion boutique is both unique and popular and that these two seem to be in conflict, but they are not. A fashion boutique must be different from the general public and yet recognized by the general public, otherwise, it is just a lonely and strange existence.

However, in recent years, self-media such as netizens and YouTubers have blossomed, and their influence is even greater than that of traditional advertising media. A video or a photo of a netizen can make a niche brand more famous, and an influx of inquiries and orders can be made instantly. In addition to domestic media and self-media, consumers also have more convenient access to foreign information. More and more people will watch foreign YouTubers channels and follow foreign IG celebrity netizens, and consumers no longer need to go through agents or buying agents to get overseas product information. Therefore, we have noticed that in recent years, consumers in Taiwan have been paying attention to and placing orders for overseas shopping festivals that were not

originally related to Taiwan, such as the U.S. Thanksgiving Black Friday sale and the European discount season. As a result, the fashion marketing has already entered the online community [19].

## **2.2 Social Marketing and Consumer Feedback Analysis**

Social Marketing is generally defined as marketing activities through the gathering of Internet users or posting messages on social platforms, including Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, etc. Social Marketing is not just an online activity but can be used to achieve business objectives by gathering three or more people to influence each other. Social marketing is not just an online activity. According to Rheingold [20], a virtual community is a social gathering where a certain number of people discuss a lot on the Internet and give a certain amount of emotion to develop a network of interpersonal relationships. With the birth of social media, the tools and strategies of marketing communication have been radically changed. In the era of virtual social media, companies still have strict control over the content, timing, and frequency of messages, while consumers' sources of product information are shifting from traditional print media to virtual social media, which in turn influences purchasing decisions. Fashion brands often rely on two types of accounts for their social media activities: official brand accounts and social media influencer accounts.

In the section on consumer feedback, we can see the changes brought about by the digital era of human life. Nowadays, consumers care about more than just the material or design of the clothing before they communicate their purchases. you can almost always see them commenting on the speed of delivery and the integrity of the packaging in the consumer feedback, and the high or low ratings and consumer feedback in the store reviews. It also affects the purchase of invisible buyers. In addition to sellers on shopping platforms or their websites, we can also often see many consumers discussing on some social service websites about materials, style and design, after-sales service of brands, and even buying tips or product descriptions, and some people with the same or opposite experience will leave their thoughts and opinions in the end.

Interestingly, many economic players and researchers have found that deploying big data

analytics to identify data patterns and capture them can generate competitive business intelligence [21]. Increasingly, companies and researchers active in these industries are generating big data analytics from many different sources, such as (a) users in the form of user-generated content (UGC); (b) devices in the form of device data; and (c) operations in the form of transactional data. However, the most popular data source is UGC, which has been widely used, for example, to learn more about online customer satisfaction, experience, and engagement with the service [22]. Regarding online data including structured and unstructured data, reviews are rated as a number (structured format). But the written text of the reviews is unstructured and has been studied in textual analysis to better understand consumer reviews (Xiang et. al., 2015). In the marketing literature, they represent an important component of the so-called electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). A growing number of scholars in the disciplines of marketing, data management, and computer science are studying the antecedents and consequences of IWOM [23].

## **3. METHODOLOGY**

Big data analysis of web-generated data to predict consumer behavior and psychology is an emerging topic [11]. It is necessary to extract and transform data from online reviews before analysis, and due to the large and unstructured nature of consumer-generated data, text mining and semantic web analysis play an important role in big data analysis (Ban and Kim, 2019). In this study, a content approach was used to analyze and deconstruct a large number of reviews collected from Google.com about fine consumption, followed by semantic web analysis to check the association with the extracted keywords.

When collecting data, researchers specify the type of information they want, clarify concepts, limit the scope of the collection, and familiarize themselves with the characteristics of keywords. Data refinement and pre-processing involve converting unstructured textual data into structured form. Complex pre-processing is essential to obtain accurate results. As techniques for analyzing text, such as information extraction, document summarization, and clustering [11]. Semantic network analysis uses single terms to clarify the network structure and meaning in a text. Selecting specific terms and repeating them to emphasize specific

meanings is a method for the content analysis of the relationships between words that occur together in a sentence or paragraph. The core of semantic network analysis is the influence of indicator words, and the analysis based on structural homogeneity includes subgroup classification indicators based on word similarity [24].

The textual sources of information for this study are divided into three main parts :

- (1). Consumer diaries: These record the consumer's strategy and planning before the action; the findings and changes during the action; the reflection and review after the action, etc., as the researcher's observation and thoughts.
- (2). Audience feedback and comments: On social media platforms, there are real-time message boards for the audience to discuss and provide comments.
- (3). Social Platform Analysis: Usually, social platforms provide users with some behind-the-scenes information, such as the number of views, customer purchase reviews, etc.

This study used content analysis to analyze the data, including question formation, sampling, and coding and then comparing the results. In this study, the questions to be investigated have been described earlier, and the subject matter of the analysis is compiled from the stem, that is, the sentences in the subject matter that are scattered in various paragraphs but have similar meanings are edited to form a unit of analysis that can be processed, which may be a minimal paragraph of one to three sentences, and the sentences with different meanings form different stems. After the stemming is confirmed, a possible classification structure is decided. Then, coding was performed, i.e., the researcher autonomously categorized the stems according to the definition of the categorization framework, and finally, two academic experts familiar with the subject matter of the study were asked to calculate the coder reliability through mutual agreement with the coder using the principle of reciprocal subjectivity [25].

First, the themes of each event were extracted, and the data that meet the definition of the visitor experience and have similar ideas or thoughts were collected and expressed in the form of complete sentences. Then, these themes were categorized according to their degree of similarity, and five categories were identified and

named. After the initial categorization of themes, three experts were invited to help with coding according to the intersubjective principle. After coding, the coding reliability was calculated to be 0.92, showing that the three coders agree on categorizing the sentences.

## **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Analysis of Categories**

For the scope of the fashion boutique industry, firstly, according to the analysis of categories, it is divided into four major categories, namely

- (1). Apparel: men's, women's, children's, custom-made clothes, etc.
- (2). Accessories: earrings, bracelets, necklaces, rings, hair accessories, watches, etc.
- (3). Leather goods: men's bags, women's bags, wallets, belts, briefcases, etc.
- (4). Footwear: leather shoes, high heels, children's shoes, sports shoes, boots, etc

### **4.2 Analysis of the Evaluation of Various Types of Fine Products**

The naming of each category and the decision will be made, and the consumer's evaluation will be divided into positive and negative evaluation factors. Each category is defined as follows.

- (1). Aesthetic orientation: It refers to consumers' evaluation of the beauty of the appearance of the products.
- (2). Value orientation: It refers to the evaluation of the price consumers think they pay and the degree of comparison of the quality of products they receive.
- (3). Time orientation: It refers to the consumer's evaluation of the merchant's delivery and arrival time.
- (4). Communication orientation: It refers to the consumer's evaluation of the merchant's attitude, response time, and content of the response to the buyer's question.
- (5). Quality orientation: It refers to the consumer's evaluation of the quality of the products.
- (6). Other orientations: for example, more gifts, wrong products sent, product specifications do not match, etc.

In terms of positive evaluation, there are 1156 themes, and consumers in the apparel category gave the most comments on beauty orientation, time orientation, and value orientation. The accessories category was dominated by value

orientation and beauty orientation. Consumers in the leather goods category focused on quality orientation, beauty orientation, and value orientation. In the case of footwear, consumers' responses focused on beauty, value, and quality (as shown in Table 1).

In terms of negative evaluations, there were 872 stem words. There seemed to be no outstanding items in the negative appraisal of the apparel category, with quality orientation, communication orientation, time orientation, aesthetic orientation, and value orientation ranging from 15% to 20%. In the accessories category, quality, communication, and time are the most important. Consumers in the leather goods category emphasized quality orientation, time orientation,

and communication orientation. In the case of footwear, the quality orientation was the most important (as shown in Table 2).

### 4.3 Comprehensive Evaluation Analysis

The results are shown in Table 3, which shows that the percentage of both positive and negative evaluations was highest for quality and second highest for aesthetics, regardless of the product. This result is different from previous e-commerce-related studies that considered price as the top priority for consumers (e.g., [26]). This shows that the marketing of fashion boutiques cannot be based on price promotion as the main marketing method for general online shopping.

**Table 1. Positive evaluation analysis of various types of goods**

Category	Categories	Theme example
<b>Apparel</b>	Aesthetic orientation (38.21%)	I think it's beautiful...
	Time orientation (27.84%)	Delivery is very efficient ...
	Value orientation (20.52%)	Value for money, well worth buying ...
	Communication orientation (10.55%)	The boss is very enthusiastic to explain ...
	Quality orientation (2.55)	The elasticity of the pants is very good...
	Other orientation (0.33)	I was surprised by the extra belt that the owner gave me...
<b>Accessories</b>	Value orientation (38.84%)	Packaging is beautiful, the goods are more beautiful, value for money ...
	Aesthetic orientation (30.55%)	The design is very special...
	Quality orientation (19.12%)	Simple to wear and look good, the most important thing is not allergic ...
	Time Orientation (10.29%)	One day after the order was placed, it was shipped immediately...
	Other orientation(1.20%)	The box sent by the boss feels very high-class...
<b>Leather goods</b>	Quality orientation (29.46%)	The line part of the car is very delicate ...
	Aesthetic orientation (27.34%)	The shape is very fashionable ...
	Value orientation (24.15%)	Reasonable price without losing quality ...
	Communication orientation (10.51%)	The store explained very carefully
	Time Orientation (7.99%)	After ordering quickly received ...
	Other Orientation (0.15%)	The leather pouch is very sophisticated ...
<b>Shoes</b>	Aesthetic orientation (32.01%)	The version is just right very comfortable, soft, and comfortable, long-standing not tiring...
	Price orientation (31.65%)	This price can also free shipping, a purchase of 2 pairs ...
	Quality orientation (21.16%)	Very cool shoes ...
	Time orientation (10.96%)	Super fast delivery, after 2 days after the order is received ...
	Communication orientation (2.41%)	Questions back in seconds ...
	Other orientation (1.11%)	Sent the Italian imported shoe polish yeah!

**Table 2. Negative evaluation analysis of various types of commodities**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Theme example</b>
<b>Apparel</b>	Quality orientation (20.49%)	Wearing out of doors twice and normal use, the clothes have some serious hair pilling
	Communication orientation (19.61%)	Do not read and do not return, but the fan page continues to update
	Time orientation(17.65%)	There is talk of in-stock goods, but they have to wait several days before delivery
	Aesthetic orientation(15.36%)	The product does not match the photo on the Internet
	Value orientation(15.21%)	I think it's too expensive
	Other orientation(7.44%)	Sent the wrong color, and said it was because I ordered the wrong
<b>Accessories</b>	Time orientation (28.26%)	Waiting for a month, in the middle of the order was canceled by the system, repeatedly called before delivery
	Communication orientation(24.90%)	The size is not correct, the message does not reply, after-sales care ...
	Quality orientation(24.01%)	Merchandise to wear the second time to break
	Value orientation(11.31%)	Later found to be more expensive than other homes
	Time Orientation(10.31%)	Said a week to arrive the results of waiting a month
	Other orientation(1.21%)	Wrong and re-sent, poor packaging
<b>Leather goods</b>	Quality orientation (29.22%)	The zipper head will fall off, and can not be stuck
	Time orientation (28.32%)	Not shipped by the agreed time
	Communication orientation(18.83%)	I told the seller that there was a problem with the product, but in return, I got a read-no-reply
	Aesthetic orientation(15.23%)	The actual product is much different from the photo on the Internet party
	Value orientation(8.08%)	Feel cheated
	Other orientation(0.32%)	Do not feel like made in Taiwan, seems like mainland goods
<b>Shoes</b>	Quality orientation (47.95%)	The sole version is hard, not suitable for long walks, and worn a few times only to laugh ...
	Communication orientation(17.98%)	There are defects in the goods to exchange, and special instructions to check before sending, but the result is still the same defect
	Value orientation(16.74%)	After the discount is almost 800, it's not worth it...
	Aesthetic orientation(12.62)	I feel that the actual color is not good
	Time Orientation(3.70%)	Waiting for a long time to arrive
	Other orientation(1.01%)	Promised to send gifts are not attached

**Table 3. Comprehensive analysis**

<b>Orientation</b>	<b>Positive Reviews</b>	<b>Negative Reviews</b>
Quality Orientation	35.47%	30.60%
Aesthetic Orientation	25.37%	26.77%
Value Orientation	20.57%	13.37%
Communication	10.46%	8.70%
Time Orientation	7.11%	19.12%
Quality Orientation	1.11%	1.44%

*Note: Other that is, for example, wrong delivery, poor packaging, satisfaction with the gift, etc.*

## **5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Conclusion**

Big data analysis of online generated data to predict consumer behavior and psychology is an emerging topic [11]. Since the huge amount of unstructured qualitative data generated by consumers is of high research value, this study conducts text mining and semantic networking to deconstruct a large number of comments about fine consumption using content analysis.

During the analysis process, this study will divide fashion boutiques into clothing, accessories, leather goods and footwear according to the collected themes, that is, these four categories have a higher rate of evaluation by consumers. The evaluations of various boutique consumers are different. As for the evaluation category, this research summarizes five major orientations, namely aesthetic orientation, value orientation, time orientation, quality orientation, communication orientation, and time orientation. And Jain [6] believes that perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, perceived enjoyment, and price awareness have direct and indirect relationships to online luxury goods purchase intentions through attitudes. There are some similarities between the two, but in Jain's [6] study, luxury goods are not classified, and it is impossible to compare the differences between different types of luxury goods. Okta and Ambarwati [27] identified in their study that product quality, product price, trust and sales amount have significant influence on online purchase decision of fashion products in boutiques. As Ramadhanty and Ahmad [28] said, there are new developments in the fashion industry at present. Fashion is an overall and personal pleasure. Personalized attire reflects one's personality, and online product purchase decisions have a significant impact. Although fashion boutiques are not impulsive purchases of e-commerce, more studies have pointed out that the development of e-commerce has further promoted the sales of fashion boutiques [29,30]. Nimo [31] explores the growth trajectory of South Africa's fashion retail market amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, highlighting that despite South Africa's entrenched mall culture, the rapid growth of e-commerce and the emergence of omnichannel retail, coupled with social media and an explosion in sustainable consumer behavior could revitalize and boost struggling industries. And as fashion becomes part of contemporary

female ideals, boutiques become political venues for discourse contests [32].

In the apparel category, consumers gave positive comments on beauty orientation, time orientation, and value orientation, while negative comments do not seem to be more prominent items, quality orientation, communication orientation, time orientation, and beauty and value orientation are between 15% to 20%. In the jewelry category, the positive evaluation of the value orientation and beauty orientation, the negative evaluation of the quality orientation, communication orientation, and time orientation are the main ones. In the leather goods category, consumers' positive evaluations were focused on quality orientation, beauty orientation, and value orientation, while negative evaluations were mostly on quality orientation, time orientation, and communication orientation. In terms of consumer response to shoes, the positive evaluation is based on beauty, value, and quality orientation, but the negative evaluation is based on quality orientation. From the above, we can see that there is a great difference between the positive and negative consumer opinions of different quality items, and it is impossible to make a uniform statement. This part is in line with Varshneya's [1] study on the value of fashion brand consumers' experience and word-of-mouth, but Varshneya [1] did not further analyze the generated word-of-mouth. In addition, this study also confirms that price is a priority for consumers in the marketing strategy of fashion boutiques, as opposed to previous e-commerce-related studies [26]. This suggests that the marketing of fashion boutiques cannot be based on price promotions as the main marketing method for general online shopping. The purchase of fashion boutiques is different from the way of life shopping. The purchase of fashion boutiques is different from the way of life shopping. The research of Hikmawati and Rizqi [33] pointed out that it has an impact on the impulse buying behavior of online shopping in life shopping, but fashion interest has a significant negative impact on the impulse buying behavior of online shopping.

### **5.2 Research Proposals**

- (1). From the results of this study, it is clear that boutique customers care most about not price, and merchants should pay attention to their consumers' various evaluations rather than focusing on price-cutting competition at the expense of product quality.



- (2). For the time factor, the business should strengthen the management of goods, or inform the exact delivery time in advance, so as not to cause consumers to be impatient. In addition, in terms of communication, consumers also value the response time and multiple communication channels for consumers' questions.
- (3). Product descriptions should be conveyed in a way that consumers can fully understand, and product pictures should not be overly retouched and should be compared to real-life items so that consumers can more accurately understand product information and avoid misunderstandings. For customers who give negative comments, the store can explain the handling situation to increase the confidence of potential customers.

### COMPETING INTERESTS

- None of the author of this paper has a financial or personal relationship with other people or organizations that could inappropriately influence or bias the content of the paper.
- It is to specifically state that "No Competing interests are at stake and there is No Conflict of Interest" with other people or organizations that could inappropriately influence or bias the content of the paper.

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