



Special Issue - Innovative Commerce: Bridging Business and Computer Applications (ICBBCA-2026)

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A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF ONLINE REVIEWS ON PRODUCT BUYING DECISIONS

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Abstract

The rapid growth of e-commerce has significantly transformed consumer purchasing behaviour in the digital era. Among the various factors influencing online shopping decisions, online reviews play a crucial role in shaping customer perceptions and purchase intentions. This study focuses on analysing the impact of online reviews on product buying decisions and understanding how review ratings, review quality, quantity of reviews, and positive and negative feedback influence consumer behaviour. The primary objective of this research is to examine how online reviews reduce uncertainty, and affect brand reputation in competitive digital marketplaces. The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through a structured

questionnaire from 76 respondents to understand their online shopping habits and their reliance on reviews before making purchase decisions. Secondary data was gathered from journals, research articles, websites, and previous studies related to e-commerce and consumer behaviour.

Introduction

Shopping has always been an essential part of daily life. In the past, people mainly purchased goods from physical stores where they could see, touch, and examine products before buying them. However, with the rapid growth of the internet, online shopping has become increasingly popular. Today, people can buy clothes, electronics, groceries, and many other items from the comfort of their homes. This change has not only made shopping more convenient but has also



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transformed the way customers make decisions. In traditional shopping, buyers often relied on shopkeepers or advice from friends and family. In online shopping, customers cannot physically inspect products, so they depend heavily on online reviews. Online reviews are opinions, ratings, and experiences shared by customers who have already used the product. These reviews provide helpful information about quality, performance, and value.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the role of online reviews in customer decision-making
- To study how reviews, help in product comparison.
- To identify how online reviews, affect brand image
- To explore how businesses, use online reviews.
- To examine the role of star ratings and review quantity

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive research design to analyze the impact of online reviews on product buying decisions. It focuses on understanding consumer perceptions and behavior regarding online reviews.

Sources of Data

Primary Data

Primary data for the study was collected from respondents through a structured questionnaire created using Google Forms. The survey included close-ended questions on online reviews and buying decisions.

Secondary Data

Collected from journals, books, e-commerce reports, websites, and previous research studies.

Sample Size

The sample size of the study consists of 70 respondents. The data was collected from individuals who have experience in online shopping and reading product reviews

Sampling Technique

Respondents were selected based on their availability and willingness to participate in the survey. This method was chosen due to time limitations and easy accessibility of participants.

Tool Used for Data Collection

A structured questionnaire was used as the main tool for data collection. The questionnaire was created using Google Forms and included multiple-choice questions

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to measure the impact of online reviews on buying decisions.

Data Analysis

S.No	Response	Number of Responses	Percentage
1	Yes, strongly	41	54%
2	Yes, moderately	21	28%
3	No	14	18%
Total		76	100%

Table: 1 Reviews Influence Your First Impression of a Product

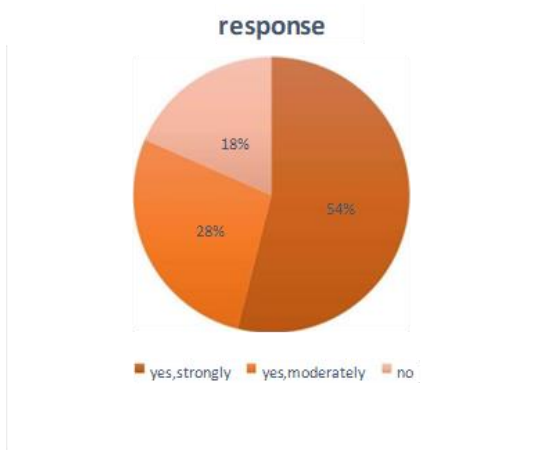


Fig 1: Response

Interpretation

The table shows that reviews play a significant role in shaping the first impression of a product. A majority of respondents (54%) strongly believe that reviews influence their perception, while 28% feel they moderately influence. Only 18% state that reviews do not affect their first impression. This highlights that customer reviews serve as a crucial factor in initial product evaluation.

Findings of the Study

- Most respondents read online reviews before purchasing a product.
- Positive reviews significantly increase the likelihood of buying a product.
- Negative reviews strongly discourage customers from making a purchase.
- Customers trust detailed reviews with ratings and real user experiences.
- Star ratings play an important role in quick decision-making.
- Reviews with images or videos create higher credibility among buyers.
- Young consumers are more influenced by online reviews compared to older consumers.
- Overall, online reviews have a strong impact on shaping customer buying decisions.



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Suggestions and Recommendations

- E-commerce platforms should prioritize transparency by highlighting verified purchase tags and encouraging photo or video reviews.
- Companies need to strengthen AI and machine-learning tools to detect and remove fake or misleading reviews.
- Businesses can motivate customers to share their experiences by offering rewards, loyalty points, or discounts for genuine reviews.
- Awareness programs should be conducted to educate buyers about comparing reviews across multiple platforms.
- Brands in fashion and electronics should invest heavily in review systems because these categories are most frequently checked by buyers.

Conclusion

The study concludes that online reviews have a significant impact on consumer buying decisions in today's digital world. Most customers read reviews and check star ratings before purchasing, showing that reviews have become an essential part of the buying process. They help customers reduce risk, build confidence, and make informed decisions. Reviews also shape the first impression of a product and influence final purchase choices. The findings highlight that customers trust expert opinions as well as

real customer experiences. They prefer different formats such as text reviews, star ratings, and photos or videos to get complete information. Positive reviews increase trust and encourage purchases, while negative reviews can stop customers from buying or even lead to order cancellation.

Overall, online reviews act as a powerful tool in modern marketing. They not only guide consumers but also provide valuable feedback to businesses. Companies that maintain good product quality and encourage honest reviews can build strong customer trust and long-term loyalty. Thus, online reviews play a vital role in shaping consumer behavior and business success.

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