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**Full Length Research Paper**

Effect of Online Product Reviews on the Intention to Purchase of Conspicuous Products and Services

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The Indian retail business has been revolutionized by the rapid development of e-commerce and the growing interest of consumers in making purchases over the internet. Customers nowadays are more likely to be open to new experiences and maintain a focus on the benefits internet shopping may provide. Flipkart's recent "Big Billion day" Sale is indicative of shifting customer buying habits. The Internet's ability to disseminate vast amounts of data rapidly and cheaply, as well as its increasing accessibility, are likely contributing factors in the boom of e-commerce. But, for ecommerce to realize its full potential, company owners that rely on it as a distribution channel require a more nuanced comprehension of online shoppers' demographics, purchase habits, and motivations, as well as strategies for converting offline customers into online ones. This research was undertaken in an effort to address a void in the existing literature about the role of online product or service reviews in influencing customer purchasing decisions. The study aims to provide light on the criteria by which consumers evaluate internet reviews prior to making a purchase. The current study uses a descriptive research approach and primary data collection in the form of a structured questionnaire to achieve its aims. The study included 104 participants as its sample size. Averages, one-sample t-tests, and correlations were used in the study's analysis. According to the findings, consumers look to online reviews for a variety of reasons before making a purchase, including learning about the product's quality, learning how to make the best use of it, learning about the product's cost and benefits, learning about relevant deals or discounts, learning about the product's warranty, guarantee, or replacement details, learning about the brand's reputation among reviewers, and learning about the availability of sales services. It was shown that consumers are influenced by several aspects of the information presented in internet reviews.

Introduction

While looking to buy anything, individuals in the past would frequent many stores before making a final decision based on word-of-mouth recommendations. Yet, as technology developed, the idea of online buying emerged, and with it came the idea of online customer evaluations. The value of internet evaluations, however, in preserving a company's image, has grown over time. These are provided by shoppers who have had positive experiences with a store and its products. Reviews posted on websites have given rise to a new method of advertising and marketing, one that bridges the gap between casual word-of-mouth and the kind of feedback that can do wonders for a company's bottom line. Online reviews are incredibly useful for businesses since they increase sales, raise brand recognition, and shed light on where an organization may use improvement.

The modern customer, thanks to the Internet, may go from being an uninformed bystander to an informed participant in the market by providing feedback and writing online evaluations that are accessible to an endless number of people all over the world. Prospective customers of that goods or service utilise these evaluations or feedbacks as a resource for electronic Word

of Mouth. In actuality, the online review community enables people to share and hear a variety of perspectives, and to reconsider their own beliefs in light of the feedback they receive.

Reviews left by previous customers online are becoming increasingly influential in the purchasing decisions of potential new consumers. Blogs, e-commerce websites, social media, video platforms, and unbiased reviewing platforms all have slightly different aims, features, and user experiences when it comes to evaluating and reviewing products available online.

Review of Literature

Research conducted by the Wall Street Journal in October 2020 found shocking factual facts that any business would want to know, as well as the significance of internet evaluations (The Wall Street Journal, 2020). Companies have an obligation to capitalise on their knowledge of online reviews since consumers who shop online look to online reviews as a means of obtaining product information prior to making purchase decisions (Fu et al., 2020). In November 2021, newspaper pieces such as business news daily directed companies towards the dynamics of reacting to an internet review (Business News Daily, 2021). Customers who shop online are limited in their ability to see, touch, and test products since they rely on other consumers' opinions instead (Schneider and Zielke, 2020). A research conducted by Google using data from 57 million online customer reviews revealed that customers were impacted by these evaluations while making purchases (Morrison, 2015). A "sales assistant" provides assistance to a consumer by looking for information on product attributes; similarly, online customer reviews provide assistance to customers in determining information regarding a product that most closely meets their requirements (Schneider and Zielke, 2020). Before concluding their purchasing selections, the vast majority of consumers find it helpful to read the comments of other consumers regarding the items or services offered by shops. Likewise, Christy M.K. Cheung and Dimple R. Thadani (2012) have pointed that since receivers are mostly unfamiliar with the credentials of communicators in the context of e-WOM communication, they tend to look for a variety of cues that are present within the review (e.g., characteristics of a stimuli) and associated with its environment (e.g., credibility of websites/platform) when determining the quality of e-WOM (electronic word-of-mouth) messages Cheung and Thadani referred to some of the authors based on which they believed that the nature of review platform relates to e-WOM adoption. Bickart and Schindler found that consumer reviews are more influential than marketer generated information on corporate websites.

Hypothesis for Study

H1: high- and low-involvement buyers are indifferent to the quality of reviews they read before making a conspicuous product/service purchase.

H2: Review writing is something consumers are open to doing regardless of whether they have had a good or bad experience with the product in question.

H3: The customer perceived value of online product reviews before purchasing a product is independent of the fact how often they shop online.

Research Methodology

This study analyses the influence that reading online product evaluations has on the behaviors of consumers as well as the decisions that they make when shopping. The literature research utilized internet search engines such as Google Scholar and Research Gate to compile the necessary data for the review. For carrying out the most effective research possible, a survey in the form of a questionnaire was carried out online. This was done because the online mode addresses the problems of reach and scalability, saves money, saves time, and promotes the concept of a paperless society. In addition, participants in online surveys benefit from convenience since they could complete the survey at their own pace and discretion, which ultimately improves the reliability of the data. The conclusions drawn from the review of the relevant literature considering the earlier research questions formed the foundation for the creation of the questionnaire. The examination of primary data, which comprised participants from a range of age groups, provides the foundation for this study. A questionnaire was prepared in order to carry out an investigation in the locations that were being sampled in order to obtain pertinent information for research. In order to gain a better understanding of the perspectives and ways of thinking of a select group of individuals, in-depth conversations were held with the use of a questionnaire. Statistical tools such as tables, averages, graphs, and other such things are utilized in the processing and analysis of the questionnaire. The primary purpose of the questionnaire was to investigate people's points of view.

Data Collection

Primary data and secondary data are the two types of data that may be acquired. The use of a questionnaire using a Likert scale with five points allows for the collection of primary data. The literature review is used to acquire secondary data, which consists of data that was collected by other researchers working on this issue and is shown. 200 persons from a variety of age groups were asked to fill out the questionnaire, and 144 of them did so validly. Of those 144 responders, six people met the criteria for inclusion.

Data analysis and Interpretation

SPSS is the data analysis programme that was utilised for the analysis. We find a link using SPSS between Purchase Behavior and product review, as well as between Purchase Behavior and other parameters such as brand, promotion, need, availability, and price.

As mentioned in methodology ANOVA was conducted to test difference between the groups of high and low involvement consumer preferences towards online product reviews. H1: High-involvement consumers and Low-involvement consumers are indifferent towards the kind of reviews they prefer before purchasing a product.

Hypothesis Testing

H1: high- and low-involvement buyers are indifferent to the quality of reviews they read before making a conspicuous product/service purchase.

Source	DF	Sum of Square	Mean Square	F Statistic	P-value
Groups (between groups)	1	8.45	8.45	1.5195	0.2336
Error (within groups)	18	100.1	5.5611		
Total	19	108.55	5.7132		

1. H₀ hypothesis

Since $p\text{-value} > \alpha$, H₀ is accepted.

The averages of all groups assumed to be equal.

In other words, the difference between the averages of all groups is not big enough to be statistically significant.

2. P-value

p-value equals **0.233556**, [$p(x \leq F) = 0.766444$]. It means that if we would reject H₀, the chance of type1 error (rejecting a correct H₀) would be too high: 0.2336 (23.36%)

The bigger the p-value the stronger it supports H₀

3. The statistics

The test statistic F equals **1.51948**, which is in the 95% region of acceptance: $[-\infty : 4.4139]$

H2: Review writing is something consumers are open to doing regardless of whether they have had a good or bad experience with the product in question.

Source	DF	Sum of Square	Mean Square	F Statistic	P-value
Groups (between groups)	1	12.004	12.004	2.1156	0.1621
Error (within groups)	19	107.8055	5.674		
Total	20	119.8095	5.9905		

1. H₀ hypothesis

Since $p\text{-value} > \alpha$, H₀ is accepted.

The averages of all groups assumed to be equal.

In other words, the difference between the averages of all groups is not big enough to be statistically significant.

2. P-value

p-value equals **0.162125**, [$p(x \leq F) = 0.837875$]. It means that if we would reject H₀, the chance of type1 error (rejecting a correct H₀) would be too high: 0.1621 (16.21%)

The bigger the p-value the stronger it supports H₀

3. The statistics

The test statistic F equals **2.115619**, which is in the 95% region of acceptance: $[-\infty : 4.3807]$

H3: The customer perceived value of online product reviews before purchasing a product is independent of the fact how often they shop online.

Source	DF	Sum of Square	Mean Square	F Statistic	P-value
Groups (between groups)	1	42.3306	42.3306	3.2706	0.08308
Error (within groups)	24	310.6309	12.943		
Total	25	352.9615	14.1185		

1. H_0 hypothesis

Since $p\text{-value} > \alpha$, H_0 is accepted.

The averages of all groups assumed to be equal.

In other words, the difference between the averages of all groups is not big enough to be statistically significant.

2. P-value

p-value equals **0.0830814**, [$p(x \leq F) = 0.916919$]. It means that if we would reject H_0 , the chance of type1 error (rejecting a correct H_0) would be too high: 0.08308 (8.31%)

The bigger the p-value the stronger it supports H_0

3. The statistics

The test statistic F equals **3.270551**, which is in the 95% region of acceptance: $[-\infty : 4.2597]$

Conclusion

In this research, we investigate how customers' opinions expressed in reviews affect their final purchasing decisions. This study shows that internet word of mouth, in the form of customer evaluations, has a significant influence in influencing consumer purchases reviews. Internet reviews are an essential element of the purchasing process and may be the deciding factor for a potential consumer. Information offered through reviews on a product is found to be helpful in reducing the customer's perceived risk, which in turn increases the customer's propensity to make a buy decision. In addition to assisting potential buyers in making a decision, businesses may learn how to better meet their customers' needs by reading and responding to reviews and comments. Consumers' decision making is influenced by a number of elements, including online product reviews, brand, availability, price, and the necessity for the goods. Primary data analysis, which comprised participants of varying ages, forms the backbone of the study. To conduct research with representative samples, a questionnaire was designed.

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