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CONTENTS

Sr.	TITLE & NAME OF THE AUTHOR (C)	Page
No.	TITLE & NAME OF THE AUTHOR (S)	No.
1.	CHANGING BUSINESS DYNAMICS IN ERA OF TECHNOLOGICAL DISRUPTIONS	1
	MONICA GUPTA, Dr. SHASHI SHEKHAR & Dr. KAVITA AGGARWAL	
2.	INFLUENCE AND VALIDITY OF ONLINE REVIEWS ON CUSTOMERS PURCHASE	5
	DECISION – A STUDY	
	MONISHA D & Dr. S. GURUSAMY	
3.	FINANCIAL STRUCTURE OF SELECT BATTERY COMPANIES IN ANDHRA	10
	PRADESH – AN ANALYTICAL STUDY	
	Dr. KOMMINENI KALYANI & Dr. P. MOHAN REDDY	
4.	A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF GST ON GOODS TRANSPORT AGENCIES (GTA)	17
	WITH REFERENCE TO TAMIL NADU	
	ANAND SHANKAR RAJA M & KRISHNA B	
5.	ENHANCED SPARSE SYSTEM FOR MULTI-CHANNEL MANAGEMENT USING	26
	REDUCED MONOTONE GEOMETRIC ALGEBRA	
	Dr. R. MARIMUTHU	
6.	THE STUDY OF CRYPTOCURRENCIES AROUND THE WORLD	30
	GURUCHARAN SINGH BAGGA	
	REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK & DISCLAIMER	34

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FINDINGS

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INFLUENCE AND VALIDITY OF ONLINE REVIEWS ON CUSTOMERS PURCHASE DECISION – A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

India is under a transition period with emerging digitalization; hence, there is wide change over in shopping behaviour. Nowadays many customers prefer online shopping to the traditional shopping. In this scenario, it is essential that to make this study on impact of online reviews because online reviews are the major significant reason in making online shopping. This research paper were also made in relating the AIDA model with online reviews. In this study, an attempt has been made to identify the products purchased online based on reviews, to explore the preferred website for online reviews and to examine the impact of online reviews in the customers purchasing behaviour. The study has revealed that the purchase decision based on good reviews and good rating is quite strong and positive to shop in online. Overall, the study is benefits of the modern marketing towards the digitalization.

KEYWORDS

online shopping, digitalization, online reviews, purchase decision.

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INTRODUCTION



nline shopping allows customers to find a product by visiting the online shopping applications of the store directly by searching alternative sellers using a shopping search the same products availability and pricing at different e-shopping. Online shopping applications enable the customers to look through the several ranges of products and services, view photo or images of the products, along with information about the product specifications, feature and

prices.

ONLINE REVIEWS

Online reviews express the opinions of product purchasers and/or service users and are posted on web sites that are hosted either by a selling company or a third-party virtual platform; these reviews usually contain a written open comment section, often accompanied by a numerical rating. Such reviews provide different types of information not presented in traditional online shopping settings because they give consumers the opportunity to share their previous experiences of products, services, and companies with other potential consumers. Opinions posted by peers have been recognized as more trustworthy than company-sponsored advertising they are also considered a more valuable and sought after source of information. Online reviews can benefit both the consumers and the companies that choose to use them. On the other hand, online reviews could potentially have negative effects on decision making if the amount of information presented in reviews is too overwhelming to process or the opinions stated in the reviews are inconsistent. The Internet, electronic communication has become a major source of information for consumers planning to purchase new products. In fact, online product review Websites outranks all other media in influencing customer decisions. User-generated con- tent, especially online product reviews, helps consumers make informed decisions about purchasing new products and has become a major driving force in new product sales, making effective e-marketing a critical success factor for new product launch. An increasing number of studies have found a positive relationship between online consumer reviews and product sales, including books, movies, and video games. In the online market, three metrics of consumer product reviews have been under close examination: volume, valence, and dispersion. The measuring the volume of product reviews is straight forward discussions about a product in online forums lead to increased awareness among consumers to buy the products from online.

CUSTOMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR IN ONLINE SHOPPING

The marketing around the online shopping, customer's buying behaviour may not be influenced and controlled by the brand and firm, when they make a buying decision that might concern the interactions with search engine, recommendations, online reviews and other information. With the quickly separate of the digital devices environment, people are more likely to use their mobile phones, computers, tablets and other digital devices to gather information. The online shopping has a growing effect on consumer's mind and buying behaviour. In an online shopping environment, interactive decision may have an influence on aid customer decision making. Each customer is becoming more interactive, and though online reviews customers can influence other potential buyers' behaviours. Subsequently, risk and trust would also are two important factors affecting people's' behaviour in digital environments. Customer considers switching between echannels, because they are mainly influence by the comparison with offline shopping, involving growth of security, financial and performance. There are three factors may influence people to do the buying decision, first, people cannot examine whether the product satisfy their needs and wants before they receive it. Second, customer may concern at after-sale services. Finally, customer may afraid that they cannot fully understand the language used in e-sales. Based on those factors customer perceive risk may as a significantly reason influence the online purchasing behaviour.

Online retailers have placed much emphasis on customer trust aspect; trust is another way driving customer's behaviour in digital environment, which can depend on customer's attitude and expectation. Indeed, the company's products design or ideas cannot met customer's expectations. Customer's purchase intension based on rational expectations, and additionally impacts on emotional trust.

AIDA MODEL



Attention: The consumer becomes aware of a category, product or brand (usually through advertising).

Interest: The consumer becomes interested by learning about brand benefits & how the brand fits with lifestyle.

Desire: The consumer develops a favourable disposition towards the brand.

Action: The consumer forms a purchase intention, shops around, engages in trial or makes a purchase.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

An attempt has been made to study the impact of online reviews in various aspects of buying behavior. This study also helps in understanding the consumer's preference on various online reviews in choosing products /services. In addition, this study enables to capture the opinion on online reviews, which create decision-making process. This study was also made in linking the AIDA model with online reviews.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chakraborty & Bhat (2018)1 study brand image which was considered as a signaling phenomenon because high brand image ensures quality product that can reduce consumer's uncertainty, that the effects of online reviews on functional and hedonic brand images in the context of consumer electronic products in India. Lee (2017)² analysed on social shopping deals and their impacts on review metrics at an online review site, Yelp and compared the review metrics of the restaurant businesses and the health and wellness businesses. online review score on the growth rate of the reviews and consequently on the sale growth. Wu He et.al (2017)³ examined on online customer reviews which could light into their experience, opinions, feelings, and concerns it is important for businesses to collect, monitor, analyze, summarize, and visualize online customer reviews posted on social media platforms such as online forums. Simeon et.al (2017)^a asserts that online reviews to explore the experiences of tourists related to cultural attractions, identifies similarities, differences between cultural attractions and identifies tourists' preferences. Authors find five critical components of tourists' experience related to wonder, authenticity, relaxation, discovery and knowledge. Cezar & Ogut (2016)⁵ examined on the impact of three main technologies on converting browsers into customers: that a high rank in search listings, a high number of recommendations and location rating has a significant and positive impact on conversion rates. Yang, Sarathy & Walsh (2016)⁶ analyzed on the psychological mechanism through which consumer reviews affect people's purchasing decisions and behavior that negative reviews induce higher risk perception and a less favorable attitude toward purchases compared to positive reviews. Zhu, David K.C. & Fei (2016)⁷ showed that online consumer reviews mitigate the effectiveness of the other two information sources in driving brand sales. Bona Kim, Seongseop Kim & Cindy Y. Heo (2016)8 evaluated the online hotel reviews produced by customers to identify that satisfiers and dissatisfiers in full-service hotels were distinct, with the exception of two common service-related factors, namely, staff and their attitude and service. Geng Cui, Hon-Kwong Lui, and Xiaoning Guo (2016)9 examined the effect of online reviews on new product sales for consumer electronics and video games. Found that a some light on the effects of eWOM on new product sales and offer interesting revelations for marketing professionals.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To identify the products purchased online based on reviews
- 2. To explore the preferred website for online reviews
- ${\it 3.} \quad {\it To examine the impact of online reviews in the customers purchasing behaviour.}$

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is descriptive in nature and uses primary data. The primary data were collected through the questionnaire. Convenient sampling was adopted in the collection of the data. The sample size is 105 for the study. Data was collected from the consumers who purchased goods online. The questionnaire was structured and questions were closed ended in nature. The questionnaire had 3 parts. The first part of the questionnaire was designed to collect demographic information of the respondents. This covers age, gender, occupation, educational qualification, and family monthly income. The second part of questionnaire was prepared to elicit information about online reviews on the purchasing behavior of customers. The last part of the questionnaire was aimed at elicity information about the online review regarding purchasing products. Statistical tools like Frequency Distribution, Ranking, Chi-square test, Multiple Regression were used to get conclusive results with the help of SPSS V21 and MSExcel software.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- 1. The study was confined only to the consumers in Chennai City.
- 2. Only samples of 105 respondents were taken for the study.
- 3. The duration of the study is 3 months so an in-depth study could not be carried.

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES OF THE RESPONDENTS

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE		FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL
GENDER	Male	69	65.7	105
	Female	36	34.3	[100.0]
AGE	Below 27 Years	46	43.8	
	28 To 37 Years	22	21.0	105
	38 To 47 Years	18	17.1	[100.0]
	Above 48 Years	19	18.1	
EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS	UG	64	61.0	105
	PG	27	25.70	[100.0]
	Other (Diploma)	14	13.30	
MONTHLY FAMILY INCOME	Rs.10,000 -Rs.20,000	23	21.8	
	Rs.21,000 - Rs.30,000	28	26.7	105
	Rs.31,000 - Rs.40,000	30	28.6	[100.0]
	Above Rs. 41,000	24	22.9	
OCCUPATIONS	Students	42	40.0	
	Self-employed	9	8.6	105
	Employer	45	42.8	[100.0]
	Professional	9	8.6	

Source: Primary data

Table 1 show that majority of the respondents are male (65.7%), Most of the them are in the age group of 18-27 (43.8%), Majority of them are Undergraduates (61%) and employed (42.8%) with a monthly income ranging between 30001-40000 (28.6%).

TABLE 2: FREQUENCY OF ONLINE SHOPPING

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage		
Once in week	6	5.7%		
Once in month	84	80.0%		
Twice in month	12	11.4%		
Everyday	3	2.9%		
Total	105	100%		

Source: Primary data

Table 2 reveal the frequency of online shopping. Out of 105 respondents 5.70% shop online in once a week, while 80% shop once a month. 11.40% respondents shop twice a month. 2.90% respondents shop every day. Majority of the respondents shop online once a month.

TABLE 3: OPTION TO VIEW ONLINE REVIEWS

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage	
Yes	86	81.9%	
No	19	18.1%	
Total	105	100%	

Source: Primary data

Table 3 show that the option to view online reviews. Out of 105 respondents, 81.90% option to view online reviews, while 18.10% do not view online reviews. So it can be inferred that the majority (81.90%) respondents to view online reviews

TABLE 4: CHECKING ONLINE REVIEWS BEFORE PURCHASING PRODUCTS

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Often	20	19.%
Always	55	52%
Sometimes	23	22%
Rarely	7	7%
Total	105	100%

Source: Primary data

Table 4 reveals the checking online reviews before purchasing products. Out of 105 respondents, often 19% check online reviews before purchasing products, while 52% respondents always check online reviews before purchasing products, 22% of respondents sometimes check online reviews before purchasing product, whereas 7% of respondents used to check online reviews rarely. It concludes, Majority of the respondents always check online reviews before purchasing products

TABLE 5: OPINION ON ONLINE REVIEWS

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Create confusion	66	62.9%
No confusion	39	37.1%
Total	105	100%

Source: Primary data

Table 5 show that the opinion online reviews creating confusion while purchasing goods and services. Out of 105 respondents, 62.90% consumers have confusion while purchasing goods and services when they go through reviews, while 37.10% consumers did not create confusion while purchasing goods and services. So it can be inferred that the majority (62.90%) of the respondents are have confusion while purchasing goods and services if they look for reviews.

RANKING

TABLE 6: WEBSITES FOR ONLINE REVIEWS

Products	Frequency	Ranking
Amazon Customer Reviews	89	1
Facebook	26	2
Twitter	15	3
IMDB	10	4
TRIP ADVISER	1	5

Source: Primary data

Table 6 show that the websites browsed by the respondents for online reviews. Amazon is frequently used website for online reviews followed by Facebook, Twitter, IMDB, and Trip Adviser.

TABLE 7: PRODUCTS PURCHASED BASED ON REVIEWS

Products	Frequency	Ranking
Electronics	67	1
Movie Tickets	28	2
Textiles	27	3
Electricals	25	4
Book / Magazines	18	5
Airline / Train Reservation	14	6
Food and Beverage	12	7
Hotel Booking	11	8
Stationeries	4	9

Source: Primary data

Table 7 show that the preferred product purchased based on reviews. Majority of the respondents look for online reviews before purchasing electronics goods. This is followed by Movie tickets; Textiles, Electricals, Books/Magazines, Reservation, Food & Beverage, Hotel booking and the least preferred products for online reviews are Stationary products. It can be inferred that Majority of the respondents rely on reviews for purchase of electronic products.

CHI SQUARE TEST

Null hypothesis: There is no association between demographic variables and the opinion on Online reviews.

Alternative hypothesis: There is association between demographic variables and the opinion on Online reviews.

TABLE 8: CHI SQUARE ANALYSIS: DEMOGRAPHICS AND THE OPINION ON ONLINE REVIEWS

Chi- Square Value		Degree of freedom	P-value	
Age	15.186(a)	9	.086	
Gender	2.947(a)	3	.400	
Occupation	9.232(a)	9	.416	
Education	2.456(a)	6	.874	
Monthly Income	5.951(a)	9	.745	

Source: Primary data

Table 8 the chi square test on the summarized cross tabulation about reveals that there is no association between demographics and the opinion on online reviews. Majority P value is 0.874 which is greater than 0.05. Hence, null Hypothesis is accepted.

MULTIPLE REGRESSION

TABLE 9

Dependent variable: Purchase decision	Interdependent variable: Online Reviews
Multiple R value:.740	R square value:.547
F value: 30.195	P value: 0.000

TABLE 10: MODEL SUMMARY

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
1	.740a	.547	.529	.609	R Square	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
					.547	30.195	4	100	.000

a. Predictors: (constant), desire, interest, attention, action

Source: Primary data

This table 10 provides the *R* and *R*² values. The *R* value represents the simple correlation and is 0.740 (the "R" Column), which indicates a high degree of correlation. The *R*² value (the "R Square" column) indicates how much of the total variation in the dependent variable, Intrinsic Motivation, can be explained by the independent variable perception on purchase decision. In this case, can be explained, which is very large. The multiple correlation coefficient is 0.740 measures the degree of relationship between the actual values and the predicted values. This coefficient value of 0.740 indicates that the relationship between (Independent Variables) Desire, Interest, Attention Creator, Action of Purchase and (Dependent Variable) Purchase Decision based on good review and good rating is quite strong and positive.

TABLE 11: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.			
Regression	44.838	4	11.210					
Residual	37.124	100	.371	30.195	.000b			
Total	81.962	104						
a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision								
b. Predictors: (constant, Online Reviews								

Source: Primary data

From the table 11. ANOVA significance 0.000 indicates that statistical significance of the regression model that was run. Here, p < 0.000, which is less than 0.05, and indicates that, overall, the regression model statistically significantly predicts the outcome variable (i.e., it is a good fit for the data).

TABLE 12: COEFFICIENT

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	В	Std.Error	Beta		
(constant)	413	.465		887	.377
Action of purchase	.008	.019	.038	.411	.682
Attention creator	.037	.034	.085	1.082	.282
Interest	.231	.031	.664	7.392	.000
Desire	.009	.026	.025	.334	.739

Source: Primary data

From the table 12 coefficient the inference is been determined. The coefficient of determination R-square measures the goodness of fit of the estimated Sample Regression Plane (SRP) in terms of the proportion of the variation in the dependent variables explained by the fitted sample regression equation. Thus, the value

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

of R square is.547 simply means that about 54.7 % of the variation in Purchase Decision based on good review and good rating is explained by the estimated SRP that uses the AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire And Action) independent variable and R square value is significant at the 5% level.

The beta coefficient tells you how strongly is the independent variable associated with the dependent variable. It is equal to the correlation coefficient between the variables. Thus, this regression model is excellent in creating impact between online reviews and the purchase decision. It can be concluded that the online reviews have a significant impact on the purchasing decision of the respondents. The customers' decision to purchase products online is influenced by the reviews posted on the internet

SUGGESTIONS

Polite and prompt responses from the company to the negative reviews of the customers can change the customer perception about the products. The reviews can be given in a long sentence instead of giving a single word evaluation such as good, bad and worthless reviews. The videos, pictures and cumulative reviews can be posted to create a positive impact on customer purchasing behavior. Many people are buying the products and posting their reviews in social Medias, I suggest that there could be an option that people who are buying the new products can discuss with the people who have already posted the reviews.

CONCLUSION

Online reviews has a strong impact on customers purchasing behavior, 8 out of 10 consumers trust online reviews as much as a personal recommendation. Consumers prefer to shop through channels that make product information, including rating and reviews, easily accessible. The result suggests that the majority of consumers have a positive relationship between online consumer reviews and product sales. Consumers believes that online reviews has become a major driving force in new product sales and it creates Action, Interest, Desire, Attention towards customers purchasing behavior. The ways consumers use online reviews may differ by specific product categories and product familiarity and involvement. Thus, investigating consumer review usage behavior in different product categories and focusing on the level of familiarity and involvement would enrich our understanding regarding online consumer review usage behavior.

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