

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE, IT & MANAGEMENT

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**IMPACT OF ONLINE CUSTOMER APPRAISAL ON ONLINE SHOPPER BUYING DECISIONS**

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**ABSTRACT**

*E- Commerce is the booming industry in recent days. It is a form buying and selling the goods online which allows the consumers. It facilitates the customers to buy the desired products 24\*7. In the recent era people preferring the modern techniques of shopping through online due to busy schedules. So people using technology to meet their needs. While buying a product the particular website is allowing the user to share their views on a purchased product. In order to know the quality of the product, specifications of the product or service, service towards a product etc. the customer needs to get the information. So for the convenience of the customers e-commerce websites are providing a facility to review the product by different ways like ratings, reviews, comments and discussions on other platforms i.e., namely discussions on social media, consumer forums etc...A technique of convenience sampling is used and the sample of 198 responses. The purpose of this study is to know the impact of positive and negative information of the product and how it impacts the customer buying decision.*

**KEYWORDS**

e-commerce, online shopping, ratings, reviews, comments, consumer forums, discussions on social media.

**INTRODUCTION**

**E**lectronic commerce (ecommerce) is a type of business model, or segment of a larger business model, that enables a firm or individual to conduct business over an electronic network, typically the internet. Electronic commerce operates in all four of the major market segments: business to business, business to consumer, consumer to consumer and consumer to business. Electronic commerce in digital goods and services that are intended for consumption by the human senses (Clarke 1997).

Every type of business is having a separate significance. Ecommerce boom has made the retailer's sales to be reduced, as many people prefer online shopping due to many reasons. But still retail stores exist and there are many new entrants.

Appraisal is the term which refers to valuation/assessment. A customer when purchases the product their customer derives some experience towards the product. The experience may be either positive or negative. If the customer likes the product there is a scope of giving a positive appraisal and if the customer gets negative experience, there is a scope of giving a negative appraisal. Appraisal is something which gives the other customer the specifications of the product. It is the process of gathering the information about the product of the customer. Appraisal consists of ratings, reviews, comments, likes for the reviews, recommendations.

Customer comments are a double-edged sword. On the one hand, you'll receive a lot of plaudits for your work, as well as useful customer feedback. On the other hand, you'll receive some complaints, as well – including some that are downright nasty. It is a single sentenced description towards the product which gives very precise information. Customer ratings are stars which also act as one of the type of appraisal of the product. It may or may not give the accurate information of the product.

Customer review is a review of a product or service made by a customer who has purchased the product or service. Customer reviews are a form of customer feedback on electronic commerce and online shopping sites. There are also dedicated review sites, some of which use customer reviews as well as or instead of professional reviews. The reviews may themselves be graded for usefulness or accuracy by other users.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To identify the effectiveness of online appraisal on customer buying behavior.
2. To identify the different factors that followed as customer appraisal in ecommerce sector.
3. To identify the impact of customer appraisal on consumer buying decision.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY****PRIMARY DATA**

The primary data will be collected mainly with the help of a questionnaire designed for the purpose of the study.

**SECONDARY DATA**

The secondary data will be collected from different sources like -

- Journals, Magazines, etc.
- Organizational manuals
- Websites
- Published and unpublished content and reports

**POPULATION**

Some online shoppers are taken into my study to identify the problems facing by them while doing online shopping.

**SAMPLING**

Sample plan to know how the variables of customer appraisal affecting the consumers purchase decision.

**SAMPLING SIZE**

Taking into account the nature and the extent of study along with the constraint of time, a sample size of 198 respondents were taken. The survey was conducted over a period of 120 days.

**SAMPLE METHOD**

The researcher has followed the convenience sampling method for this project study.

**RESEARCH DESIGN**

- ❖ In the research design of this project the study was conducted by the survey method.
- ❖ Taking sample 198 respondents by commencing sampling using the research instrument as the questionnaire.
- ❖ Personal interview is considered as the sample plan.

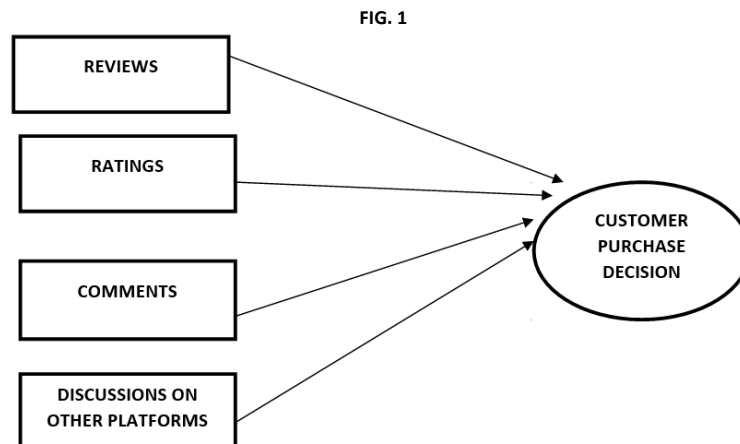
**HYPOTHESIS**

H<sub>01</sub>: Reviews doesn't show any impact on online customer purchase decision.

H<sub>02</sub>: Ratings doesn't show any impact on online customer purchase decision.

H<sub>03</sub>: Comments doesn't show any impact on online customer purchase decision.

H<sub>04</sub>: Information gathered on other platforms doesn't show any impact on online customer buying decision.

**RESEARCH FRAMEWORK****REVIEWS**

Online user reviews have become an important source of information to consumers, substituting and complementing other forms of firm-to-consumer and offline word-of-mouth communications about product quality (which appears August 2006 issue of Journal of Marketing Research.) Online consumer reviews (OCR), one type of electronic word-of-mouth, provide product information and recommendations from the customer perspective (Lee et al., 2008) (aliyayli). The opinions and ratings of the products also generally include brief profile information about the consumer (source) posting the review including community-rated reputation of reviewers indicating the perceived usefulness of previously posted reviews and other products purchased or rated (Wu, P.F., 2013). Opinions and ratings of the products also generally include brief profile information. Whereas Online review section has become a must have on any consumer oriented website and it does have a major impact on customer's buying behaviour. (PrabhaKiran, Dr.S. Vasantha 2014). The online market enables customers to write recommendations that influence potential consumers (Lee et al., 2008). According to a report of the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (Assocham) on online shopping, India's e-commerce market has reached US\$ 8.5 billion in 2012, compared to US\$ 2.5 billion in 2009. The market has shown a rise of 88 per cent with US\$ 16 billion in 2013 (Shubham & Shagufta). Online reviews provide potential consumers valuable references before purchase, and their purchase decision will boost product sales eventually. Thus, it is appropriate to measure online review effect with product sales performance (Godes & Mayzlin 2004, Chevalier & Mayzlin 2006, Duan et al. 2008, Ghose & Ipeirotis 2011) In Chevalier and Mayzlin's study, the authors characterize patterns of reviewer behavior and examine the effect of consumer reviews on firms' sales patterns. On the contrary, some prior studies reported that online user-generated reviews are perceived as having lower credibility than traditional WOM due to the absence of source cues on the Internet (Smith et al., 2005) (aliyayli).

**RATINGS**

Consumers frequently need to make a prediction about a product's quality before buying. These predictions are central to marketing because they drive initial sales, customer satisfaction, repeat sales, and ultimately profit, as well as shareholder value (Aaker and Jacobson 1994; Bolton and Drew 1991; Rust, Zahorik, and Keiningham 1995, Bart et al.). Given the growth of online review websites, marketing scholars have examined demand consequences of online product ratings (Bickart and Schindler 2001; Sridhar&raji). There is limited and mixed empirical evidence on social influence in online ratings. Schlosser (2005) reports that reviewers, motivated by a need to be perceived as discriminating, decrease their online product ratings after reading others' online reviews. Other research reports that when others' online ratings are at the lower end of the rating scale, reviewers tend to increase their online product rating (Moe and Trusov 2011; Sridhar&raji). Moreover, the distribution of product ratings 1 is commonly found to have a right-skewed U-shape or J-shape across various contexts and platforms (McGlohon et al. 2010; Yi et al.). These conclusions rest on two key assumptions. The first assumption is that user ratings provide a good indication of product quality. The second assumption is that consumers are drawing appropriate quality inferences from user ratings. Specifically, Clemons et al. (2006) found that strongly positive ratings can positively influence the growth of product sales, and Chen et al. (2008).

**COMMENTS**

Online comments have a dual function. They serve as traditional comments or reviews about a particular product as well as evaluations of the product, which potential buyers can use as reference. The power of online comments, including their effect on the online sales and business has been empirically proven in many areas (LIANPING REN et al; 2015). These online comments are inclusive and diverse in terms of content. Several studies have examined the negative comments, such as customer complaints. (Sparks and Browning 2010; LIANPING REN et al; 2015). Comments are not threaded, so to respond to other comments users will typically reference the user name of the person they are responding to (Nicholas Diakopoulos et al). Reading motives relating to social interaction included people wanting to see a divergence of other views in the comments such as other perspectives or dimensions, to see people's true feelings, or to get the community's current thinking on an issue.

**INFORMATION ON OTHER PLATFORMS**

Social networking sites have become popular in recent times and they are receiving a lot of attention on the internet. Along with the World Wide Web (www), the Internet has provided a new paradigm in every corner of our society and resulted in a change in our lives through interaction over the Internet (Alexander et al, 2013). Human beings are social and nowadays, consumers are participating in variety of activities, from consuming content to sharing knowledge, experiences, opinions, and involved in discussion with other consumers online (AydaDarban et al 2012). Internet is a social place where created new forum for consumers. Virtual communities, blogs, and online social networking sites provide a platform to influence consumers' purchase decisions (OTX research, 2008). The media that describes a variety of new sources of online information that are created, initiated, circulated and used by consumers intent on educating each other about products, brands, services, personalities, and issues is call social media.(Blackshaw, P. and Nazzaro, M. (2004).).Furthermore, Kotler (2009) argues that the consumers are mostly affected by their social factors such as opinions of their family or friends while making a purchase decision and the family is usually the most influential factor on consumers while purchasing an expensive product Chu and Kim (2011) suggest that the consumers easily engage with social network sites in their buying decision process to seek their contacts' opinions about products, because they acquire more valuable information from their friends of family rather than unknown people(Sinemozer 2012). "Technology related developments such as the rise of powerful search engines, advanced mobile devices and interfaces,

peer-to-peer communication vehicles, and online social networks have extended marketers' ability to reach shoppers through new touch points" (Shankar et al. 2011, 30, Holly Paquette 2013). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, 61) define social media as "a group of Internet based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and allow the creation and exchange of user generated content."

## DATA ANALYSIS

### CHI-SQUARE TABLES

**TABLE 1: AGE \* WHAT INFLUENCES YOUR PURCHASE**

CHI-SQUARE TESTS			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	29.917 <sup>a</sup>	10	.001
Likelihood Ratio	24.196	10	.007
Linear-by-Linear Association	.521	1	.470
N of Valid Cases	198		

a. 10 cells (55.6%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .56.

The test shows the significant difference between age & what influences the purchase. The minimal acceptable value is 0.05. The value which was derived is .001. There is significant relation between age & what factors influence the purchase.

**TABLE 2: ENDER\*WHAT INFLUENCES YOUR PURCHASE**

CHI-SQUARE TESTS			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.260 <sup>a</sup>	5	.031
Likelihood Ratio	13.170	5	.022
Linear-by-Linear Association	.000	1	.985
N of Valid Cases	198		

a. 3 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.44.

The test shows the significant difference between gender & what influences the purchase. The minimal acceptable value is 0.05. The value which was derived is .031. There is no significant relation between gender & what factors influence the purchase.

**TABLE 3: OCCUPATION\*WHAT INFLUENCES THE PURCHASE**

CHI-SQUARE TESTS			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	30.893 <sup>a</sup>	20	.057
Likelihood Ratio	30.698	20	.059
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.112	1	.043
N of Valid Cases	198		

a. 21 cells (70.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .20.

The test shows the significant difference between occupation & what influences the purchase. The minimal acceptable value is 0.05. The value which was derived is .057. There is no significant relation between occupation & what factors influence the purchase.

## DISCUSSIONS

Online customer appraisal is the process which involves ratings, reviews, comments, & likes for the reviews. Directly or indirectly customer appraisal affects the purchase decision of the other customer. It is helpful for the company as well as for the customers. Reviews give the detailed information of the product. Ratings may or may not give the accurate information. Comments are the one sentenced description of the product. It gives the simple description of the product and the service of the company.

From the sample of 198 respondents, the maximum no. of respondents prefers online shopping and the maximum no. prefer online shopping is males. Through my research I came to know the information like hypothesis of reviews has rejected the alternate hypothesis H1 and accepted the null hypothesis H0. Hypothesis for ratings has rejected the alternate hypothesis H1 and accepted the null hypothesis H0.

With respect to reviews and ratings, there is no influence on purchase decision of the customers.

## FINDINGS

- The maximum no. of population prefers online shopping and maximum no. of population 96.5% prefer online shopping is males.
- App 96% of population browse e-commerce sites once in a month
- App 39% of the population prefers to purchase products once in a couple of months.
- 43.4% of population purchase products through Amazon.
- 36.4% of population purchases electronic goods through online.

## SUGGESTION

- If the company provides better services, customers show interest in appraising the product, which leads to retain existing customers, attracting new customers & generating revenue.
- Presently the information gathered from various sources doesn't make any impact on online customer purchase decision. So even for some of the complicated products there must be warranty and service should be provided.

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