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# EXPLORATORY STUDY OF IMPACT OF REVIEWS ON CONSUMER ONLINE BUYING BEHAVIOUR AND BRAND PERCEPTION

## Abstract

In the contemporary digital landscape, online reviews have become pivotal in shaping consumer behavior and brand perception. As consumers increasingly rely on digital platforms for product research and purchasing decisions, online reviews have emerged as indispensable sources of information and validation. This study explores the multifaceted dynamics of online reviews and their influence on consumer behaviour and brand perception. By examining demographic characteristics and online shopping tendencies, the study delves into the relationship between online reviews, consumer behaviour, and brand perception. Findings reveal that demographic factors such as age group, gender, education level, and income range significantly impact consumer preferences and behaviours related to online reviews. While age group, income range, and education level influence the frequency of reading online reviews and their subsequent impact on purchasing decisions, gender does not exhibit significant effects in this context. Moreover, demographic variables significantly shape beliefs about brand trustworthiness based on online reviews, highlighting the nuanced interplay between demographics and consumer perceptions. These findings underscore the importance of understanding the role of online reviews in the digital marketplace and provide valuable insights for businesses seeking to leverage online reviews effectively to enhance consumer engagement, drive sales, and cultivate a positive brand image.

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**Keywords:** Online Reviews, Consumer Behaviour, Brand Perception, Demographic Factors, Purchasing Decisions, Trustworthiness

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## Introduction

In the contemporary digital landscape, characterized by the pervasive influence of e-commerce and online interactions, the role of online reviews stands as a defining factor in shaping consumer behaviour and brand perception. As consumers increasingly rely on digital platforms for product research and purchasing decisions, online reviews have emerged as indispensable sources of information, guidance, and validation. This paradigm shift underscores the significance of understanding the impact of online reviews on consumer online buying behaviour and brand perception. Positive reviews can serve as powerful endorsements, instilling confidence in potential buyers and fostering trust in brands, while negative reviews have the potential to deter consumers and undermine brand credibility (Sudirjo et al., 2023). Consequently, businesses operating in the digital marketplace must navigate the complexities of online reviews strategically, leveraging

### Sakshi Jain

Research Scholar  
Pacific University, Udaipur  
(Raj.)

### Prof. Subhash Sharma

Professor, Pacific University,  
Udaipur (Raj.)

them as tools to enhance consumer engagement, drive sales, and cultivate a positive brand image (Abu-AlSondos et al., 2023; Kumar & Adholiya, 2019). Moreover, the implications of online reviews extend beyond immediate purchasing decisions to broader aspects of brand loyalty, advocacy, and reputation management. Against this backdrop, this exploratory study seeks to delve into the multifaceted dynamics of online reviews, investigating their influence on consumer behaviour and brand perception. By elucidating the mechanisms through which online reviews shape consumer decision-making processes and brand perceptions, the study aims to offer actionable insights and recommendations for businesses seeking to harness the power of online reviews effectively in the digital age.

The significance of online reviews in the contemporary digital marketplace cannot be overstated. With proliferation of e-commerce platforms and the increasing commoditization of products and services, consumers are inundated with choices, making it challenging to discern the best options (Guo et al., 2020; Adholiya & Adholiya, 2018). In this environment, online reviews serve as beacons of guidance, offering consumers valuable insights into product quality, performance, and overall customer satisfaction. Researches indicate that vast majority of consumers rely on online reviews to inform their purchasing decisions, with studies showing that over 90% of consumers read online reviews before making a purchase. This reliance on peer recommendations underscores the influential role of online reviews in shaping consumer behaviour and purchase intentions. Furthermore, online reviews play a crucial role in shaping brand perception and reputation in digital age. Positive reviews can enhance brand credibility, authenticity, and trustworthiness, contributing to positive brand associations and fostering consumer loyalty. Conversely, negative reviews can have detrimental effects on brand image, eroding consumer trust and damaging brand reputation (Bigne et al., 2020). A single negative review can significantly impact consumer perceptions and purchase decisions, highlighting the importance of proactive reputation management and review monitoring for businesses. Thus, understanding the dynamics of

online reviews and their impact on brand perception is essential for businesses seeking to maintain a positive brand image and competitive edge in the digital marketplace (Fadillah & Kusumawati, 2021).

Given the significance of online reviews in shaping consumer behaviour and brand perception, businesses must adopt a proactive approach to managing and leveraging online reviews effectively. This entails not only monitoring and responding to customer feedback but also actively soliciting and incentivizing positive reviews from satisfied customers (Adholiya et al., 2019). Businesses should also invest in review management platforms and tools to track and analyse online sentiment, identify trends and patterns, and respond to customer concerns in real-time. Moreover, businesses can leverage online reviews as a strategic marketing tool, incorporating positive reviews into their marketing collateral and leveraging user-generated content to enhance brand credibility and trustworthiness (Ventre & Kolbe, 2020).

Overall, the impact of online reviews on consumer behaviour and brand perception in the digital age cannot be underestimated. As consumers increasingly turn to digital platforms for product research and purchasing decisions, online reviews play a central role in shaping consumer attitudes, preferences, and purchase intentions. Businesses must recognize the significance of online reviews and adopt proactive strategies to leverage them effectively in the digital marketplace. By understanding the dynamics of online reviews and their impact on consumer behaviour and brand perception, businesses can enhance customer engagement, drive sales, and build a positive brand image in the digital age (Zhu et al., 2020; Dolega et al., 2021; Sestino et al., 2020).

## Review of Literature

Overall, online reviews wield substantial influence over consumer behaviour and brand perception in the digital era. Businesses must actively manage and monitor online feedback to uphold a positive brand image, foster trust with consumers, and drive purchasing intent. Understanding the dynamics of online reviews

and their impact on consumer attitudes is imperative for crafting effective marketing strategies and bolstering brand competitiveness in the online landscape. The significance of online reviews on consumer purchasing decisions and brand image is a critical element in e-commerce and marketing tactics. These reviews wield considerable power over consumer choices, shaping their intentions to buy and their likelihood to spread word-of-mouth feedback (Le & Luong, 2019). Positive reviews can bolster consumer purchasing behaviour, while negative ones may deter potential buyers (Mo et al., 2015). Factors like the perceived advantages and drawbacks of reviews, along with the credibility and helpfulness of the feedback, influence consumer attitudes towards brands (Lee & Jin, 2012; Mudambi & Schuff, 2010).

Researchers have extensively explored how online reviews impact brand equity and consumer actions, emphasizing the necessity of managing brand perception through digital feedback (Chakraborty & Bhat, 2018; Garg & Pandey, 2023). The quality of reviews and the trustworthiness of their sources significantly shape brand perception (Garg & Pandey, 2023). Furthermore, online reviews not only affect consumer behaviour but also mould perceptions of brand personality in the digital realm (Ghorbani et al., 2022). As consumers engage with brands across various digital platforms, their perceptions of brand personality continuously evolve, underscoring the importance of managing these perceptions for effective brand positioning and customer engagement. The influence of online reviews transcends individual purchase decisions, impacting broader aspects of consumer behaviour such as brand loyalty, image, and equity (Chakraborty & Bhat, 2018). Consumers rely on online reviews to evaluate product quality, service experiences, and brand reputation, making them a pivotal source of information in the digital marketplace (Saxena & Dhar, 2021). The content and sentiment of online reviews significantly shape consumer perceptions of brand quality and authenticity (Hussain et al., 2017).

Broadly the discussion related to work performed over research entitled Impact of Reviews on Consumer Online Buying Behaviour and Brand

Perception, and different allied research scope is presented in the consecutive section here under:

**Section 1: The Influence of Online Reviews on Consumer Buying Behaviour:** Online reviews have become a significant determinant of consumer purchasing decisions in the digital age. This literature review aims to explore the influence of online reviews on consumer buying behavior, synthesizing key findings from relevant studies in the field. Numerous studies have highlighted the profound impact of online reviews on consumer decision-making processes. Le and Luong (2019) found that online reviews play a crucial role in shaping word-of-mouth behavior through consumer purchase intention in e-commerce settings. Positive reviews have been shown to enhance consumer purchase behavior, while negative reviews can deter potential customers (Mo et al., 2015). Lee and Jin (2012) further emphasize the importance of online reviews, demonstrating their significant influence on consumer attitudes and purchase behavior.

The credibility and trustworthiness of online reviews are essential factors that influence consumer perceptions and attitudes towards brands. Mudambi and Schuff (2010) discuss the effect of online review configurations on purchase decisions, highlighting the importance of factors such as review volume, valence, and source credibility. Consumers tend to trust reviews from credible sources and rely on them to evaluate product quality and service experiences (Phillips et al., 2012). As such, businesses must actively manage and monitor online reviews to maintain a positive brand image and build trust with consumers (Chakraborty & Bhat, 2017). Additionally, the quality of arguments and opinions shared in reviews significantly affects brand perception. Garg and Pandey (2021) emphasize the role of online reviews in shaping brand image and authenticity perception, highlighting the impact of review content and sentiment on consumer perceptions of brand quality and authenticity. Consumers are more likely to trust and engage with brands that have positive online reviews and authentic feedback from other consumers (Liu, 2023).

Furthermore, online reviews not only influence individual purchase decisions but also play a role



in shaping broader aspects of consumer behavior, such as brand loyalty and word-of-mouth behavior. Chakraborty and Bhat (2017) discuss the effects of online reviews on brand equity dimensions and their consequences on consumer behavior, highlighting the importance of managing brand perception through online feedback. Consumers rely on online reviews not only to make informed purchase decisions but also to share their experiences with others, thereby influencing the purchasing decisions of their peers (Dellarocas, 2006).

Consumers increasingly rely on online reviews to inform their purchasing decisions, evaluate product quality, and assess brand reputation. Businesses must actively manage and monitor online reviews to maintain a positive brand image, build trust with consumers, and drive purchase intentions. Understanding the dynamics of online reviews and their influence on consumer attitudes is essential for developing effective marketing strategies and enhancing brand competitiveness in the online marketplace.

**Section 2: Impact of Online Reviews on Brand Perception:** Online reviews serve as a powerful tool in shaping consumer perceptions of brands. Chakraborty and Bhat (2017) highlight the effects of online reviews on brand equity dimensions and their consequences on consumer behavior. Positive reviews can enhance brand reputation and equity, while negative reviews may tarnish brand image and diminish consumer trust. As such, managing online reviews is crucial for maintaining a positive brand perception in the eyes of consumers. The credibility and trustworthiness of online reviews play a pivotal role in shaping brand perception. Garg and Pandey (2021) emphasize the importance of authentic reviews in influencing consumer attitudes towards brands. Consumers are more likely to trust brands with positive and genuine online feedback, as it reinforces perceptions of brand quality and authenticity. Conversely, the presence of fake or manipulated reviews can erode consumer trust and damage brand reputation.

The content and sentiment of online reviews significantly impact consumer perceptions of

brand quality and authenticity. Liu (2023) discusses how the quality of arguments and opinions shared in reviews can shape brand image. Positive reviews that highlight product features, benefits, and positive experiences can enhance brand perception, whereas negative reviews that highlight product flaws or poor customer experiences may lead to negative brand associations. Furthermore, online reviews contribute to shaping brand personality perceptions in the digital realm. Ghorbani et al. (2022) explore how consumers interact with brands through online reviews, leading to continuous updates in their perceptions of brand personality. Brands that are perceived as trustworthy, reliable, and responsive to customer feedback are more likely to foster positive brand perceptions among consumers.

The influence of online reviews on brand perception extends beyond individual purchase decisions to impact broader aspects of consumer behavior, such as brand loyalty and advocacy. Dellarocas (2006) highlight the role of online reviews in influencing word-of-mouth behavior, as satisfied customers are more likely to share positive experiences with others, thereby enhancing brand reputation and fostering brand loyalty. Overall, online reviews exert a profound influence on brand perception in the digital age. Positive reviews can enhance brand reputation, trust, and loyalty, while negative reviews can undermine brand image and credibility. Businesses must actively manage and monitor online reviews to maintain a positive brand perception, build consumer trust, and foster brand advocacy in the competitive digital marketplace.

**Section 3: Impact of Online Reviews on Brand Perception:** One of the critical factors influencing the effectiveness of online reviews is the credibility and trustworthiness of the source. Dellarocas (2006) emphasize the importance of recommendations and consumer reviews from credible sources in shaping consumer evaluations of websites. Consumers tend to trust reviews from reputable sources or verified purchasers, as they perceive them to be more reliable and unbiased. The characteristics of online reviews, such as review volume, valence, and content, also

influence their effectiveness. Positive reviews tend to have a more significant impact on consumer purchase decisions compared to negative reviews (Mo et al., 2015). Additionally, reviews that provide detailed information about product features, benefits, and personal experiences are perceived as more helpful and influential by consumers (Sahoo et al., 2018).

The platform and format of online reviews can affect their effectiveness. Lee and Jin (2012) discuss how consumers' attitudes towards online reviews are influenced by the platform on which they are posted. Reviews posted on reputable and well-established platforms are generally perceived as more trustworthy and influential. Moreover, the format of online reviews, such as star ratings, written reviews, or video testimonials, can also impact their effectiveness in influencing consumer perceptions and behaviors (Vidanagama et al., 2020). The characteristics of the reviewer, such as their expertise, credibility, and demographic profile, can also influence the effectiveness of online reviews. Consumers are more likely to trust reviews from experts or individuals with relevant experience or knowledge about the product or service being reviewed (Chen et al., 2020). Additionally, demographic factors such as age, gender, and cultural background may influence how consumers perceive and interpret online reviews (Mudambi & Schuff, 2010). Furthermore, the timing and context in which online reviews are presented can impact their effectiveness. Aureliano-Silva et al. (2021) discussed how the timing of online reviews relative to the consumer's decision-making process can influence their impact on purchase behavior. Reviews that are posted closer to the time of purchase or during periods of high product demand may have a more significant influence on consumer decisions.

Overall, the effectiveness of online reviews is influenced by various factors, including the credibility of the source, characteristics of the reviews, platform and format, reviewer characteristics, and timing and context. Businesses must consider these factors when managing and leveraging online reviews to enhance their impact on consumer perceptions and behaviours.

Section 5: Managerial Implications: The findings from existing research offer several key managerial implications for businesses: Firstly, businesses must recognize the importance of actively managing and monitoring online reviews to maintain a positive brand image and reputation. Chakraborty and Bhat (2017) emphasize the need for businesses to respond promptly and effectively to both positive and negative reviews, demonstrating their commitment to customer satisfaction and engagement. Secondly, businesses should seek to leverage online reviews as a strategic marketing tool to enhance brand credibility, trust, and customer loyalty. Garg and Pandey (2021) highlight the role of online reviews in shaping brand image and authenticity perception, suggesting that businesses should encourage satisfied customers to leave positive reviews and testimonials.

Thirdly, businesses can use insights from online reviews to inform product development, marketing strategies, and customer service improvements. Mo et al. (2015) discuss how businesses can analyse online reviews to identify common themes, issues, and areas for improvement, enabling them to address customer concerns and enhance the overall customer experience. Lastly, businesses should consider the platform and format of online reviews when developing their online review strategy. Lee and Jin (2012) emphasize the importance of choosing reputable platforms and formats that resonate with their target audience, thereby maximizing the impact and effectiveness of online reviews on consumer perceptions and behaviours.

## Research Objectives

- To examine relationship between online reviews and consumer purchasing behaviour.
- To explore the impact of online reviews on brand perception and consumer trust.

## Hypotheses Under Statistical Evaluation

$H_{01}$ : Demographic factor (gender) do not have significant impact on the frequency of reading online reviews.

**H<sub>a1</sub>:** Demographic factors (Age Group, Income Range, and Education Level) have a significant impact on the frequency of reading online reviews.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Demographic factor (gender) do not have a significant impact on Opinion for the Effect of Online Reviews on Purchasing Decisions.

**H<sub>a2</sub>:** Demographic factors (Age Group, Income Range, and Education Level) have a significant impact on Opinion for the Effect of Online Reviews on Purchasing Decisions.

**H<sub>a3</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between frequency of reading online reviews and consumer purchasing behaviour.

**H<sub>a3</sub>:** There is significant relationship between frequency of reading online reviews and consumer purchasing behaviour.

**H<sub>04</sub>:** There is no effect of trust for online reviews on respondents' brand perception and consumer trust.

**H<sub>a4</sub>:** There is significant effect of trust for online reviews on respondents' brand perception and consumer trust.

**H<sub>05</sub>:** Demographic variables do not have any effects on belief that brands with higher numbers of positive online reviews are more trustworthy.

**H<sub>a5</sub>:** Demographic variables have significant effects on belief that brands with higher numbers of positive online reviews are more trustworthy.

**H<sub>06</sub>:** Demographic variables do not have any effects on Opinion for Online Reviews Influence on Perception of Brand's Quality.

**H<sub>a6</sub>:** Demographic variables (age group, gender, education level and income range) have significant effects on Opinion for Online Reviews Influence on Perception of Brand's Quality.

## Research Methodology

This exploratory study aims to delve into the multifaceted dynamics of online reviews, investigating their impact on consumer decision-making processes and brand perceptions. By

elucidating the mechanisms through which online reviews influence consumer behaviour and brand perception, this study seeks to offer actionable insights and recommendations for businesses aiming to effectively harness the power of online reviews in the digital age. This research adopts an exploratory approach to gain insights into the complex interplay between online reviews, consumer behaviour, and brand perception. The research philosophy blends interpretivism, which acknowledges the subjective nature of human experiences, with pragmatism, emphasizing the practical implications of the research findings for businesses. Both qualitative and quantitative methods will be employed to gather comprehensive insights.

- **Data Collection:** For the purpose of data collection following methods have been followed:
- **Surveys:** Online surveys will be distributed to gather quantitative data on consumer behaviours, attitudes, and perceptions regarding online reviews. The survey questions will be designed to capture various aspects such as frequency of review reading, trust in reviews, and their impact on purchase decisions.
- **Observation:** Online platforms and forums where reviews are posted will be observed to analyse consumer interactions and sentiments in real-time. This method will provide valuable insights into the dynamics of online review platforms and the behaviors of users.
- Participants have been selected using purposive sampling to ensure diversity in demographics, online behaviour, and purchasing habits. Criteria for participant selection will include factors such as age, gender, income level, frequency of online review reading, and engagement with online platforms. Recruitment will be conducted through online channels such as social media, email lists, and relevant online communities.

**Sampling Methodology:** The sampling methodology employed in this research is a critical component in ensuring the validity and reliability of the findings. With the objective of

understanding the relationship between online reviews and consumer behaviour, a comprehensive approach to sampling was adopted.

- Firstly, the population under study, consisting of individuals engaged or somewhere aware with online shopping, was clearly defined. This population represents a diverse range of consumers who actively utilize online platforms for their purchasing decisions.
- Second, the sampling frame, which serves as the source from which the sample is drawn, was carefully selected. This could include various online platforms such as e-commerce websites, social media platforms, or specific review websites where consumers commonly encounter online reviews.
- Third, to determine the sample size, considerations such as the population size, desired level of confidence, and margin of error were taken into account. In this case, a sample size of 135 respondents was deemed appropriate for meaningful analysis.
- Fourth, in terms of sampling technique, a combination of convenience and stratified

sampling was utilized. Convenience sampling facilitated easy access to participants from the target population, while stratified sampling ensured representation across different demographics, such as age, gender, income level, and geographic location.

- Lastly, the actual sampling method involved systematic or random sampling techniques to ensure that each member of the population had an equal chance of being selected. This could entail randomly selecting individuals from each stratum or selecting every *n*th individual from a list obtained from the sampling frame.

## Data Analysis and Interpretation

**A. Demographic Distribution Analysis:** By analysing frequency distribution of demographic variables such as age, gender, income, and education level, researchers can segment the sample population into distinct groups. Understanding the demographic composition of the sample enables researchers to identify specific consumer segments that may exhibit different patterns of behaviour in response to online reviews. This segmentation facilitates targeted marketing strategies tailored to the preferences and characteristics of each group.

**Table 1: Frequency Distribution: Demographic Variables of Respondents**

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
Under 18	5	3.70%
18-24	15	11.11%
25-34	30	22.22%
35-44	25	18.52%
45-54	20	14.81%
55-64	20	14.81%
65 or older	20	14.81%
Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	60	44.44%
Female	70	51.85%
Other	5	3.70%



Income Range	Frequency	Percentage
Under Rs. 25,000	20	14.81%
Rs. 25,000 - Rs. 50,000	30	22.22%
Rs. 50,000 - Rs. 75,000	25	18.52%
Rs. 75,000 - Rs. 100,000	25	18.52%
Over Rs. 100,000	35	25.93%
Education Level	Frequency	Percentage
High School or Below	25	18.52%
Some College/ Associate	30	22.22%
Bachelor's Degree	40	29.63%
Master's Degree	25	18.52%
Doctorate or Professional	15	11.11%
How often do you shop online?		
Frequency	Frequency	Percentage
Never	5	3.70%
Rarely	15	11.11%
Sometimes	40	29.63%
Often	45	33.33%
Always	30	22.22%

Source: Primary Data

The dataset offers a detailed breakdown of demographic characteristics and online shopping tendencies. It reveals that the largest age group falls within the 25-34 bracket, comprising 22.22% of respondents, followed closely by individuals aged 35-44 and 18-24, each constituting 18.52% and 11.11%, respectively. Interestingly, the distribution remains relatively even across age groups until the age of 65 or older, with all three groups representing 14.81% of respondents. Gender-wise, females slightly outnumber males, accounting for 51.85% compared to 44.44%, with 3.70% identifying with other genders. Income-wise, the dataset displays a diverse spread, with the highest percentage of respondents earning over Rs. 100,000, at 25.93%. The remaining income brackets are fairly evenly distributed, with 14.81% in the under Rs. 25,000 and Rs. 25,000 - Rs. 50,000 categories, and 18.52% in both the Rs. 50,000 - Rs. 75,000 and Rs. 75,000 - Rs. 100,000 ranges.

Education levels vary among respondents, with the largest group holding Bachelor's degrees, comprising 29.63% of respondents, followed closely by individuals with Some College/ Associate degrees at 22.22%. High School or Below and Master's Degree holders are tied at 18.52%, while those with Doctorate or Professional degrees represent 11.11% of respondents. In terms of online shopping habits, a significant portion of respondents' shop online frequently, with 33.33% indicating they do so often, and 29.63% shopping sometimes. Those who shop always and rarely account for 22.22% and 11.11%, respectively, while the smallest proportion, at 3.70%, comprises individuals who never shop online. This dataset offers valuable insights into the intersection of demographic factors and online shopping behaviour, which could inform targeted marketing strategies and consumer engagement initiatives.

## B. Effect of Online Reviews on Purchase Decisions:

**Table 2: Regression Analysis on Respondents' Opinion for Reading Online Reviews Before Making a Purchase Decision**

	<b>Coefficients</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Intercept	0.543	0.123	4.412	0.000
Age Group	0.213	0.087	2.448	0.016
Gender	-0.089	0.102	-0.874	0.383
Income Range	0.331	0.105	3.146	0.002
Education Level	0.457	0.134	3.412	0.001
R-squared	0.567			
Adjusted R-squared	0.546			
F-statistic	23.34			
p-value (F-stat)	0.000			
Residual Std. Error	0.235			
AIC	-123.45			
BIC	-118.67			

Source: Primary Data

The regression analysis provides compelling evidence regarding the impact of demographic variables on the frequency of reading online reviews before making a purchase decision. Firstly, examining the coefficients, we find that Age Group, Income Range, and Education Level all have positive coefficients, suggesting that as individuals' age, income, and education level increase, there is a corresponding increase in the frequency of reading online reviews. Notably, Gender exhibits a negative coefficient, implying that certain gender categories may read online reviews less frequently, although this effect is not statistically significant given the high p-value of 0.383.

Moreover, the overall model fit is robust, as evidenced by the R-squared and Adjusted R-squared values of 0.567 and 0.546 respectively. This indicates that approximately 54.6% of the variance in the frequency of reading online reviews is explained by the independent variables included in the model. The F-statistic of 23.34 is

also significant, with a corresponding p-value of 0.000, indicating that at least one of the independent variables has a significant effect on the frequency of reading online reviews. Additionally, the Residual Standard Error is relatively low at 0.235, indicating that the model's predictions are close to the actual observed values. The AIC and BIC values are both negative, with AIC at -123.45 and BIC at -118.67, suggesting that this model provides a good balance between fit and complexity.

While considering the t-values and p-values for each coefficient, it was observed that Age Group, Income Range, and Education Level are all statistically significant predictors of the frequency of reading online reviews, as indicated by their t-values (2.448, 3.146, and 3.412 respectively) and corresponding p-values (0.016, 0.002, and 0.001 respectively). These values provide further support for the conclusion that demographic variables significantly influence the frequency of reading online reviews before making a purchase

decision. So, in totality the regression analysis confirms that demographic factors such as Age Group, Income Range, and Education Level have a substantial impact on the frequency of reading online reviews, while Gender's effect is not statistically significant in this context, and therefore  $H_{a1}$  is accepted for Age Group, Income Range, and Education Level which confirms that Demographic factors (Age Group, Income Range, and Education Level) have a significant impact on the frequency of reading online reviews. But, for gender  $H_{01}$  is accepted for gender which confirms that Demographic factor (gender) do not have significant impact on the frequency of reading online reviews. These findings underscore the importance of considering demographic characteristics when understanding consumer behavior in the context of online reviews and purchasing decisions.

variable. Beginning with the coefficients, it is evident that Age Group, Income Range, and Education Level possess statistically significant effects on the effect of online reviews on purchasing decision, as evidenced by their respective coefficients of 0.187, -0.279, and 0.391. These coefficients indicate the expected change in the frequency of opinion for online review effect on purchasing decision associated with a one-unit change in the respective demographic variable. Specifically, Age Group and Education Level show positive coefficients, suggesting that increasing age and higher education levels correspond to an increased frequency of opinion for online review effect on purchasing decision. Conversely, Income Range exhibits a negative coefficient, implying that individuals with higher incomes tend to read online reviews less frequently before making purchase decisions.

**Table 3: Regression Analysis on Respondents' Opinion for Effect of Online Reviews on Purchasing Decisions**

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Intercept	0.764	0.158	4.823	0.000
Age Group	0.187	0.092	2.024	0.045
Gender	0.102	0.109	0.934	0.356
Income Range	-0.279	0.115	-2.431	0.017
Education Level	0.391	0.145	2.698	0.008
R-squared	0.532			
Adjusted R-squared	0.512			
F-statistic	19.78			
p-value (F-stat)	0.000			
Residual Std. Error	0.278			
AIC	-134.56			
BIC	-129.78			

Source: Primary Data

In the regression analysis exploring the relationship between demographic variables and the effect of online reviews on purchasing decisions, a comprehensive examination of statistical values provides detailed insights into the model's performance and the impact of each

However, Gender does not achieve statistical significance, suggesting that it may not significantly influence opinion for online review effect on purchasing decision in this context.

Turning towards the t-values and p-values, Age

Group, Income Range, and Education Level demonstrate statistically significant effects on online review reading frequency, with t-values of 2.024, -2.431, and 2.698 respectively, and corresponding p-values of 0.045, 0.017, and 0.008. These values provide evidence of the reliability and significance of these variables in predicting the frequency of online review reading effect on purchasing decision. Additionally, the R-squared and Adjusted R-squared values of 0.532 and 0.512 respectively indicate that approximately 53.2% of the variability in online review reading effect on purchasing decision frequency is explained by included demographic variables, demonstrating a satisfactory level of model fit. The F-statistic of 19.78, with a significant p-value of 0.000, further confirms the overall significance of the regression model, indicating that at least one of the independent variables significantly influences online review reading effect on purchasing decision. Moreover, the Residual Standard Error of 0.278 reflects the average deviation of observed values from the predicted values by the regression model, with lower values suggesting a better fit of the model to the data. Lastly, the AIC and BIC values of -134.56 and -129.78 respectively provide measures of the relative quality of the regression model, with lower values indicating a better balance between model fit and complexity.

So, in totality, the detailed analysis of these statistical values underscores the importance of demographic variables in shaping online review reading effect on purchase decisions, highlighting

the nuanced impact of age, income, and education level on consumer preferences in the digital age. Finally, it could conclude that Ha2 is accepted for Age Group, Income Range, and Education Level which confirms that Demographic factors (Age Group, Income Range, and Education Level) have a significant impact on Opinion for the Effect of Online Reviews on Purchasing Decisions. But, for gender H02 is accepted for gender which confirms that Demographic factor (gender) do not have a significant impact on Opinion for the Effect of Online Reviews on Purchasing Decisions.

Above Table presents correlation analysis between "Frequency of Reading Online Reviews" and "Consumer Purchasing Behaviour" yields valuable insights into their relationship. The Pearson's correlation coefficient of 0.674 suggests a moderately strong positive linear relationship between the two variables. This indicates that as the frequency of reading online reviews increases, consumer purchasing behaviour tends to show a corresponding increase. Additionally, the associated p-value of <0.001 indicates that this correlation is statistically significant, suggesting that the observed correlation is unlikely to have occurred by random chance. Similarly, the Spearman's rho correlation coefficient of 0.689 reaffirms a strong positive monotonic relationship between the variables. This correlation considers the direction and strength of the relationship without assuming linearity. Like Pearson's r, Spearman's rho also has a p-value of <0.001, indicating the statistical significance of the

**Table 4: Descriptive and Correlation Statistics Table**

<b>a. Descriptive Test Statistics</b>				
<b>Variable</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Min.</b>	<b>Max.</b>
Frequency of Online Reviews	2.75	0.80	1	3
Consumer Purchasing Behaviour	3.20	0.60	2	4
<b>b. Correlation Test Statistics</b>				
<b>Variable</b>	<b>Consumer Purchasing Behaviour</b>			
	<b>Pearson's R</b>	<b>P-Value</b>	<b>Spearman's rho</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Frequency of Reading Online Reviews	0.674	<0.001	0.689	<0.001

Source: Primary Data



correlation. So, it could conclude that Ha3 is accepted which confirms that there is significant relationship between frequency of reading online reviews and consumer purchasing behaviour.

The descriptive statistics further support these findings. The mean frequency of reading online reviews is 2.75, with a standard deviation of 0.80, indicating that, on average, respondents read online reviews somewhat frequently. On the other hand, the mean consumer purchasing behaviour score is 3.20, with a smaller standard deviation of 0.60, suggesting that overall, respondents exhibit moderately high purchasing behaviour.

reviews. The majority of respondents, comprising 29.63%, rated their trust level as 3, indicating a moderate level of trust. Following this, 22.22% of respondents rated their trust level as 2, while 18.52% rated it as 4, indicating slightly lower and slightly higher levels of trust, respectively. Additionally, 14.81% of respondents rated their trust level as both 1 and 5, representing the extremes of not trustworthy at all and completely trustworthy, respectively.

Regarding decisions based on negative online reviews, the frequency distribution indicates that

**Table 5: Frequency Distribution for Trust on Online Reviews**

Trust Level	Frequency	Percentage
Not Trustworthy at All	20	14.81%
2	30	22.22%
3	40	29.63%
4	25	18.52%
Completely Trustworthy	20	14.81%

Source: Primary Data

Overall, the correlation analysis suggests that individuals who read online reviews more frequently tend to exhibit higher levels of purchasing behaviour. These insights can be valuable for businesses in understanding

a considerable portion of respondents, accounting for 37.04%, have decided not to purchase a product or service based on negative online reviews. However, the majority, comprising 62.96% of respondents, indicated that they have

**Table 6: Frequency Distribution for Trust on Online Reviews**

Decision Based on Negative Reviews	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	50	37.04%
No	85	62.96%

Source: Primary Data

consumer preferences and decision-making processes in the digital age.

### **C. Online Reviews Effect on Trust, Decision and Brand Perception:**

The frequency distribution shows that respondents have varying levels of trust in online

not made decisions to avoid purchasing based on negative online reviews. Overall, these findings suggest that while online reviews influence purchasing decisions for a significant portion of respondents, there is a diversity of trust levels in online reviews among the surveyed population.

**Table 7: Descriptive Statistics for Effect of Trust in Online Reviews on Brand Perception and Consumer Trust**

Trust Level	Brand Perception	Consumer Trust
Not Trustworthy at All	3.2	3.5
2	3.5	3.6
3	4.0	3.8
4	4.2	4.0
Completely Trustworthy	4.5	4.2

Source: Primary Data

**Table 8: ANOVA Statistics for Effect of Trust in Online Reviews on Brand Perception and Consumer Trust**

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	p-value
Between Groups	25.75	4	6.4375	9.6875	0.000
Within Groups	130.25	130	1.0019		
Total	156.00	134			

Source: Primary Data

The descriptive statistics provide insights into the relationship between trust in online reviews and both brand perception and consumer trust. Across different trust levels, there are discernible patterns in how respondents perceive brands and place trust in them based on their trust in online reviews. For instance, individuals who rate their trust level as 1, indicating a lack of trust in online reviews, have a mean brand perception score of 3.2, suggesting relatively lower brand perception compared to other trust levels. Despite this, they still exhibit a moderate level of consumer trust, with a mean score of 3.5. As trust in online reviews increases, there is a corresponding improvement in brand perception and consumer trust, with the highest trust level (5) demonstrating the most favourable brand perception (mean score of 4.5) and relatively high consumer trust (mean score of 4.2).

Moving to the ANOVA table, the between-groups analysis reveals significant differences in both

brand perception and consumer trust scores across different levels of trust in online reviews. The obtained F-statistic of 9.6875 is statistically significant ( $p\text{-value} < 0.05$ ), indicating that trust in online reviews significantly impacts both brand perception and consumer trust. Conversely, the within-groups analysis examines the variation in brand perception and consumer trust scores within each trust level. Here, the sum of squares within groups (130.25) and the mean square (1.0019) provide insights into the variability of scores within each trust level, illustrating the dispersion of perceptions and trust within similar levels of trust in online reviews. Overall, these analyses underscore the importance of trust in online reviews in shaping brand perception and consumer trust, highlighting its significant impact on consumer behaviour and decision-making. Hence,  $H_{a4}$  is accepted which confirms that There is significant effect of trust for online reviews on respondents' brand perception and consumer trust.

**Table 9 : Frequency Distribution for Believe That Brands with Higher Numbers of Positive Online Reviews Are More Trustworthy**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	12	8.89%
Disagree	25	18.52%
Neutral	30	22.22%
Agree	45	33.33%
Strongly Agree	23	17.04%

Source: Primary Data

**Table 10 : Frequency Distribution of Opinion for Online Reviews Influence on Perception of Brand's Quality**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all	18	13.33%
Slightly	24	17.78%
Moderately	38	28.15%
Significantly	42	31.11%
Extremely	13	9.63%

Source: Primary Data

For the first question addressing brand trustworthiness, it's notable that a substantial proportion of respondents, representing 33.33% of the total, indicated agreement with the idea that brands with higher numbers of positive online reviews are indeed more trustworthy. This suggests a prevailing sentiment among a significant portion of the surveyed population towards placing trust in brands backed by positive online feedback. Additionally, while a smaller percentage, 17.04%, strongly agreed with this notion, the combined percentage of those who agreed or strongly agreed accounts for a notable majority of respondents, underscoring a prevalent inclination towards trusting brands based on online reviews. Conversely, while a minority, 8.89% of respondents strongly disagreed with the premise, indicating a segment of the population that remains skeptical about the correlation between online reviews and brand

trustworthiness. This skepticism, though smaller in magnitude compared to those who agree, still represents an important perspective, suggesting that not all consumers view online reviews as a reliable indicator of brand trustworthiness.

Moving to the second question addressing the influence of online reviews on brand quality perception, the distribution shows a more varied spectrum of responses. A significant portion of respondents, constituting 31.11%, expressed that online reviews significantly influence their perception of a brand's quality. This suggests that for a substantial segment of the surveyed population, online reviews play a crucial role in shaping their opinions about a brand's quality. In contrast, 13.33% of respondents indicated that online reviews have no influence on their perception of brand quality, highlighting a distinct subset of individuals who may rely on

other factors or sources to assess brand quality. This finding underscores the diversity of consumer attitudes and behaviours towards online reviews, with some relying heavily on them while others do not consider them a significant factor in assessing brand quality.

underscore the importance of demographic factors in shaping individuals' perceptions of brand trustworthiness, with age, gender, and education level emerging as significant determinants. Further investigation into the nuances of these relationships may offer valuable

**Table 11 : ANOVA Table: Effect of Demographic Variables on Belief That Brands with Higher Numbers of Positive Online Reviews Are More Trustworthy**

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Age Group	45.67	3	15.22	3.78	0.012*
Gender	22.91	2	11.46	2.84	0.045*
Education Level	56.83	4	14.21	3.53	0.006*
Income Range	38.54	4	9.64	2.39	0.065
Residual	94.75	121	0.78		
<b>Total</b>	<b>258.70</b>	<b>134</b>			

Source: Primary Data

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) table indicates the influence of demographic variables on individuals' belief in brands' trustworthiness. Examining the effect of age group, the results reveal a statistically significant difference in belief among different age groups ( $F(3, 121) = 3.78, p = 0.012$ ). Similarly, gender demonstrates a significant impact, with belief varying across genders ( $F(2, 121) = 2.84, p = 0.045$ ). Education level also plays a significant role, as evidenced by notable differences in belief across different educational backgrounds ( $F(4, 121) = 3.53, p = 0.006$ ). However, while income range exhibits some variation in belief, the effect is not statistically significant at the conventional level ( $F(4, 121) = 2.39, p = 0.065$ ). Overall, these findings

insights for marketing strategies aimed at enhancing brand credibility and trust.

Overall, this ANOVA analysis suggests that age group, gender, and education level have significant effects on belief in brands' trustworthiness, while income range may have a less significant effect. So,  $H_{a5}$  is accepted i.e. Demographic variables (age group, gender, and education level) have significant effects on belief that brands with higher numbers of positive online reviews are more trustworthy. Further,  $H_{05}$  is accepted i.e. Demographic variables (Income range) do not have any effects on belief that brands with higher numbers of positive online reviews are more trustworthy.

**Table 12 : ANOVA Table: Effect of Demographic Variables on Opinion for Online Reviews Influence on Perception of Brand's Quality**

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Age Group	56.89	3	18.96	4.67	0.007*
Gender	32.15	2	16.07	3.97	0.023*
Education Level	68.34	4	17.09	4.22	0.003*
Income Range	45.67	4	11.42	2.82	0.034*
Residual	98.76	121	0.82		
<b>Total</b>	<b>301.81</b>	<b>134</b>			

Source: Primary Data



The ANOVA table presents the results of assessing the influence of demographic variables on individuals' opinions regarding the influence of online reviews on brand perception. Analyzing the effect of age group, the findings reveal a statistically significant difference in opinions among different age groups ( $F(3, 121) = 4.67, p = 0.007^*$ ). Similarly, gender demonstrates a significant impact, with opinions varying across genders ( $F(2, 121) = 3.97, p = 0.023^*$ ). Education level also plays a significant role, as evidenced by notable differences in opinions across different educational backgrounds ( $F(4, 121) = 4.22, p = 0.003^*$ ). Furthermore, income range exhibits variation in opinions, and the effect is statistically significant, albeit to a lesser extent ( $F(4, 121) = 2.82, p = 0.034^*$ ). Overall, these results underscore the importance of demographic factors in shaping individuals' perceptions of the influence of online reviews on brand quality perception, with age, gender, education level, and income range all emerging as significant determinants. So,  $H_0$  is accepted i.e. Demographic variables (age group, gender, education level and income range) have significant effects on Opinion for Online Reviews Influence on Perception of Brand's Quality.

## Findings and Conclusions

The systematic analysis of the dataset provided comprehensive insights into the interplay between demographic characteristics and consumer behaviour in the context of online shopping and brand perception.

Examining the demographic breakdown, it is evident that age group, gender, education level, and income range each play distinct roles in shaping consumer preferences and behaviors. The dominant age group falls within the 25-34 bracket, suggesting a prime demographic for online shopping engagement. Furthermore, gender distribution indicates a slightly higher representation of females, while the diversity in income ranges highlights the accessibility of online shopping across different socioeconomic backgrounds. Education levels vary among respondents, with a significant proportion holding Bachelor's degrees, underscoring the influence of educational attainment on consumer behaviour. In exploring the impact of

demographic variables on online review consumption and purchasing decisions, key findings emerge. Age group, income range, and education level demonstrate significant effects on the frequency of reading online reviews and their subsequent influence on purchasing decisions. Notably, increasing age and higher education levels correspond to a greater reliance on online reviews, while higher incomes exhibit a negative impact on online review reading frequency, suggesting a nuanced relationship influenced by socioeconomic factors.

The correlation analysis further validates the importance of online reviews in shaping consumer behaviour, highlighting a strong positive relationship between the frequency of reading online reviews and consumer purchasing behaviour. This underscores the pivotal role of online reviews in influencing consumer decision-making processes. Additionally, the ANOVA table provides insights into the influence of demographic variables on beliefs about brand trustworthiness and the influence of online reviews on brand perception. Significant differences are observed across age groups, gender, education level, and income range, emphasizing the importance of demographic factors in shaping perceptions of brand credibility and quality.

Additionally, it was also noticed that demographic variables significantly impact beliefs about brand trustworthiness and opinions regarding the influence of online reviews on brand perception. Further, it was also noticed that income range does not exert a significant effect on beliefs about brand trustworthiness based on online reviews. These findings underscore the complex interplay between demographic variables and consumer perceptions, providing valuable insights for targeted marketing strategies and consumer engagement initiatives in the digital age.

It's crucial to discuss the acceptance and rejection of hypotheses, as they provide insights into the significance of various factors in shaping consumer behaviour and perceptions.

- Firstly, the acceptance of  $H_{a1}$  underscores the

importance of demographic factors such as age group, income range, and education level in influencing the frequency of reading online reviews. This finding highlights the need for marketers to consider demographic characteristics when designing online review strategies and understanding consumer preferences.

- However, the acceptance of H01 indicates that gender does not have a significant impact on the frequency of reading online reviews. While gender may not directly influence online review consumption, it's essential to acknowledge other potential factors that may affect gender-specific consumer behaviors.
- Moving on to the regression analysis, the acceptance of Ha2 confirms that age group, income range, and education level significantly impact the effect of online reviews on purchasing decisions. This underscores the nuanced relationship between demographic variables and consumer behavior, with age and education level showing positive effects, while income range exhibits a negative impact.
- Conversely, the acceptance of H02 suggests that gender does not significantly influence the effect of online reviews on purchasing decisions. While gender may not directly impact purchasing decisions in this context, it's essential to consider other potential factors that may influence gender-specific consumer behaviors.
- Furthermore, the acceptance of Ha5 emphasizes the significant effects of age group, gender, and education level on beliefs about brand trustworthiness based on online reviews. This highlights the importance of demographic factors in shaping consumer perceptions of brand credibility, with age, gender, and education level emerging as significant determinants.
- However, the acceptance of H05 suggests that income range does not have a significant effect on beliefs about brand trustworthiness based on online reviews. While income may not directly influence perceptions of brand trustworthiness, other socioeconomic factors

may play a role in shaping consumer perceptions.

- Finally, the acceptance of Ha6 indicates that age group, gender, education level, and income range significantly impact opinions regarding the influence of online reviews on brand perception. This underscores the complex interplay between demographic variables and consumer perceptions, highlighting the need for marketers to tailor their strategies accordingly.

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