



Research Article

## The Impact of Online Reviews on Consumer Buying Behavior –A Systematic Literature Review

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### Abstract

The online reviews, including online consumer reviews, influencer reviews, fake reviews, collectively shape consumer purchasing and re-purchasing decisions. Online reviews is an emerging area demanding evaluation and management of online reviews for better decision making to reduce possible damages that consumers face in day-to-day life. Consumers including Millennials and Gen Z are exposed to online platforms on daily basis for different product types and consumer involvement. An attempt is made to synthesise existing literature on online review and buying behaviour, including mediators and moderators, viz., psychological and demographic factors thereof. The existing 53 studies are analysed to understand the scope of online review and consumer behaviour with Indian cultural and psychological dimensions for better future understanding and to explore new opportunities in the research area. The documents sourced from Web of Science and Scopus from 2015 to 2025 are evaluated through thematic analysis with PRISMA model and bibliometric analysis.

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**KEYWORDS:** Online reviews, E-WOM, E-Commerce, habit, credibility, perceived trust, fake reviews.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Massive advancement of e-commerce led to digitalization in retailing environment which resulted in perpetual evolving customer satisfaction. The online reviews including online consumer reviews, influencer reviews, fake reviews and product description collectively shape consumer purchasing and re-purchasing decisions. Nowadays marketing tools and techniques such as advertising, sales promotion, digital marketing, and influencer marketing plays a vital role in online review (both human-generated (genuine) as well as computer-generated (fake) reviews) system influence customers attitudes, behaviors, and purchasing decisions. The product reviews posted by the customers enable potential consumers to finalize their online purchase decision (Chen et al., 2016; and Kang et al., 2022). There are factors which help in understanding the power of online reviews such as informational and social (Setiawati & Rani, 2025), purchase-history (Leon, 2019), socioeconomic, and political environments (Jin et al., 2008; Ladhari, 2008; Lu et al., 2017; and Han & Han, 2023). In addition to above, environmental factors like cultural aspects and omnichannel mechanism also influence consumer buying patterns. Culture is defined as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another” (Hofstede, 1980), (Han & Han, 2023). Omnichannel shoppers are “those shoppers who use at least two channels of the same retailer during their shopping journey” (Juaneda-Ayensa et al., 2016). Every review has diverse-quality and informational value to analyze creditability, perception, behavior, and consumer

psychology etc. Where the credibility describes instilled trust and belief of the consumers (Cheung, et al. 2012; and Abedin et al., 2024), the behavior turns into tendency (Venkatesh et al., 2012; and Juaneda-Ayensa et al., 2016) and emerge as perception of the consumer (Chatterjee & The Author(s), 2023). On the other hand, consumer psychological and cognitive factors are a subjective which varies from consumer to consumer.

The three primary AI applications in e-commerce viz., ‘product recommendation systems’, ‘virtual assistants’, and ‘automated ordering’, are raising vital concerns regarding consumer autonomy and the evolving role of trademarks in digital retail environments (Farley, 2023), (Giordani, 2025). Online Consumer satisfaction and luxury market dynamics in India evolved over time due to evolution of online review system as the “ease of online access, search, and transacting” has a beneficial impact on customer satisfaction (Prentice et al., 2019; Mutambik et al., 2024).

The ‘factors influencing the intention to use online reviews’ are well explored in developed countries but not much explored in developing or newly emerging countries (Pham et al., n.d.). A study conducted by Changchit et al. (2020) in the ‘e-commerce environment in Thailand’ (Pham et al., n.d.), and second study by Fogel and Zachariah (2017) in the US, only focusing on Yelp. A common limitation of both studies is that both considered student data for analysis (Pham et al., n.d.).

There are very less studies developed based on Indian context with Indian digital platforms as compared to the rest of world.

**Table 1:** Evolution of Impact of Technology on Consumer Buying Behavior

Stage / Period	Key Developments	Core Concepts	Impact on Consumer Behavior	Key References
Early Internet Era	digital interactivity	foundation of consumer engagement driven by informational feedback	made selling to consumers complex	Crittenden et al., 2010; Medrano et al., 2016; Juaneda-Ayensa et al., 2016
E-WOM	traditional word-of-mouth evolved into a new form of communication: ‘electronic word of mouth’ (e-WOM)	Information evolved from consensus perceived as highly credible	dominant factor to shape buying decision	Reyes-Menendez et al., 2019; Lo and Yao 2018; Qiu et al. 2012; Pooja & Upadhyaya, 2022
Social media enabled review diffusion, influencer marketing and digital marketing	Many users interacting with websites such as Facebook and Twitter creates social feedback loop	importance of these media platforms has evolved globally	influence their communication habits evolves the online review ecosystem	Mahmood & Sismeiro, 2017; Torabi & Bélanger, 2021; Šola et al., 2024; Setiawati & Rani, 2025
consumer satisfaction and AI driven Ecosystem	‘Big data’, ‘Artificial Intelligence’ (AI), ‘blockchain’	reshaped consumer accessibility, personalized demands, lifestyles and purchasing behaviours	consumer trust & ROI	Zhang et al., 2023; Migkos et al., 2025; Hu & Phanniphong, 2024

**2. OBJECTIVES**

The key objectives of the study to explore the consumer buying behaviour in the context of online reviews in order to identify major factors impacting Consumer buying Behaviour and draw future directions for research are explored. The objectives are sub-divided into followings:

1. To conduct a SLR on the topic the online reviews those impact consumer buying behaviour.

2. To Identify the variables impacting consumer buying behaviour from the existing studies in the context of online reviews
3. To identify the research gaps and propose future research agenda

**3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The SLR is the systematic literature method for “identifying, evaluating and synthesizing” the literature as the existing study

(Moher et al, 2009). The nature of study is explorative and covers articles published during 2015-2025. In order to conduct SLR, published work extracted from Scopus and Web of Science database. The search strategy used for the data extraction is “(“Online review” OR “online consumer review” OR “online product review” OR “Digital Review” OR “online rating” OR “e-feedback” OR “e-review”) AND (“consumer buying” OR “Buyer behaviour” OR “Purchase Behavior” OR “Shopping Behaviour” or “ Buying Habits” or “consumer behaviour”)”. The extracted data finalized using appropriate inclusion and exclusion criterion as suggested by the PRISMA

framework. The SLR is carried out with the help of VOS-viewer software.

**3.1. Screening and PRISMA Model**

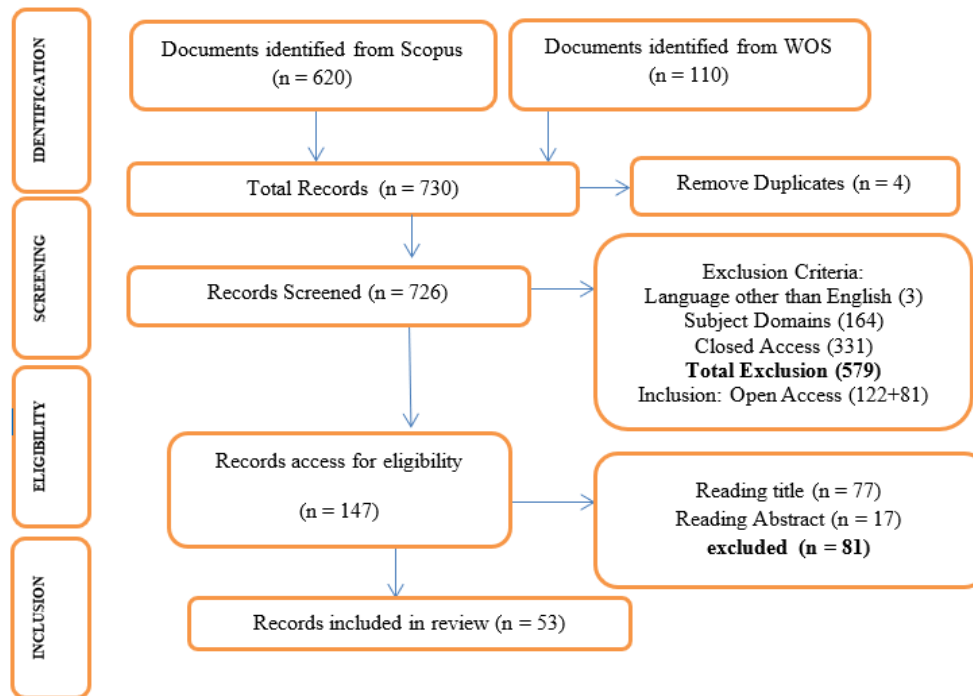
The data were collected from Web of Science and Scopus as both these have comprehensive and multidisciplinary coverage of both established and emerging research with recognition and credibility in academic research (Burnham, 2006). Executing above search strategy, there are 110 and 620 documents available on WoS and Scopus respectively, details shown in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Inclusion and Exclusion in Data Collection and Selection

Database	Web of Science and Scopus
Articles	WoS = 110, Scopus
Keywords	“Online reviews”, “e- reviews”, “e-feedback”, “Buying behavior”, “Shopping Behaviour”, “Purchase Behaviour”
Inclusion	<b>Domains</b> – ‘Business, Management and Accounting’, ‘Social Sciences’, ‘Decision Sciences’, ‘Economics’, ‘Econometrics and Finance’, ‘Psychology, Arts and Humanities’, ‘Environmental Science’, ‘Materials Science’, ‘Multidisciplinary’ <b>Language</b> – English <b>Availability</b> – Open Access
Exclusion	<b>Domains</b> – ‘Computer Science’, ‘Engineering’, ‘Energy, Agricultural and Biological Sciences’, ‘Neuroscience’, ‘Mathematics’, ‘Earth and Planetary Sciences’, ‘Chemical Engineering’, ‘Biochemistry, Genetics and Molecular Biology’, ‘Physics and Astronomy’, ‘Medicine’, ‘Immunology and Microbiology’, ‘Health Professions’ <b>Language</b> – Chinese, Portuguese, French, Spanish <b>Availability</b> – Gold, Green, Hybrid gold, Bronze

Source: Authors’ Owned

The number of articles further reduced, due to non-alignment with the of the present study

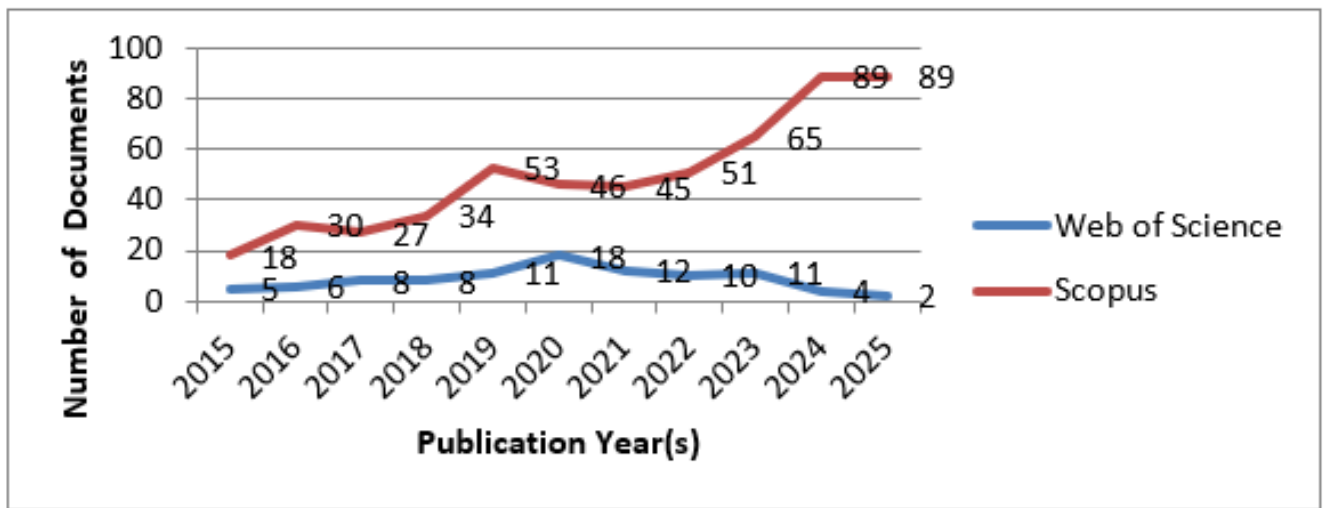


Source: Authors’ compilation

**Fig. 1:** PRISMA Model for Document Selection

**Trend of Publications in the WoS and Scopus:** The highest number of publications in the WoS in 2020 and in the Scopus in 2024-2025 as shown in Fig. 2. A rise in publication in the Scopus from 2021 to 2025 indicates significance of digital

behavior and online platforms (post pandemic) vis-a-vis creation of generic idea into specialized topics of online reviews, consumer choices, and perception with respect to AI, demographic and cultural differences (Setiawati & Rani, 2025).



Source: Authors' compilation

Fig. 2: Number of Publications in the WoS and Scopus during 2015 to 2025

The above documents were published by reputed publishers of the industry like Elsevier, Emerald Group Publishing, Taylor & Francis, Mfpi, Springer Nature, Wiley, Frontiers Media Sa, Sage, Assoc Computing Machinery, Hindwani Publishing Group, IEEE, IGI Global, Informa, Technoscienze Publ and Univ Talca, and Fac Ingenieria.

**3.2. Bibliometric Analysis**

Bibliometric analysis is conducted with the help of MS-Excel and VOSviewer software. The VOSviewer tool has a great ability to visualise bibliographic data, helpful for researchers to identify both thematic connections within a research area and collaborative networks among authors (Wong, 2018; Setiawati

& Rani, 2025). The bibliometric analysis is presented through research clusters, themes & conceptual structure, keyword co-occurrence, and co-citation.

**1. Keyword Co-Occurrence Analysis**

The keyword co-occurrence analysis shows how many times the keywords related to the relevant research field occur together in the research space. The thematic analysis is an inductive reasoning approach of research as observations or data used to build new patterns or themes (Setiawati & Rani, 2025). To carry out analysis selected keywords are replaced with similar words to get the more accurate results given in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Replacement of Keywords based on Similarity

Words	Replaced to	Words	Replaced to
humans	Human	Consumer behavior	Consumer behaviour
Hospitality industry	Hospitality	Review valences	Review valence
emotion	Emotions	Word of mouth	Word-of-mouth
Machine learning	Machine-learning	Hotel industry	hotels
Customers' satisfaction	Customer satisfaction	Text mining	Text-mining
Ewom/e-wom	Electronic word of mouth	Online customer reviews	Online consumer reviews
Electronic commerce / e-commerce	e-commerce	Natural language processing	Natural language processing systems

Source: Authors' compilation

There are 2368 keywords in the source documents, 101 meets the threshold and form 7 clusters as shown in Table 4 below. It

shows that consumer behavior is the primary topic around which other sub-topics revolves.

Table 4: Keyword Co-Occurrence analysis of Datasets from VOSviewer

Database	Items	Clusters	Links	Total Link Strength
Scopus	101	7	1675	4352
WOS	51	3	760	1771

Source: Authors owned

The clusters formed are explained in Table 5 presented hereunder.

Table 5: Details of Clusters

Database	SN	Color	Cluster Details
Scopus	Cluster 1	Red	Online reviews influence the consumer behavior and purchase decision.
	Cluster 2	Green	Psychological and demographic aspects
	Cluster 3	Blue	Industry and country specific application
	Cluster 4	Yellow	Combination of different techniques/factors in consumer behaviour
	Cluster 5	Purple	Technical and methodological techniques
	Cluster 6	Teal	Contemporary and recent trends
	Cluster 7	Orange	Behavioural aspects
WOS	Cluster 1	Red	Technology adoption and online shopping acceptance
	Cluster 2	Green	Social and informational dimension
	Cluster 3	Blue	Consumer psychology and social commerce

Source: Authors' Compilation

The keyword co-occurrence results are presented in Fig. 3 below

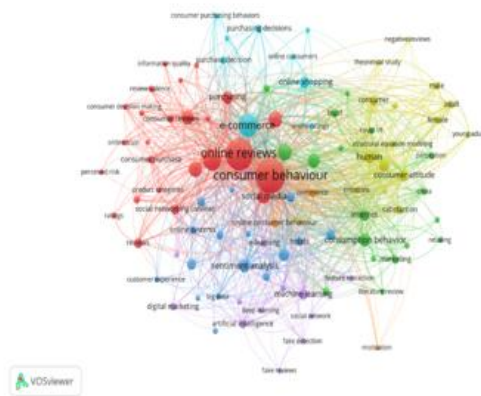
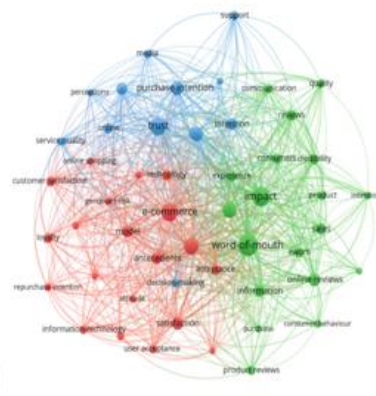


Figure 3: Keywords Co-occurrence  
Source: VOSviewer, Scopus



Source: VOSviewer, WOS

## 2. Co-Citation Analysis

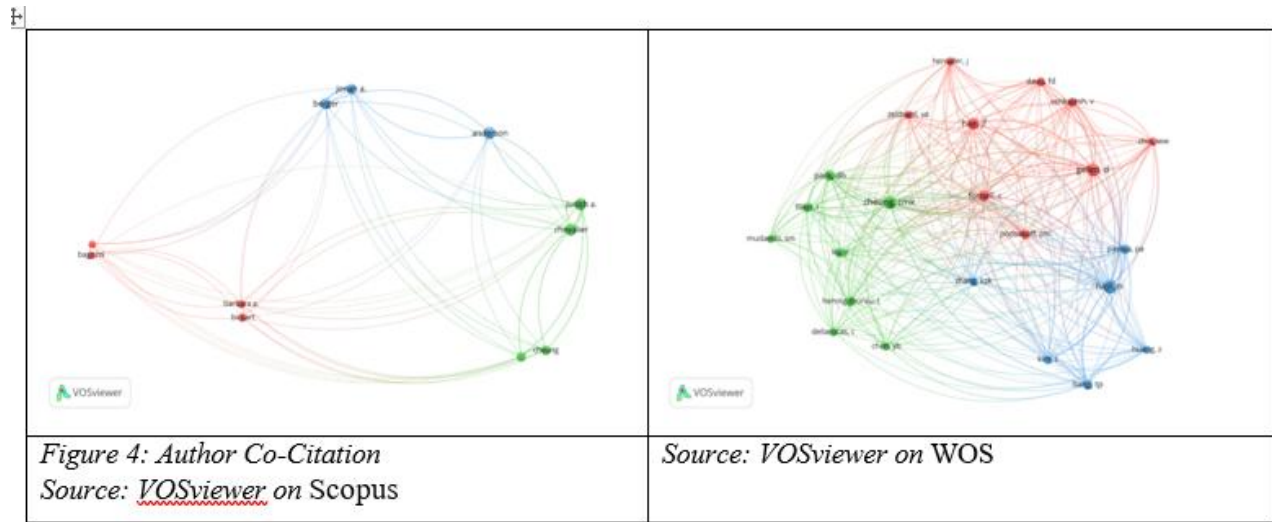
Co-citation analysis examines **how often two documents, authors, or journals are cited together** in other research papers or in a research space. A co-authorship network was generated using a full counting method, requiring a minimum of three publications per author to reflect research expertise

(Setiawati & Rani, 2025). The documents extracted from the Scopus and WOS analysed where 20 authors from both databases met the threshold. There are 11 and 23 items shortlisted forming 3 clusters in each database. The results are presented in Table 6 and Fig. 4 below.

Table 6: Authors Co-Citation analysis of Scopus and WOS from VOSviewer

Dataset	Items	Clusters	Links	Total Link Strength
Scopus	11	3	53	412
WOS	23	3	251	3689

Source: Authors owned



4. FINDINGS

Table 7: Key Findings from the Previous Studies

S. N	Key Findings	Reference
1.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Temporal distance has positive impact on purchase decision of high involvement products, while having negative impact on purchase decision of low involvement products”</li> <li>“A retailer’s internal word of mouth (WOM) has a limited impact on its sales of high-involvement products, whereas external WOM sources have a significant influence on sales”</li> </ol>	Liu et al., 2019
2.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>‘Review attraction and helpfulness issues’ are explored at the two stages: (i) notice stage and (ii) comprehend stage</li> <li>Review attraction is mainly influenced by ‘explicit information’ such as ‘review extremity’, ‘review reliability’, and ‘reviewer credibility’</li> <li>A review is helpful if it is “scored extremely negative”, “written by high-ranking reviewers”, “conveying both subjective and objective information”, and “mixed by positive and negative sentiments”</li> </ol>	Chen et al., 2016
3.	Five factors – ‘perceived computer self-efficacy’, ‘perceived online review ease of use’, ‘perceived online review usefulness’, ‘perceived online review credibility’, and ‘perceived online review importance’ either directly or indirectly affect the ‘intention to use online reviews’	Pham et al., n.d.
4.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>‘consumer’s intention to purchase’ in an omnichannel store is influenced by ‘personal innovativeness’, ‘effort expectancy’, and ‘performance expectancy’</li> <li>omnishoppers are those “who seek out new technology in order to experiment with it and be the first to try it among their family and friends”</li> </ol>	Juaneda-Ayensa et al., 2016
5.	“Interaction between the volume of online reviews and positive emotional polarity” did not facilitate consumer purchase decisions as much	Kang et al., 2022
6.	In the case of increased online shopping experience, “cognitive involvement increased more dramatically in the strong-tie group, and affective involvement increased more in the weak-tie group”	Ma et al., 2020
7.	‘Responsive website design’, ‘clear navigation’, and ‘effective promotional communication’ are vital for enhancing ‘online shopping satisfaction’	Migkos et al., 2025
8.	Consumers with a high or positive ‘Consumer Online Service Experience’ (COSE) including both utilitarian and emotional aspects are more likely to engage in ‘Online Impulse Buying Behaviour’ (OIBB) “customer’s attitudinal loyalty toward an e-commerce platform” can act as a mediator between ‘Consumer Online Service Experience’ (COSE) and ‘Online Impulse Buying Behaviour’ (OIBB)	Mutambik et al., 2024
9.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Consumers are more willing to pay for non-famous brands than for famous brands when purchasing products” because predicting quality is difficult</li> <li>“Without brand awareness, it takes more effort for consumers to evaluate attributes and make decisions”; “reviews exert a greater impact on sales for weak brands than for strong brands”</li> <li>“The trust provided by the platform in online shopping reduces the risk created by the uncertainty consumers’ face regarding products and purchase decisions”</li> </ol>	Sung et al., 2023
10.	The study argues that despite increased social media use in developing countries (such as Pakistan), consumers still do not consider the usefulness of E-WOM as an important factor in their decision	Sardar et al., 2021
11.	“Trustworthy comment will be taken into account by a consumer, while a comment that does not generate confidence will be discarded”	Reyes-Menendez et al., 2019
12.	E-WOM has a positive but weak and insignificant effect on the purchasing decision	Putri et al., 2025

13.	“Customers place great importance on the central cues related to the review content” – ‘review valence’, ‘comprehensiveness’, ‘images and readability’	Alghamdi et al., 2024
14.	‘Consumer trust’ as a mediator in the “luxury purchasing process, offering invaluable guidance for marketers seeking to optimize engagement strategies within virtual platforms”	Hu & Phanniphong, 2024
15.	Consumers first assess the ‘relevance of reviews. If relevant, they then evaluate ‘trustworthiness’, ‘credibility’, and ‘veracity’	Walther et al., 2025
16.	“Negative reviews may disproportionately influence consumer perceptions, and consequently, course enrollment rates”	Šola et al., 2024
17.	Using the Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA), they extracted “five product attribute topics from online clothing reviews”: ‘quality’, ‘size’, ‘fabric’, ‘design’, and ‘comfort’	Shan et al., 2024
18.	1. “Customers are inclined to acquire more information for deeper thinking and to make a comparison when negative comments appear which could more likely result in choosing not to buy the product to reduce their risk” 2. “Women hope to reduce the risk of loss by drawing on as much overall information as possible because they are more likely to focus on negative reviews”	T. Chen et al., 2022
19.	cultural traits affect consumers’ emotional tendencies and consumer service quality perception in cross-border e-shopping	Han & Han, 2023
20.	“Contemporary consumers frequently demonstrate attentiveness through active use of digital tools during the purchasing process” the concept of an ‘augmented average consumer’ in trademark law – “an individual whose decision-making is enhanced by AI support”	Giordani, 2025
21.	“The community users attach specific meanings to the profile cues and that they compensate for the ambiguity associated with the respective meanings of the cues by interpreting the two related cues together” “Negative WOM has a high impact despite having less credibility than positive WOM”	Lim & Van Der Heide, 2014
22.	“Confirms the presence of time heterogeneity in the intrinsic mechanism of online customer satisfaction”	M. Wang et al., 2025
23.	‘Customer-generated photos’ (CGPs) significantly influenced the “perceived argument quality of online reviews” by making them “more informative and persuasive” but customers perceive social media photos as per their motivation	Safeer et al., 2025
24.	1. “Under high time pressure, respondents depended more on source attributes and less on message attributes in evaluating and using reviews to seek information regarding a potential purchase” 2. “Consumer self-confidence was found to positively influence the extent of satisfaction expected from the purchase decision”	Lee & Hong, 2021
25.	“All service quality dimensions (tangibility, reliability, assurance, empathy, and responsiveness) have a positive influence on customer satisfaction”	Torabi & Bélanger, 2021
26.	1. “The use of a recommendation system will reduce the diversity of the product categories that consumers view and purchase” 2. “There are differential homophily effects between consumer cross category purchase behaviors and co-purchase link formation” 3. “Positive ratings and high review volume are key factors in predicting the formation of the co-purchase network” 4. “High review volume is positively associated with the log-odds of forming a co-purchase relation”	Gao, 2023
27.	1. consumers consider a range of different attributes (such as internal and external consistency, objectivity, length, readability, and extremity) simultaneously when making decisions, rather than relying on a single piece of information or criterion, such as the star rating of a review 2. reviews with a lower level of external inconsistency are found to be the less credible because when an online review is consistent with the majority of reviews, the former information from the existing reviews confirms details in the particular review and accordingly increases its credibility	Abedin et al., 2024
28.	“When encountering a great number of online reviews across the search products, consumers tend to rely more on the texts rather than the images so as to quickly master essential information”	F. Liu et al., 2020

5. RESEARCH GAPS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Table 8: Research Gaps identified from the Previous Studies

S. No.	Author(s)	Paper Title	Gaps	Suggestions
1.	Liu et al., 2019	“Exploring Consumers' Buying Behavior in a Large Online Promotion Activity: The Role of Psychological Distance and Involvement”	1. Inadequate integration of psychological factors 2. Lack of financial and economic consideration	1. Consider the effect of the interaction of psychological factors 2. financial factors like ‘payment mechanism’, ‘financial risk’, ‘pricing strategies’, ‘sales turnover’, ‘monetary promotions’
2.	Šola et al., 2024	“AI-Powered Eye Tracking for Bias Detection in Online Course Reviews: A Udemy Case Study”	oversimplification of emotional effects	Address the “complexity of emotions and their discrete nature can influence purchasing behaviours”
3.	Ma et al., 2020	“How Social Ties Influence Customers' Involvement and Online Purchase Intentions”	contribution of specific dimension to the integrate relationship	“What an emotional alignment or contextual alignment will affect the integration relationship”
5.	Chen et al.,	“Exploring Determinants of Attraction and	limited stage-based	Add more stages “to explore determinants

	2016	Helpfulness of Online Product Review: A Consumer Behaviour Perspective”	explanation of review influence	of attraction and helpfulness of online product review”
6.	F. Liu et al., 2020	“The Combination Signaling Effect of Text and Image on Mobile Phone Review Helpfulness - The Moderating Effect of Signaling Environment”	narrow focus on quantitative review signals	“More qualitative signals should be recognized for better explaining how a review is perceived to be helpful, such as review readability, review reliability, review enjoyment and so on”
7.	Paul and Nikolaev 2021; Walther et al., 2025	“Fake Review Detection on Online E-commerce Platforms: A Systematic Literature Review; A grounded theory of how consumers determine the veracity of online user reviews”	Difficulty in identifying truthful and deceptive reviews	Address “inconsistencies in behaviour and similarities in behaviour between truthful and untruthful reviewers”
8.	Pham et al., n.d.	“Factors Influencing Intention to Use Online Consumer Reviews: The Case of Vietnam”	Insufficient cross culture comparison	future studies may “integrate cultural variables into the research model to identify specific differences between collectivist and individualistic cultures and their impact”
9.	Dwidienawati et al., 2020	“Customer review or influencer endorsement: which one influences purchase intention more?”	restrictive generational scope	different types of E-WOM could also be studied
10.	Migkos et al., 2025	“Impact of Influencer Marketing on Consumer Behavior and Online Shopping Preferences”	Ethical dimensions unexplored	“Investigate the ethical dimensions of influencer marketing, including disclosure practices, influencer authenticity, and consumer protection”

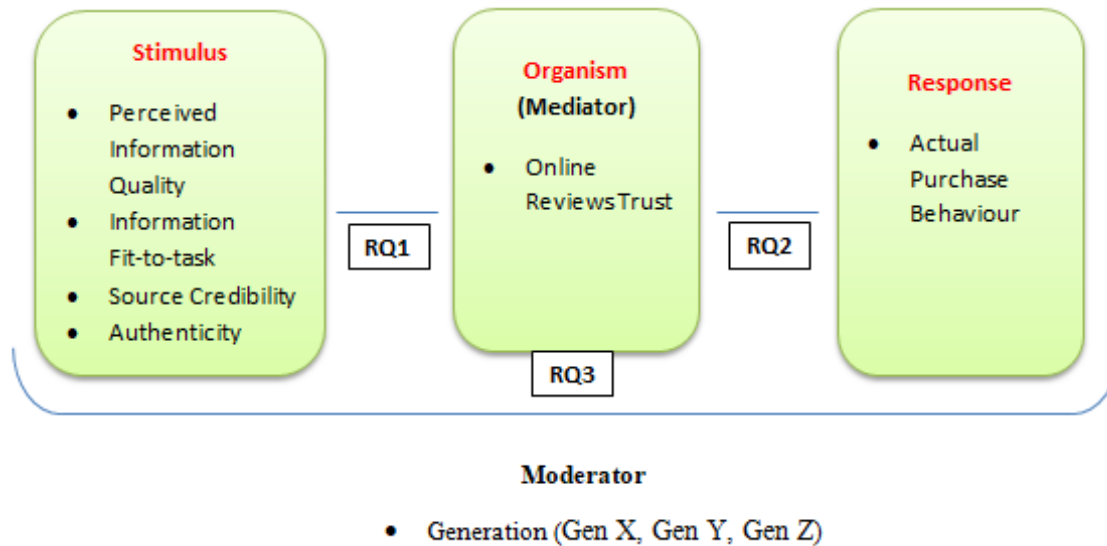
The psychological factors and motivation strongly influence the consumer attitude and how they perceive something. Review Characteristics and consumer trust is a well-established phenomenon in the recent studies.

To focus more on a specific area of e-commerce, such as ‘mobile commerce’ or ‘social commerce’ (Pham et al., n.d.). Every study has selected some industry or digital platform with different country context to explore the relationship and effects but we can consider the relationship in generalizations form as well and new or emerging Brand of India with Indian context of consumer buying patterns. Further studies can establish the relationship of multiple technologies like neuromarketing and AI with Indian linguistic style including both webrooming and showrooming.

## 6. CONCLUSION & IMPLICATIONS

The paper contributes to both theoretical and practical aspect of shopping literature in many ways. Theoretical implications elaborates the product attributes, online review characteristics, Psychological aspect of online reviews influencing consumer purchase, co-purchase and re-purchase decision across online platforms and virtual communities integrating different approaches under different content style, linguistic styles,

gender, culture while addressing critical issues such as information asymmetry, social influence bias, fake reviews, rating bubbles, signaling environment, omnichannel effect, spillover effect. It highlights the role of marketing like sale promotion information, advertising, influencer endorsements, digital marketing into various industries and situational factors like time pressure, delivery mechanisms, and mobile payments and visual and behavioural factors gives “consolidated account of antecedents, mediators and moderators of the construct online review” to make a well informed decision. It provides Practical implications to online retailers and marketers in respect of the business and consumer market related to online reviews, credibility, visibility, behavior, and attitude with different types of consumers. E-business operators should encourage consumers “to write more valuable reviews, sellers and manufacturers should pay more attention to extreme negative reviews”, therefore improve brand image and promote sales. This study evolved new dimensions in business like website designs and review management system, app developer. From the above findings and identified Research gaps the Concept Map for further Analysis given below –



**Figure 5:** Concept Map for further studies in the Indian Context

The above diagram represents Stimulus (Independent Variable) – Perceived Information Quality, Information Fit-to-task, Source Credibility, and Authenticity; influencing Response (Dependent Variable) – Actual Buying Behaviour mediated by organism – Online Reviews Trust in the context of Moderator that is Generations of Indian origin.

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