

## "The Influence of Online Product Reviews on Consumer Decision-making: A Meta-analysis of Empirical Studies"

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### Abstract

*The customer of the twenty-first century is eager to learn. Connecting to a social network and exchanging information has become easier for people thanks to the internet's accessibility and cost. It has promoted a variety of online activities for users, including messaging, blogging, talking, and gaming. This variety of individuals has benefited from the virtual realm by being able to exchange posts or online reviews more swiftly. For this reason, it's widely accepted that online social networks are a useful tool for customers to obtain guidance and information. Any feedback a customer provides enhances the company's standing. One views reputation as a valuable asset. When a customer shares unfavourable evaluations, this value may be diminished. It damages a company's reputation for making good on its claims to provide high-quality goods. The motivation behind this study is to analyze and appreciate the perspectives that impact consumers' decisions while making purchases through web channels. The demonstration of customers spreading the word about purchases from an online store is as online shopping. This study's essential objective was to look at what digital showcasing means for customer buying decisions. The specific points of the review were to: recognize the item classes that consumers purchase on digital media stages; dissect the effect of digital advertising on consumer conduct; and research the different digital media stages in India that might impact consumer conduct. This study's essential objective was to inspect what digital showcasing means for customer buying decisions. The particular goals of the review were to: recognize the item classifications that consumers purchase on digital media stages; examine*

*the effect of digital advertising on consumer conduct; and research the different digital media stages in Nigeria that might impact consumer conduct.*

**Keywords:** *Social media, Digital marketing, Brand loyalty, Marketing strategy, online, Consumer Buying behaviour, Consumer purchase decisions.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The manner that consumers make decisions about what to buy has changed significantly in the digital age. The growing impact of online product reviews is one of the most notable shifts in this market. Consumers today are no longer exclusively dependent on conventional advertising or word-of-mouth referrals from friends and family as they traverse the enormous marketplace of goods and services. Rather, they resort to the internet, where a plethora of product reviews are waiting to be discovered.

These internet reviews have developed into more than just unofficial viewpoints expressed online; they are now a significant factor in customer choice. This introduction will examine the complex ways in which people's decisions are influenced by online product reviews, highlighting the significance of comprehending this dynamic for both customers and companies.

### 1.1.The Digital Revolution:

The introduction of the internet has caused a significant change in how consumers behave. Customers can access an almost infinite variety of goods and services from the comfort of their homes with only a few clicks. However, it can be difficult to identify the ideal product in this huge online marketplace. Online product reviews are relevant in this situation. These evaluations, written by other customers who have used the good or service, provide priceless information and recommendations to prospective customers. They act as informational lighthouses amid a sea of options, guiding customers toward well-informed and purpose-driven decisions.

### 1.2.Trust and Social Proof:

Online product reviews now function as a source of social proof and trust in addition to information. In a time when traditional advertising is frequently shrouded in scepticism,

consumers are more likely to rely on the experiences of their peers. The legitimacy and reputation of a product are built by the reviews of many people combined. A greater number of favourable reviews helps maintain confidence and trust in the eyes of prospective customers, while bad reviews may indicate caution. The mood that these assessments collectively express creates a social consensus, which can influence decisions significantly. To put it simply, customers cherish the sense of community and shared experiences that online product evaluations provide when trying to make informed decisions.

In the talk that follows, we'll go into more detail on how online product reviews affect consumers' decisions, looking at how they affect buying habits, the significance of authenticity, and the difficulties they present for companies. Comprehending this impact is essential for customers seeking to make well-informed choices as well as companies trying to use evaluations to their advantage in a market that is getting more and more competitive.

### **1.3. Online product**

Any good or service that is advertised, sold, and delivered online is referred to as an online product in the context of e-commerce and digital business. These things can take many different forms; they can be digital products like software, e-books, music, and streaming services, or they can be tangible commodities like apparel, electronics, and home goods. The ease of online buying, the worldwide reach of digital markets, and the potential for innovation and personalization have all influenced the world of online products. They have had a significant impact on supply chains, businesses in general, and industries in addition to revolutionizing the way we shop and consume material. An essential part of the digital economy are online goods, which provide new channels for company and consumer communication, consumption, and commerce.

## **2. LITERATURE REREVIEW**

In order to better understand how important managers utilize social media accounts and how they facilitate communication with important consumers, **Lacoste (2016)** has made contributions to research in the social media era. The purpose of the study was to distinguish between the selling and KAM functions' use of social media. The grounded theory method was used in a qualitative research methodology for this study. The researchers expanded the use of social media for the KAM function and presented a model based on examined actual data.

Customer relationship management (KAM) is a single core competency that unites simple, short-term selling and complex, longer-term selling perspectives. KAM is all about marketing abilities and pursuits. The participants worked for industrial or service firms ranging from medium-sized manufacturers to a handful of the 40 largest French enterprises listed on the Paris stock exchange. The researchers collected data from these participants using a combination of interview techniques. The study's findings demonstrated that social media connections with the targeted key consumer are made possible by the trinity of identification, reputation, and credibility. It was discovered that the primary account managers mostly concentrated on leveraging social media to create targeted relationships through a two-step process (connection preparation and initiation) and sought to increase connections both inside and outside of the primary client organization. Key account managers, however, don't concentrate on maintaining important client connections on social media. Additionally, this research has revealed that managers have switched to more conventional in-person meetings in an effort to establish lasting relationships with their clients. As a result, the 65 current study has demonstrated how social media is constrained inside the crucial consumer interaction life cycle.

**Pachitanu (2016)** Through his research study, he has presented the key findings of an exploratory qualitative investigation and looked at the marketing strategies used by FMCG companies in Romania, paying particular attention to their online marketing initiatives. Examining the use, general awareness, significance, and development of particular social media platforms for the businesses' marketing communications mix was the study's goal. Semi-structured interviews were used as the data collecting method, and themes and categories were identified from the analysis of the responses. The study revealed that social media is commonly referred to as the virtual space. It comprises various platforms and applications that facilitate online interaction between individuals or individuals and companies/brands. These interactions are marked by specific actions such as "like," "share," "post," and "comment," as well as the expression of user-generated content in the form of photos, videos, and writings. Social media gives businesses the chance to engage directly and personally with their customers; this is important for their communication strategy. It is also frequently used to send advertising messages to customers and solicit spontaneous user feedback. It also allows businesses to get customer feedback about their products and services, which helps to build their reputations. For organizations to succeed in the social media space, they need to invest in long-term

strategies that are creative, consistent, and continuous. The best results can be achieved by integrating social media into the company's overall communication plan, traditional and social media working together as a causal force to maximize each other's effects and prompt favourable outcomes.

**Ainin, Parveen, Moghavve and Jaafar (2015)** has out a study examining the variables influencing Facebook usage among small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs). The effect that Facebook usage has on the SMEs' non-financial and financial performance has also been investigated by the study's authors. Using an integrated model, the study examined how Facebook usage is influenced by compatibility, cost-effectiveness, interaction, and trust, and how this affects the performance of the business. The purpose of the survey is to gather information from 259 Malaysian SMEs via questionnaires. To evaluate the hypotheses, statistical analyses were carried out using the Partial Least Square (PLS) approach. According to the study, Facebook use significantly improves SMEs' financial performance. It also had a positive effect on SMEs' nonfinancial performance, as evidenced by decreased expenses for marketing and customer support, enhanced customer relations, and easier access to information. Additionally, it was shown that Facebook usage among SMEs is influenced by a number of criteria, including cost effectiveness, compatibility, and engagement.

**Broekemier, Chau and Seshadri (2015)** We out an online poll to find out how managers of business-to-business (B2B) small enterprises feel about social media and how they use it for marketing. According to the study's findings, which were based on a descriptive research design, over half of B2B small enterprises used social media for marketing. Improved corporate reputation, increased consumer interest, increased customer awareness, and business promotion to new clients were the four primary reasons for adopting social media, as reported by B2B small firms. A sizable fraction of those who did not use social media said they had no plans to utilize it at all in the foreseeable future. They erroneously thought that social media was more suited for drawing in a younger clientele than serving as an affordable means of business promotion. Moreover, almost 25% of individuals who utilized social media admitted to being ignorant of the success of their marketing initiatives.

**Aspasia and Ourania (2014)** have undertaken studies in an effort to examine the literature from the academic and business worlds about managers' attitudes, goals, and the adoption of

social media. The second goal is to increase knowledge about the social media activity of Greek food manufacturing companies and look into potential explanations for the adoption of social media as well as Greek managers' opinions regarding the efficacy and use of social media marketing. To accomplish the aforementioned research goals, two hundred firms' descriptive data were gathered, examined, and case studies of 127 Greek food manufacturing companies were created. The study examined firm-initiated social media actions and offered a theoretical framework for understanding the things that corporations have achieved with social media. The following three aspects of social media usage were examined: a) how social media was used and which networks were the most popular; b) how organizational and managerial traits affected the use of social media; and c) how managers perceived the advantages and efficacy of the company's use of social media. The findings demonstrated that Greek food manufacturing companies made a major effort to fully utilize social media. Nonetheless, social media accounted for about half of the businesses; Greek food companies mostly used Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube, with Facebook leading the pack. The top three advantages of social media marketing, as reported by the marketing directors of Greek food companies, were brand building, real-time information on products, contests, awards, etc., and integrating customer services.

**Dahnil, Marzuki, Langgat and Fzlin (2014)** conducted a study with the goal of reviewing the scholarly literature on the elements that influence SMEs' and organizations' adoption of social media marketing. In order to review the literature, the authors formatted draft databases that can be used as future sources of publications in the fields of social media, internet, and e-marketing. E-business, e-commerce, internet marketing, and e-marketing were the associated fields. The writers have examined a collection of research that describe many types of external and internal variables associated with the adoption of technology. The authors have discovered several new areas for the application of social media in SMEs organizations, including end users, organizational, technological, management, and business environments. It was discovered that some of the important elements for end users were training for evolving technologies, simplicity of use, perceived utility, perceived compatibility, and relative advantage during the adoption process. Adoption was positively impacted by the management of resources, including time, money, and people; awareness and excitement about emerging technologies; managers' comfort level with their use; the competitiveness of the environment;

the intensity of the information; and the presence of related experimentation and innovation. Other significant elements under the technological factors for adoption category were credibility, competitiveness, compatibility, and technological innovation. Among the key elements that contributed significantly to the adoption of social media were the managers' involvement and dedication, as well as their strong involvement, technological support, and level of knowledge. Other crucial components of the business environment for SMEs' adoption of social media included the existence of competitors in the market, government influence, policies and initiatives, basic infrastructure like high-speed internet, the globalized economy, and cultural influence.

**Cox, (2012)** conducted a study to determine how a small company owner might use social media to engage customers and develop their business. The small business owner was interviewed in-depth and the study used a case study methodology. Additional content analysis was done on the company's Twitter and Facebook posts. The case study's findings revealed the variety of techniques the proprietors employed to establish and preserve ties with their clientele. The primary categories, such as announcements, content sharing, and both general and specific participation, were identified by the content analysis results. The study's findings looked at tactics including networking and building relationships with other companies, e-WOM, information sharing, increased brand exposure, placing a greater emphasis on relationships than sales, increasing sales, encouraging interaction through engaging content, and a learning curve as a major barrier to entry.

**Salvi (2011)** studied the use of social media by FMCG brand marketers to sway consumer behaviour in the context of FMCG products. Six semi-structured interviews were conducted with social media specialists from the different companies as part of the qualitative method that was chosen. The interview encompassed a wide range of topics, including the distinctions between social media channels and other marketing channels, how to use various social media platforms, the difficulties faced by FMCG brands in particular, and how to use social media to influence consumers. In order to help FMCG brand marketers effectively use social media platforms to influence consumers, the author has compiled the results of the interviews and presented ten key strategies. These include humanizing your brand, message is key, listening and monitoring, knowing your social media tools, interacting and engaging, emotionally

connecting with the consumer, identifying and utilizing influencers, building consumer response platforms, planning for the long term, adapting and experimenting.

**Haff (2017)** has put a study into action with the goal of identifying the marketing tactics and social media channels used by organic food businesses. The content analysis method was used in this study to assess the organic food industry's social media marketing tactics. Eight organic enterprises were formed by applying the qualitative methodologies. The study's conclusions demonstrate that the marketing methods under evaluation were initially divided into informative and transformational strategies, and these categories were further divided based on how the customer regarded the tactics. It was found that the organic food sector made greater use of transformational messaging techniques. The results showed that consumers could be engaged on social media by the emotive aspects of the industry's advancement. Furthermore, only one company had consistent interaction, and only half of the sampled enterprises had demonstrated a consistent online marketing strategy.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The review's examination approach was applied. The review populace, research configuration, test edge, strategy, and test size, as well as the information assortment and examination techniques, research methodology, degree, and restrictions utilized in this review, are totally remembered for the exploration strategies.

#### **3.1. Research plan'**

An exploration configuration is an arrangement that frames the strategies, timing, and areas for social event and breaking down information. The review will utilize study research procedure. This study will utilize a review research plan, since overview research looks at both of all shapes and sizes populaces by picking and inspecting tests from the populace to decide the proportionate event, importance, and connections among humanistic and mental variables.

#### **3.2. Data collection method**

The systematic method of gathering data is known as data collection. Both primary and secondary data will be gathered using the probability sampling technique in order to analyze the impact of digital marketing on customer behaviour. 450 respondents will complete a



structured, closed-ended questionnaire to provide primary data. Newspapers will be the source of secondary data collection. periodicals, websites, and journals.

#### 4. RESULTS

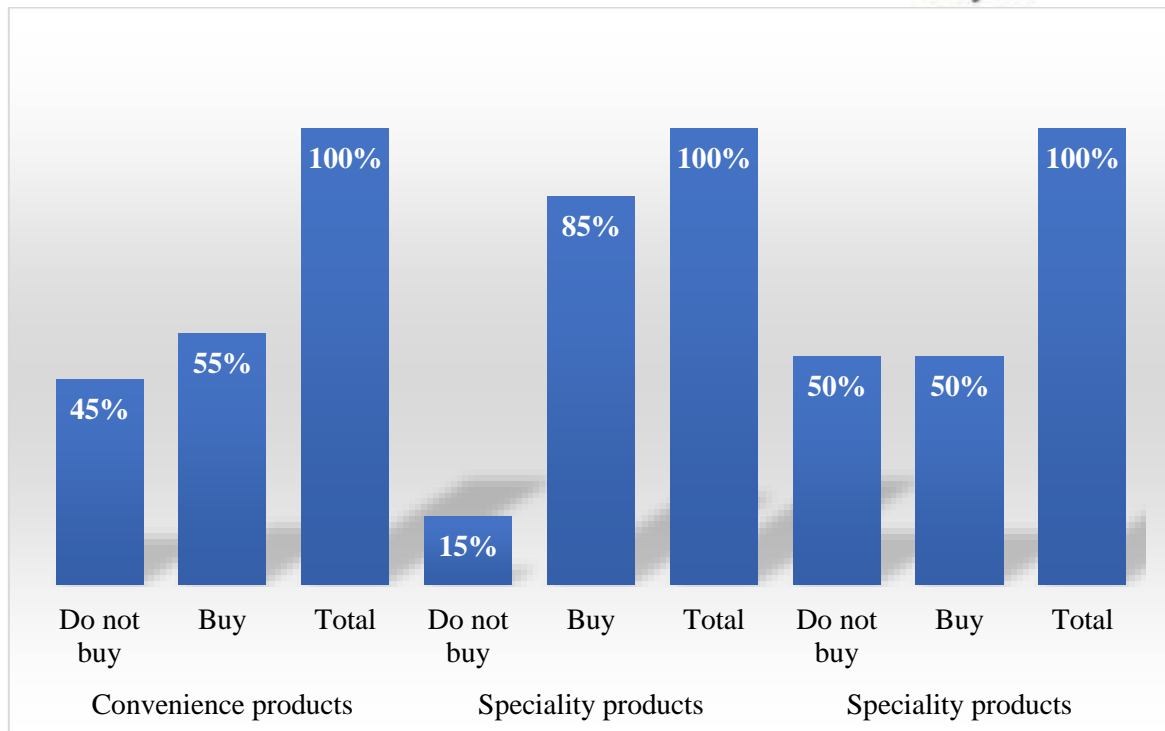
The investigation was guided by the following specific research objectives:

Dissect the association between present day customer buying conduct and digital showcasing. Inspect the social media stages and strategies that straightforwardly impact the activities of customers. Figure out what sorts of products individuals purchase on digital media stages. Dissect the effect that digital advertising has on consumers' decision-production. The outcomes got from the information were expected to address the particular examination targets that were expressed in the review. There are directed subsections in the information assortment device.

The poll was made utilizing the online review device Google Structures, and it was sent by email, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Skype, notwithstanding other digital media stages. The poll was intended to guarantee that no inquiries are missing, and 450 respondents finished it, yielding a 100 percent reaction rate. This is made sense of by a demographically adjusted client base that is learned about digital showcasing and anxious to present info.

**Table 1:** Product categories that customers purchase through digital media

Product categories		Frequency	Percent
Convenience products	Do not buy	200	45%
	Buy	250	55%
	Total	450	100%
Speciality products	Do not buy	100	15%
	Buy	350	85%
	Total	400	100%
Speciality products	Do not buy	230	50%
	Buy	220	50%
	Total	450	100%



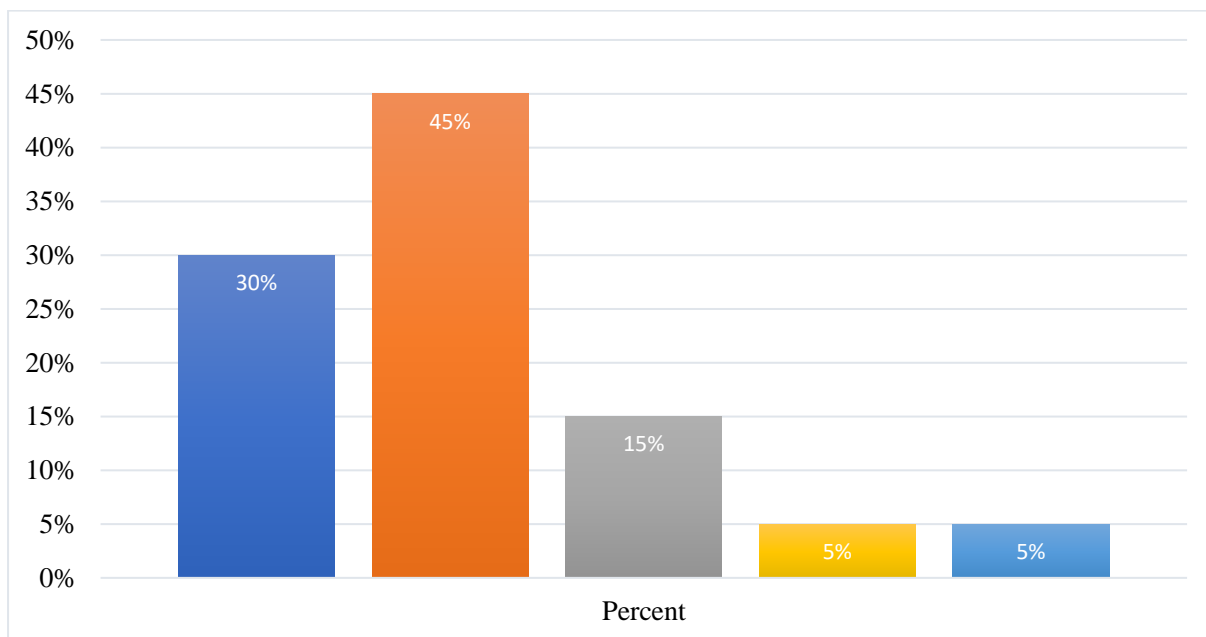
**Fig 1:** Product categories that customers purchase through digital media

**Interpretation:** Convenience items, specialty products, and specialty products are the three product categories for which the data in this table pertains. Within the Convenience products category, 45% of consumers do not purchase, whilst 55% are willing to do so. Just 15% of consumers in the specialty products category say they won't buy, while 85% of them are inclined to do so. It looks like the third entry is just the Specialty products category repeated with a different number. Given that it displays the identical percentages (50% buy and 50% do not buy) as the prior Specialty items category, it may be a typographical error or duplicate entry. In conclusion, customers have a tendency to purchase specialty goods more frequently than convenience goods, despite the latter having a smaller but still considerable purchasing preference. Check the third entry to make sure it is accurate and consistent with the information provided in the prior Specialty products category.

**Table 2:** Digital Marketing's Effect on Consumer Behaviour

		Frequency	Percent
Digital marketing /Advertising has the	Strongly agree	180	30%
	Agree	200	45%

potential of affecting your behaviour	Neutral	40	15%
	Disagree	15	5%
	Strongly agree	15	5%
	Total	450	100%



**Fig 2:** Digital Marketing's Effect on Consumer Behaviour

**Interpretation:** The replies to a survey about people's perceptions of the possible influence of digital marketing and advertising on people's behaviour are shown in this table. The majority of respondents indicated a significant favourable sentiment regarding the influence of digital marketing/advertising, with 30% saying they "Strongly agree" and 45% saying they "Agree" that it has the ability to affect their conduct. A minority merely "Disagree" (5%) or "Strongly disagree" (5%) with this notion, while a lesser percentage (15%) took a "Neutral" position. Overall, 75% of respondents had a positive opinion of digital marketing's and advertising's ability to change behaviour, indicating that a sizable majority of the sample population believes it to be influential.

## 5. DISCUSSION

Our study was made to assist us with testing the speculation and achieve our exploration objectives. The development of the web and the web, the blast of cell phones, tablets, and PCs,

as well as digital innovation's change of showcasing, are contributing variables to the persistent climb and future advancement of digital promoting. Customers presently have more noteworthy circumspection over how they get data about labour and products on account of the Web. Customers never again need to invest as much time or energy shopping since they can get to a boundless assortment of labour and products from organizations all around the world on account of the Web. Social media channels have made it workable for brands to interface with a bigger crowd. This is due to the fact that social media provides a forum for information sharing and educated purchasing decisions. Social media gives customers the ability to learn about a company's goods and services, stay up to date on trends, offer feedback on goods and services, and participate in promotions and contests. Social media advertising procedures empower organizations to associate with virtually every fragment of the populace. Organizations presently perceive and embrace social media showcasing as a basic part of their prosperity systems. Social media marketing offers other advantages in addition to devoted clientele, including better exposure, higher sales, lower marketing costs, and more productive leads and collaborations.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This study looked at how Nigerian consumers' purchasing habits were affected by digital marketing. Drawing from an analysis of existing research and data gathered from 450 participants in a survey, it is apparent that digital showcasing fundamentally impacts consumer buying decisions. Extra examination shows that the accompanying digital media channels straightforwardly affect consumer conduct and the decision to purchase: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google, Instagram, sites and online journals, messages, LinkedIn, and multimedia publicizing. It has been resolved that customers purchase accommodation, shopping, specific, and unsought items among other item classifications through digital stages.

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