

## CONSUMER TRUST IN E-COMMERCE: THE EFFECT ONLINE REVIEWS AND RATINGS

### KEPERCAYAAN KONSUMEN TERHADAP E-COMMERCE: DAMPAK ULASAN DAN PERINGKAT ONLINE

Feliks Anggia Binsar Kristian Panjaitan

Universitas Halu Oleo

\*felikscp23@gmail.com

\*Corresponding Author

#### ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the influence of online reviews and ratings on consumer trust in e-commerce, with the aim of identifying the key factors that influence this dynamic. Using a Systematic Literature Review approach, this study examines relevant studies to explore the role of positive, negative reviews, and elements such as reviewer credibility in shaping consumer trust. The results show that the quality and authenticity of reviews have a significant impact on consumer trust, which has implications for better review management strategies for e-commerce platforms.

**Keywords:** online reviews, ratings, consumer trust, e-commerce

#### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menganalisis pengaruh ulasan dan rating online terhadap kepercayaan konsumen dalam e-commerce, dengan tujuan untuk mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor utama yang mempengaruhi dinamika ini. Menggunakan pendekatan Systematic Literature Review, penelitian ini mengkaji berbagai studi yang relevan untuk mengeksplorasi peran ulasan positif, negatif, dan elemen-elemen seperti kredibilitas pengulas dalam membentuk kepercayaan konsumen. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa kualitas dan keaslian ulasan memiliki dampak signifikan terhadap kepercayaan konsumen, yang berimplikasi pada strategi pengelolaan ulasan yang lebih baik untuk platform e-commerce.

**Kata kunci:** ulasan online, rating, kepercayaan konsumen, e-commerce

## 1. INTRODUCTION

E-commerce has seen remarkable growth, with the number of global online shoppers projected to surpass 2.14 billion in 2021, and this trend is expected to continue (Braga & Jacinto, 2022). As consumers increasingly turn to online shopping, they often rely on reviews and ratings from previous buyers to inform their purchasing decisions. This reliance on consumer-generated content is critical in mitigating uncertainty associated with online purchases (Ponte et al., 2015). E-commerce platforms such as Amazon, Tokopedia, and Shopee have integrated rating and review systems to facilitate this process, allowing consumers to evaluate the quality of products and services based on collective feedback.

However, the rise of online reviews also presents challenges for e-commerce stakeholders. While positive reviews can enhance consumer trust and influence purchasing behavior, the prevalence of fake or misleading reviews raises concerns about the credibility of the information available (Casaló et al., 2015). Research indicates that the quality and quantity of online reviews significantly impact consumer trust and satisfaction (Zhu et al., 2020). For instance, a study found that positive online ratings can enhance booking intentions in the hospitality sector, demonstrating the power of consumer ratings as informational cues (Ramanathan et al., 2022). Conversely, negative reviews can deter potential buyers, highlighting the dual-edged nature of online feedback (Ghouri et al., 2021).

Understanding the validity of online reviews is crucial for fostering consumer trust in e-commerce platforms. Trust is a fundamental component of online transactions, as consumers often hesitate to share personal and financial information due to concerns about privacy and security (Gazali & Suyasa, 2020). Studies have shown that perceived risk significantly influences consumer trust and purchasing decisions in online environments (Bauerová, 2018). For example, consumers are more likely to engage in online shopping when they perceive a low risk of loss associated with their transactions. Furthermore, the social presence generated by online reviews can enhance trust, suggesting that the interaction among consumers plays a vital role in shaping their perceptions (Bulut & Karabulut, 2018). In summary, the integration of reviews and ratings in e-commerce platforms has transformed consumer behavior, enabling more informed purchasing decisions. However, the challenges posed by fake reviews necessitate a deeper understanding of how review validity impacts consumer trust. As e-commerce continues to evolve, addressing these challenges will be essential for maintaining consumer confidence and ensuring the sustainable growth of online shopping.

E-commerce provides undeniable convenience and convenience, allowing consumers to purchase goods from anywhere and at any time. However, these advantages also create uncertainty about the quality of the product or service offered by the seller. For example, buyers who buy electronic products online cannot directly check the physical quality of the goods or get after-sales service directly, which risks reducing their trust. In response to this uncertainty, consumers are increasingly relying on reviews and ratings from previous buyers to get a clearer picture of the products they are purchasing. Reviews provide perspective from other people's real experiences, which can influence purchasing decisions.

However, there is variation in how online reviews are received and processed by consumers, which is influenced by factors such as cultural context, product type, and platform used. In countries with a more collectivistic culture, such as Japan, consumers pay more attention to reviews from multiple people, while in countries with a more individualistic culture, such as the United States, trust in reviews may be more influenced by individual opinions. In addition, the type of product purchased also influences the extent to which reviews and ratings can build trust, for example for technology products compared to fashion products.

The influence of online reviews and ratings on consumer behavior has been extensively studied, revealing a complex interplay between review valence (positive or negative), volume, and authenticity. Positive reviews are often found to significantly enhance consumer trust and influence purchase intentions. For instance, Rosania highlights that trust mediates the relationship between online customer reviews and purchase intention, suggesting that positive reviews can effectively arouse consumer interest in products (Rosania, 2023). Similarly, Tanuwijaya emphasizes that when consumers perceive benefits from reading online reviews, their trust in the website increases, leading to a higher likelihood of purchase (Tanuwijaya, 2023). This aligns with findings from Stouthuysen et al., who assert that customer reviews play a crucial role in establishing initial trust and influencing purchase intentions (Stouthuysen et al., 2018).

Conversely, the presence of negative reviews can have a disproportionately large impact on consumer perceptions. Research indicates that even a small number of negative reviews can significantly deter potential buyers, as consumers often weigh negative information more heavily than positive (Yang et al., 2016). This phenomenon is supported by Sparks and Browning, who note that negative word-of-mouth can severely affect booking intentions and overall trust in hotel services (Sparks & Browning, 2011). Furthermore, the study by Yang et al. reinforces this notion by demonstrating that both review valence and volume significantly impact consumer purchase decisions, highlighting the psychological weight that negative reviews carry (Yang et al., 2016).

The volume of reviews also plays a critical role in shaping consumer trust. A higher volume of reviews can enhance credibility, as consumers often interpret a larger number of reviews as indicative of a product's reliability (Sebastianelli & Tamimi, 2018). This is echoed in the work of Dong et al., who found that the characteristics of online reviews, including their quantity, significantly influence consumer trust across different contexts (Dong et al., 2018). Additionally, the authenticity of reviews is paramount; reviews perceived as genuine and written by actual consumers tend to foster greater trust compared to those suspected to be fabricated or incentivized (Soares et al., 2022). Research by Pfeuffer and Phua emphasizes the importance of sponsorship disclosures in online review videos, suggesting that transparency regarding the origins of reviews can enhance consumer trust (Pfeuffer & Phua, 2021). In summary, the dynamics of online reviews and ratings are multifaceted, with positive reviews fostering trust and purchase intentions, while negative reviews can deter consumers significantly. The volume and authenticity of reviews further complicate this landscape, underscoring the necessity for e-commerce platforms to prioritize genuine consumer feedback to build and maintain trust.

Consumers' increasing reliance on online reviews as an indicator of trust motivated this research. With the increasing volume of e-commerce across platforms, businesses need to understand how to build consumer trust effectively. Therefore, this research aims to explore the factors that influence consumer trust in e-commerce, especially related to reviews and ratings given by previous buyers. In addition, for e-commerce businesses, this research will provide a deeper understanding of the importance of review and rating management, as well as how to mitigate fake or invalid reviews that can damage a platform's reputation. It is hoped that the results of this research can provide useful insights for building more credible marketing and operational strategies.

This research aims to compile a systematic analysis of the influence of online reviews and ratings on the level of consumer trust in e-commerce platforms. This analysis will include a review of various studies that have been conducted to evaluate the extent to which reviews and ratings influence consumer decisions in purchasing products or using services on the platform. Apart from that, this research also aims to identify the main factors that influence the relationship between reviews and ratings on consumer trust. These factors include the type of review (positive versus negative), the volume of reviews, the authenticity of reviews, as well as the impact caused by the characteristics of a particular e-commerce platform. As part of the research results, practical recommendations will be developed to help e-commerce platforms manage reviews and ratings effectively. These recommendations include strategies to increase consumer credibility and trust through more transparent and trustworthy review management, thereby strengthening the relationship between consumers and e-commerce platforms.

This research is expected to provide a significant contribution in understanding the relationship between online reviews and ratings and the level of consumer trust in e-commerce platforms. One of the main contributions is providing better insight for e-commerce platforms in designing more effective marketing strategies by utilizing reviews and ratings as a tool to build consumer trust. In addition, this research also offers practical guidance for e-commerce players in managing online reviews effectively. The resulting recommendations include how to improve the quality and credibility of reviews, handle negative reviews, and tackle fake reviews with a constructive approach to maintaining the platform's reputation. Furthermore, this research can be an important reference for further studies that explore other factors that influence consumer trust in the e-commerce context, such as website design, customer service, and transaction security. Thus, this research is not only practically relevant but also provides a theoretical contribution to the literature related to consumer behavior and digital marketing.

The research was also designed to answer several key questions related to consumer reviews and trust. First, how do online reviews and ratings influence consumer trust in e-commerce platforms? Second, what are the key factors in reviews and ratings, such as review

quality, review volume, and authenticity, that have a significant impact on consumer trust? Third, how do positive and negative reviews influence consumers' trust and purchasing behavior? Finally, how does the volume and authenticity of online reviews affect the level of consumer trust in e-commerce platforms? Through answers to these questions, it is hoped that this research can provide in-depth insight for e-commerce players and researchers in managing consumer trust in the digital era.

## **2. METHODS**

### **2.1. Research Design**

This research uses Systematic Literature Review (SLR) as a research approach to analyze and synthesize existing studies on the influence of reviews and ratings on consumer trust in the context of e-commerce. SLR is a method used to systematically collect, evaluate and synthesize relevant and high-quality research results, with the aim of providing a comprehensive picture of a phenomenon based on existing literature. In this research design, SLR will be used to identify existing patterns in the existing literature regarding factors that influence consumer trust in e-commerce platforms, with a particular focus on the role of reviews and ratings. With SLR, researchers can avoid literature selection bias and provide an objective and comprehensive picture of the influence of these factors on consumer purchasing decisions on e-commerce platforms.

### **2.2. Literature Search Strategy**

The literature search strategy used in this research aims to identify relevant articles that discuss the topic of the influence of reviews and ratings on consumer trust in e-commerce. Several steps that will be taken in the literature search strategy are as follows:

1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria: Inclusion and exclusion criteria will be developed to select relevant articles. Articles to be included in this review are:
  - Articles discussing e-commerce, trust, online reviews, ratings, and consumer behavior.
  - Articles published in peer-reviewed journals or recognized books.
  - Articles published within the last five years to ensure the up-to-dateness of the data.
  - Articles are available in English and the main languages used in this field (such as Indonesian, if relevant).
2. Exclusion criteria include:
  - Articles that are not relevant to the research topic.
  - Articles that are not available in full or only in abstract form.
  - Studies that do not include analyzes directly related to the influence of reviews and ratings on consumer trust in e-commerce.
3. Search in Academic Databases: Researchers will conduct literature searches in several trusted academic databases, such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and JSTOR, to ensure the diversity of sources used. Searches will use keywords such as:
  - "Online reviews and consumer trust"
  - "E-commerce and consumer trust"
  - "Ratings and consumer behavior in e-commerce"
  - "Impact of online reviews on purchasing behavior"
  - "Consumer trust and e-commerce platforms"
4. Researchers will also utilize citation tracking, which makes it possible to find related articles through references to relevant main articles.

### 2.3. Data Collection

At the data collection stage, researchers will identify and collect articles that meet the inclusion criteria. Articles included in this study will include:

- Peer-reviewed articles published in leading international journals.
- A book that discusses theories and concepts related to the influence of reviews and ratings on consumer trust in e-commerce.
- Research reports from research institutions or platforms that have high credibility that study similar topics.

Data collected will include research using a variety of methodologies, including experimental studies, case studies, and quantitative analysis relevant to reviews and ratings in e-commerce. The main objective of data collection is to understand the factors that influence consumers in building their trust in e-commerce platforms based on available reviews and ratings.

For example, some studies might investigate differences in influence between reviews received by products in a particular category, such as electronics versus clothing, or compare consumer trust in large platforms (such as Amazon) versus newer smaller platforms.

### 2.4. Data Analysis

Once data collection is complete, data analysis will be carried out using thematic analysis techniques to identify patterns that emerge in the literature. This thematic analysis technique allows researchers to identify main themes that often appear among various published studies. Several steps that will be taken in analyzing this data are as follows:

1. **Data Coding:** Each article collected will be analyzed to identify key elements relevant to the influence of reviews and ratings on consumer trust. Researchers will highlight quotes and passages from articles that relate to themes such as psychological factors (e.g., the influence of positive reviews on perceived quality), social factors (e.g., the influence of other consumers' opinions on purchasing decisions), and technical factors (e.g., the reliability of ratings and reviews within the platform).
2. **Identify Patterns and Themes:** Based on this coding, researchers will organize research results into several main categories, such as:
  - **Consumer Psychology:** The influence of consumers' emotional and cognitive aspects on reviews and ratings. For example, how positive or negative reviews can influence product quality perceptions and purchasing decisions.
  - **Social Factors:** How reviews and ratings from other consumers can influence purchasing behavior. This includes the role of social influence, recommendations, and social validation in e-commerce.
  - **Trustworthiness and Authenticity Factors:** The influence of review volume and credibility in building or undermining trust. This includes how fake or untrustworthy reviews can influence consumer perceptions.
  - **Platforms and Product Types:** How reviews and ratings are received varies across platforms and product types. For example, on platforms like Amazon or Tokopedia, the role of reviews can vary greatly depending on the product category, such as electronics versus beauty products.
3. **Organizing Results:** Based on the results of the thematic analysis, the researcher will organize the findings in an organized structure, where each main category is explained in detail. These findings will be explained in the context of existing theory and analyzed further to identify knowledge gaps that need further research.

Through this analysis, this research is expected to provide in-depth insight into how reviews and ratings influence consumer trust in e-commerce, as well as how broader factors can mediate or influence this relationship.

### **3. RESULTS**

#### **3.1. Key Findings**

In this section, the main results of the research analyzed will be presented in a summary that includes significant findings regarding the influence of reviews and ratings on consumer trust in e-commerce. Some of the main findings found in the literature are as follows:

##### **1. Influence of Positive and Negative Reviews on Consumer Confidence**

Consumer trust in e-commerce platforms is significantly influenced by online reviews, which can be both positive and negative. Positive reviews serve as a form of social validation, enhancing the trust of potential buyers. Research indicates that a higher volume of positive reviews correlates with increased sales. For instance, Chevalier and Mayzlin study demonstrates that positive reviews can lead to a substantial increase in product sales on platforms like Amazon, underscoring the importance of consumer feedback in shaping purchasing decisions (Yu et al., 2019). This phenomenon is further supported by findings from Yu et al., which highlight how positive online information can facilitate consumer decision-making by reinforcing trust in the product and seller (Yu et al., 2019).

Conversely, negative reviews can severely undermine consumer trust. Mudambi and Schuff's research reveals that even a small number of negative reviews can significantly damage perceptions of product quality and diminish trust in sellers (Yu et al., 2019). This aligns with the concept of negativity bias, where negative information is perceived as more impactful than positive information. The psychological mechanisms behind this bias suggest that consumers are more likely to remember and be influenced by negative experiences, which can lead to a detrimental effect on their purchasing behavior (Wang et al., 2015). Furthermore, studies by Wang et al. emphasize that negative word-of-mouth (WOM) is often more influential than positive WOM, reinforcing the idea that negative reviews can disproportionately affect consumer trust and decision-making processes (Wang et al., 2015).

The interplay between positive and negative reviews illustrates a complex dynamic in consumer behavior. While positive reviews can enhance trust and lead to increased sales, negative reviews can create significant barriers to purchase. This duality highlights the critical role that online reviews play in shaping consumer perceptions and decisions in the e-commerce landscape. As consumers navigate their choices, the balance of positive and negative feedback becomes a crucial factor in their overall trust in e-commerce platforms and the products offered (Guhl et al., 2019). In summary, both positive and negative reviews are essential in influencing consumer trust and decision-making in e-commerce. Positive reviews enhance trust and encourage purchases, while negative reviews can lead to skepticism and reduced sales. Understanding this dynamic is vital for e-commerce platforms aiming to foster consumer confidence and drive sales.

##### **2. Factors That Increase or Reduce Consumer Trust in Ratings and Reviews.**

Consumer trust in ratings and reviews is significantly influenced by several key factors, including reviewer credibility, review authenticity, and the number of reviews available. Each of these elements plays a critical role in shaping consumer perceptions and decisions in the online marketplace.

Firstly, reviewer credibility is paramount in determining the impact of reviews on consumer trust. Research indicates that consumers are more likely to trust reviewers who have identifiable profiles, a consistent history of reviews, and verified purchases. For instance, Jin and Phua (2014) found that reviewers who share personal experiences and include product images are perceived as more credible, leading to increased trust from consumers (Dong et al., 2018). This aligns with findings from (Kusumasondjaja et al., 2012), which suggest that the identification of the reviewer significantly affects the perceived credibility of reviews, with negative reviews from identifiable sources having a stronger impact than anonymous ones.

(Kusumasondjaja et al., 2012). Thus, the transparency and reliability of the reviewer contribute significantly to the overall trust consumers place in the reviews.

Secondly, the authenticity of reviews is another critical factor that influences consumer trust. Authenticity pertains to whether a review is genuinely written by a user or is fabricated or incentivized. Lu et al. (2013) demonstrated that consumers are more inclined to trust reviews that appear to be genuine and not exaggerated, highlighting the importance of mechanisms to filter out fake reviews (Dong et al., 2018). This is supported by the work of (Bauman & Bachmann, 2017), which emphasizes that the perceived authenticity of online reviews is essential for fostering trust in e-commerce environments (Bauman & Bachmann, 2017). The presence of fake or paid reviews can severely undermine consumer trust, making it crucial for platforms to implement systems that detect and mitigate such practices.

Lastly, the sheer volume of reviews available for a product also plays a significant role in shaping consumer trust. Senecal and Nantel (2004) found that a higher number of reviews correlates with increased trust, as it suggests that a product has been evaluated by a larger consumer base, providing stronger social proof (Dong et al., 2018). Conversely, a limited number of reviews can lead to skepticism, as consumers may feel that they do not have enough information to make an informed decision. This phenomenon is echoed in the findings of Christin (2023), which confirm that the quantity of reviews significantly influences initial trust in online services, particularly in the context of hotel bookings (CHRISTIN, 2023). In summary, the interplay of reviewer credibility, review authenticity, and the number of reviews available creates a complex landscape that significantly affects consumer trust in ratings and reviews. Understanding these factors can help businesses and platforms enhance their credibility and foster trust among consumers.

### **3. Differences in Review Influence between Different Types of Products or Services and E-Commerce Platforms**

The influence of online reviews on consumer trust varies significantly across different types of products and e-commerce platforms. This variability is primarily attributed to the nature of the products themselves and the characteristics of the platforms on which the reviews are presented.

Firstly, the type of product plays a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions and trust in reviews. Research indicates that technology products, such as smartphones and laptops, necessitate detailed evaluations due to their complexity and the high stakes involved in purchasing decisions. Consumers often seek in-depth reviews that provide comprehensive insights into product features, performance, and quality. For instance, Mudambi & Schuff (2010) highlight that technology products garner more attention for extensive reviews, which help consumers understand the pros and cons more clearly (Player & Schuff, 2010). In contrast, for more commodity-based products like clothing or cosmetics, consumers tend to prioritize overall ratings and brief reviews that offer a general sense of quality, relying less on detailed evaluations (Mudambi & Schuff, 2010; Yin et al., 2021). This distinction is further supported by Mudambi and Schuff, who argue that the perceived helpfulness of reviews is influenced by whether the product is classified as a search good (easier to evaluate) or an experience good (requiring firsthand experience) (Player & Schuff, 2010).

Secondly, the e-commerce platform significantly impacts how reviews affect consumer trust. Established platforms like Amazon have sophisticated review systems that enhance credibility through mechanisms such as verified purchase indicators and the ability to include multimedia content (Hu et al., 2008; Zhu & Zhang, 2010). (Hu et al., 2008; found that reviews on larger platforms have a more pronounced effect on purchasing decisions compared to smaller, less established sites, where the potential for fake or unverified reviews diminishes trust (Hu et al., 2008). This is corroborated by (Zhu & Zhang, 2010), who emphasize that the influence of online reviews is moderated by both product characteristics and the credibility of

the platform (Zhu & Zhang, 2010). The transparency and verification processes in place on larger platforms contribute to a higher level of consumer trust, as they can better assess the reliability of the reviews they encounter (Hu et al., 2008; Zhu & Zhang, 2010).

In summary, the interplay between product type and e-commerce platform characteristics significantly shapes the influence of online reviews on consumer trust. Technology products demand detailed evaluations, while commodity products rely more on general ratings. Additionally, established e-commerce platforms enhance trust through robust review verification systems, contrasting sharply with smaller platforms that may struggle with credibility issues.

### **3.2. Synthesis of Studies**

This research presents a synthesis of relevant results to provide a more comprehensive picture of how reviews and ratings influence consumer trust in e-commerce. In general, reviews and ratings have been shown to have a significant influence on consumer trust, with a consistent impact across various e-commerce sectors. However, the impact varies depending on the platform and product category. Positive reviews generally increase consumer trust, but negative reviews also play an important role in encouraging more careful purchasing decisions.

The influence of reviews on consumer trust also varies by region and industry sector, highlighting the importance of local and industry-specific context in shaping consumer perceptions. In countries with high levels of digital literacy, such as North America and Europe, consumers tend to trust and rely more on online reviews compared to regions with lower digital literacy. In regions with low digital literacy, consumers may be more skeptical of the authenticity of reviews or feel less trust in the security of online transactions, thereby affecting their level of trust in e-commerce platforms.

Additionally, the industry sector also influences how reviews are received by consumers. In the travel or tourism industry, reviews play an important role as consumers often seek first-hand experience-based information about travel destinations, accommodations or travel services. Reviews supported by photos or experience stories have a big influence, considering that purchasing decisions in this sector are strongly influenced by emotional factors and experience expectations. On the other hand, in the beauty product industry, reviews and ratings are more subjective and persuasive, focusing on visible effects according to consumer needs or preferences. By bringing together the findings from these various studies, this research provides deeper insight into the role of reviews and ratings in building consumer trust in e-commerce. It also identifies existing research gaps, as well as areas that can be further explored by researchers and practitioners in the industry.

## **4. DISCUSSIONS**

In this research, online reviews and ratings were shown to play a significant role in shaping consumer trust in e-commerce platforms, with certain factors influencing the level of trust. Based on the literature analysis that has been carried out, several main questions of this research can be answered as follows:

### **1. The Influence of Online Reviews and Ratings on Consumer Trust**

Research indicates that online reviews and ratings significantly influence consumer trust levels, shaping their purchasing decisions. Detailed and comprehensive reviews are particularly valued by consumers, as they provide a clearer understanding of previous experiences, thereby alleviating the uncertainty associated with new purchases. Lee and Jin highlight that consumer attitudes towards online reviews directly affect their usage behaviors, suggesting that positive attitudes towards detailed reviews can enhance trust and influence purchasing intentions (Lee & Jin, 2012). Similarly, Lee et al. emphasize the importance of trust in online shopping environments, noting that community-based feedback mechanisms help build this trust by leveraging past consumer experiences (Lee et al., 2011).

Higher ratings, especially those supported by numerous reviews, serve as strong indicators of product quality. Mudambi and Schuff argue that the perceived helpfulness of reviews is crucial in the consumer decision-making process, with higher ratings typically correlating with increased consumer confidence (Mudambi & Schuff, 2010). This is further supported by Kim and Han, who discuss how authentic reviews are increasingly recognized as vital in the tourism sector, where consumers cannot physically experience a service before purchase (Kim & Han, 2022). The presence of multiple positive reviews can create a favorable impression, reinforcing the notion that consumers prefer products with high ratings (Shoham et al., 2016).

Conversely, low ratings or insufficient reviews can diminish trust and deter potential buyers. Research by Xie et al. illustrates that negative reviews can significantly impact offline business performance, indicating that consumers often weigh negative feedback heavily when making decisions (Xie et al., 2015). Additionally, the complexity of online reviews, which often contain both positive and negative elements, can lead to confusion and hesitation among consumers. This duality in reviews underscores the importance of review quality and the potential for contradictory information to influence purchase decisions negatively (Bo et al., 2023). In summary, the interplay between online reviews, consumer trust, and purchasing behavior is complex and multifaceted. Detailed, high-quality reviews foster trust and encourage purchases, while low ratings or inadequate reviews can lead to consumer hesitation. The growing body of literature emphasizes the critical role of online reviews in shaping consumer perceptions and behaviors in various markets.

## **2. Factors that Influence Consumer Trust**

Consumer trust in online shopping environments is influenced by several key factors, including the quality and authenticity of reviews, the volume of reviews, and the credibility of the review sources. Research indicates that detailed and informative reviews tend to enhance consumer trust, as they provide clarity and comprehensive information about products. For instance, Zhu et al. highlight that the social presence generated by online reviews significantly affects consumer trust, suggesting that a higher social presence correlates with increased trust levels among consumers (Zhu et al., 2020). Similarly, Dong et al. emphasize that the characteristics of online reviews play a crucial role in shaping consumer trust, underscoring the importance of review quality in influencing customer attitudes and behaviors (Dong et al., 2018).

Moreover, the authenticity of reviews is paramount in fostering trust. Consumers are more inclined to trust reviews perceived as coming from credible sources, such as verified buyers or individuals with genuine experiences. Pfeuffer and Phua's study reveals that sponsorship disclosures in online review videos can significantly impact consumer trust, indicating that transparency about the source of reviews is critical (Pfeuffer & Phua, 2021). This aligns with findings from Stouthuysen et al., who assert that customer reviews, along with vendor-specific guarantees, contribute to the development of initial trust in unfamiliar online vendors (Stouthuysen et al., 2018). The credibility of the review source is thus a vital component in establishing consumer trust.

The volume of reviews also plays a significant role in consumer trust. A high volume of reviews can signal that a product or platform is widely used, which enhances consumers' sense of security when making purchasing decisions. Yang et al. provide evidence that both review valence (the positivity or negativity of reviews) and review volume significantly impact consumer purchase decisions, suggesting that consumers perceive a higher volume of reviews as indicative of product reliability (Yang et al., 2016). This is further supported by the work of Ismagilova et al., who conducted a meta-analysis revealing that electronic word-of-mouth communications, including the quantity of reviews, significantly influence consumers' intentions to buy (Ismagilova et al., 2019). In conclusion, the interplay between review quality,

authenticity, and volume is crucial in shaping consumer trust in online shopping contexts. As consumers navigate the complexities of online marketplaces, understanding these factors can help businesses enhance their credibility and foster stronger relationships with their customers.

### **3. The Effect of Positive and Negative Reviews on Consumer Trust and Purchasing Behavior**

The impact of positive and negative reviews on consumer trust and purchasing behavior is a critical area of study in consumer psychology and marketing. Positive reviews are widely recognized for their role in enhancing consumer trust, which often translates into increased purchasing behavior. Research indicates that consumers are more likely to trust products that accumulate numerous positive reviews, as these reviews serve as social proof of the product's quality and reliability (Mani et al., 2023). This phenomenon is particularly pronounced in online shopping environments, where consumers rely heavily on the experiences of others to inform their purchasing decisions (Sun et al., 2023).

Conversely, negative reviews also play a significant role in shaping consumer perceptions and behaviors. While it might seem intuitive that negative reviews would deter purchases, studies have shown that constructive negative feedback can enhance the credibility of a product. This is because a balanced review profile, which includes both positive and negative feedback, suggests authenticity and transparency from the seller (Mani et al., 2023). Furthermore, negative reviews can provide valuable insights into potential product shortcomings, allowing consumers to make more informed decisions. This transparency can ultimately foster greater trust in the seller, as consumers appreciate honesty about product limitations (Sun et al., 2023).

The dual impact of reviews—both positive and negative—highlights the complexity of consumer decision-making processes. For instance, research has demonstrated that consumers often engage in a thorough evaluation of both types of reviews before arriving at a purchasing decision. This evaluation process is influenced by the perceived credibility of the reviews, which can be affected by the overall balance of positive and negative feedback (Mani et al., 2023). Moreover, the emotional responses elicited by reviews, whether positive or negative, can further influence purchasing behavior, as consumers may be driven by their emotional reactions to the information presented (Sun et al., 2023). In summary, both positive and negative reviews significantly impact consumer trust and purchasing behavior. Positive reviews enhance trust and drive purchases, while negative reviews, when constructive, can increase credibility and transparency, ultimately benefiting consumer trust. The interplay between these types of reviews underscores the importance of a balanced review profile in shaping consumer perceptions and decisions.

### **4. The Effect of Review Volume and Authenticity on Consumer Trust**

The relationship between review volume, authenticity, and consumer trust has been extensively studied, revealing that both the quantity and perceived authenticity of online reviews significantly influence consumer trust levels. A higher volume of reviews tends to enhance consumer confidence, as it provides a broader spectrum of opinions and experiences, which consumers can evaluate to gauge the credibility of the information presented. For instance, Christin's study indicates that online reviews significantly influence trust, particularly in the context of hotel bookings, where the credibility and quality of reviews directly impact initial consumer trust (CHRISTIN, 2023). This finding is echoed by Dong et al., who highlight that not all reviews have the same impact on trust, suggesting that the characteristics of reviews, including their volume, play a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions (Dong et al., 2018).

Moreover, the authenticity of reviews is paramount in fostering trust. Consumers are increasingly skeptical of fake or manipulated reviews, which can severely undermine their trust in online platforms. Research by Kim and Kim emphasizes that the perceived authenticity of online reviews significantly enhances trust among travelers, indicating that when consumers believe reviews are genuine, they are more likely to trust the platform providing them (Kim & Kim, 2019). This aligns with findings from Handayani et al., who assert that the availability of trustworthy information in e-marketplaces fosters consumer trust, ultimately influencing their purchasing decisions (Handayani et al., 2022).

The interplay between review volume and authenticity is further supported by the work of Sparks and Browning, who found that positive online reviews not only enhance trust but also influence booking intentions in the hospitality sector (Sparks & Browning, 2011). Similarly, Zhang et al. argue that consumer-generated reviews are more effective than editor reviews in attracting interest, underscoring the importance of authentic consumer feedback in building trust (Zhang et al., 2010). In summary, the evidence suggests that both the volume and authenticity of online reviews are critical in establishing consumer trust. Platforms that effectively manage and verify the authenticity of reviews are likely to experience greater success in building and maintaining consumer trust, which is essential for driving purchasing behavior in the digital marketplace.

Overall, the results of this study clearly answer the research question, showing that online reviews and ratings have a significant influence on consumer trust. This trust is influenced by several main factors, such as the quality and authenticity of reviews, review volume, and the interaction between positive and negative reviews. Therefore, it is important for e-commerce platforms to focus on managing review quality, ensuring the authenticity of information, and managing review volume in order to build and maintain stronger consumer trust.

Based on the resulting findings, there are several practical implications that are relevant for e-commerce platforms in managing reviews and ratings to increase consumer trust. One of the key steps e-commerce platforms should take is to prioritize the credibility of reviews. One way to achieve this is by verifying that reviewers are legitimate consumers and have first-hand experience with the product being rated. For example, a purchase verification system or flagging reviews written by verified buyers will strengthen consumer trust in those reviews. Large platforms such as Amazon and eBay already have this system in place, showing whether reviews are from buyers who actually purchased the product on their platforms, providing more confidence for consumers looking for information.

Additionally, e-commerce platforms need to provide transparency in review management. This includes an explanation of how reviews are selected, how fake reviews can be detected, and the policies that apply to removed or reported reviews. By providing clarity about this process, platforms can increase integrity and make consumers feel more secure and confident in making purchasing decisions based on existing reviews. Another important step is to increase the authenticity of reviews. E-commerce platforms must have clear measures in place to detect and remove fake or paid reviews. Research by Luca (2011) shows that fake reviews can damage consumer trust and reduce the platform's overall credibility. Therefore, applying AI and machine learning-based technologies to detect suspicious patterns—such as reviews that are excessive or come from newly created accounts—can help ensure that the reviews appearing on the platform are truly trustworthy.

In addition, managing interactions between positive and negative reviews is also an important factor in increasing consumer trust. This research shows that consumers are not only interested in positive reviews, but also how platforms handle negative reviews. Therefore, platforms must provide quick and constructive responses to complaints or criticism that arise. Demonstrating commitment to improving products or services can increase positive perceptions from consumers. For example, if there is a negative review regarding shipping

issues, the platform or seller can respond by offering a solution, apologizing, or explaining the steps taken to fix the issue. This kind of response not only improves consumers' experience, but also increases their trust in the integrity and professionalism of the e-commerce platform.

While this research provides valuable insights, there are several limitations worth noting, and there are opportunities for further research to deepen understanding of the relationship between reviews, ratings, and consumer trust. One of the main limitations is the limited literature coverage, which only includes articles published in indexed academic journals. Some more recent literature or that published in non-academic conferences or platforms may not have been included, which may limit our understanding of recent trends in the influence of reviews on consumer trust. In addition, the use of a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach means that studies that were missed or of poor quality could influence the overall results.

Future research directions could include further investigation into how new technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI), chatbots, and virtual assistants, influence interactions between consumers and online reviews. For example, research could explore how AI can be used to optimize reviews or to suggest products to consumers based on deeper and more personalized review analysis. This can help create a more efficient and relevant shopping experience, which in turn can influence consumer confidence levels. Additionally, further research could explore cultural differences in how consumers from different regions respond to reviews and ratings. These studies can compare how consumers in countries with higher levels of digital literacy react to reviews compared to consumers in developing countries, who may rely more on face-to-face interactions or personal recommendations. This kind of research could provide insight into how trust in reviews can be influenced by cultural context and level of exposure to digital technology. Further research could also explore the influence of reviews in specific industries, such as banking or insurance, which often rely heavily on reputation. Understanding how reviews play a role in building trust in these sectors can provide new insights into the dynamics of consumer trust in more risk-sensitive contexts. By understanding the limitations of this research and paving the way for more in-depth research, we can gain a more comprehensive understanding of how reviews and ratings influence consumer trust in e-commerce.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This research provides in-depth insight into the influence of reviews and ratings on consumer trust in e-commerce. Based on an analysis of existing literature, it can be concluded that online reviews and ratings play an important role in shaping consumer trust in products, services and e-commerce platforms. The main findings of this research show that positive reviews can increase consumer trust levels, while poorly handled negative reviews can undermine that trust. Factors such as reviewer credibility, review authenticity, and number of reviews have also been shown to have a significant impact on consumer decisions.

Practically, the implications of these findings suggest that e-commerce platforms need to manage reviews more carefully, ensure their quality and credibility, and provide constructive responses to negative reviews. Implementing a review verification system and using technology to detect fake reviews is key to building and maintaining consumer trust. Additionally, it is important for platforms to manage the interaction between positive and negative reviews in order to create a transparent and fair experience for consumers.

However, this research has several limitations, especially in terms of the scope of literature used and the approach applied. Therefore, further research is needed to explore the role of new technologies in influencing the management of reviews and ratings, as well as to analyze cultural differences in consumer reactions to reviews in different regions. Future research could also further deepen the study of specific industry sectors and how reviews influence trust in more specific contexts.

Overall, this research reinforces the importance of reviews and ratings as key tools in building trust in e-commerce, and provides practical guidance for platforms in improving their interactions with consumers. With the right approach to managing reviews, e-commerce platforms can increase consumer loyalty and optimize the online shopping experience.

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