



Negative Online Reviews and Consumer Purchase Intentions for Search and Credence Goods: Reactions from Users of Online Shopping Platforms in Nigeria



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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between negative online reviews and consumer purchase intention. For this study, we used product-brand-related negative online reviews, dealers-related negative online reviews and platform-related online reviews, while the purchase intention of online shoppers was used to proxy consumers' purchase intention. Negative online reviews were considered in the areas of accessibility, reliability, genuineness, integrity, lead time, user-friendliness, security and satisfaction. To achieve the objectives of the study, a sample of 200 users of online shopping platforms spread across three major cities namely Asaba, Warri and Sapele in Delta State, Nigeria was drawn using the convenience sampling technique. Data were analyzed using the multiple regression estimation techniques. The results of the study indicate that negative online reviews have an inverse and significant relationship with consumer purchase intention. Specifically, product/brand-related negative online reviews, dealers-related negative online reviews and platform-related negative online reviews significantly discourage consumers' purchase intention. This study, therefore, recommends that negative reviews should be reduced by organizations managing online shopping platforms.

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1 Introduction

We live in a technological age where all that is required to access information is a basic mobile device and a stable internet connection. The buying and selling process, as well as consumers' attitudes on purchasing decisions, has evolved dramatically. In contrast to the old consumer buying decision-making process, which relied on face-to-face word-of-mouth interaction, information about products, services, and trends has become crucial to customers due to their availability through internet technologies in recent years. Consumer purchasing processes can now be started and completed with the touch of a button from anywhere in the world and at any time, with little or no emphasis on a physical presence (Lantzy & Anderson, 2020).

Several organizations in Nigeria and other areas of the world have developed online platforms where consumers may engage with brands and/or third-party dealers to purchase things (physical goods or services) and have them delivered to their doorstep or nearby convenience. Shopping has become a digital experience, with companies like Amazon, eBay, Walmart, and Bestbuy (based in the United States), ASOS, Boohoo, and Debenhams (based in the United Kingdom), and Jumia, Konga, JiJi, Payporte, and Ajebomarket (based in Nigeria) providing more satisfaction to customers. However, in recent years, the online customer buying experience has been marred by issues that are product-related, dealer-related, or platform-related (Zhao et al., 2020). These setbacks have become elements that affect consumer happiness, prompting companies such as Amazon, eBay, Walmart, and Bestbuy, among others, to implement a feedback procedure that allows customers to express their pleasure and assess items, dealers, and platforms (Hussain et al., 2020). An online review is a description of a customer's experience with a brand, product, dealer, or selling platform, expressed online through closed-ended ratings or open-ended comments, and can be good or negative.

Consumers rely on online reviews to make purchasing decisions. Online reviews have also become a valuable resource for comparing products (Zhang et al., 2014; Zhang & Piramuthu, 2018). According to surveys and research data on online consumers, an increasing number of people utilize search engines and other online consumer platforms to learn more about the things they want to buy before deciding whether or not to buy them. The question is about a variety of areas of demand, including brand, brand reputation, and product comparisons at various price points. Online reviews, according to Cui et al. (2015), provide the most direct answers since they reveal customers' actual thoughts and help buyers to learn about the benefits, drawbacks, best uses, cost-effectiveness, user experience, and buying considerations of goods (Emons, 2001; Bonroy et al., 2013).

The problem

Online reviews created by past customers enhance information about products and service providers in the internet-shopping environment (Zhang & Piramuthu, 2018). If this is the case, buyers will be extremely sensitive to unfavourable internet evaluations about the products or services they intend to acquire. Consumers typically interpret negative internet reviews as warning flags from early adopters or other consumers who have already eaten the product or utilized the service and had a negative experience. Zhang et al. (2014); Keh & Sun (2018); Kim & Tanford (2019); Hussain et al. (2020); Zhong et al. (2021), are just a few examples of empirical studies on the impact of online reviews on consumers' purchase intent. However, these studies were conducted in other countries. Nigerian researchers have yet to delve into this field of study. As a result, this study is ideally positioned to evaluate the impact of unfavourable internet reviews on consumers' purchase intentions in Nigeria (Wu et al., 2020; Mariani et al., 2019).

Literature review

Conceptual review

Online reviews

An online review is a description of a customer's experience with a brand, product, dealer, or selling platform that is expressed online in the form of closed-ended ratings or open-ended comments. Consumer reviews on the internet are frequently viewed as a kind of online word-of-mouth marketing for products, services, processes, and platforms, and can be favourable or bad based on the reviewer's personal experience. Consumers today utilize the internet to acquire items and services and to review them based on information offered on the products vs their own experience (Jia & Liu, 2018). Consumers typically have certain expectations of the products or services they intend to purchase, and they expect to be satisfied to the extent that their expectations are met after they make their purchase. Before making a

purchase choice, customers frequently compare their experience and degree of satisfaction to their expectations. This comparison will result in either a gap, parity, or supplanting of consumer expectations. Cui et al. (2015), on the other hand, claimed that online consumer reviews reflect more accurate and complete information. Online reviews, unlike conventional word-of-mouth reviews, are statements made by potential, present, or former customers regarding a product or company. A significant number of people and organizations have access to information via the Internet. True and trustworthy information on product experience, price, and performance, as well as other statements or reviews, are among the statements or reviews that consumers can collect and respond to through a network platform (Li & Wang, 2018).

Online review methods

There are various methods through which consumers complete online reviews and each method is dependent on the platform on which such reviews are to be completed as well as the purpose for such reviews. For instance, consumers who are expected to express their level of satisfaction will require a unique review method compared to consumers who are expected to document their general experience. For this study, we have identified two major methods which include the close-ended online reviews and the open-ended online reviews (Overby & Lee, 2006; Close & Kukar-Kinney, 2010).

Close-ended online reviews

These are online reviews usually carried out on a structured platform such that the reviewers (which in this context are the consumers) are expected to follow a structured pattern on responses that are scale-related. The close-ended online reviews are often used to rate consumers' experience using a structured scale with each scale item pre-denoted and explained to consumers before the review. In close-ended online reviews, consumers do not have the opportunity to express their experience in their own words, but often use ratings like stars.



Figure 1. An example of a Close-Ended Online Review

Source: See <https://www.itsolutionstuff.com/post/bootstrap-star-rating-example>

Open-ended online reviews

These are online reviews usually carried out on an unstructured platform which allows the reviewers to express their experience in their own words. In this method, the reviewers are not expected to follow a structured pattern of responses. The close-ended online reviews often provide spaces for reviewers to state type and send their reviews.



Figure 2. An example of a Close-Ended Online Review

Source: Google Play Store App Review

Types of online reviews

As a common form of consumer feedback documentation, online reviews are of different types and with different purposes. For example, some online reviews consist of consumers' opinions about a given product or service, while consumers can also express their opinions about a given shopping platform following their shopping experience (Nam & Seong, 2021). The following are types of online reviews as identified in this study (Laroche et al., 1996; Bian & Forsythe, 2012).

Brand or product related online reviews

The whole consumer experience combines the pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase experience of the consumers and when compared to the consumers' expectations, a conclusion is reached by the consumer which will either be positive or negative. All product-related experiences of the consumers such as accessibility, genuineness, physical condition, cost, condition for use and derived satisfaction are usually considered by consumers before concluding the product or brand. Simply put, when a product is easily accessible, genuine as promised, in good physical condition (i.e. without production defects), purchased at a fair price compared to substitutes and gives the desired satisfaction, a consumer, having such experience with a product or brand will surely give a positive review or feedback (Guo et al., 2021; Ko, 2018).

Dealers-related online reviews

For continuous users of online shopping platforms in Nigeria, the term "dealers" on shopping platforms refers to third-party distributors of a product or brand through the platform. These shopping platforms enable dealers (or sellers) to create virtual stores online and make products available for general view by consumers. Online reviews related to dealers are also a common type of online review where consumers rate their experience with a dealer on the platform. All consumer experiences with a dealer, including dealers' reliability, accessibility, and integrity among others form the basis upon which consumers define their experience. A customer's interpretation of negative reviews about a dealer on a given platform may lead to the decision not to purchase from or deal with such dealers.

Platform-related online reviews

In Nigeria like in other developing countries, online shopping platforms often go through downtimes and upgrades - a period those consumers will find it difficult to use such platforms smoothly. Sometimes, these platform-related reviews may be tied to the nature of the shopping platform - i.e. whether or not it is user-friendly, safe and easily accessible, gives a simple and smooth shopping experience and is free from cyber frauds. A lot of consumers have been defrauded in recent years due to the porous nature of online shopping platforms in Nigeria, and when this occurs, negative platform-related online reviews are expected from such customers. For this study, we have highlighted several platform-related factors that consumers look out for when defining their experience on shopping platforms; and these factors include accessibility, reliability, user-friendliness, lead time and security (Widodo et al., 2022; Tuárez et al., 2022).

Negative online reviews

A negative online review is one borne out of an unpleasant consumer experience with a brand, product, dealer or a shopping platform and expressed online either through close-ended ratings or open-ended comments. It is often associated with consumers' dissatisfaction and an outcome of a shortfall between consumers' expectations and consumers' experience or reality. Ciu et al. (2015), quoted Liang and Chen who argued that the negative comments are based on customers' dissatisfaction with products and services and these customers share their experiences with friends and relatives, advising them not to buy the products or services. Generally, consumers often place more attention on negative online reviews compared to positive ones when making their purchase decisions (Basiri et al., 2020). Hence, consumers rely more on negative reviews in their purchase decisions. This is simply a reflection of the implication of negative online reviews and the aim of this study is to directly examine how these negative reviews affect consumers' purchase decisions.

Reasons for negative online reviews

Having known that negative online reviews are an outcome of a bad consumer experience with the product/brand, the dealer or the platform through which the purchase was made. A bad consumer experience is simple a shortfall in consumers' expectations when compared to reality. For instance, when a consumer expects a 50ml but receives a 45ml, this, for most consumers will be perceived as a deliberate attempt to defraud them, hence, a negative online review. For this study, we have summarized several factors that can result in a negative online review from consumers in the table below;

Table 1
Reasons for a Negative Review from Consumers/Users of Online Shopping Platforms

Factors	Brand/Product-Related	Dealer-Related	Platform-Related
<i>Accessibility</i>	When consumers find it difficult to access the brand or products online.	When dealers are not easily accessible by consumers or organizations to respond to consumers' demands.	When the platform is not designed in a manner that is easily accessible to consumers with just the click of a button.
<i>Reliability</i>	When the product or service is not reliable as expected by the consumers before the purchase was made.	When dealers are not reliable and trustworthy to provide the exact demand of the consumers and at the right price.	How reliable is the shopping platform in terms of the information they give and about products and services displayed?
<i>Genuineness</i>	When the product is different from what was displayed or advertised physically or in terms of content.	When there are dealers who operate on the platform to defraud consumers or sell non-genuine products or services.	Is the platform a genuine one or just a clone of another platform, or is it designed to purposefully mislead insensitive consumers shopping online?
<i>Integrity</i>	When the brand is deceptive in its description of the product or service to consumers.	When dealers on the platform have no integrity and often try to deceive consumers or give deceptive messages.	Is the platform a popular demand to its integrity or does it have a bad reputation in the face of the consumers?
<i>User-friendliness</i>	When the product or service is complicated to the consumers and difficult to use compared to other products.	Nil	When the shopping platform is not user-friendly and consumers have to deal with some technical barriers while using the platform to shop.
<i>Satisfaction/Benefits</i>	When the satisfaction derived after using such product or service falls below the consumers' expectations.	Nil	When the consumers are not satisfied with the design of the platform and how orders are placed, processed and delivered to them.
<i>Lead Time</i>	When consumers have to wait for an unreasonably long period to get a response for complaints or enquiries.	When it takes an unreasonably long time for dealers to meet the requests of the consumers or respond to enquiries.	When it takes an unreasonably long period time for demands to be processed, and/or for platform-related

			complaints to be addressed.
<i>Security</i>	When the consumers perceive that the product is not safe for use.	Nil	When the platform is not safe for consumers to place payment information due to the fear of being defrauded by hackers.

Sources: Author's Classification for Illustration

Consumers' purchase decision

Consumer buy intent is frequently linked to their ultimate purchase choice, and it is also a reliable predictor of consumer purchasing behaviour. Mullet believes that a product's or brand's purchase intention is linked to the product's or brand's attitude and external variables and that it can be viewed as a subjective predisposition of customers to choose a specific product, as well as a significant signal for predicting consumer behaviour. Purchase intention is defined by Liu and Qiu (2015) as the possibility of intending to acquire a product or brand. Purchase intention refers to a consumer's willingness to acquire specific goods. Overall, even though different scholars' definitions of consumer buy intention differ, they all believe it is a psychological activity and the chance of purchase intention occurring. As a result, purchase intention is defined in this study as the possibility and probability of customers purchasing a product or service.

2 Theoretical Framework

Attribution theory (AT)

Attribution theory examines how people form inferences about why a communicator supports a particular viewpoint or acts in a particular manner (Kelley, 1973). Consumers frequently link persuasive messages to either product stimuli (i.e. product performance) or non-product stimuli (i.e. communicator qualities or circumstances) when they receive them (Mizerski, 1982). According to this theory, the more consumers believe the message is truly related to the product stimulus, the more credible the communicator will be, 2) the more confidence consumers will have in the message's accuracy, 3) the stronger consumers' belief that the product truly possesses the attributes mentioned, and 4) the more consumers will be persuaded by the message. Consumers will discount the accuracy of the message and the actual performance of the product if they suspect the message is influenced by non-stimulus factors (i.e. personal incentives, bias), and they will perceive the communicator as biased, and they will be less persuaded by the communicator and the message if they suspect the message is influenced by non-stimulus factors (i.e. personal incentives, bias). The discounting principle of attribution theory is the name given to this last phenomenon.

When readers find poor reviews for experience products, they disregard the reviews' accuracy and relate them to the reviewers' internal motivations. Platforms, types of reviewers, and source reliability are all aspects that can influence the attribution process, according to the research. Because they do not support the company's product or get incentives for doing so, sources or platforms such as other consumers and non-commercial or third-party review websites are more trustworthy than experts or retailer's websites, according to the Attribution hypothesis. As a result, consumers will trust bad internet evaluations from the former and consider them when making a purchasing decision.

The theory of planned behaviour (TPB)

Ajzen proposed the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) (1991). This theory is based on the rationed action theory (TRA), which is primarily used to predict and analyze human behaviour. Because TRA implies that an individual's decision to embrace a specific behaviour is fully voluntary, it ignores the ethical considerations made by core users, particularly individual traits. As a result, Ajzen (1991), included a third factor: cognitive behavioural control. The type of information inconsistency is used as an independent variable, felt uncertainty is used as a mediator, and purchase intention is used as a dependent variable in this study. Individual perceptual control will deteriorate as buyers' perceived

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uncertainty grows, lowering purchasing intent. For this study, we assume that negative online reviews of products/brands, dealers, and platforms will create a sense of uncertainty in consumers' minds about such products/brands, dealers, and platforms, and that, as a result of the TPB's proposition, consumers' purchase intentions will be discouraged.

Empirical review

Several empirical studies have been carried out on this area of investigation, but most studies focus generally on the relationship between online reviews and consumers' purchase intention and decisions- see [Zhong et al. \(2021\)](#); [Hussain et al. \(2020\)](#); [Basiri et al. \(2020\)](#); [Yanhui & Zongwei \(2016\)](#); [Xuemei et al. \(2016\)](#), but only a very few have been specific with determining how negative online reviews are perceived by consumers- see [Liu & Qiu, 2015](#); [Ciu et al., 2015](#). [Zhong et al. \(2021\)](#), investigated the impact of false online reviews on consumer buying decisions. According to the findings, online reviews have a significant impact on consumers' purchasing decisions, and as a result, expressions of emotional polarity and intensity in deceptive reviews of all aspects of the product will give customers a sense of dependability and security, allowing them to determine whether the online review is trustworthy. Customers' eagerness to purchase will be bolstered when the comment is trusted.

Another study by [Hussain et al. \(2020\)](#), revealed that internet reviews have a stronger impact on customers with high professionalism than on customers with poor professionalism. The degree of importance and relevance that customers perceive for a product based on their innate desire, values, and concerns is referred to as online review user participation. The number of reviews based on attribute descriptions has a beneficial impact on the purchase intention of customers with limited engagement. Customers with a high level of involvement, on the other hand, respond positively to the number of reviews based on basic recommendations. According to [Basiri et al. \(2020\)](#), who utilized an experimental method to investigate the impact of online word-of-mouth on customer purchase decisions, customers are more affected by online word-of-mouth when purchasing high-involvement products than when purchasing low-involvement products.

An empirical study was conducted by [Xuemei et al. \(2016\)](#) to explore the impact of internet reviews on customer purchasing intent. For the aim of attaining the study's goal, a sample of 500 users of online shopping platforms was used, and primary data was collected and analyzed. The findings demonstrated that the number of favourable reviews had a beneficial influence on customers' purchasing intent. This means that the more good evaluations a customer sees for a product, the more likely that customer will buy the product, and vice versa. [Yanhui & Zongwei \(2016\)](#), have conducted research into the utility of online reviews for consumers. According to the survey, the bigger the number of good internet reviews, the more likely buyers are to make online purchases. Furthermore, product kinds influence the volume of reviews and purchasing intent. The study also found that the amount of comments on experience items that have an impact on purchase decisions is higher than on search-based products.

A study by [Liu & Qui \(2015\)](#), looked at the effect of unfavourable online reviews on consumers' buying intent. This study examines the impact of product information, the dimension of negative online reviews on purchase intention, and the moderating function of product type, based on the dimension of product information and utilizing the experimental technique. The findings imply that (1) the negative online reviews' product information dimension has a considerable impact on purchase intent, but (2) product type has no significant moderating influence between them. [Ciu et al. \(2015\)](#), investigated the impact of unfavourable online reviews on consumers' attitudes and purchasing intentions for online products. According to the findings, most online customers read product reviews before making a purchase. Negative internet evaluations have an impact on consumer purchasing intent, attitudes, and behaviours, according to the study. Furthermore, purchasing attitudes have an impact on behaviour intention.

3 Tools and Methodology

The survey research design was used in this study. Focusing on Delta State, a sample of 200 respondents was conveniently collected from three major cities: Asaba, Warri, and Sapele. Users of online purchasing platforms in Delta State make up the respondents. Questionnaires were given as the data gathering instrument and these were distributed to users of online shopping malls. The questionnaires were designed to gather feedback from users on how negative online reviews of items, dealers, and platforms affect their purchase intent. The researchers used the ordinary least square (OLS) multiple regression estimate technique for data analysis.

Model Specification

$$\text{CPI} = \alpha_0 + \beta_1\text{ACC} + \beta_2\text{REL} + \beta_3\text{GEN} + \beta_4\text{INT} + \beta_5\text{LDT} + \beta_6\text{USF} + \beta_7\text{SEC} + \beta_8\text{SAT} + \epsilon_i \quad (\text{i})$$

$$\text{CPI} = \alpha_0 + \beta_1\text{ACC} + \beta_2\text{REL} + \beta_3\text{GEN} + \beta_4\text{INT} + \beta_5\text{LDT} + \beta_6\text{USF} + \beta_7\text{SEC} + \beta_8\text{SAT} + \epsilon_i \quad (\text{ii})$$

$$\text{CPI} = \alpha_0 + \beta_1\text{ACC} + \beta_2\text{REL} + \beta_3\text{GEN} + \beta_4\text{INT} + \beta_5\text{LDT} + \epsilon_i \quad (\text{iii})$$

Where:

CPI:	Consumer purchase intention
ACC:	Accessibility of products/brands, dealers and the shopping platform
REL:	Reliability of products/brands, dealers and the shopping platform
GEN:	Genuineness of products/brands, dealers and the shopping platform
INT:	Integrity of products/brand, dealers and the shopping platform
LDT:	Lead time for products/brands, dealers and the shopping platform
USF:	User-friendliness of products/brands and the shopping platform
SEC:	Users' security and/safety with products/brands and the shopping platform
SAT:	Users' satisfaction with products/brands and the shopping platform
α_0 :	a constant, equals the value of Y when the value of X = 0
β :	coefficient of the independent variables
ϵ_i :	the error term

4 Results and Discussion

Regression results presentation

Table 2
Regression estimation for model I

CPI = $\alpha_0 + \beta_1\text{ACC} + \beta_2\text{REL} + \beta_3\text{GEN} + \beta_4\text{INT} + \beta_5\text{LDT} + \beta_6\text{USF} + \beta_7\text{SEC} + \beta_8\text{SAT} + \epsilon_i$ (i)		
Independent variables	<i>Product/Brand-Related Negative Online Reviews and Consumers' Purchase Intention</i>	
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Intercept	-76.80109	0.0000
ACCESS	-0.752908	0.0037
REL	-0.700020	0.0000
GEN	-0.781768	0.0098
INT	0.653058	0.0307
LDT	-0.624921	0.0136
USF	0.575160	0.0771
SEC	-0.606546	0.0145
SAT	-0.530029	0.0312
N	200	
Adjusted R-squared	0.719907	
F-test		0.041285

^aSignificance at the level 5% level (two-tailed)

Table 3
Regression Estimation for Model II

CPI = $\alpha_0 + \beta_1\text{ACC} + \beta_2\text{REL} + \beta_3\text{GEN} + \beta_4\text{INT} + \beta_5\text{LDT} + \beta_6\text{USF} + \beta_7\text{SEC} + \beta_8\text{SAT} + \epsilon_i$ (ii)		
Independent variables	<i>Platform-Related Negative Online Reviews and Consumers Purchase Intention</i>	
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Intercept	-0.412536	0.0000
ACCESS	-0.71105	0.0217
REL	-0.36310	0.0012
GEN	0.72273	0.0000
INT	-0.94670	0.0190
LDT	-0.53485	0.0147
USF	-0.45456	0.0018
SEC	-0.54123	0.0004
SAT	-0.61253	0.0546
N	200	
Adjusted R-squared	0.905311	
F-test		0.001886

^aSignificance at the level 5% level (two-tailed)

Table 4
Regression Estimation for Model III

CPI = $\alpha_0 + \beta_1\text{ACC} + \beta_2\text{REL} + \beta_3\text{GEN} + \beta_4\text{INT} + \beta_5\text{LDT} + \epsilon_i$ (iii)		
Independent variables	<i>Dealers-Related Negative Online Reviews and Consumers Purchase Intention</i>	
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Intercept	-0.547404	0.0000
ACCESS	-0.357017	0.0244
REL	-0.523200	0.0085
GEN	0.784442	0.0620
INT	-0.908621	0.0264
LDT	-0.713269	0.0006
N	200	
Adjusted R-squared	0.863547	
F-test		0.007497

^aSignificance at the level 5% level (two-tailed)

From the regression results in Table 2, we examined how consumers and users of online shopping platforms will react to negative online reviews about the products they intend to buy or order. On a general note, these results show that negative online reviews for products and/or brands can significantly affect consumers' purchase intention inversely. Consumers of such products will be discouraged once they come across such reviews online, and so, maybe compelled to explore product substitutes with more positive reviews. This study confirms the findings of Ciu et al. (2015), which revealed that most online shoppers view online reviews from product users before purchasing and that negative online reviews affect consumer purchase intention, attitudes, and behaviours. Moreover, buying attitudes influence behaviour intention. From the regression results in Table 3, we examined how consumers and users of online shopping platforms will react to negative online reviews about the shopping platform through which they intend to buy or order products and services. These results show that negative online reviews about a given shopping platform can significantly affect users' intention in an inverse manner. Consumers will often have doubts about such platforms while those who are

unwilling to take any risk will not even consider giving such platforms a try. Negative reviews about such platforms imply that users will be compelled to use other similar platforms with positive reviews. In line with the findings of this study, Liu & Qui (2015), suggested through their findings that the product information dimension of the negative online reviews has a significant effect on purchase intention, but product type has no significant moderating effect between them.

From the regression results in Table 4, we examined how consumers and users of online shopping platforms will react to negative online reviews about dealers on the platform from which they intend to buy or order products and services. These results show that negative online reviews about the dealers on a shopping platform can significantly affect users' of such platform in an inverse manner. Consumers often want to feel safe when dealing with sellers online on and off shopping platforms. The key to doing business online is trust and to earn consumers' trust, dealers must ensure that they are accessible, reliable, with high integrity and respond swiftly to consumers' complaints and enquiries. Basiri et al. (2020), confirmed through their findings that consumers are more affected by online word-of-mouth when buying high-involvement products than when buying low-involvement products. For Xuemei et al. (2016), the number of good reviews positively affects customers' purchase intention. Yanhui & Zongwei (2016), also revealed that the number of comments on experience products playing an effect on the purchase decision is more significant than that on search-based products.

5 Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

Following the findings obtained from prior findings as well as the results obtained in this current study, it is pertinent to conclude that negative online reviews have an inverse and significant relationship with consumers' purchase intention. Specifically, product/brand-related negative online reviews significantly discourage consumers' purchase intentions; dealers-related negative online reviews significantly discourage consumers' purchase intention; while platform-related negative online reviews also significantly discourage consumers' purchase intention.

Recommendation

1. This study has shown negative online reviews often discourage consumers' purchase intention. Therefore this study recommends that negative reviews should be reduced by organizations managing online shopping platforms. The perception of negative reviews on consumer attitudes influences purchasing intention; therefore, reducing negative reviews can improve consumer purchase attitudes and behavioural intentions.
2. This study also shows that the spread of negative online reviews should be given more attention by the organization managing online shopping platforms. This is because these organizations will also be affected by consumer access to online negative comments in the long run.

Finally, there should be a strict on-boarding process for dealers on a given shopping platform, and there should be strict punishment for dealers who violate the organization's code, to preserve the integrity of the platform.

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