

Influence Of Online Reviews And Ratings On Customer Satisfaction In Fashion Purchases

Dr. M. Krishna Kumar¹

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Muslim Arts College, Thiruvithancode, Kanniyakumari District, Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Abishekapatti, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, India

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ABSTRACT:

The rapid growth of e-commerce has significantly transformed consumer purchasing behavior, particularly in the fashion sector. This study examines the influence of online reviews and ratings on customer satisfaction in fashion purchases. The primary objective is to analyze how reviews and ratings affect purchase decisions and overall satisfaction levels of customers. The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected from 80 respondents in Kanyakumari District using a structured questionnaire. Analytical tools such as percentage analysis, ANOVA, and correlation were used to interpret the data. The findings reveal that online reviews and ratings play a crucial role in influencing customer decisions and satisfaction. A majority of respondents rely on reviews before making a purchase, and negative reviews were found to have a strong impact on buying behavior. The ANOVA results indicate a significant relationship between income and customer satisfaction, while the correlation analysis shows a strong positive relationship between online reviews and satisfaction levels. The study concludes that online reviews and ratings are key determinants of customer satisfaction in online fashion shopping. It suggests that e-commerce platforms should focus on maintaining transparency, ensuring authenticity of reviews, and improving product quality and service. These measures will help in enhancing customer trust, satisfaction, and long-term loyalty in the competitive online fashion market.

Keywords: Online Reviews, Customer Satisfaction, Fashion Purchases, E-Commerce, Consumer Behavior

INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of e-commerce has transformed the way consumers purchase fashion products, offering convenience, variety, and competitive pricing. Among the various factors influencing online buying behavior, reviews and ratings have emerged as powerful tools that shape consumer perceptions and decision-making. Unlike traditional shopping, where customers can physically examine products, online platforms rely heavily on user-generated content such as feedback, star ratings, and comments to reduce uncertainty and build trust. Online reviews and ratings serve as a form of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), providing insights into product quality, size accuracy, delivery experience, and overall satisfaction. Consumers often depend on these reviews to evaluate fashion goods, which are highly subjective and influenced by personal preferences, trends, and expectations. Positive reviews tend to enhance customer confidence and increase purchase intention, while negative reviews can create hesitation and dissatisfaction.

In the context of fashion purchases, where visual appeal, fit, and quality are critical, reviews and ratings play a crucial role in shaping post-purchase satisfaction. They not only influence initial buying decisions but also impact customer expectations and perceived value. A mismatch between expectations formed through reviews and the actual product experience can significantly affect satisfaction levels. Therefore, understanding the influence of online reviews and ratings on customer satisfaction is essential for e-commerce platforms and fashion retailers. It helps businesses improve product quality, enhance transparency, and build long-term customer relationships. This study aims to examine how reviews and ratings.

affect customer satisfaction in online fashion purchases, providing insights into consumer behavior in the digital marketplace.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Rachmiani and Oktadinna (2024), in their study “The Impact of Online Reviews and Ratings on Consumer Purchasing Decisions in E-Commerce Platforms,” examined how customer-generated reviews influence buying behavior and satisfaction. The study found that online reviews act as a major source of information, helping consumers evaluate product quality and reliability before making a purchase. Positive reviews were found to increase trust and reduce perceived risk, while negative reviews created hesitation and lowered satisfaction levels. The research highlighted that star ratings and detailed feedback significantly shape consumer expectations, especially in fashion products where physical inspection is not possible. It also pointed out that consumers tend to rely more on recent and verified reviews. The study suggested that businesses should actively manage customer feedback and ensure transparency. The study concluded that effective use of reviews and ratings can enhance customer satisfaction and improve overall online shopping experience.

Cahya et al. (2024), in their study “Consumer Reviews and Their Role in Online Shopping Satisfaction,” analyzed the importance of user-generated content in shaping consumer perceptions. The study revealed that reviews provide valuable insights into product features, quality, and usability, which directly influence satisfaction levels. It found that customers often compare multiple reviews before making a purchase decision, particularly in fashion items such as clothing and accessories. The research also emphasized that authentic and detailed reviews help reduce uncertainty and increase confidence in online purchases. However, misleading or fake reviews were identified as a major challenge affecting trust. The study suggested implementing strict verification systems to ensure review authenticity. It concluded that genuine customer feedback plays a vital role in enhancing satisfaction and building long-term customer relationships.

Wu and Huang (2023), in their study “Influence of Online Customer Reviews on Fashion Product Purchases,” examined how reviews impact consumer decisions in the fashion segment. The study found that online reviews significantly affect consumer attitudes, preferences, and satisfaction levels. Customers rely heavily on reviews to assess product fit, quality, and overall appearance, which are critical in fashion purchases. The research highlighted that both positive and negative reviews influence expectations, which in turn affect post-purchase satisfaction. It also found that visual reviews, including images shared by customers, have a stronger impact than text-based reviews. The study suggested that businesses should encourage customers to share detailed feedback and real images. It concluded that managing online reviews effectively can improve customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

Su et al. (2023), in their study “Impact of Customer Review Sentiment on Consumer Satisfaction and Business Performance,” analyzed large-scale e-commerce data to understand review influence. The study found that negative reviews have a stronger psychological impact compared to positive ones, often leading to dissatisfaction and reduced purchase intention. It highlighted that sentiment analysis of reviews can help businesses understand customer expectations and improve service quality. The research also pointed out that timely responses to negative feedback can mitigate dissatisfaction and improve customer perception. Furthermore, consistent positive ratings were found to enhance brand image and customer trust. The study suggested adopting advanced data analytics to monitor and respond to customer feedback. It concluded that effective management of review sentiment is crucial for improving customer satisfaction and sustaining business growth.

Fernandes et al. (2022), in their study “Measuring the Impact of Online Reviews on Consumer Decision-Making,” developed a framework to understand how reviews influence satisfaction and purchase behavior. The study found that credibility and trustworthiness of reviews are key factors affecting consumer satisfaction. Customers tend to rely more on reviews that are detailed, balanced, and perceived as genuine. The research also revealed that higher ratings generally lead to increased satisfaction, but overly positive reviews may sometimes create unrealistic expectations. It emphasized the importance of transparency and authenticity in review systems. The study suggested that e-commerce platforms should implement mechanisms to filter fake reviews. It concluded that trustworthy reviews significantly enhance customer satisfaction and influence repeat purchases.

Zhang et al. (2022), in their study “Effect of Online Ratings and Reviews on Consumer Perceived Quality,” examined the relationship between ratings and customer satisfaction. The study found that star ratings serve as a quick evaluation tool for consumers, while written reviews provide deeper insights into product performance. It highlighted that consumers often prioritize products with higher ratings and a large number of reviews. The research also found that inconsistencies between ratings and actual product experience lead to dissatisfaction.

Additionally, it emphasized that fashion products are more sensitive to review influence due to their subjective nature. The study suggested improving the accuracy and reliability of rating systems. It concluded that online reviews and ratings play a significant role in shaping customer satisfaction and purchase decisions.

FASHION PURCHASES

Fashion purchases refer to the buying of clothing, accessories, footwear, and other style-related products that are influenced by current trends, personal preferences, and social factors. These purchases are not only made to satisfy basic needs but also to express individual identity, lifestyle, and social status. In the context of online shopping, fashion purchases involve selecting and buying fashion goods through digital platforms such as e-commerce websites and mobile applications. Consumers rely on product images, descriptions, reviews, and ratings to make decisions, as they cannot physically examine the items before purchase. Fashion purchases are often characterized by factors such as changing trends, brand influence, quality perception, price sensitivity, and customer experience. They are also highly subjective, as preferences vary based on age, gender, culture, and personal taste. Therefore, understanding consumer behavior in fashion purchases is essential for analyzing satisfaction levels and improving marketing strategies.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the influence of online reviews and ratings on customer satisfaction in fashion purchases.
2. To analyze the factors affecting customer satisfaction in online fashion shopping.
3. To evaluate the role of online reviews and ratings in shaping purchase decisions of customers.
4. To identify the relationship between customer satisfaction and online shopping experience in fashion products.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The present study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design. The descriptive aspect focuses on explaining the customer profile and their online fashion purchasing behavior, while the analytical aspect examines the relationship between online reviews, ratings, and customer satisfaction. The study aims to identify and analyse the key factors influencing customer satisfaction in online fashion purchases.

Source of Data

The study is based on both primary and secondary data sources:

- ❖ **Primary Data:** Primary data are collected directly from respondents using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire is designed to gather information regarding demographic profile (age, gender, income), online shopping behavior, frequency of purchases, influence of reviews and ratings, and level of satisfaction towards fashion products purchased online.
- ❖ **Secondary Data:** Secondary data are collected from various sources such as research journals, books, websites, and previous studies related to online shopping, e-commerce, and customer satisfaction. These sources provide theoretical and conceptual support for the study.

Sampling Design

- ❖ **Sampling Technique:** The study employs Simple Random Sampling to ensure that each respondent has an equal chance of being selected, thereby minimizing sampling bias.
- ❖ **Sample Size:** A total of 80 respondents are selected for the study. The sample size is considered adequate for conducting statistical analysis such as ANOVA, correlation, and F-test.
- ❖ **Sampling Unit:** Individual customers who purchase fashion products through online platforms.
- ❖ **Study Area:** The study is confined to Kanyakumari District.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- ❖ The study is limited to a sample size of 80 respondents, which may not fully represent the entire population.
- ❖ The findings are based on self-reported data, which may involve bias or inaccuracies.

ANALYSIS

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

S.No	Variables	Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Age	Below 20	12	15%
		21 – 30	30	37.5%
		31 – 40	20	25%

		Above 40	18	22.5%
2	Gender	Male	35	43.75%
		Female	45	56.25%
3	Education	School Level	10	12.5%
		UG	38	47.5%
		PG	22	27.5%
		Others	10	12.5%
4	Monthly Income	Below ₹10,000	15	18.75%
		₹10,000 – ₹20,000	28	35%
		₹20,000 – ₹30,000	20	25%
		Above ₹30,000	17	21.25%

Sources: Primary Data

The above table shows the demographic profile of the respondents selected for the study. It is observed that the majority of respondents (37.5%) belong to the age group of 21–30 years, indicating that young adults are more actively involved in online fashion purchases. Regarding gender, female respondents (56.25%) are higher than male respondents, suggesting that women are more engaged in online fashion shopping. In terms of education, most respondents (47.5%) are undergraduates, followed by postgraduates (27.5%), which indicates that educated individuals are more likely to use online platforms for fashion purchases. With respect to monthly income, a significant portion of respondents (35%) falls within the ₹10,000–₹20,000 income group, showing that middle-income consumers are the primary users of online fashion shopping.

TABLE 2: INFLUENCE OF ONLINE REVIEWS AND RATINGS ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

S. No	Factors	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1	Reviews help in making purchase decisions	30 (37.5%)	28 (35%)	10 (12.5%)	8 (10%)	4 (5%)	80
2	Ratings reflect product quality	26 (32.5%)	30 (37.5%)	12 (15%)	8 (10%)	4 (5%)	80
3	Negative reviews affect my purchase	34 (42.5%)	25 (31.25%)	9 (11.25%)	7 (8.75%)	5 (6.25%)	80
4	I trust online reviews before buying	28 (35%)	32 (40%)	8 (10%)	7 (8.75%)	5 (6.25%)	80
5	Reviews influence my satisfaction level	25 (31.25%)	30 (37.5%)	12 (15%)	8 (10%)	5 (6.25%)	80

Sources: Primary Data

The above table presents the influence of online reviews and ratings on customer satisfaction in fashion purchases. It is observed that a majority of respondents strongly agree (37.5%) and agree (35%) that reviews help in making purchase decisions, indicating the importance of customer feedback in online shopping. Regarding product quality, most respondents agree (37.5%) that ratings accurately reflect product quality, showing reliance on rating systems. A significant percentage of respondents strongly agree (42.5%) that negative reviews affect their purchase decisions, highlighting the strong impact of unfavorable feedback. Further, 40% of respondents agree that they trust online reviews before buying, which shows that reviews act as a reliable source of information. Additionally, 37.5% agree that reviews influence their satisfaction level, indicating that expectations formed through reviews play a key role in determining satisfaction.

TABLE 3: FACTORS AFFECTING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN ONLINE FASHION SHOPPING

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Mean Square (MS)	F-Value	Significance (p-value)
Between Groups	18.72	3	6.24	4.15	0.009
Within Groups	114.28	76	1.50		
Total	133.00	79			

Sources: Computed Data

The above ANOVA table shows the relationship between monthly income and customer satisfaction in online fashion shopping. The calculated F-value (4.15) is statistically significant at the 5% level, as the p-value (0.009) is less than 0.05. This indicates that there is a significant difference in customer satisfaction levels among different income groups. Hence, the null hypothesis (H_0) stating that there is no significant relationship between income and satisfaction is rejected. The result implies that income plays an important role in influencing customer satisfaction. Customers with different income levels may have varying expectations regarding product quality, price, and service, which ultimately affect their satisfaction in online fashion purchases.

TABLE 4: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ONLINE REVIEWS/RATINGS AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN FASHION PURCHASES

Variables	Online Reviews & Ratings	Customer Satisfaction
Online Reviews & Ratings	1.000	0.682**
Customer Satisfaction	0.682**	1.000

Sources: Computed Data

Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The above table shows the correlation between online reviews and ratings and customer satisfaction. The correlation coefficient value ($r = 0.682$) indicates a strong positive relationship between the two variables. This means that as the influence of online reviews and ratings increases, the level of customer satisfaction also increases. The significance value at the 0.01 level indicates that the relationship is statistically significant. Hence, the null hypothesis (H_0) stating that there is no significant relationship between online reviews and customer satisfaction is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted.

FINDINGS

- ❖ The majority of respondents (37.5%) belong to the age group of 21–30 years, indicating that young adults are the most active participants in online fashion shopping.
- ❖ Female respondents (56.25%) are higher than male respondents, showing that women are more involved in purchasing fashion products online.
- ❖ Most of the respondents are undergraduates (47.5%), which indicates that educated individuals prefer online platforms for fashion purchases.
- ❖ A significant portion of respondents (35%) belongs to the middle-income group (₹10,000–₹20,000), suggesting that online fashion shopping is popular among middle-income consumers.
- ❖ The majority of respondents agree that online reviews help in making purchase decisions, highlighting the importance of customer feedback in online shopping.
- ❖ Most respondents believe that ratings reflect product quality, indicating reliance on rating systems while selecting fashion products.
- ❖ A high percentage of respondents strongly agree that negative reviews affect their purchase decisions, showing the strong impact of unfavorable feedback.
- ❖ The majority of respondents trust online reviews before making a purchase, which indicates that reviews act as a reliable source of information.
- ❖ The ANOVA results reveal that there is a significant relationship between monthly income and customer satisfaction, indicating that satisfaction levels vary across different income groups.
- ❖ The correlation analysis shows a strong positive relationship ($r = 0.682$) between online reviews/ratings and customer satisfaction, proving that reviews significantly influence satisfaction levels.
- ❖ Overall, online reviews and ratings play a crucial role in shaping both purchase decisions and customer satisfaction in online fashion shopping.

SUGGESTIONS

- ❖ E-commerce platforms should implement strict verification systems such as “verified purchase” tags to ensure authenticity of reviews and ratings and to build customer trust.
- ❖ Companies should encourage customers to provide detailed reviews, including product images, size, and quality feedback, by offering incentives like discounts or reward points.
- ❖ Sellers should monitor and respond to negative reviews promptly to resolve issues and improve customer satisfaction and brand image.
- ❖ Providing accurate product descriptions, proper size charts, and high-quality images can reduce expectation gaps and enhance satisfaction.
- ❖ Businesses should use data analytics to study customer reviews and identify common problems to improve product quality and service.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined the influence of online reviews and ratings on customer satisfaction in fashion purchases. The findings reveal that online reviews and ratings play a significant role in shaping consumer behavior, purchase decisions, and overall satisfaction levels. In the absence of physical product evaluation, customers heavily depend on reviews and ratings to assess product quality, size, and reliability. The study highlights that positive reviews enhance trust and confidence, while negative reviews strongly impact purchase

decisions and satisfaction levels. The analysis also indicates that demographic factors such as income influence satisfaction, as different groups have varying expectations regarding product quality and pricing. Furthermore, the strong positive correlation between online reviews and customer satisfaction confirms that reviews are a crucial determinant in the online fashion shopping experience. Overall, the study concludes that effective management of online reviews and ratings is essential for improving customer satisfaction. E-commerce platforms and sellers must focus on maintaining transparency, ensuring authenticity of reviews, and enhancing product quality and service. By doing so, they can build customer trust, increase satisfaction, and achieve long-term success in the competitive online fashion market.

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