IMPACT OF ONLINE REVIEWS ON CUSTOMER PERCEPTION AND BUYING BEHAVIOR

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This paper investigates the impact of online customer reviews on consumer perception and buying behavior and highlights the major elements of OCRs responsible in influencing a consumer to make the final purchase decision.

Methodology: Exploratory and descriptive research was conducted based on primary data collected from respondents residing in the National Capital Region of Delhi by means of a questionnaire wherein the sampling technique used was stratified random sampling. The collected data were converted into data matrix using SPSS 21.0 software and inferential analysis was done.

Findings: Factors contributing to making any online review more relevant and factors responsible to trust the authenticity of a review.

Research limitations/Implications: The study is limited to a specified geographical area of Delhi & NCR and is conducted at a certain stage of evolution of the Internet.

INTRODUCTION

Customer review is an assessment of a product or service by a customer who has purchased and used it or had experienced it. Before the advent of internet word of mouth has been the most influential source of information gathering and information transmission about product-related experiences. The arrival and expansion of the Internet has extended consumers’ options for gathering product information by including other consumers’ comments, posted on the Internet, and has provided consumers opportunities to offer their own consumption-related advice by engaging in electronic word-of mouth (eWOM) (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Since Web 2.0 internet has become a primary source of product-related information for consumers and has significantly impacted the consumer behavior. Consumers are no longer mere buyers of a product or service but they have now become information providers too.

The impact of electronic word of mouth has been found to heavily depend upon two factors: source credibility and message relevance. Source credibility refers to the characteristics of a communicator that affect how the receiver perceives and accepts the message. For eWOM, a communicator is the writer of a review and a receiver is the reader of the review. Message relevance means that the subject of review must be important to the matter at hand.

Source: Research Gate, Kelley O’Reilly
eWOM is now referred to as online customer reviews (OCRs) which is mainly customer generated content. Many information and cultural goods are experience goods that a consumer needs to taste before assessing its quality and its location with respect to his or her ideal product (Bounie et al., 2005). Today, the internet has made it possible for consumers to share their understanding and impression of a product or a service. Internet reviews have transformed customers from passive to active while making purchase decisions. Today, people rely more and more on reviews because of the fact that they do not want to interact with people due to shortage of time and various other reasons.

Online reviews and ratings include brief profile information about consumer posting, community rated reputation of reviewers indicating the usefulness of previously posted reviews and other products purchased (Wu, P.F. 2013). Online retailers now make sure that they have a separate section on their website to record customer reviews. Reviews may be in the form of ratings, textual feedback or images or even videos sometimes. Many leading online retailers consider reviews as a free source of marketing. For instance, Jeff Bezos, CEO of amazon.com, regard online word of mouth as a winning marketing instrument even better than television marketing. It is safe to say that we are entering from a ‘digital marketing’ world into a ‘post-purchase digital marketing’ world.

Customers’ purpose for viewing online reviews differs and can be classified into four broad categories: information build up, minimizing risk, quality assurance and sense of social belonging. Reviews lessen the search time by a significant amount and provide information on how to properly use the product and thereby reduce the risk of improper use and maintenance of the product. Reviews further help to evaluate the perceived quality of the product and the associated cost benefits and create bonding amongst users of similar products and generate a platform for communication among users.

The impact of online product reviews can be significant since potential online customers often refer to online reviews from previous customers before making their purchase decisions (Banerjee, Bhattacharyya, & Bose, 2017; Liu, 2006). A survey showed that 90% of consumers read online reviews and 83% of them agree that online reviews affect their final decisions (Channel Advisor, 2011). Based on positive and negative reviews that consumers read online, they tend to like or dislike a commodity or service. The father of behavioral psychology, Watson, proposed the “stimulus response” model of consumer behavior. Mehrabian extended this model and gave the “stimulus-organism-response” model. This model suggests that a particular scenario or a combination of scenarios can trigger consumers’ psychology and influence their behavior. Here stimulus is the review which is a combination of review rating (positive, moderate and negative reviews) and content (shop reputation, seller reputation, brand reputation, quantity of review, text, and image, etc.); organism is the consumer who differs in age, geography, gender, etc. and response is the buying behavior. The S-O-R model can be depicted in the following figure.
Online reviews make a notable contribution in impacting the purchase decision of consumers and in shaping their perception about a product or a service and the degree of this impact is determined by numerous factors such as positive, negative and neutral ratings, length of reviews, source of reviews, type of product, demographics of the consumer and nature of content.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A study of existing research work in this area suggests that there are a number of factors and processes that help shape consumers perception and influence his buying decision through online reviews. This section will highlight the underlining theories and models related to currently available literature.

OCRs and the Process of Persuasion

William McGuire (1960) gave a model of persuasion which suggests that there are six steps involved in pursuing a customer to make buying decision. This model is appropriately applied to study the impact of OCRs on customer perception and buying behavior. First step is exposure wherein the customers are exposed to online reviews through their own research and willingness to know more about the product or service they are about to buy. Step two is attention or awareness wherein customers identify reviews through repeated viewing and thereafter comprehend the value that the review delivers which forms the third step, i.e. comprehension. Next step is acceptance where customers believe the reviews and then comes retention i.e. customers remember the message conveyed through OCRs they have viewed and relate it to specific company or product or service. Last step in the process is action i.e. the buying decision; customers align their behavior in the desired direction and make the decision of whether to purchase the product or service. This knowledge called persuasion knowledge, usually helps individuals adaptively respond to persuasion attempts and achieve their own goals (Friestad & Wright, 1994).

Review Valence

Review valence represents the psychological value assigned to a product or service by a customer based on reviews. There are typically three trends observed in review valence: positive, negative and neutral (Purnawirawan, 2016). Purnawirawan et al. (2012) found out that biased reviews have more impact than neutral ones and they tend to affect consumers’ perception of the product or service and thereby the buying behavior. Such biased reviews instill more confidence in readers and help them make better, more precise and faster buying decisions. Negative reviews are considered more helpful than moderate or extremely positive ones (Racherla and
Friskie, 2012) and affect consumers in a stronger way (Park and Lee, 2009).

**Review Content**

Various online review platforms are used by consumers and literature classifies these platforms deliberately designed to read and post reviews. Some of these platforms include personal blogs, retail websites, video-sharing platforms, social media as a platform for online reviews, and independent consumer review platforms (Burtona & Khammash, 2010; Dellarocas, 2003; Fan & Gordon, 2014; Lee & Youn, 2009; Preece & Shneiderman, 2009). Personal blogs contain reviews posted by bloggers about their experiences with a product or service and provide recommendations accordingly.

Retail platforms are websites of a retail store which focus on the sale of goods and services through the Internet (Investopedia) and product reviews and information come mainly from sellers selling their products on these sites. Video sharing platforms allow sharing all kinds of videos—personal videos, advertisement, messages, and product reviews in video format. Communication is generally in the form of exchange of videos and text comments. Independent consumer review platforms display reviews on their website (Burtona & Khammash, 2010). These are different from retail websites in that independent consumer review platforms are not linked to retailers and sellers, i.e. do not sell online. Each of these platforms has a distinguished form of posting reviews yet each of them shares some common features such as catchy headings, website names, and eloquent words etc. review content refers to the style in which the review is posted on these platforms. OCR content may be textual, image, audio, video, or ratings. It can also be factual or subjective evaluation (Holbrook, 1978). The more subjective of online review, the more strongly of consumer purchase intention (Jin, 2007).

**Recentness of Review**

Recentness of review refers to the date and time when review was posted. It can be a new and updated review or an older one. Previous studies in this area suggest that buying intention is directly linked to recentness of the reviews posted online. Recent reviews provide current and present-day information and are more reliable than older ones. When consumers read old online reviews, they might think that the review content is too old to use and therefore unreliable when making purchase decisions (McKinney et al., 2002). However the study of Jin (2014) suggests that a consumer with near future buying intention (booking a hotel in a day or two) tend to read more recent reviews than a consumer with far future buying intention (booking a hotel in a few months) who read older reviews.

**Customer Involvement**

The concept of involvement is proposed by Hupfer and Gardner (1971), who states that involvement refers to a certain level of interest. Involvement refers to the extent to which the customer is interested in knowing about the product or service that he is considering to purchase. Involvement also depends on self-concept and self-values. Degree of involvement will also depend on the type of commodity being considered for purchase or the type of service. For example, experience goods will generally involve more degree of involvement from customer before buying it, i.e. customers tend to read more about such a commodity and base their final
Online reviews have enabled open communication among users and prospective buyers of an item and hence increased the degree of involvement of consumers before making the final purchase decision.

**Online Consumer Reviews and Buying Behavior and Decision Process**

The availability of online reviews has made people more involved in their purchases since they pay for a product or service and wants to be fully informed of the pros and cons of the same. Online reviews are regarded as more reliable source of information especially for experience goods (Bronner and de Hoog, 2010). The characteristics of OCRs are of great importance in making a difference in consumer perception and thereby his buying behavior. Racherla and Friskie (2012) suggests that background information of the reviewer did not provide much usefulness to the consumer. Word count does not contribute much to the reader of an online review (Racherla and Friskie, 2012). This is a contradiction to Chevalier and Mayzlin (2006) and Mudambi and Schuff (2010) who found a positive connection. Furthermore consumers are more influenced by the online reviews available in established websites than those which are not (Park and Lee, 2009). Reviews offered by reviewers with high expertise are considered less useful than those with lower expertise and reviews offered by reviewers with high reputation are considered as more useful that those with low reputation (Racherla and Friskie, 2012).

Traditional model of the stages a consumer pass through before making the purchase decision is a linear model, i.e. the consumer recognizes a need, searches for information on possible purchase alternatives, evaluates those, and by eliminating them reaches the final buying decision (Kotler and Armstrong, 2008). However, a study by McKinsey (Court et al., 2009) is suggestive of the fact that it is now a cyclic process and a continuous loop. Potential buyers now not only remove alternatives but also add on new ones based on the reviews that successfully draw their attention. That is to say that a consumers’ consideration set keeps on changing (King et al., 2014).

**Fake Customer Reviews**

In today’s world of internet and e-commerce it is becoming more and more easy to post false reviews to hamper or boost a product’s esteem. The impact that OCRs have on customer buying behavior and perception of a product as well as the ease to remain incognito has made OCRs a prey to malicious activities. Fake reviews injected into the system do not represent correct and accurate information about the product or service being offered.

There are a number of unscrupulous business owners both online and offline who attempt to post false positive reviews about their own product or false negative reviews about their competitors in an attempt to demolish the reputation of their competitor (Dellarocas 2006, Mayzlin et al. 2012, Lappas 2012, Luca and Zervas 2013). In a complaint filed by ecommerce giant Amazon.com in October 2015 it stated that these reviews although small in number jeopardize the trust that their customers, sellers and manufacturers place in Amazon thereby deteriorating its brand image.
Fake online reviews can be both paid as well as unpaid. Unpaid reviews are generally malicious attacks launched by anonymous groups to spread chaos across platforms and among its customers. Paid reviews are generally posted in order to tarnish the reputation of a brand or a platform in general by competitors. Paid reviews can also be positive when posted to improve a brand or product image since first impressions count and good ratings certainly make for a good impression. In October of 2015 Amazon.com also registered a complaint against 1000 people who proposed to hire themselves out as fake reviewers (Weise 2015).

Legal Implications of Fake or Paid Customer Reviews

Companies that use fake reviews violate the terms of use of review platforms and can be suspended for doing so. Buyers as well as sellers of fake reviews are liable and can be reported by competitors who can even claim damage charges. This conduct of buying and selling reviews is anti-competitive and warning notices in such cases are a big threat to companies indulged in trade of fake reviews.

Federal Trade Commission (FTC) forbids the use of online fake reviews. Under Section 5 of the FTC Act U.S. Code § 45 fake reviews serve as deceitful advertisements and are therefore declared illegal. FTC clearly states that a review is fake if it is not based on real experience of the customer and subjects every fake review to a $10,000 fine.

Objectives of the Study:
- To find out the factors motivating consumers to view OCRs.
- To study the impact of review valence on consumer perception and buying behavior.
- To investigate the effect of recentness of reviews on purchase intentions.
- To study the impact of online review content on customer.
- To find if customers trust the authenticity of OCRs.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted using exploratory and descriptive styles of research to find answers to the objectives of this study. Since the study demands a primary data, an electronic form of questionnaire was floated for execution of the research objectives. The questionnaire was separated into three main parts. The first part captures the demographics of the respondents which include age and gender, the second part collects information on whether people are influenced by online customer reviews and the third and the last part of questionnaire focused on importance and impact of these online reviews. A stratified sample was chosen at random to fill the questionnaire. Primary data were collected from 130 respondents which consisted of both males and females who were aged 18 or above. Secondary data for this research was collected from previously published research papers, reports, white papers and cases on the same topic.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The data collected consisted of 58% female and 42% male (Fig. 3) respondents out of which 58% were in the age bracket of 18-23 years old while 35% were between 24 to 29 years of age and 6% aged 30 and above (Fig. 4).
Out of the total respondents only 8% say that they post online reviews regularly and 20% do not post online reviews at all. However a significant number of people, 72% post online reviews sometimes (Fig. 5). We can say that most of the people post reviews only when they feel the product is a costly one or they have extreme experience with that product or service. Extreme experience includes both extremely good and extremely bad experience. As per the data collected, most people (58%) tend to always read online reviews before making a purchase decision, 38% people read them only sometimes, i.e. only before purchasing experience goods or costly goods and there is only 3% respondents who do not read online reviews at all (Fig. 6).

77% people agree that online reviews do impact their buying decision and 20% say that it may or may not be the case. 3% however deny any influence of online reviews on their buying decision (Fig. 7).
Most of the people prefer websites by respective companies to view online reviews (49%). We can say that people believe that company owned websites provide more authentic reviews. Video and image reviews come next with a preference of 22%. Video and images provide visual proofs and content. Only a small fraction of people (9%) say that they use social media platforms as a source of product information (Fig. 8). 49% people say that the view reviews for quality assurance while 25% and 23% say they use them for risk minimization and information gathering respectively. Only 3% of the sample population is encouraged to view online reviews because of their social culture, i.e. because someone has recommended it to them (Fig. 9).

As per the respondents, review platform, reviewer, review content and recentness of review forms important ingredient in trusting the authenticity of any review whereas length of review play only a little or no role in the same. That is to say length of any review is not as important to its readers as the other factors. It is more or less in a neutral state. Figures are as follows:

- Importance of review platform in reviews: 55% important over 16% not important (Fig. 10)
- Importance of reviewer in reviews: 42% important over 24% not important (Fig. 11)
• Importance of review content in reviews: 76% important over 11% not important (Fig. 12)
• Importance of recentness of review in reviews: 66% important over 13% not important (Fig. 13)
• Importance of review length in reviews: 29% important and 31% not important (Fig. 14)

65% of the respondents find online review relevant and accurate and 66% trust these if there are multiple customer reviews to read and 23% believe the reviews are authentic.
35% feel that it is hard to tell if OCRs are truthful or biased and 11% do not trust OCRs (Fig. 15 & 16).

Hypothesis Testing
Following hypothesis were formulated to test the various relations among existing variables:

$H_01$: There is no significant relationship between genders and if they post online reviews.

$H_{11}$: There is significant relationship between genders and if they post online reviews.

To test the above stated hypothesis a cross tabulation between ‘gender’ and ‘do you post online reviews’ was conducted (Table 1) and chi square was calculated for the same cross tabulation. Results of chi square test reflected that it has a $p$-value = 0.361 (Table 2) which is greater than the chosen $p$-value of 0.05 which means that we reject the alternate hypothesis and accept the null hypothesis that there is no significant association between gender and if they post online reviews. Both male and females equally post or do not post online reviews.

$H_{02}$: There is no significant relationship between genders and influence of reviews on buying behavior.

$H_{12}$: There is significant relationship between genders and influence of reviews on buying behavior.

To test this hypothesis a cross tabulation between gender and influence of reviews on buying decisions was performed (Table 3) and Pearson chi square was calculated. The results showed a $p$-value = 0.016 (Table 4) which is smaller than the chosen $p$-value of 0.05. This means that we accept the alternate hypothesis that there is significant relationship between gender and influence of reviews on buying decisions.
**Fig. 17:** Cross tabulation between gender and influence of reviews on buying decisions.

- **H₀**: There is no significant relationship between genders and trust on OCR.
- **H₁**: There is significant relationship between genders and trust on OCR.

Cross tabulation for the above stated hypothesis was performed and chi² square was calculated. It was found that the p-value for chi square = 0.455 which is greater than the chosen value of 0.05. This clearly means that we accept the null hypothesis and there is no significant relationship between gender and the level of trust on OCR. Both males and females trust or distrust OCRs independently.

**Table 3: Crosstab between gender and do the reviews influence buying decision**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do these positive, negative &amp; neutral reviews influence your buying decisions?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4: Chi-Square Tests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pearson Chi-Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.211a</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>130</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*2 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.66.*

**Fig. 18:** Cross tabulation between gender and trust on OCRs

- **Table 5: Crosstab between gender and do the reviews influence buying decision**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you trust online customer reviews as much as personal recommendation?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, I believe the reviews are authentic</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, if there are multiple customer reviews to read</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 6: Chi-Square Tests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pearson Chi-Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.575a</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>130</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.*
**H04:** There is no significant relationship between importance of recentness of review and importance of review content.

**H14:** There significant relationship between importance of recentness of review and importance of review content.

Regression analysis was performed in order to test the above hypothesis (Table 7).

- **Dependent variable (y)** – Importance of review content (Table 7)
- **Independent variable (x)** – Importance of recentness of review (Table 7)

**Regression equation** - \( y = 1.171 + 0.737 \times \) (Table 8)

The regression equation so formed suggests that 100% improvement in recentness of review increases the importance of review content by 73.7% with 1.171 being the constant (or intercept).

The regression model is significant also this model explains 56.9% variation in the variables as seen by R square value (Table 9).

Also a high F value of 86.739 is suggestive of acceptance of our alternate hypothesis i.e. there is a significant relationship between importance of recentness of review and importance of review content (Table 10).

**Table 7: Variables Entered/Removed**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Variables Entered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rate the following as per their importance in a review [Recentness of review]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. **Dependent Variable:** Rate the following as per their importance in a review [Review Content]  
b. **All requested variables entered.**

**Table 8: Coefficients**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Constant)</td>
<td>1.171 0.219</td>
<td>0.737 0.057</td>
<td>5.356</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. **Predictors:** (Constant), Rate the following as per their importance in a review [Review Content]

**Table 9: Model Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
<th>Durbin-Watson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.754a 0.569</td>
<td>0.565</td>
<td>0.717</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. **Predictors:** (Constant), Rate the following as per their importance in a review [Recentness of review]

**H05:** There is no significant relationship between importance of review content and importance of length of review.

**H15:** There is significant relationship between importance of review content and importance of length of review.

Regression analysis was performed in order to test the above hypothesis (Table 11).

- **Dependent variable (y)** – Importance of review content (Table 11)
- **Independent variable (x)** – Importance of length of review (Table 11)

**Regression equation** - \( y = 3.049 + 0.283 \times \) (Table 12)

The regression equation so formed suggests that 100% improvement in length of review increases the importance of review content.
by 28.3% with 3.049 being the constant (or intercept).
The regression model explains only 8.5% variation in the variables as seen by R square value (Table 13).
A low F value of 11.87 is suggestive of acceptance of null hypothesis i.e. there is no significant relationship between importance of length of review and importance of review content (Table 14).

**H$_{06}$**: There is no significant relationship between importance of review platform and importance of reviewer.

**H$_{16}$**: There is significant relationship between importance of review platform and importance of reviewer.

**H$_{07}$**: There is no significant relationship between importance of review platform and importance of review content.

**H$_{17}$**: There is significant relationship between importance of review platform and importance of review content.

**H$_{08}$**: There is no significant relationship between importance of review platform and importance of recentness of review.

**H$_{18}$**: There is significant relationship between importance of review platform and importance of recentness of review.

To test the above five hypothesis, Pearson correlation was calculated. Results of the calculation are given in table 15 and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Variables Entered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rate the following as per their importance in a review [Length of review]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 12: Coefficientsa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (Constant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance [Review Content]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 13: Model Summaryb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 14: ANOVAA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: Rate the following as per their importance in a review [Review Content]
b. Predictors: (Constant), Rate the following as per their importance in a review [Length of review]
corresponding values of Pearson correlation are highlighted for convenience in reading.

It was found that there is fairly high correlation between importance of review platform and importance of reviewer (57%), importance of review platform and importance of review content (54%) and importance of review platform and importance of recentness of review (53%). There is also a significant correlation between importance of reviewer and importance of review content (53.3%) and a very high correlation between importance of review content and importance of recentness of review (75.4%). This means that if we improve any one the other chances that other improves are quite high. Also all the five correlations are highly significant and therefore we accept the alternate hypothesis that there is significant relationship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 15: Correlations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rate the following as per their importance in a review [platform]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONCLUSIONS

Given below is a list of conclusions that are drawn from this research.

- Online customer reviews have emerged as an important source of information gathering for consumers especially for experience and costly goods and services.
- There are various factors which motivate consumers to view OCRs some of which are information gathering, quality assurance, risk minimization and social culture. Among the stated factors, quality assurance drives most consumers to view OCRs.
- Review valence has a great impact on consumers and influences their perception and buying behavior to a great extent since most of the sample population agrees that positive, negative and neutral reviews play a significant role in shaping their purchase decisions. Recentness of review is directly related to how consumers look at review content and interpret it. Mostly recent reviews are considered to be more reliable and enhance the importance of any review content. Review content is of utmost importance to the consumers. There are other factor which affect the importance of review content and these include review platform and recent of the review.
- Most of the people believe that OCRs provide an accurate picture of what the product or service actually is and how to use it and that these OCRs are reliable to a great extent.
- People mostly trust OCRs if there are multiple reviews to read about the same commodity.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND FUTURE SCOPE

- The results of this study are important to those who post reviews online since they will know various factors which favor OCR search and the importance of certain elements in a review.
The study is limited to geographic area or Delhi and NCR. Application of findings of this study may be limited at all India level due to factors such as mobility, lack of time, lack of resources to conduct a pan India research.

The study is conducted at a particular evolution stage of the internet. Therefore, the findings may vary at different stages of evolution of the internet and the Web. Further researches may be done at these changing stages to see how consumers perceive OCRs and how OCRs influence their buying behavior.

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