

Impact of Customer Reviews towards Online Purchase Intention among Undergraduates

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Abstract

The Internet is an essential and fundamental pillar of modern information society, connecting billions of people around the world. Customer reviews have helped online business enterprises to improve their businesses. At least one third of the internet users welcome product reviews and actively posts their own content experience, and most of online customers used to refer, before purchase decisions. According to prevailing literature, customer reviews towards online purchase intention studies are limited in global level and rare in local level, and a research was conducted in the selected study area to find out the impact of customer reviews towards online purchasing intention. To carry out the study, model was developed based on Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) by identifying review timeliness, review quantity, visual image quality, and review ratings as independent variables, and online purchase intention as dependent variable. Empirical survey was conducted among 205 undergraduates from selected four faculties of Rajarata university of Sri Lanka through distributing a pretested structured questionnaire based on stratified sampling technique. Undergraduates were selected because they are representing younger generation of the population of the country, heterogeneous group of people, and they are very helpful in the research. Correlation analysis, regression analysis and ANOVA were tested using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software. The result revealed that, all four hypotheses were accepted, and significant positive relationship among online purchasing intention and all independent variables. Most influential factors were identified as visual image quality followed by review timeliness. Valuable suggestions, recommendations, and guidelines for future researches were discussed in briefly.

Keywords: Customer reviews, purchasing intention, review quantity, review ratings