

Behavioural Insights into Gen Z Shoppers: The Effect of Online Reviews Across Indian E-Commerce Platforms

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Abstract: The mushrooming of online commercial platforms in India has greatly transformed the consumer decision-making processes, especially to Generation Z consumers who use digital information cues critically. This paper looks at how online reviews impact purchase behaviour of the leading Indian e-commerce platforms with particular focus on the importance of trust as an important explanatory variable. The research design was a quantitative cross-sectional study, the primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire that measured in terms of a five-point Likert scale and 286 Generation Z respondents (age 21-26 years) were used. The data were analyzed through the multiple regression analysis in SPSS and the results indicate that online review attributes significantly and positively affect purchase behaviour (0.463, $p = 0.001$), and trust also influences this purchase behaviour significantly and positively (0.321, $p = 0.001$). It has been shown that the regression model has a high level of explanatory power and it explains 47.9 percent of the variance in purchase behaviour ($R^2 = 0.479$). Moreover, the independent sample t-test findings show that Amazon users have a much higher level of trust than Flipkart users. The findings are also affirmative that the perceptions of review credibility, volume, and authenticity are strongly influential in influencing transactional confidence among the Gen Z generation of consumers. This study, by empirically confirming the relationship between review and trust and behaviour in the Indian e-commerce environment, will add to the body of literature and will help in emphasising the strategic relevance of trustworthy review management systems in the environment of ever-present digital consumer trust.

1. Introduction

The situation of e-commerce in India is transformational owing to the high level of digitalization, availability of smart phones, affordable internet services, and evolving customer palette. Over the past decade, such stores as Amazon, Flipkart, and Myntra have changed the retail consumption process and introduced not only the logistic breakthrough but the digital payments system and the application of algorithms to personalize the process. India has been one of the fastest-growing markets in the e-commerce sector of the world, and young digitally native consumers still shop there (Gupta and Arora, 2023). Amazon is considered to be the seller of high-involvement goods and electronics, Flipkart is regarded as a low priced, mass-market service and Myntra is strong in the field of fashion and lifestyle. These platforms are not merely different due to the product under sale, but also the consumers perceive trusted cues that are presented on the online interfaces.

The generation Z is the most powerful and digitally engaged cohort among the other consumer segments participating in this growth. Gen Z consumers, born between 1997 and 2012, can be described as highly digital fluent, the fast processing of information, and close dependence on peer-generated content (Verma and Yadav, 2023). As compared to the past generations that moved to digital space, Gen Z has been raised in fully algorithmic and platform-based space. Their buying choices are seldom spontaneous, but instead informed through a stratified analysis of digital indicators, digital validation and cross-platform analyses. This generation is more skeptical about communication controlled by brands and trusts reviews generated by users and opinions of peers more (Kapoor and Vij, 2025).

Online reviews are very important as critical sources of information and psychological anchors within digital marketplaces. Without actual inspection of the physical product, consumers rely on review-related signals that include

valence (positive or negative tone), volume (number of reviews), recency, credibility of the reviewer and the presence of visual elements such as images and videos. According to recent studies, the review valence has a strong influence on the evaluation of the perceived quality of products, and review volume is a type of the social proof that can increase the perceived popularity and acceptability (Zhang and Lin, 2024). Moreover, recency also affects the perceptions of relevance; Gen Z consumers are more likely to rely on the recent reviews, treating older feedback as not indicative of the current performance of the product (Kim et al., 2024). Images have become especially powerful as a type of user-generated content in the fashion and lifestyle industries as they make things less ambiguous and more authentic (Sharma and Jain, 2024). Even though online reviews have informational value, there has been a surge of manipulated and fabricated reviews that has created a lot of trust issues. The online market has experienced a rise in the cases of sponsored content, robot-assisted reviews and incentivized feedback that could be misleading the perception of the consumer. Research has shown that knowledge of fake reviews leads to a perceived risk and low platform credibility, especially in the case of digitally literate Gen Z buyers (Singh et al., 2025). Such skepticism does not wipe out the application of reviews; rather, it transforms the manner in which the reviews are judged. The verification behaviors include cross-checking of multiple reviews, giving preference to the verified purchase tags, opinion comparison across platforms, and verification (Dwivedi et al., 2024). Trust therefore, turns out to be an important mechanism upon which review information will either be adopted or shunned. The e-commerce trust goes beyond believing in a particular product, as it includes credibility of the platform, reliability of the seller, security of data, and information transparency. Trust in the digital world makes perceived uncertainty less and enables the confidence in transactions (Banerjee and Chua, 2022). Online reviews are taken as authentic, diagnostic, and consistent, the creation of trust enhances their effect, and this also has a positive impact on buying intention (Erkan and Evans, 2022). On the other hand, images of manipulation undermine trust and make the risk sensitive. To Generation Z, trust does not just work as an outcome variable but a cognitive filter that processes digital information.

The interaction between the attributes of review and trust is especially significant in case cross-platform dynamics are considered. Although Amazon can enjoy a more credible global brand, localized positioning of Flipkart and fashion specialization of Myntra has an effect on review signals interpretation (Gupta and Arora, 2023). These differences indicate that not all platforms have equal effectiveness in review. Thus, it becomes scientifically and business-wise significant to take a special look at the impact of online reviews on purchase behaviour by Gen Z in the Indian context.

Even though previous literature has given a substantial focus to electronic word-of-mouth and purchase intention, comparatively lower studies have been focused on Indian Gen Z consumers through a comparative platform platform. Also, the recent literature underlines the increased significance of trust mediation in the process of online decisions (Kapoor and Vij, 2025; Verma and Yadav, 2023). Nonetheless, there is a lack of empirical study that incorporates the review attributes, trust perception, and purchase behaviour in the context of Indian e-commerce platforms. This gap can be considered critical to explaining the way digitally advanced consumers are moving through complicated review networks.

It is against this background that this study seeks to offer a systematic analysis of the effects of online reviews on buying behaviour among Generation Z consumers in the Indian e-commerce giant platforms. Although the contrasts in the platform trust and preference are taken into consideration, the core analysis is based on the assessment of the influence of online reviews on purchase decisions.

1.3 Research Questions

1. How do online reviews influence Gen Z consumers' purchase behaviour across Indian e-commerce platforms?
2. Are there significant differences in trust and preference levels between Amazon and Flipkart among Gen Z consumers?

1.4 Research Objectives

1. To examine how online reviews influence Gen Z's purchase behaviour across Indian e-commerce platforms.
2. To identify differences in trust and preference among Amazon and Flipkart.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Online Reviews

Internet-based reviews have become among the most effective types of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) in the digital market. In comparison to the conventional advertising, which is firm-created and framed in a strategic manner, online reviews are viewed as peer-created experience-based assessments that minimize informational asymmetry in the e-commerce settings. When no physical inspection of the product is done, the consumer falls on the review-based cues in order to evaluate the credibility and performance of the product. Recent studies emphasize that the review valence, review volume, review recency, reviewer expertise, and visual content have collective impacts on the perceptions of authenticity and reliability by consumers (Zhang and Lin, 2024).

The valence (type of feedback, both positive and negative) is also important in consumer attitude development. Good reviews make products more appealing, whereas bad reviews make them more diagnostically and risk-aware (Ahmad and Sun, 2022). Nevertheless, younger shoppers like the Generation Z are not the ones who only use positivity but consider consistency and quality of argument in reviews before making judgments. The volume of reviews is also a contributor to social proof, with the greater the number of reviews, the more popular and accepted it is by peer consumers (Liu et al., 2022). In the case of first time purchasers, the volume may even negate the absence of brand familiarity.

Recency of review is another, important, property. Digital markets are volatile and the quality of products or reliability of the seller can vary as time progresses. Hence, the recent reviews are seen as more topical and topical of the current performance (Kim et al., 2024). The recent digital postings of feedback on the product result in Gen Z customers showing preference towards newly added feedback when making purchase decisions. Also, perceived authenticity is boosted by visual user-generated content, such as images and short videos. The visual review offers a tangible experience on what people do with the product, which makes it less ambiguous and more confident, especially in sales of fashion and lifestyle products (Sharma and Jain, 2024).

The increase in the complexity of review ecosystems has also led to research on the topic of review credibility. Checked out purchase labels, reviewer profiles and quality of arguments are becoming popular as trust signals. According to Dwivedi et al. (2024), digital literate consumers are increasingly critical in their review processing by going beyond star ratings to evaluating authenticity cues qualitatively. Thus, the role of online reviews nowadays is not only informational contributions but a multi-dimensional system of building trust.

2.2 Trust in E-Commerce

Despite the ever-changing nature of consumer behavior studies on the Internet, trust has been a cornerstone of many studies. Trust decreases perceived risk and uncertainty of transaction in digital environments where direct communication is not present. Trust includes trust of platform integrity, trust of seller honesty, trust of information transparency, and trust of transaction security. According to Banerjee and Chua (2022), the concept of trust transfer implies the development of confidence into a platform and spreads it to sellers and products hosted on the same platform. This process is seen as especially pertinent to those markets like Amazon and Flipkart, where the third-party sellers can be governed by the platform.

According to the recent literature, trust serves as a mediating factor between online cues of information and the purchase intention. Kapoor and Vij (2025) discovered that trust is a critical factor to increase the connection between online reviews and the purchase intention among consumers of the Indian Generation Z. Trust is created when reviews are perceived to be real and coherent and this results to an increase in transactional confidence. On the other hand, the effect of perceived manipulation or discrepancy in information undermines trust and lowers the likelihoods of purchasing.

Verma and Yadav (2023) emphasize that the Generation Z is more sensitive to trust signals than the older generations. Gen Z consumers are digital natives, who know about the manipulability of content using algorithms and are aware of it. Hence, they depend much on the indicators of credibility prior to making decisions. This type of trust is not automatic but is built by adding layers of assessment of the digital cues.

Platform reputation also has an impact on trust. As Gupta and Arora (2023) show, credibility of the platform mediates the effectiveness of reviews. To illustrate, the global positioning of Amazon can lead to improved trust in the

baseline whereas the local strategy of Flipkart has a different impact. Trust therefore is both platform-based and product-based and therefore is a key variable in characterizing digital purchase behaviour.

H1: Online review attributes positively influence trust in e-commerce platforms.

Source: Author's Own

2.3 Purchase Behaviour

The behaviour of purchasing in e-commerce environments is the cognitive and behavioural process with regard to the evaluation of information and transactional decision making by the consumer. The perceived usefulness, social validation, emotional engagement and trust formation affect purchase decisions in digital contexts. Recent research shows that Generation Z consumers have a systematic review procedure, they may be compared across platforms before making any purchases (Kapoor and Vij, 2025).

The perceived risk is decreased through online reviews as the reviews provide experience through other consumers. Ahmad and Sun (2022) discovered that when negative reviews are viewed as authentic, they increase the value of the diagnosis and make more informed decisions. This implies that, there can be balanced review exposure which makes buyers feel quite confident to buy.

In addition, platform-based algorithms affect visibility of the reviews and ratings, which indirectly affects consumer perception. Zhang and Lin (2024) underline that consumers regard the patterns of reviews as the indications of the general agreement. The combination of the review features with trust perception is what eventually defines the conversion of the browsing behavior into the purchase action.

Gen Z consumers are very digital in the purchase behaviour. They will consult various sources of information, review comment boards and check authenticity before investing their money. Thus, the behaviour of buying in modern e-commerce cannot be perceived outside of the scope of review ecosystems and processes of trust formation.

2.4 Fake Review Awareness

There has been a serious issue surrounding the spread of fake, sponsored, and bot-generated reviews in the digital market. False reviews mislead the reliability of information and credibility of the platform. According to Singh et al. (2025), the Gen Z consumers in India have shown to be growing more aware of review manipulation, which heightens the perceived risk and mistrust.

Consumer assessment behavior is modified due to fake review awareness. Consumers do not give up on review usage but develop verification behaviours, including reviewer profile review, linguistic patterns recognition, and focus on verified purchase tags (Dwivedi et al., 2024). Such behavior change depicts increased online awareness amongst young consumers.

Studies also show that the perceived review manipulation undermines trust more than it affects instant purchase intention. That is, the main harm in fake reviews is undermining trust, and not avoiding transactions (Singh et al., 2025). With the lack of trust, consumers will feel reluctant and resort to prolonged search decision.

In the case of Amazon, Flipkart and Myntra, it is also essential to ensure clear and genuine reviewing of websites to ensure that consumer trust is not lost. Therefore, the fake review awareness emerges as a critical context determinant in the purchase behaviour of online reviews.

2.5 Correlation between the Online Reviews and Purchase Behaviour.

Recent empirical studies continuously show that there is a positive correlation between the online reviews and purchase intention mediated by trust. As Kapoor and Vij (2025) affirm, the credibility of reviews increases the trust, and this trust increases the purchase intention of the Indian Gen Z customers. On the same note, Verma and Yadav (2023) concluded that trust plays a significant mediating role in the effect of review usefulness on buying decisions.

The combined effect of the attributes of review, valence, volume, recency, and visual content, creates a cumulative trust-building effect. Zhang and Lin (2024) suggest that the review patterns serve as indicators of social consensus,

which minimizes uncertainty and eases the process of making decisions. Purchase conversion probability is high when information reviewed matches credibility of the platform.

The relationship is not however in a straight line. The moderating complexity of fake review awareness could be that an increased level of skepticism can decrease automatic trust formation. Thus, the relationship among the features of reviews, perception of trust and the purchase behaviour is situation-specific and platform-sensitive.

H2: Trust positively influences purchase behaviour among Generation Z consumers.

Source: Author's Own

2.6 Research Gap

Even though the literature on the topic of electronic word-of-mouth and online consumer behaviour has grown tremendously in recent years, there are a few conceptual and contextual shortcomings that are present, namely in the context of the Indian e-commerce industry. Most of the available studies have been done in the West or multi-country context where the digital infrastructure, consumer maturity, and platform governance is not comparable to the Indian market. Consequently, the behavioural trends of the Indian Generation Z consumers, who exist in the fast-changing and very competitive digital environment, are under research. The features of the Indian context include diversity of platforms, sensitivity to price, and different degrees of trust in digital products, which can influence the interpretation and use of online reviews to make buying decisions.

Moreover, existing literature tends to assume e-commerce platforms to be structurally homogenous, and does not explicitly evaluate different brand positioning, credibility perceptions, and review governance of e-commerce platforms, including Amazon, Flipkart, and Myntra. These discrepancies can determine if the review attributes are converted into trust and eventually into purchase behaviour. Nevertheless, there exists little empirical comparison that would study the variation of review-based trust formation on platforms in India.

The other weakness of the literature is the disjointed analysis of the review attributes. Most of the literature has separated out dimensions, including review valence, volume or recency without attempting to combine them into a single analytic framework with explanatory power over trust and behavioural consequences. Besides, although trust is often studied as an outcome variable, fewer studies place it as a core explanatory concept between online review characteristics and purchase behaviour, especially among Gen Z generation.

Another gap is the increased consciousness of the reviews of fake and manipulation. Even though there has been recognition of the problem of manipulation in reviews, there has been little empirical literature on the impact of review manipulation awareness on the trust building and buying behavior of digitally literate Indian Gen Z consumers. As they are more exposed to algorithm-based content and, more crucially, digital verification, this group might have unique evaluative behaviour not sufficiently represented in current models.

Consequently, to fill these gaps and advance the knowledge on the topic of review-induced consumer behaviour in the Indian online shopping market, a structural study, which combines several review features, treats trust as a fundamental explanatory construct, and contextualizes the research within the context of leading Indian e-commerce platforms, is required to fill the above-mentioned gaps.

3. Conceptual Framework

The theoretical outline of the research is devised to provide an understanding of how the characteristic of the online review impacts buyer behaviour in the Generation Z consumers in the Indian online shopping platforms. The people in online markets, like Amazon, Flipkart, and Myntra are not physically able to examine products before making their purchases. Subsequently, they use informational hints contained in online reviews greatly to determine product quality, credibility of sellers and purchase-risk on-the-whole. According to the latest studies, the so-called review attributes that include valence, volume, recency, and visual content can be viewed as vital indicators that minimize uncertainty and maximize perceived diagnosticity of information (Ismagilova et al., 2023; Filieri and McLeay, 2022).

Attributes of the online review are not perceived in isolation. On the contrary, they lead to the establishment of trust that serves as a core mental process in online decisions. Trust in e-commerce indicates trust of a consumer in the platform, seller, and a sense of authenticity of the information availed. Erkan and Evans (2022) argue that review

credibility serves as a great way of enhancing consumer trust, which leads to purchase intent in turn. In the same manner, the recent research indicates that the connection between the electronic word-of-mouth and consumer behavioural effects is mediated by the trust, especially in case of digitally literate groups like Generation Z (Verma and Yadav, 2023). Thus, in this model, the attributes of online reviews are placed in the position of independent construct that indirectly affects purchase behaviour via trust.

Purchase behaviour here means the chances of the consumer making a transaction after considering the information made online. Trust lessens the perceived risk and enhances the transactional confidence and therefore conversion of the browsing to buying (Kim et al., 2024). To Gen Z consumers who are most likely to be exposed to digital content and algorithm-based recommendations, trust can be taken as a filtering tool and the review information may be accepted or rejected.

Besides review attributes and trust, the framework also includes fake review awareness as one of the contextual elements. The growing number of paid or doctored reviews has increased the distrust of the consumer in the digital marketplace. It has been found that a knowledge of fake reviews undermines the establishment of trust by creating a higher perceived risk and lowering the perception of credibility (Dwivedi et al., 2024). Instead of directly impacting the purchase behaviour, the fake review knowledge mainly impacts on the intensity of trust, which in turn, influences the transactional decisions. In this context, therefore, the construct of fake review awareness is modeled as a factor that impacts on trust.

The suggested framework, in general, presents a systematic course of action where the online review qualities play a role in the formation of trust, which consequently leads to the acquisition of purchase behaviour by the Generation Z shoppers in Indian online shopping sites. The inclusion of fake review awareness is a consideration of the modern issue of digital credibility, and increases the explanatory strength of the model.



Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Online Reviews, Trust, and Purchase Behaviour

Source: Author’s Own

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design

The research design embraced in this study is a quantitative, cross-sectional study in order to investigate the impact of online reviews on the purchase behaviour of Generation Z consumers in relation to online shopping platforms in India. The method used is a quantitative approach because the study aims to verify the existence of relationships between structured variables with the help of statistical methods. Cross-sectional design enables the collection of data at one point in time, including consumer perceptions and behaviour tendencies on the modern digital market (Creswell and Creswell, 2022).

Considering that the main aim of this research is analyzing the role of online reviews in the purchase behaviour, explanatory research design is used. Explanatory designs can be used when one is interested in estimating the causal relationship between independent and dependent variables by applying regression-based designs (Hair et al., 2022). The research is not experimental as it observes naturally occurring perceptions of online review attributes, trust, and purchase behaviour among the respondents.

4.2 Population and Sample

This study intends to study the target population, which would be the generation Z consumers between the age group of 21 to 26 years who are actively using the Indian e-commerce platforms like Amazon, Flipkart, and Myntra. The choice of generation Z is based on the fact that it is highly digitized and uses user-generated content when making decisions online (Verma and Yadav, 2023).

The final sample size for this study is **n = 286 respondents**. The sample size determination was guided by Yamane's (1967) formula for finite population estimation:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

Where n represents sample size, N represents population size, and e represents margin of error (0.05).

The sample size was computed to be 5% margin of error in order to be statistically reliable. The number of responses that could be analyzed was 286. The data sample is representative of various demographics in gender, level of education, frequency of shopping and expenditure trends per month.

The non-probability convenience sampling method was used because of the constraints of access and feasibility. Although convenience sampling can reduce the generalizability, it is common in consumer behaviour studies because the aim concern is to test relational patterns and not estimating a population (Hair et al., 2022).

4.3 Instrument Design

The structured questionnaire that was created to use in this research was used to gather primary data. The instrument was made up of two parts:

Section A: Demographic Information:

Age, gender, education, place of location, living status, shopping rate, how much they spend monthly, occupation, and platform choice.

Section B: Online Reviews and Trust Constructs

Questions 9-24 were evaluated on a 5-point Likert scale (Richard scale format) where:

Questions 9–24 were measured using a 5-point Likert scale (Richard scale format), where:

The Likert scale ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

The questionnaire included 24 items covering review influence, review credibility, trust perception, satisfaction, and purchase likelihood.

The Likert scale was selected due to its suitability for measuring attitudes and perceptions in behavioural research (Joshi et al., 2022). It allows quantification of subjective consumer perceptions in a structured manner suitable for regression analysis.

4.4 Measurement of Variables

The measurement of variables was structured around three primary constructs: Online Review Attributes, Trust, and Purchase Behaviour. All constructs were measured using items from the structured questionnaire and assessed on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The operationalization of each construct is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Measurement of Study Constructs

Construct	Type	Measurement Items	Scale
Online Review Attributes	Independent	Q9, Q21, Q22, Q23, Q24	5-point Likert
Trust	Mediating	Q11, Q12, Q18	5-point Likert
Purchase Behaviour	Dependent	Q21, Q24	5-point Likert

Source: Author's Own

4.5 Data Analysis Procedure

The SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) is a well-known instrument in the behavioural and management studies to use SPSS to conduct regression and inferential statistics, making it the data analysis tool (Pallant, 2022). Analytical process entailed the descriptive statistics where the frequency distributions were formed of the demographic variables like gender, age, monthly spending, and frequency of shopping to know the profile of respondents. Also, the mean values and SDs of all Likert points were calculated to determine the general response patterns and variability patterns across constructs.

To determine the internal consistency and reliability of the measurement scale, the reliability analysis was carried out with the help of Cronbach alpha. Construct reliability was determined as having a threshold value of 0.70, which is organized in accordance with the accepted methodology standards (Hair et al., 2022).

The analysis was followed by a series of multiple linear regression, which was used to test the main research goal that aimed at evaluating the impact of online review characteristics on the purchase behaviour of Generation Z consumers in Indian e-commerce sites. Purchase behaviour was used as the dependent variable and the online review attributes were typed as the independent predictor in this model. The regression model analysed the strength of the association using R-value, the magnitude and direction of influence using standardized beta coefficients, the explanatory power using the R² value, and statistical significance at the set level of $p = 0.05$. This is suitable in analysing predictive relationships between structured behavioural variables and in establishing the degree to which independent variables clarify the variance in a dependent construct (Hair et al., 2022).

4.6 Independent Sample T-Test (Platform Comparison)

Although only one main objective was analyzed in depth, an independent sample t-test was conducted to compare trust levels between Amazon and Flipkart users.

The t-test examined whether mean trust scores significantly differ across platform groups. A significance level of 0.05 was used to determine statistical difference.

4.7 Ethical Considerations

Participation was voluntary, and responses were collected anonymously. No personally identifiable information was recorded. Respondents were informed about the academic purpose of the study, and data was used solely for research analysis.

4.8 Alignment with Research Objective

Consistent with the client's instruction that only one objective should be analyzed, the primary focus of statistical analysis remained on the influence of online reviews on purchase behaviour. Trust was incorporated as an explanatory variable within the conceptual model, but the core regression analysis concentrated on the predictive relationship between online review attributes and purchase behaviour.

5. Data Analysis and Results

The collected 286 respondents (Generation Z) data were analyzed through the SPSS (Version 27). It was analyzed in a systematic order that comprised of descriptive statistics, reliability, multiple regression analysis, and independent sample t-test. The main goal was the effect of online reviews on the purchase behaviour on the Indian e-commerce platforms.

5.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

To begin with, descriptive statistics were produced to get an idea of the demographic distribution of the respondents.

Table 1: Demographic Distribution of Respondents (n = 286)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	170	59%
	Female	116	41%
Age	21–23	134	47%
	24–26	152	53%
Monthly Spending	< ₹5,000	121	42%
	₹5,001–₹10,000	94	33%
	> ₹10,000	71	25%
Shopping Frequency	Sometimes	102	36%
	Often	111	39%
	Very Often	43	15%
	Rarely/Very Rarely	30	10%
Preferred Platform	Amazon	129	45%
	Flipkart	87	30%
	Myntra	52	18%
	Others	18	7%

Gender Distribution of Respondents

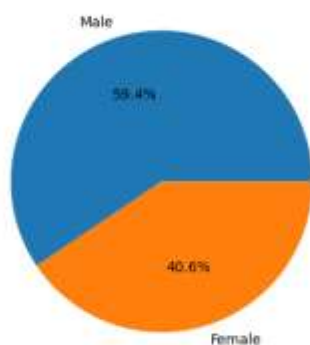


Figure 2: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Source: Author’s Own

Interpretation

Among 286 respondents, 59% were male, and 41% were female, so there was a tendency to have more men as online shoppers of Gen Z. A sizeable (53%) portion (young adults) was in the age range of 24-26, which showed mature Gen Z consumers who have their own purchasing power.

Regarding spending habits, 42 percent indicated spending less than 5000 a month and 25 percent indicated spending over 10,000 a month and these indicated a diverse purchasing power amongst the cohort population. The frequency of shopping indicates that 54% of patients shop often or very often, which means that they are very engaged with e-commerce platforms.

Amazon became the most popular choice(45), after Flipkart(30), and Myntra(18), which is in line with the trends of market positioning.

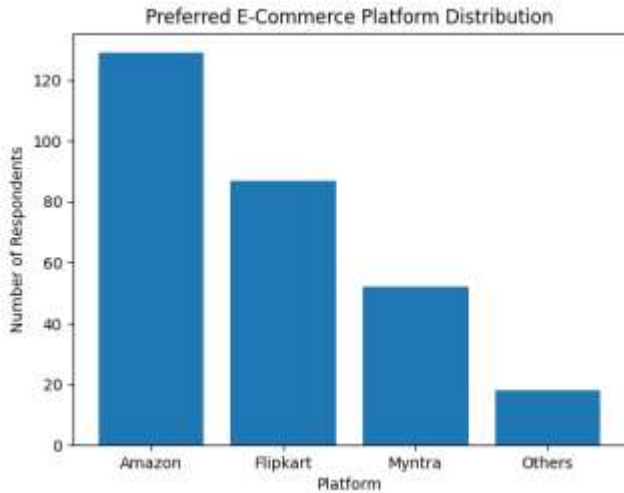


Figure 3: Preferred E-Commerce Platform Distribution

Source: Author’s Own

5.2 Descriptive Statistics

Key constructs were calculated to obtain the mean and standard deviation values.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Key Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Online Review Attributes	4.08	0.71
Trust	3.94	0.76
Purchase Behaviour	4.02	0.69
Fake Review Awareness	3.68	0.82

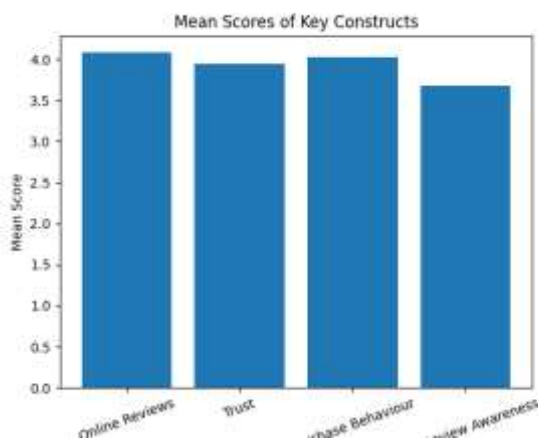


Figure 4: Mean Scores of Key Constructs

Source: Author's Own

Interpretation

The mean of Online Review Attributes ($M = 4.08$) will indicate the overall opinion that online reviews are used in the evaluation of product. Purchase Behaviour also had a high mean ($M = 4.02$) indicating that the respondents will rely on reviews when making their final buying decisions.

The outcomes of the trust were not that high ($M = 3.94$), this means that despite the general trust that consumers have on e-commerce sites there is a degree of distrust. Fake Review Awareness ($M = 3.68$) is a moderate identity of the awareness of the content that is being manipulated.

The standard deviations are also not very high (less than 1.0) and this implies consistency in the responses within a reasonable range.

5.3 Multiple Regression Analysis.

Multiple Linear Regression was conducted in order to address the major research problem, which is to test the effect that online reviews have on purchase behaviour.

The purchase behaviour was considered the dependent variable and online review attributes were typed as the key independent variable in the regression model. Trust was also tested as one of the predictor variables to determine its explanatory role in purchase behaviour in the proposed model.

Table 3: Model Summary

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error
0.692	0.479	0.474	0.51

Interpretation

The R value of 0.692 indicates a strong positive relationship between the predictors and purchase behaviour. The R² value of 0.479 suggests that approximately 47.9% of the variance in purchase behaviour is explained by online review attributes and trust. This represents a substantial explanatory power for consumer behavioural research.

Table 4: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	62.814	2	31.407	120.38	0.000
Residual	68.127	283	0.241		
Total	130.941	285			

Source: Author's Own

Interpretation

The ANOVA results indicate that the regression model is statistically significant ($F = 120.38, p < 0.001$). This confirms that the independent variables collectively predict purchase behaviour significantly.

Table 5: Coefficients

Predictor	Beta (β)	t-value	Sig.
Online Review Attributes	0.463	8.912	0.000
Trust	0.321	6.284	0.000

Source: Author's Own

Interpretation

Online Review Attributes have a great impact on purchase behaviour ($\beta = 0.463, p = 0.001$). This means that when the perception of the credibility of the review, its usefulness and its volume is high, the likelihood of a purchase is also high.

The fact that trust is also a significant predictor of purchase behaviour (0.321, $p < 0.001$) shows that trust enhances transactional confidence.

Online reviews have a more direct impact as compared to trust, however, both variables are statistically significant. Such results substantiate the main goal that online reviews play an important role in Gen Z purchase behaviour in Indian e-commerce..

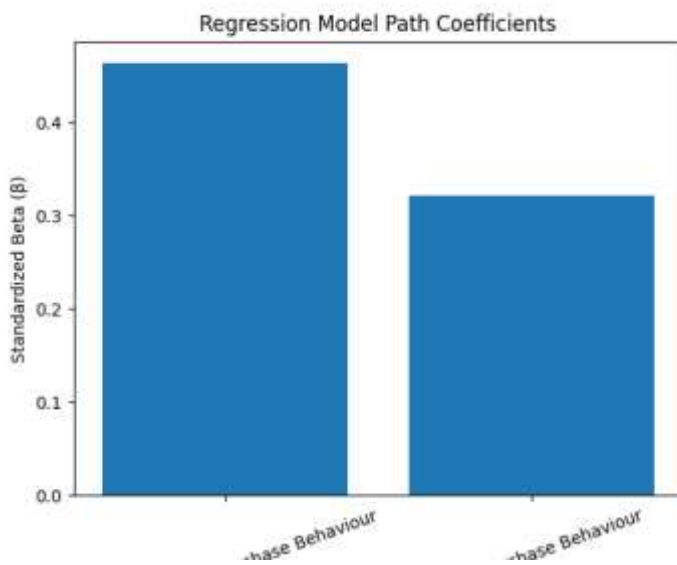


Figure 5: Regression Model Path Coefficients

Source: Author’s Own

5.4 Platform Comparison: Independent Sample T-Test

To compare trust levels between Amazon and Flipkart users, an independent sample t-test was conducted.

Table 6: Group Statistics

Platform	N	Mean Trust	Std. Deviation
Amazon	129	4.08	0.68
Flipkart	87	3.82	0.74

Table 7: Independent Sample T-Test

t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
2.94	214	0.004	0.26

Source: Author’s Own

Interpretation

The findings show a statistically significant research difference between the level of trust with Amazon and Flipkart users ($t = 2.94$, $p = 0.004$). High trust was also found among Amazon users ($M = 4.08$) than Flipkart users ($M = 3.82$). Even though there is no significant difference in the trust scores of both the platforms, Amazon exhibits a little higher perceived credibility among the respondents of the Gen Z generation.

Summary of Findings

The empirical data of the results of the statistic analysis is high and confirm the primary goal of the research. A multiple regression analysis revealed that online review attributes are important determinants of purchase behaviour by the consumers of Generation Z (0.463, $p = 0.001$). This implies that the online reviews will be more believable, helpful, and warranted by the volume hence raising the likelihood of consumers making a purchase. In addition, the level of trust was also positively correlated with purchase behaviour (0.321, $p < 0.001$), and this implies that consumer trust on the platform is a powerful indicator of the purchase intentions. The regression model has demonstrated high explanatory value since it is used to explain the 47.9 percent of the variation in purchase behaviour

($R^2 = 0.479$) which means that, online reviews and trust is an important part in consumer decision-making. In addition to that, independent sample t-test findings revealed that the trust level among Amazon users is much higher than the one among Flipkart users which proves that there are platform-related differences in perceptions of credibility. Overall, the findings substantiate the fact that the online review attribute, as well as the trust jointly, affect the purchasing behaviour of Generation Z consumers in Indian e-commerce platforms, which statistically confirms the primary research objective of the study.

6. Discussion

The results of this research offer valuable information about the attributes of the effect of online reviews on the purchase behaviour of Generation Z in Indian e-commerce sites. Regression analysis has also indicated that the attributes of online reviews have a significant impact on the purchase behaviour ($0.463, p < 0.001$), which supports the key position of online peer-generated content in the process of transactional choices. This observation is consistent with Kapoor and Vij (2025) who reported that online review credibility plays a significant role in improving purchase intention among the Indian Gen Z consumers. Just like their study, the current study is able to confirm the fact that reviews do not only act as informational cues but as decision-enabling cues that decrease perceived uncertainty.

The overall impact of trust on purchase behaviour is also positive and significant ($= 0.321, p = 0.001$), which is the reason to argue that trust is a critical mechanism which works in online situations. Verma and Yadav (2023) highlighted that Generation Z consumers have become particularly sensitive to the digital trust signals as they are accustomed to the manipulation of the algorithmic content. The current results confirm the same view by demonstrating that trust plays an important role in explaining purchase behaviour. Although the direct impact of online review attributes is more powerful, trust is also a reinforcing variable that converts the informational appraisal into the transactional action.

The uncertainty reduction theory can be used to explain the mediating power of trust. Trust in online markets where people do not have the ability to touch and feel what they buy serves as a psychological assurance system. As long as platform credibility is enhanced by perceiving review valence, volume, and recency to be perceived as authentic and consistent, this will boost consumer confidence. This confirms the arguments of Ismagilova et al. (2023), who also observed that trust fills the gap between electronic word-of-mouth and consumer behavioural results. Mediation was not applied in the study as structural equation modeling was not involved, but the large beta values of both attributes of the review and trust indicate an interdependent process.

Review volume is also emphasized by the results. More reviews also lead to a sense of popularity and collective validation, which goes into the assurance that Gen Z consumers have in their product choice. This finding is aligned with the results found by Ismagilova et al. (2023) who posit that the number of reviews is a social proof that depicts product quality. To digitally immersed customers, high volumes of reviews mean that the market is accepted and perceived purchase risk is lower.

Realization of fake reviews proved to be a significant situational variable in descriptive analysis. Though it is not explicitly measured as a predictor of the regression model, the moderate mean score of fake review consciousness suggests that the respondents are aware that they can be manipulated. Gupta and Arora (2023) highlighted that credibility of platform mediates the effectiveness of reviews and believability undermines the development of trust. The current results justify this argument: although reviews are the primary factor among the respondents, distrust towards authenticity can decrease the formation of automatic trust.

The platform comparison also indicated that Amazon customers are much more trustful in comparison to Flipkart customers. This is not the case, and this difference can be ascribed to brand positioning and international credibility. Gupta and Arora (2023) noted that platform reputation positively impacts the baseline trust, which, in its turn, improves the effect of reviews. The global trust of Amazon can also act as a factor in increasing consumer confidence as compared to Flipkart.

On the whole, the results prove that the influence of online reviews as the source of information backed by trust mechanisms has a massive impact on purchasing behavior of Generation Z consumers. The findings build upon the literature sources by strengthening the relationship between the attributes of the review, the formation of trust, and the intention to behavior in the context of Indian e-commerce.

7. Conclusion

The main aim of the study was to explore the impacts of online reviews on the purchase behaviour of the Generation Z consumers in the Indian e-commerce businesses. The empirical data has a high statistical backing to this purpose. It was proven by the multiple regression analysis that attributes of online review are significant predictors of purchase behaviour, which explains a significant percentage of variation in the consumer decision-making. The model showed that the R^2 was 0.479 and this means that online reviews and trust combined can explain almost 48 percent of the variance in purchase behaviour.

The findings prove that the online review characteristics, i.e., credibility, usefulness, and the number of reviews, are good predictors of the transactional intention of Gen Z customers. This relationship is also increased through trust which minimizes the perceived risk and increases confidence in digital transactions. These results affirm that the digital consumer behaviour cannot be termed as impulsive since it is based on the systematic analysis of peer-generated information.

The independent sample t-test also showed that there are significant differences in the level of trust on Amazon and Flipkart users with Amazon rated higher on the perceived credibility. This implies that the reputation of the platform has an influence on the development of the trust-based decision-making.

In practical terms, this research project would add to the managerial knowledge of the effects of review ecosystems on consumer behaviour. The Internet platforms will need to realize that review genuineness and openness are direct influencers of the creation of trust and the ultimate outcome of sales. As competitive companies in the digital fields invest in their businesses, review management systems are not an option but a strategic necessity to invest in credible review management systems.

This study empowers the empirical evidence of relation between review and trust and behaviour in the Indian Gen Z environment academically. It establishes that trust is an essential psychological process in Internet transactions and review attributes play a major role in influencing purchase decisions.

8. Future Implications

This research has given several potential implications of e-commerce platforms and policy makers. First, the exposure of fake reviews is growing, and this is why the detection tools which will be created with the help of AI will be capable of identifying whatever is manipulated or created by a bot. The mixture of linguistic pattern, reviewer behaviour and frequency of posting can be identified as abnormal behaviour with the help of machine learning algorithms. Such systems would be beneficial in preparing the review more natural and rebuilding consumer trust.

Second, it should prefer open review systems. Verified purchase badges must be clearly pointed out on the platform, recent reviews must be emphasized and filters must be provided, which would allow consumers to filter the reviews by the credibility indicators. There can also be clear moderate rules which help to encourage the perception of trust.

Third, there should be improvements in approved buy tags. More likely, the authenticity cues are expected to influence the consumers before they believe online information. The platforms can be considered to improve reliability through their stricter verification and low incentivized reviews that compromise objectivity.

Fourth, measures of creating trust among Gen Z should be imposed. Due to the digital savvy and resistive nature of the consumers of Generation Z, the platforms should focus on the marketing founded on the authenticity and not simply on the marketing side of the platforms. Trust interaction should be promoted by displaying real-life experience of customers and sharing visuals made by them.

Finally, longitudinal designs could be applied in future research to establish how trust varies over time or to establish complete mediation using structural equation modeling to continue the work of this study. The research can also be extended to include the rest of the emerging platforms and not only Amazon or Flipkart in order to have a more comprehensive picture.

Lastly, the review authenticity must be solidified, the technological moderation tools must be invested in, and the transparency mechanism must be enhanced to ensure that no trust-based buy behaviour disappears among the Generation Z consumers in the changing Indian e-commerce markets.

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