

## THE POWER OF ONLINE REVIEWS: ANALYSIS OF CUSTOMERS' PERCEPTION AND PURCHASING DECISIONS IN SKIN CARE PRODUCTS

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### ABSTRACT

The research aimed to determine the customers' perception of online reviews, including its influence on their purchasing decisions for skin care products. Notably, the study seeks to determine the participants' sociodemographic profile about age, sex, marital status, level of education, and monthly income. It also seeks to determine how the participants think about the rating, credibility, and valence of online reviews of skin care products, as well as the impact of these reviews on the participants' decisions to buy skin care products.

The study used descriptive research methods to describe the variables and to obtain information to describe the study. It analyzes the perception and purchasing decisions in online reviews for skincare products. The study's participants were chosen using convenience sampling, and data was gathered from 150 individuals.

Most of the participants are 18-25 years old and females. Most of them are single and college undergraduates with 10,000 below earning monthly. The study also revealed that most participants had very high positive perceptions of online reviews of skincare products in terms of rating, credibility, and valence. Furthermore, the study indicates that online reviews highly influence online shoppers purchasing decisions for skin care products.

**Keywords:** online reviews, customer perception, purchasing decision, skin care product

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Online reviews directly impact consumer behaviour. A compelling review can support a reluctant customer and persuade them to pick the products or services over rival offerings. Using online reviews as a guide, consumers can voice their opinions and provide feedback about products and services. Reviews, whether favourable or unfavourable, offer you the ability to engage with customers, address concerns, and show that you are committed to providing exceptional customer service. The online review will help the customer choose trustworthy online shopping apps so that they will gain from it.

Online reviews have an impact on customers' purchasing decisions. They will be absorbed in reading some reviews and know if the online review on the product gains their attention, they will buy it. People will investigate and search for more online reviews until they earn their trust

to buy that product. Searching for good online reviews of the products is the customers' work because this is their only purchase basis. Favourable online customer reviews increase the likelihood of purchasing more than unfavourable ones (Guo et al., 2020).

Everyone in the world wants to have good skin. A lot of people believe that maintaining good skin care is essential. Glowing, youthful, clear, fresh, and immaculate skin are characteristics of healthy skin. Humidity-balanced skin is also considered beneficial. Extra care is required for face skin to stay healthy, smooth, moisturized, and glowing. One of the steps toward achieving your goal is using skin care products.

Treating skin, particularly facial skin, can benefit from skincare products. The organic and chemical ingredients used in the formulation of these products enable them to address skin issues effectively. Customers can purchase skincare products that best suit their needs and skin type thanks to the diverse ingredients and benefits of skincare, which establish users as reliable sources of information. In this situation, online reviews can serve as a valuable resource for fulfilling these needs while influencing a brand's purchasing intention and brand equity.

The study will be conducted to determine how powerful the online review is in the consumer's decision to buy skin care products. The insights in this study will help the business understand how influential online reviews are and how they affect consumers' purchasing decisions. Thus, this study will focus on the analysis of online reviews, the customer perception and the influence of online reviews on their purchasing decision in skin care products.

In view of preceding statements, this study was conducted to:

1. Determine the socio-demographic profile of the participants in terms of:

- a. age;
- b. sex;
- c. civil status;
- d. educational attainment; and
- e. monthly income

2. Determine the perception of the participants on the online reviews of skin care products in terms of:

- a. rating;
- b. credibility; and
- c. valence

3. Determine the influence of online reviews on the purchasing decisions of the participants in skin care products.

## **2.0 METHODOLOGY**

The study utilized a descriptive research design. It was used to describe the participants' perception of online reviews and its influence on their purchasing decisions for skin care products. The study utilized a convenience sampling technique by considering 150 participants

who shopped online to buy skincare products relying on online reviews and were residents of Cavite.

A self-administered survey questionnaire was developed for data gathering for this study. The structured questionnaire comprises several statements that determined the participants' perception of online reviews and its influence on their purchasing decisions for skin care products.

The data were evaluated using descriptive statistic techniques using frequency counts, percentages, and means. Percentages and frequency distribution charts were utilized to determine the participants' socio-demographic profiles. To examine the data concerning the power of online reviews in determining customers' perceptions and purchasing decisions to buy skin care products, a 5-point Likert scale was used.

**Table 1. Descriptive interpretation for online reviews in customers' perception in skin care products**

WEIGHTED MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
4.21-5.00	Strongly Agree
3.41-4.20	Agree
2.61-3.40	Slightly Agree
1.81-2.60	Disagree
1.00-1.80	Strongly Disagree

**Table 2. Descriptive interpretation for influence of online reviews in customers' purchasing decisions in skin care products**

WEIGHTED MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
4.21-5.00	Strongly Agree
3.41-4.20	Agree
2.61-3.40	Slightly Agree
1.81-2.60	Disagree
1.00-1.80	Strongly Disagree

### 3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Socio-demographic Profile

As indicated in Table 3, 92% of participants were 18-25. Regarding gender, the vast majority of participants identified as female, constituting 67.33%. Regarding civil status, most participants were single (97.33%). When considering educational attainment, most participants are college undergraduates (66.67%). Regarding monthly income, the largest group of participants had an income below ₱10,000, with 72%.

**Table 3. Distribution of participants according to their socio-demographic profile**

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES	FREQUENCY (n=150)	PERCENTAGE (%)
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<b>Age</b>		
18 – 25 years old	138	92
26 – 30 years old	6	4
31 – 40 years old	2	1.33
41 years and above	4	2.67
<b>Sex</b>		
Female	101	67.33
Male	49	32.67
<b>Civil Status</b>		
Single	146	97.33
Married	4	2.67
<b>Educational Attainment</b>		
Highschool Graduate	32	21.33
College Undergraduate	100	66.67
College Graduate	16	10.67
Vocational	2	1.33
<b>Monthly Income</b>		
10,000 below	111	74
10,001 – 20,000	19	12.67
20,001 – 30,000	14	9.33
30,001 above	6	4

### 3.2 Perception on Online Reviews of Skin Care Products

Table 4 shows the perception of online reviews of skincare products in terms of rating based on the participants' perceptions. The measure that received the highest weighted mean of

4.59 stated that considering the number of ratings in reviewing skin care products is essential. On the other hand, the measure with the lowest weighted mean of 4.45 was registered on the item that star rating helps consumers online to know the level of satisfaction with the skin care product. The highest and lowest weighted mean was interpreted as strongly agree; this statement implies that the participants have a very high positive perception of online reviews of skincare products in terms of rating. As a result, the overall measure of perception of online reviews of skin care products considered by participants in terms of ratings is 4.5, interpreted as strongly agree. The finding shows that the rating of skin care products on online reviews is very positive.

According to Rawar (2023), as most people shop online, the review rating for every product in an online application will be a great help for the people because it gives sufficient information to consumers online and it will persuade them to buy as they think that rating is reasonable for them.

**Table 4. Perception on online reviews of skin care products in terms of rating**

Rating	WEIGHTED MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
1. Considering the number of ratings in reviewing the skin care product is important.	4.59	Strongly Agree
2. Rating helps choose the best skin care product online.	4.47	Strongly Agree
3. Star rating helps consumers online to know the level of satisfaction of the consumers on the skin care product.	4.45	Strongly Agree
4. Rating gives additional information about the product.	4.51	Strongly Agree
5. Ratings reliability is necessary in reviewing the skin care products.	4.48	Strongly Agree
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>

Table 5 shows the perception of online reviews of skincare products regarding credibility. The measure that received the highest weighted mean was 4.61 and was registered as the measure of checking the review content, which is essential. For the lowest weighted mean of 4.4, it was recorded that it is necessary to know the review date of the online reviews. Both were interpreted as strongly agree; this statement implies that the participants have a very high positive perception of online reviews of skincare products in terms of credibility. The overall measure of perception of online reviews of skin care products considered by the participants in terms of credibility is 4.5, which is interpreted as strongly agree. This finding shows that the credibility of skin care products on online reviews has a very high positive perception.

Moreover, according to Salminen et al. (2022), consumers must be wise enough to think critically since fake information can be seen online. Shoppers online increasingly rely on reviews for product data, and the effectiveness of online reviews is hindered by counterfeit reviews that give a deceitful picture of product quality; therefore, detecting fake reviews is needed.

**Table 5. Perception on online reviews of skin care products in terms credibility**

CREDIBILITY	WEIGHTED MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
1. Checking the actual review of the products versus the indicated benefits increases the product's credibility.	4.43	Strongly Agree
2. Checking the date of the review is important to know.	4.4	Strongly Agree
3. It is important to check the credibility profile of the reviewer.	4.49	Strongly Agree
4. Checking the content of the review is important.	4.61	Strongly Agree
5. The review should have picture or video to consider it credibility.	4.55	Strongly Agree

<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
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Table 6 shows the perception of online reviews of skincare products regarding valence. The measure that received the highest weighted mean of 4.52 was item 5, which stated that positive and negative reviews provide sufficient information about skin care products. On the other hand, the measure with the lowest weighted mean of 4.41 was in item 1, which showed that negative reviews could decrease participants' interest in a specific product when viewed online. The highest and lowest weighted are both interpreted as strongly agree; this statement implies that the participants have a very high positive perception of online reviews of skincare products in terms of valence. The overall measure of perception on online reviews of skin care products considered by the participants in terms of valence is 4.49, which is interpreted as strongly agree. This finding shows that the valence of skin care products in online reviews has a high positive perception.

Zhao S. et al. (2022), found that the higher the number of reviews, the better the product sales are and that a more significant number of negative reviews would discourage consumer behaviour (as cited in Zhou, 2022).

**Table 6. Perception on online reviews of skin care products in terms of valence**

VALENCE	WEIGHTED MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
1. The negative reviews decrease my interest towards the product online.	4.41	Strongly Agree
2. The positive reviews increase my interest towards the product online.	4.49	Strongly Agree
3. Negative reviews help consumers online to know if the product has a bad quality.	4.51	Strongly Agree
4. Positive reviews help consumers online to know if the product has a good quality.	4.5	Strongly Agree
5. Positive and negative reviews give sufficient information about the product.	4.52	Strongly Agree
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>4.49</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>

### 3.3 Influence of Online Reviews on Purchasing Decisions for Skin Care Products

Table 7 shows the influence of online reviews on purchasing decisions for skin care products based on the participants' perceptions. The computed value that received the highest weighted mean is 4.48, which states that the online reviews presented are helpful for my decision-making when buying skin care products. It was interpreted as strongly agree that online reviews highly influence online shoppers purchasing decisions. On the other hand, the lowest weighted mean is 4.08, which states that positive reviews from celebrities and influencers positively affect my purchasing decision. It was interpreted as agreed that online reviews influence online shoppers' purchasing decisions. In general, the overall weighted mean for the influence of online reviews

on purchasing decisions for skin care products is 4.49, which was interpreted as strongly agree that online reviews are highly influential to online shoppers purchasing decisions.

Furthermore, another study about measuring the impact of online reviews on consumers' purchase decisions conducted by Fernandes S. et al. (2022) states that businesses should make the most of their knowledge of online reviews because consumers use them to research products before purchasing. Online reviews are essential because, unlike offline purchases, online shoppers must rely on customer reviews and cannot touch or feel the product. Before buying, most customers prefer to read what other customers say about the retailers' goods and services.

**Table 7. Influence of online reviews on purchasing decisions for skin care products**

STATEMENT	WEIGHTED MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
1. The online reviews presented are helpful for my decision-making when buying skin care products.	4.48	Strongly Agree
2. Positive reviews from celebrities and influencers positively affect my purchasing decision.	4.08	Agree
3. Whenever I read negative reviews I don't buy the particular skin care product online.	4.12	Agree
4. The number of product reviews affects my purchasing decision.	4.33	Strongly Agree
5. Positive and negative reviews enables me to assess the skin care product before checking out.	4.35	Strongly Agree
6. Consistency of the online product reviews affect my purchasing decision.	4.37	Strongly Agree
7. Recency of the product reviews affect my purchasing decision.	4.23	Strongly Agree
8. Positive reviews influence me to check out the skin care product online.	4.42	Strongly Agree
9. Negative reviews influence me not to check out the skin care product online.	4.21	Strongly Agree
10. Buying more quantity of the skin care product if the review of the product is positive.	4.11	Agree
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>4.49</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>

#### 4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study determined the customers' perception of online reviews, including its influence on their purchasing decisions for skin care products. The study seeks to determine the participants'

sociodemographic profile about age, sex, marital status, level of education, and monthly income. It also seeks to determine how the participants think about the rating, credibility, and valence of online reviews of skin care products, as well as the impact of these reviews on the participants' decisions to buy skin care products.

The results led to the following conclusions:

1. The participants were 18-25 years old; most were females and single, as they constantly used skincare products online. Most are college undergraduates with a monthly income of 10,000 or below.
2. The result shows that the participants have a very high positive perception of online reviews of skin care products in terms of rating, credibility, and valence. The perception of ratings for online reviews helps to know the satisfaction level and information about the skincare products online. For credibility, it implies the correctness of online reviews posted as it contains the profile of the reviewer and the product data. Then, the valence of online reviews enables consumers to read positive and negative reviews of skincare products online. These perceptions are vital to consider when buying skincare products online.
3. It demonstrates that online reviews influence the participant's purchasing decisions. Online reviews can enable consumers to know the skincare product well by examining the positive and negative feedback as well as the consistency of the reviews. Online reviews influence customers' decisions to buy or not buy products because they provide the information that consumers need in order to decide.

Based on the above conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

1. This study shows online reviews significantly affect customers' perception and purchasing behavior when buying skin care products. Online sellers/shops should prioritize the online reviews of their skin care products.
2. Online sellers are encouraged to continue collecting positive reviews to increase the number of customers because customers tend to check the reviews before purchasing skin care products.
3. The online seller must provide their customers with the same product they posted online and the product they will give to them. This is to avoid low ratings and negative feedback given by customers in online reviews and to gain the trust of their customers.
4. Online sellers should value online reviews for them to improve the skin care products they are selling. In this way, they will know what they need to do to get more customers to buy their skin care products.
5. Customers who have purchased a skincare product can post or share their experiences with others considering buying it. This helps potential customers assess the information's authenticity and determine whether the product is credible. Often, customers look for proof of the product's effectiveness, such as photos and videos, before making a purchase.
6. Future researchers may use the study as a reference when researching the power of online reviews in customers' perception and purchasing behavior of skin care products.

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