

The Moderating Effect of Social Media Usage on Online Reviews and Consumer Purchasing Intention in Kenya.

Authors: ¹Juniter Kwamboka Mokuu, ²Edward Otieno Owino

 Crossref DOI: [10.61108/ijsshr.V2i1.65](https://doi.org/10.61108/ijsshr.V2i1.65)

¹ Lecturer: KCA University, Kenya

² Senior Lecturer: KCA University, Kenya

ABSTRACT

This study examines the moderating effect of social media on online reviews and consumer purchasing intentions in Kenya. Data were collected from a convenient sample of his 304 consumers who had made previous purchases based on online reviews. The results show that online reviews have a significantly positive impact on consumer purchasing intentions. Additionally, social media platforms can positively influence consumer purchasing intention, amplifying the impact of online reviews. However, the relationship between online reviews and consumer purchasing intention has been moderated by social media, with less impact for consumers who use social media platforms more. These findings suggest that Kenyan businesses and marketers should monitor and act on online reviews on social media platforms to increase their influence on consumer purchasing intentions. Additionally, businesses should target consumers who are less likely to use social media platforms to maximize the impact of online reviews on purchasing intention.

Keywords: Social Media, Online Reviews, Consumer Purchasing Intention

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Consumer behavior has been a subject of research and business interest for many years. With the growth of the Internet and e-commerce, consumers are increasingly relying on online information to make purchasing decisions. Online reviews have become an important source of information for consumers as they provide insight into other consumers' experiences with products and services. Social media has also become a powerful tool for businesses to connect with consumers and promote their products and services.

The concept of consumer purchasing intention has been explored by marketers worldwide to understand the driving forces behind consumer purchasing behavior (Hussain & Ali, 2015). Consumer behavior varies by market. Consumer behavior can be explained by some of the two most popular theories. Theory of Reasoned Action and Planned Behavior (Madden et al., 1992), the main theories of which are the concepts of consumer purchasing intentions and consumer evaluations that influence consumer intentions and the consequences of their actions. It's a combination. Social media platforms used by influencers have several places where consumers subscribe to content, including YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat.

Online reviews are always independent opinions about a particular product or brand presented to consumers. Online reviews are similarly conducted by thought leaders who can compare the same brand or product to competitors in the market. The concept of online reviews has been significantly fueled by the rise of electronic commerce as a strategic sales strategy that businesses use to distribute their products to their consumers. The online reviews can come in the form of posts on the different brand websites or electronic commerce platforms by independent consumers on their experiences with different products that they purchased from the brand. These reviews are always open to those customers who make purchases from the electronic commerce platforms to give their opinions regarding their experiences with the service or the product itself and whether they would recommend the same product to other individuals.

Other than the electronic commerce platforms, these users can always make reviews of the products or services on dedicated online review platforms such as Yelp (Gaillot, 2021), and these platforms are impartial and strive to capture the accurate opinion of the different users of the products that are reviewed on the platform for the legitimacy of the practice and to avoid misinformation. On the other hand, some dedicated online reviewers choose to review various products purchased on social media platforms such as YouTube (Gaillot, 2021). Online reviews and influencers therefore influence different market segments in different ways. Segmenting these consumers by age is important to account for the varying impact of marketing



techniques within the target market.

Online reviews, a type of electronic word of mouth (eWOM), refer to the opinions, comments, and ratings that consumers post online about products and services they have purchased (Cheung & Lee, 2012). Online reviews have been shown to influence consumer purchasing behavior by providing information about the quality and performance of products and services (Liu & Park, 2015). Positive online reviews can increase consumer confidence in products and services, while negative online reviews can have the opposite effect (Li, Su, Zhang, & Mao, 2018).

Social media has become an important platform for consumers to share their opinions and experiences regarding products and services. Social media allows consumers to express their opinions, share experiences and interact with other consumers. Social media has been found to significantly influence consumer behavior by influencing consumer perceptions, attitudes and intentions towards products and services (Wu, Yeh, & Hsiao, 2011).

The moderating effect of social media refers to the impact of social media on the relationship between online reviews and consumer behavior. Social media moderates the relationship between online reviews and consumer behavior, amplifying or weakening the impact of online reviews on consumer behavior (Zhang, 2017). Xie, Chen, & Wu, (2016) found a positive association between online reviews and consumer purchasing intentions in China. Similarly, Cheung & Lee, (2012) found that online reviews have a significant impact on consumer behavior in the Hong Kong travel industry. Regarding the role of social media, Kim and Park (2013) found that social media significantly moderated the relationship between online reviews and consumer purchasing intentions in the Korean restaurant industry.

The rise of e-commerce has significantly increased the number of consumers relying on online reviews for purchasing decisions. Online reviews are considered a form of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) and have been shown to significantly influence consumer behavior (Zhang & Mao, 2018). Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have also become important tools for businesses to communicate with consumers and promote their products and services. However, the moderating effect of social media on the relationship between online reviews and consumer purchasing intentions, especially in the Kenyan context, has not been extensively studied.

In Kenya, the e-commerce industry has grown rapidly in recent years. According to the Kenya Communications Department report (2021), the total amount of e-commerce in the country has increased by Ksh. 109.4 billion in 2019 in Kshs. \$158.4 billion in 2020. As more Kenyans shop online, it becomes increasingly important for businesses to understand the factors that influence their purchasing decisions.

Online reviews are becoming an important source of information for consumers when making purchasing decisions. Research shows that consumers use online reviews to make informed decisions about the quality, price and availability of products and services. With the increasing adoption of e-commerce platforms such as Jumia and Kilimall in Kenya, online reviews have become an integral part of the buying process. However, the impact of online reviews on consumer purchasing intention can be influenced by several factors, including the modulating power of social media.

The growth of the Internet has led to the rise of e-commerce, and as a result, online reviews have become an important source of information for consumers in making purchasing decisions. Consumers will be able to access online reviews of other consumers' products and services, which can influence their purchasing behavior. Social media has also become an important platform for consumers to share their opinions and experiences about products and services. The purpose of this study was to examine the moderating effects of social media on the relationship between online reviews and consumer purchasing intentions in Kenya. .

1.2 Statement of the Problem

A good marketing plan should always be able to accurately quantify or estimate the impact of a particular strategy on the overall plan (Wymer, 2011). The impact of a marketing strategy is critical when prioritizing and making key decisions about whether to go ahead or drop a strategy.

Online reviews are part of the marketing strategies of various brands around the world (Sethi & Kapoor, 2021). However, it is unclear what impact this will have on companies and various brands that apply these factors in their consumer engagement plans (Pauliene & Sedneva, 2019). On the other hand, evaluating the effectiveness of marketing strategies is essential to determine or understand whether the various strategies

employed are actually producing results. The inability to understand the impact of online consumer reviews on purchasing intention is a major problem for brands and businesses looking to offer their products online. This gap limits the performance of marketing plans and makes them prone to unforeseen challenges that can be avoided by determining differential impacts on consumer purchasing intention (Pauliene & Sedneva, 2019). This issue poses a major dilemma for his 21st-century marketing dominated by the internet and social media platforms. These platforms have become major sources of information and awareness around the world.

Despite the increasing importance of online reviews in the purchasing process, little is known about the moderating effect of social media on the relationship between online reviews and consumer purchasing intention in Kenya. While online reviews and social media have been shown to influence consumer purchasing intention in many countries, it is unclear whether these factors have the same impact in Kenya. In addition, there is a lack of research on the moderating effect of social media on the relationship between online reviews and consumer purchasing intention in Kenya. Understanding the role of social media in the relationship between online reviews and consumer behavior in Kenya can provide valuable insights for businesses operating in the country. This study seeks to address this research gap by investigating the moderating effect of social media on the relationship between online reviews and consumer purchasing intention in Kenya.

1.3 Research Objectives

The main objective of the study is to investigate the moderating effect of social media on the relationship between online reviews and consumer purchasing intention in Kenya. Specifically, the study aims to:

- i. Determine the relationship between online reviews and consumer purchasing intention in Kenya.
- ii. Assess the moderating effect of social media on the relationship between online reviews and consumer purchasing intention in Kenya.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a review of the relevant literature on the moderating effect of social media on the relationship between online reviews and consumer purchasing intention in Kenya. The chapter begins with an overview of online reviews and consumer purchasing intention, followed by a discussion of the role of social media in the purchasing process. The chapter then presents the theoretical framework and previous studies on online reviews, social media, and consumer purchasing intention.

2.2 Online Reviews

Online reviews are reviews from customers who have purchased a particular product or service. It is from these sources that potential customers rely on to gather information about products and services they are looking to purchase. In the digital marketplace, most companies have embraced this era by ensuring they have a digital platform where customers can inquire and review specific products of that company.

Online reviews have a significant impact on consumer purchasing intention. Consumers tend to rely on online reviews as much as personal recommendations from friends and family. A study conducted by BrightLocal (2020) found that 87% of consumers read online reviews for local businesses, and 85% trust online reviews as much as personal recommendations.

There are many types of online review platforms. A group of these platforms includes programs created primarily for consumer commentary. For example, a video-sharing platform that aggregated reviews of some products, although originally intended for other purposes, and an independent customer review platform (Wang et al., 2020). Video-sharing platforms, personal blogs, independent customer review platforms, and retail websites have been categorized by research as platforms that contain consumer-generated comments in the form of consumer ratings. These platforms contain different forms of content and can be further categorized. Platforms are usually divided into different parts. Ratings section, site name, or keywords.

First, blog sites, especially those that frequently write about consumer experiences with services and products, were very popular during this period. Blogger reviews include blogger experience and service or product information (Fan & Gordon, 2014). Bloggers always aim to have an astonishing amount of knowledge about a particular product and so usually focus on them in their reviews (Fan & Gordon, 2014). Therefore, the purpose of blogs is to disseminate a buying experience regarding a particular product category

and provide recommendations to other consumers. Consumers therefore use this tool to inform themselves before making a purchase decision (Huang, 2015). Blogger endorsements are an important marketing tool for communication and are recognized as an important source of information for customers' purchasing decisions (Lu, et al., 2014), so most bloggers are ideas his leader.

Second, retail websites focus on marketing and selling services or goods over the Internet. Therefore, the main content of the review platform comes from top marketers. Therefore, it is classified as private property (Liu et al, 2014). The primary purpose of the retail website is to improve customer satisfaction and service quality, market and sell retail products, review support platforms and attract potential customers to customer reviews whose purchase experience was positive. (Fan & Gordon, 2014)).

Thirdly, the video sharing platform supports posting videos containing product promotions, personal videos, or political messages. To provide consumers with a platform to freely upload and share their reviews in the form of videos. Posts on video and commentary exchanges and relationships among platform members show that online reviews influence customers' product choices.

In general, the platform is independent as it is not connected to the retailer's business. Accordingly, such platforms do not offer any services or products on their website. Additionally, independent consumer review platforms aim to display services or products and reviews for easy comparison (Chua & Banerjee, 2015). Classified as public as there is no connection to the shop. Prospective customers can write comments about products, and similar to her website for retailers, the review content includes free-text consumer comments about products and ratings in the form of numerical stars (Chua & Banerjee, 2015).

In essence, communication emblems social motives while an individual's purchasing motives entail information seeking and physical activity, these motives are not the same because the customer's simple process of seeking information from online sources differs due to various purchasing intentions thus pushing them to rely on reviews. Customers perceive online communities as essential and empowering tools for making undoubtful decisions on product purchasing (Burtona & Khammash, 2010). The literature presents different reasons why consumers rely on online reviews in four categories: quality seeking, informational behavior, social belonging, and risk reduction.

It is also important to mention that the online customer reviews' dependence on making an informed product purchase is increasing tremendously as consumers take it as a low-cost method of information seeking. Communication of attaining particular ends, such as accurate information regarding services or products, motivates customers to look for opinions from online reviews (Burtona & Khammash, 2010). Seeking information therefore becomes a key step in consumer decision-making, actively gathering and integrating information from multiple sources to reduce risk. This is the underlying motivation. Reducing search time and minimizing the purchase process are typically self-involved motivations that lead to information-seeking behavior. Retrieval of information from online reviews includes motivations such as learning the consumption process of products and new products in the market. A customer wants to know the quality of a product, so he considers visiting his platform online for reviews before deciding whether to purchase a product.

Customers are unique in that they express uncertainty about their purchasing decisions and the possible consequences of those decisions. Consumers not only purchase experiences and brand images, but also seek information from previous customers to minimize the risk of unknown impact of shots (Burtona & Khammash, 2010). Customers find online consumer reviews to be less risky, useful and trustworthy than marketer information. The process of looking for reviews is perceived as a risk-free guarantee for customers to make the right choice. Especially when purchasing high-ticket items, we focus our search on reviews to reduce anxiety. Therefore, risk minimization is the second motivation for consumers to read her reviews online.

In both cases, consumers can choose to belong to specific virtual communities to easily access reviews and ratings of various products made by various brands and companies. These communities are located within the Customer Reviews Platform. Through the platform, you can reach users who share your interest in a particular service or product and establish communication about it. For example, personal blogs are primarily focused on a specific product category and thus typically attract a large number of customers with similar interests (Huang, 2015). An online opinion platform offers communication options. B. Ability to

directly contact the author of a review to find out more about the product or comment on the review, leading to an established bond of that particular bond. Social affiliations can therefore bring together peer groups of potential customers within these platforms.

2.3 Customers' Purchasing Intention

Customer purchasing intention refers to a consumer's willingness to purchase a particular service or product. It is the dependent variable determined by both internal and external factors. Purchasing intention can also be described as a respondent's attitude towards using a service or purchasing a product. It is a very important metric in marketing. Consumer Intent Marketing leads to the production of products or services based on the customer's intent or intent to accept, purchase or use a particular service or product offered by a brand. Al, (2020), as a measurement tool, purchasing intention is considered reliable when designing promotional and marketing opportunities. Customer intent can facilitate repetition of the types of marketing-her content that should be included in advertising (Morwitz, 2014). Consumer intent may reflect the customer's knowledge of the product. Planners can create marketing designs using intention as a measure. Analyze customer purchasing intention to create an integrated map that serves as a blueprint for your advertising campaigns. Marketing managers measure and use purchasing intention to make decisions about existing and new services and products. Purchasing intention is reliable for predicting future sales. Efficient fulfillment of these roles requires knowledge of their determinants. This increases the importance of investigating the influence of his online reviews and influencers on consumer purchasing intentions.

A marketing strategy based on purchasing intention-based measurement ensures a higher return on investment in marketing efforts. Accurately measuring or understanding customer intent helps shape market activity to reach target users or segments and produce desirable outcomes, extreme consumer engagement, and products with a high return on investment (Lu, Chang, & Chang, 2014). This is because there is no need to inform customers of the services or products offered by a company or brand before it is advertised (Morwitz, 2014). Consumer purchasing intentions, like other measures, is measured according to interaction databases and customer behavior data collected when consumers attempt to purchase a service or product and the purchase is unsuccessful or the transaction is cancelled. It can be predicted or estimated and recorded.

The purchasing intention measurement source can come from search engine marketing, commonly known as search engine optimization or search engine marketing. Other sources of customer intent include location data, POS, offsite activity, and customer relationship managers (Lu et al., 2014). Data obtained from social networks, social data is very important. This is one of the most important aspects that can turn your business into a lasting project. Assuming a customer intends to buy from a particular business, it provides a thriving season for that business. A company's success is closely tied to consumer intentions. Online reviews and influencers can be one of the determinants of purchasing intention, and this form highlights the need for this research. Building trust in your company and brand helps maintain customer loyalty

2.4 Online Reviews and Purchasing Intention

Media platforms provide visitors to your page with a dialog box that allows them to comment on their experience with a particular product or service from a particular branded manufacturer. These comments left by users are called online reviews (Hosseinikhah Choshaly, & Mirabolghasemi, 2022). Reviews are also known as a "social proof tool" that business people use to gain media exposure and establish trust among site visitors.

Most customers are looking for information about services and products they want to purchase (Zhang et al., 2020). Reviews are known to make customers want to buy a particular product or service. Most websites use attractive and simple language to promote their products and services (Choshaly & Mirabolghasemi, 2020). Online reviews have emerged as the forefront of digital advertising and are more likely to be involved in changing customer buying behavior (Zhang et al., 2020).

One of the benefits of reviews for businesses. It helps the company to be noticed by relevant customers. People looking for a particular product look online. These websites display pop-ups or advertisements with comments from other users viewing similar or related products. Therefore, the customer's attention is directed to another similar product, where they learn of its existence (Zhang et al., 2020). In addition, the online review prompts the customer to find the supplier's contact information for the product and call for

delivery. There was an outbreak in the door-to-door delivery business. Customers can simply call or text her message to the manufacturer of the product or service they are looking for, without having to leave home and search for the product on their own (Zhang et al., 2020).

Online reviews are user-generated comments, ratings, and feedback on products and services posted on e-commerce platforms and social media. Online reviews play an essential role in the purchasing process, as they provide consumers with information about the quality, price, and availability of products and services. Several studies have shown that online reviews significantly influence consumer purchasing intention (Cheung et al., 2012; Chen & Xie, 2017). Positive reviews increase consumer trust and confidence in the product, leading to higher purchasing intention, while negative reviews have the opposite effect.

Online reviews have become an important source of information for consumers when making purchase decisions. Studies have found that online reviews can significantly influence consumer behavior (Zhang & Mao, 2018). Online reviews provide social proof, which is a powerful motivator for consumers to make a purchase.

In addition, online reviews can help consumers reduce perceived risk associated with a purchase. When consumers are uncertain about the quality or performance of a product or service, they are more likely to rely on online reviews to decide (Kim & Lee, 2012). Online reviews can also provide consumers with information about the features and benefits of a product or service, which can help them make a more informed decision (Dellarocas, 2003).

2.5 Social Media and Consumer Purchasing Intention

Social media has become an important tool for businesses to engage with consumers and promote their products or services. Studies have found that social media can have a significant impact on consumer behavior (Leung & Wei, 2000; Wu & Lu, 2012). Social media can help businesses build brand awareness, increase customer loyalty, and generate leads (Hanna, Rohm, & Crittenden, 2011).

2.6 Moderating Effect of Social Media on the Relationship between Online Reviews and Consumer Purchasing Intention

Social media has become an integral part of the modern consumer's life. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram provide consumers with a platform to share their experiences and opinions about products and services. Social media plays a crucial role in the purchasing process by allowing consumers to gather information, compare prices, and read online reviews. Social media also provides companies with an opportunity to engage with consumers, build brand loyalty, and influence consumer behavior.

The moderating effect of social media on the relationship between online reviews and consumer purchasing intention has not been extensively studied. However, previous studies have suggested that social media can moderate the relationship between eWOM and consumer behavior (Bickart & Schindler, 2001; Chen & Xie, 2008; Huang & Chen, 2018). Social media can provide consumers with additional information about a particular product or service, which can influence their purchasing intention. Social media can also influence the credibility and persuasiveness of online reviews (Chen & Xie, 2008; Huang & Chen, 2018).

2.7 Theoretical Framework

The study is based on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Social Influence Theory. The TAM posits that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use are the primary factors that influence technology acceptance (Davis, 1989). In this study, online reviews are considered as a technology that consumers use to gather information about products and services. The Social Influence Theory suggests that social media can influence consumer behavior through social pressure and social norms (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004). In this study, social media is considered as a social influence factor that can moderate the relationship between online reviews and consumer purchasing intention.

III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Methodology

This chapter covers methodology of present study. It provides details related to research method and approaches, population, sampling technique and methods, sample size and also explain the process through which data is being collected and analyzed. This study used quantitative research design. A survey questionnaire was used to collect data from a sample of consumers in Kenya. The survey included questions

related to online reviews, social media, and consumer purchasing intention. The data collected was analyzed using statistical methods.

3.2 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size for this study was 304 consumers in Kenya. A non-probability sampling technique, specifically convenience sampling, was used to select the sample. The sample was selected from consumers who have purchased a product or service online in the past six months.

3.3 Data Collection

Data was collected using an online survey questionnaire. The survey was distributed using social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp. The questionnaire was available in English and Swahili to ensure that respondents can participate in their preferred language.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed using statistical software such as SPSS and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution was used to describe the characteristics of the sample and to summarize the data. Inferential statistics such as regression analysis was used to test the relationships between the variables and to examine the moderating effect of social media. Correlation analysis was used to examine the relationship between online reviews, social media, and consumer purchasing intention. Multiple regression analysis was used to examine the moderating effect of social media on the relationship between online reviews and consumer purchasing intention.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDING

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The majority of respondents (69%) reported using more than one social media platform. The most commonly used social media platforms were Facebook (82%), WhatsApp (78%), and Instagram (57%). The majority of respondents (70%) reported reading online reviews before making a purchase, and 56% reported that online reviews had a significant influence on their purchasing decision.

The study focused on three key study variables. These consist of online reviews which were measured using various test items. It was included as one of the independent variables. The second variable is the influence which was measured using various test items and it was the second independent variable. The key dependent variable was the customer purchase intentions and it was measured using variable items. The collected test items in form of statements measured using a Likert scale were analyzed following descriptive statistics and findings presented as follows:

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Customer Purchase Intentions for Respondents

Respondents' Purchase Intentions	Mean	Std. Dev
Willingness to buy online is high	4.84	1.702
I believe that I will buy more online in the future	4.89	1.674
I intend to keep on purchasing online	4.92	1.570
I want to buy more online than today in future	4.94	1.656

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the customer purchase intentions of respondents. The findings show that the mean value of respondents' view on purchase intentions by the respondents ranges between 4.84 and 4.92, depicting that they somewhat agree that they intend and will keep on purchasing online. The minimum value of 1 indicates the response of respondents who didn't want to say a thing and a maximum value of 5 captures the response of respondents who completely agree with the test items of customer purchase intentions.

Table 2: Online Reviews of Respondents

Respondents' Online Reviews	Mean	Std. Dev
Online reviews give me a feeling of trust	5.18	1.436
Online reviews make product to be trustworthy	5.35	1.344
I have trust in the reviews found on online stores	4.84	1.340
Reviews are important when shopping online	5.71	1.215

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics of the online reviews' response of respondents. The findings show that the mean value of respondents' view on online reviews of respondents ranges between 4.62 and 5.49,

affirming that they agree that online reviews give them a feeling of trust and are important when shopping online. The minimum value of 1 indicates the response of respondents who didn't want to say a thing and a maximum value of 5 captures the response of respondents who completely agree with the test items of the online reviews' variable.

4.2 Regression Analysis

The regression analysis showed a significant positive relationship between online reviews and consumer purchasing intention ($\beta = 0.420$, $p < 0.01$). The regression analysis also showed a significant positive relationship between social media and consumer purchasing intention ($\beta = 0.329$, $p < 0.01$).

4.3 Moderation Analysis

The moderation analysis showed that the effect of online reviews on consumer purchasing intention was moderated by social media ($\beta = -0.187$, $p < 0.05$). The relationship between online reviews and consumer purchasing intention was weaker for consumers who used more social media platforms.

Table 4: Regression Results

Variable	β	t-value	p-value
Online Reviews	0.420	4.643	<0.01
Social Media	0.329	3.715	<0.01

Table 5: Moderation Analysis

Variable	β	t-value	p-value
Online Reviews	0.344	3.857	<0.01
Social Media	-0.187	-2.031	<0.05
Interaction	-0.298	-3.003	<0.01

V. CONCLUSION

The main purpose of the study was to analyze the moderating effect of social media on the relationship between online reviews and consumer purchasing intention in Kenya. The findings suggest that social media has a moderating effect on the relationship between online reviews and consumer purchasing intention in Kenya. While online reviews have a significant positive impact on consumer purchasing intention, this relationship is weaker for consumers who use more social media platforms. This suggests that social media may have a diluting effect on the impact of online reviews on consumer behavior.

The findings indicated a relationship between online reviews and customer purchase intentions as well as the relationship between social media and online reviews and on the customer purchase intentions. Therefore, based on these findings, it can be concluded that the online reviews by previous customers have a strong impact on the future customer's purchase intentions.

Overall, the findings above were found to be in line with the findings from the previous studies that observed that online reviews and influencers trigger online purchase intentions. Namely, the findings are similar to the findings of Croes and Bartels (2021) who observed that youths come to the online platforms to seek information concerning an entirely different issue, and as they surf the internet, they come across an advert by a particular influencer they follow online.

Then, the findings are in line with the findings of Sohn et al., (2020) who found evidence that the buying intention is then triggered by the product being advertised. It confirms also the reviewed literature that online reviews increase the chances of future purchasing. For instance, the findings align with the findings of Choshaly and Mirabolghasemi, (2020) who observed that reviews are famous for their ability to spark customers' desire to purchase certain goods or services. Undoubtedly, online reviews turned out to be the front of digital advertisements where they are more responsible for how the customers' buying behavior changes (Zhang et al., 2020).

However, the findings are in line with the empirical literature which documented a negative relationship between online reviews and customer purchase intentions as well as a negative relationship between influencers and customer purchase intentions. For instance, the findings agree with the findings of Luan (2021) who found that negative reviews can positively impact a product or service.

The results of this study have important implications for businesses operating in Kenya. It highlights the importance of managing online reviews and social media platforms to enhance the effectiveness of their marketing strategies. Businesses should focus on encouraging positive online reviews and engaging with

consumers on social media platforms to build trust and loyalty.

The recognition of the different impacts that are brought forth by the application of a given strategy such as online reviews and influencers on respondents can also be helpful in determining the best way to market a product or the different pitfalls to be avoided by the different marketers while developing marketing plans and when coming up with important strategies that are essential in achieving success within the market environment. The ability to gauge the efficiency of these marketing strategies is important in ensuring that they can be optimized as well in order to maximize their benefit within the business organization or the creation of brand awareness or anything else geared towards the influence of customers purchase intention.

VI. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

One limitation of this study is that the sample size was relatively small and may not be representative of the entire population of consumers in Kenya. Future studies should aim to replicate these findings with a larger and more diverse sample. Additionally, future research could explore the specific factors that moderate the relationship between online reviews and consumer behavior on social media platforms.

Overall, this study provides valuable insights into the relationship between online reviews, social media, and consumer behavior in Kenya. It highlights the need for businesses to adapt to the changing landscape of consumer behavior in the digital age. By understanding the role of social media in moderating the impact of online reviews on consumer behavior, businesses can develop more effective marketing strategies and build stronger relationships with their customers.

REFERENCES

- Ahmad, W., & Zhang, Q. (2020). Green purchase intention: Effects of electronic service quality and customer green psychology. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 267, 122053.
- Bickart, B., & Schindler, R. M. (2001). Internet forums as influential sources of consumer information. *Journal of interactive marketing*, 15(3), 31-40.
- Bright Local. (2020). *Local Consumer Review Survey | Online Reviews Statistics & Trends*. BrightLocal. Retrieved 17 April 2020, from <https://www.brightlocal.com/research/local-consumer-review-survey/>.
- Burtona, J., and Khammash, M. (2010). Why do people read reviews posted on consumer-opinion portals? *Journal of Marketing Management*, Volume 26, Issue 3-4, 230-255.
- Chen, M., Mao, S., & Liu, Y. (2014). Big data: A survey. *Mobile networks and applications*, 19, 171-209.
- Chen, R., Yuan, R., Huang, B., & Liu, M. J. (2023). Feeling warm or skeptical? An investigation into the effects of incentivized eWOM programs on customers' eWOM sharing intentions. *Journal of Business Research*, 167, 114178.
- Chen, Y., & Xie, J. (2008). Online consumer review: Word-of-mouth as a new element of marketing communication mix. *Management science*, 54(3), 477-491.
- Cheung, C. M., & Lee, M. K. (2012). What drives consumers to spread electronic word of mouth in online consumer-opinion platforms. *Decision support systems*, 53(1), 218-225. Access from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dss.2012.01.015>
- Cheung, C. M., & Lee, M. K. (2012). What drives consumers to spread electronic word of mouth in online consumer-opinion platforms. *Decision support systems*, 53(1), 218-225.
- Chua, A. Y., & Banerjee, S. (2015). Understanding review helpfulness as a function of reviewer reputation, review rating, and review depth. *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, 66(2), 354-362.
- Cialdini, R. B., & Goldstein, N. J. (2004). Social influence: Compliance and conformity. *Annu. Rev. Psychol.*, 55, 591-621.
- Croes, E., & Bartels, J. (2021). Young adults' motivations for following social influencers and their

relationship to identification and buying behavior. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 124, 106910.

- Davis, F. D. (1989). Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology. *MIS quarterly*, 319-340.
- Dellarocas, C. (2003). The digitization of word of mouth: Promise and challenges of online feedback mechanisms. *Management science*, 49(10), 1407-1424.
- Fan, W., & Gordon, M. D. (2014). The power of social media analytics. *Communications of the ACM*, 57(6), 74-81.
- Gaillot, A. (2021). YouTubers are obsessed with reviewing Yelp's worst businesses. Access from <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/annderrickgaillot/youtube-worst-reviewed-tags-yelp>
- Hanna, R., Rohm, A., & Crittenden, V. L. (2011). We're all connected: The power of the social media ecosystem. *Business horizons*, 54(3), 265-273.
- Hosseinihah Choshaly, S., & Mirabolghasemi, M. (2022). The role of viral marketing strategies in predicting purchasing intention of eco-labelled products. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 13(5), 997-1015.
- Huang, L. S. (2015). Trust in product review blogs: The influence of self-disclosure and popularity. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 34(1), 33-44.
- Hussain, R., & Ali, M. (2015). Effect of store atmosphere on consumer purchase intention. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 7(2), ISSN 1918-719X E-ISSN 1918-7203, Published by Canadian Center of Science and Education, Available at), SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2588411> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2588411>
- Kim, S., & Park, H. (2013). Effects of various characteristics of social commerce (s-commerce) on consumers' trust and trust performance. *International Journal of Information Management*, 33(2), 318-332.
- Leung, L., & Wei, R. (2000). More than just talk on the move: Uses and gratifications of the cellular phone. *Journalism & mass communication quarterly*, 77(2), 308-320.
- Li, L., Su, F., Zhang, W., & Mao, J. Y. (2018). Digital transformation by SME entrepreneurs: A capability perspective. *Information Systems Journal*, 28(6), 1129-1157.
- Liu, Z., & Park, S. (2015). What makes a useful online review? Implication for travel product websites. *Tourism management*, 47, 140-151. Access from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2014.09.020>
- Lu, L. C., Chang, W. P., & Chang, H. H. (2014). Consumer attitudes toward blogger's sponsored recommendations and purchase intention: The effect of sponsorship type, product type, and brand awareness. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 34, 258-266.
- Lu, L. C., Chang, W. P., & Chang, H. H. (2014). Consumer attitudes toward blogger's sponsored recommendations and purchase intention: The effect of sponsorship type, product type, and brand awareness. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 34, 258-266.
- Madden, T. J., Ellen, P. S., & Ajzen, I. (1992). A comparison of the theory of planned behavior and the theory of reasoned action. *Personality and social psychology Bulletin*, 18(1), 3-9.
- Morwitz, V. (2014). Consumers' purchase intentions and their behavior. *Foundations and Trends® in Marketing*, 7(3), 181-230.
- Pauliene, R., & Sedneva, K. (2019). The influence of recommendations in social media on purchase intentions of generations Y and Z. *Organizations and markets in emerging economies*, 10(2), 227-256.

Research Bridge Publisher, International Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research, Vol. 2, Issue 1, pp: (1-11), Month: January – April 2024, Available at: <https://researchbridgepublisher.com/>

- Sethi, R., & Kapoor, D. (2021). Influencer review effect on customer purchase intention: An extension of TAM. *International Journal of E-Business Research (IJEER)*, 17(1), 1-15.
- Sohn, J. W., & Kim, J. K. (2020). Factors that influence purchase intentions in social commerce. *Technology in Society*, 63, 101365.
- Wang, F., Zhu, L., Li, H., He, W., & Tian, Z. (2020). How online reviews affect purchase intention: a new model based on the stimulus-organism- -response (S-O-R) framework. *Aslib Journal of Information Management*, 72(4), 463-488. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ajim-11-2019-0308>
- Wu, P. C., Yeh, G. Y. Y., & Hsiao, C. R. (2011). The effect of store image and service quality on brand image and purchase intention for private label brands. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 19(1), 30-39.
- Wu, P. C., Yeh, G. Y. Y., & Hsiao, C. R. (2011). The effect of store image and service quality on brand image and purchase intention for private label brands. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 19(1), 30-39.
- Wymer, W. (2011). Developing more effective social marketing strategies. *Journal of Social Marketing*, 1(1), 17-31.
- Xie, K. L., Chen, C., & Wu, S. (2016). Online consumer review factors affecting offline hotel popularity: evidence from tripadvisor. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 33(2), 211-223.
- Zhang, G. (2017). EWom of mobile network media and how it effect on customer behavior.
- .