



Master of Business Administration

LCMB7035 – Dissertation Proposal

**The Influence of Online Customer Reviews on Purchase Decisions: A Study of Amazon
Customers in the United Kingdom**

Student Name: Chandan Kumar Kumawat

Student ID: 2428345

Supervisor Name: Shahrukh Irfan

Submission Date: 20-3-2026

Academic Year 2025–2026

AI Use Acknowledgement

All academic arguments, source selection, and critical analysis are the student's own work.

Table of Contents

1.	Introduction.....	1
2.	Literature Review.....	2
3.	Methodology.....	3
4.	Expected Findings.....	4
5.	Limitations.....	4
6.	Timeframe.....	5
7.	Conclusion	5
8.	References.....	6

1. Introduction

The retail industry has undergone a revolution in digital form and this has changed the manner in which consumers search, compare and buy goods. E-commerce in the United Kingdom has spread very fast with Amazon being the most popular online marketplace. Online shoppers have no choice but to rely on digital information to make buying choices unlike in the physical retail setting where customers can actually feel and touch products. One of the most powerful sources of this information are the online customer reviews (OCRs) - evaluations left by users publicly on such platforms as Amazon that reflect the experiences of former purchasers.

OCRs are now part of the contemporary e-commerce system. A large number of consumers review a product before finalizing a purchase, which they consider as a digital form of word-of-mouth fulfilling the lack of face-to-face interaction and physical product examination. The presence of reviews on Amazon and their sheer quantity and visibility makes this platform a highly strategic environment in which to examine these dynamics. The star rating of a product and written content of its reviews can significantly influence a prospective customer to go all the way to the checkout or give up the idea altogether.

Although the world has seen an increasing amount of literature on the subject of OCRs and consumer behaviour, there is still a paucity of empirical studies specifically on Amazon customers in the UK. Moreover, the rising rate of artificial reviews has added great ambiguity to the review ecosystem, prompting important questions regarding the credibility of consumers and the accuracy of decision making based on reviews. The subsequent research is trying to address these gaps by investigating the influence of online customer reviews on purchase intentions of Amazon customers in the United Kingdom.

Research Aim: To investigate how online customer reviews influence purchase decisions among Amazon customers in the UK.

Research Objectives:

- To analyse the importance of online reviews in customers' purchasing decisions.
- To examine how positive and negative reviews influence customer behaviour.
- To evaluate the level of trust customers place in Amazon product reviews.
- To determine whether review ratings affect purchase intention.

2. Literature Review

The relationships between online customer reviews and consumer purchasing behavior have been of scholarly interest, and an increasingly growing body of research since 2020 has shed light on the relation between the two on a number of levels.

The article of the research by Chen et al. (2022) is a formal work on eye-tracking research aimed at studying the online real-time processing of the reviews by the consumer. Their findings demonstrated that the negative reviews were disproportionately visualized compared to the positive one the female subjects. Such a trend is consistent with psychological negativity bias that stipulates the fact that human beings place more mental emphasis on negative information when they make evaluative judgements. This has a practical implication on platforms like Amazon: a small number of negative reviews can make an overweight impact on the consumer purchasing patterns, which can override a significant quantity of affirmative responses.

Fernandes et al. (2022) studied the multi-dimensionality of review influence and created a scale with valid measurements to measure the impact of OCRs on purchasing decisions. Their research defined credibility of sources, the number of reviews, the quality of language and relevance of the topic under review as the most significant determining factors of review utility. More importantly, their results showed that consumers do not react equally to all reviews; instead, they critically evaluate the perceived quality and credibility of a review, and only when these are perceived to be good and trustworthy are they allowed to impact their behaviour. The implications of this selective processing are significant to the way businesses manage review profiles on Amazon.

One of the most prolifically-investigated constructs in the OCR literature is trust. Handoyo (2024) conducted a synthesis meta-analysis research study on consumer purchasing behaviour in e-commerce settings. The research found the strongest predictors of online purchase decisions to be trust, perceived risk and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), which validates that consumer confidence in the system is a requisite factor for review-based influence to take place. Trust is also required to convert even a high count of positive reviews.

One of the most serious dangers to this trust is the issue of fake reviews. In their investigation of market forces of fake reviews, he, Hollenbeck and Proserpio (2022) found that they are a significant source of consumer decision distortions and unfair competitive conditions. Review score manipulators are advantaged unfairly and deprive real consumers of the information

climate that they are used to. The findings are added by the research by He et al. (2022), who also apply a network analysis of Amazon data to find fake-review buyers and this is why the given problem is not merely widespread but also inherent to platform dynamics.

Salminen et al. (2022) also touched upon the discussion of fake reviews creation and detection and found that automatized deceptive content has become highly developed and complicated to a point of being almost impossible to be detected by consumers. All these three studies represent a rather scary image of an information environment where the consumer cannot always rely on the truthfulness of what they read.

Lim et al. (2025) put into perspective the long-term consequences of fake reviews on the marketing front and claimed that, the proliferation of such reviews permanently affects the trust and brand reputation of consumers. In their paradigm, they note that losing trust is extremely difficult to regain and purchase intentions and customer loyalty affect both in the long-term negatively. This is in particular to Amazon UK where the degree of consumer trust in the review mechanism is not only a commercial necessity but increasingly becoming more and more strained.

Ngo et al. (2024) examined the role of eWOM in the development of purchase intention in general, where the authors examined a group of Generation Z consumers found that the quality of information, credibility, and quantity of information on eWOM had significant and positive relationships with the purchase intention. Their findings suggest that younger shoppers, who constitute an increasingly large portion of the Amazon UK clientele, are more sensitive to peer-created content and are extremely concerned about the perceived genuineness of feedback.

Altogether, the literature sources support the idea that OCRs have a strong effect on consumer choice that depends on such variables as the valence of the review, the credibility of the source, the authenticity perceived, and consumer trust.

3. Methodology

This paper shall take a quantitative research design, with a structured internet survey being the main method of data collection. The quantitative design is suitable as the research objectives will demand measuring the attitudes, perceptions and behavioural intentions of a large enough sample population, which will be statistically analysed and patterns observed.

The target audience is United Kingdom residents who have already purchased any product on Amazon during the last six months. The sampling will be convenient, where the Google Form survey will be disseminated using online communities and social sites which are UK-centred. An acceptable number of responses is 150 to 200 to corroborate the descriptive statistics and simple inferences, such as correlation and cross-tabulation.

The survey will be based on five-point Likert scales which will be built around the four research objectives and will encompass the importance of reviews, the power of positive and negative reviews, levels of trust and how star ratings could determine purchase intention. Questions concerning demographics such as age, sex, and frequency of using Amazon will also be present. Collected data will be analysed through SPSS.

Ethical issues will be dealt with by ensuring informed consent, anonymity and ensuring that the academic purpose of the study is clarified. Involvement will be voluntary and no personal information will be stored after the study.

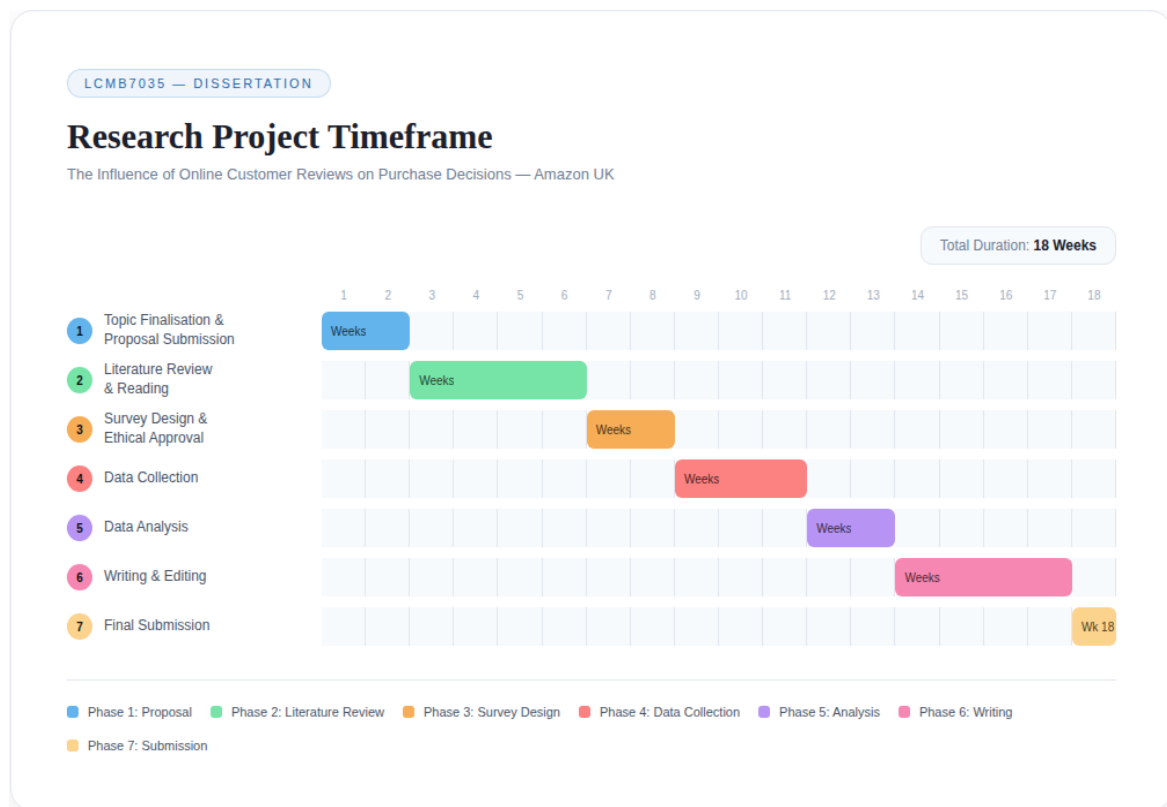
4. Expected Findings

Through the literature survey, it is assumed that most respondents will rank online reviews as having significance or high significance to their purchasing choices. In line with Chen et al. (2022), negative reviews should be perceived as more influential compared to positive ones. The level of trust in Amazon reviews is expected to be moderate, as consumer awareness about fake reviews is increasing as indicated by He et al. (2022) and Salminen et al. (2022). It is expected that higher star ratings have a positive relationship with purchase intention. Such results will provide viable advice to e-commerce companies that are interested in enhancing the credibility of reviews and consumer interactions.

5. Limitations

This research has various shortcomings. The findings cannot be generalised to the entire Amazon UK customer base because convenience sampling is used. Social desirability bias is brought about by self-reported survey data. The cross-sectional design only measures attitudes at one point in time and is incapable of establishing causal relationships. The narrow focus on Amazon in particular does not allow transferability of the findings. These constraints will be well recognised in the final dissertation.

6. Timeframe



7. Conclusion

This proposal has provided a focused, viable and scholarly based research on the role of online customer reviews in making purchases decisions by Amazon customers in the United Kingdom. The topic in question is up to date because reviews have become an important part of e-commerce, and the issues of review authenticity are on the rise. Having a clear research purpose, four objectives, and a sound quantitative research methodology, the study stands a chance to add meaningful empirical research contributions to the current consumer behaviour literature and offer practical implications to businesses that operate on the Amazon platform.

8. References

- Chen, T., Samaranayake, P., Cen, X., Qi, M. and Lan, Y. (2022) 'The impact of online reviews on consumers' purchasing decisions: evidence from an eye-tracking study', *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, article 865702. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.865702>
- Fernandes, S., Panda, R., Venkatesh, V.G., Swar, B.N. and Shi, Y. (2022) 'Measuring the impact of online reviews on consumer purchase decisions: a scale development study', *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 68, article 103066. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2022.103066>
- Handoyo, S. (2024) 'Purchasing in the digital age: a meta-analytical perspective on trust, risk, security, and e-WOM in e-commerce', *Heliyon*, 10(8), article e29714. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e29714>
- He, S., Hollenbeck, B. and Proserpio, D. (2022) 'The market for fake reviews', *Marketing Science*, 41(5), pp. 896–921. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1287/mksc.2022.1353>
- He, S., Hollenbeck, B., Overgoor, G., Proserpio, D. and Tosyali, A. (2022) 'Detecting fake-review buyers using network structure: direct evidence from Amazon', *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 119(47), article e2211932119. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2211932119>
- Lim, W.M., Agarwal, R., Mishra, A. and Mehrotra, A. (2025) 'The rise of fake reviews: toward a marketing-oriented framework for understanding fake reviews', *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 33(2), pp. 178–198. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/14413582241283505>
- Ngo, T.T.A., Vuong, B.L., Le, M.D., Nguyen, T.T., Tran, M.M. and Nguyen, Q.K. (2024) 'The impact of eWOM information in social media on the online purchase intention of Generation Z', *Cogent Business & Management*, 11(1), article 2316933. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2024.2316933>

Salminen, J., Kandpal, C., Kamel, A.M., Jung, S. and Jansen, B.J. (2022) 'Creating and detecting fake reviews of online products', *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 64, article 102771. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2021.102771>

