

Research Proposal

Name: Nabhan Puzhakkattil

Student Id: 2215386

Supervisor: Rexon Nting

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1. Title

Influence Of Online Reviews on Consumer Decision Making For Booking A Hotel In The UK and India," focusing on Hilton Hotels & Resorts Via [Booking.Com](https://www.booking.com).

2. Introduction

With the growth of technology, e-commerce has grown significantly over the years and it has become important in life of everyone (Jain et al, 2021). In context of online shopping, customers increasingly consider online reviews for getting the product information in terms of its quality, value to price and so on. In compared to the product information provided by the sellers, reviews are the information provided by the users from their experience of that product or service bought through the websites (Bilal and Almazroi, 2023). In present, there is an increasing trend of sharing the shopping and product experience by the consumers on the network platform of a brand (Lawani et al, 2019). In the context of this, there are number of studies (Floh et al, 2013; Dwidienawati et al, 2020; Quan et al, 2023) have been conducted earlier over the time and they strongly present the relationship between online reviews and consumer purchasing intention.

But at the same time, these studies lack with the focus on the service purchase decision of the consumers from the online reviews as service quality is a subjective perspective and different consumers needs different types of service quality that makes this research more important to study as it focuses on the impact of online customer reviews on their decision making to book a hotel via Bookin.com. The research has been undertaken to evaluate how online reviews impact the decision making for booking of Hilton hotels and resorts via Booking.com among the consumers of UK and India. The comparison of the customers opinion of two countries also increases the importance of this research a it will consider whether certain cultural preferences, expectations, or communication styles contribute to variations in reviews and also their impact on consumer choice for booking a hotel. The research will contribute to enhance the overall understanding of the impact of cultural differences on the consumer decision making from the online reviews. It is because consumer decision making is a psychological process where several factors such as vision, information, cultural aspects have a significant influence.

2.1 Research Aim:

The research aim will be to investigate the impact of online reviews on the consumer decision making with a comparison of the consumers of UK and India for booking Hilton Hotels & Resorts Via Booking.Com.

2.2 Research Objectives:

The following objectives will be accomplished through this research study:

- To assess the factors that influence the consumer decision making for online hotel booking
- To identify the factors that make the consumers to look towards online reviews for information of a hotel
- To critically evaluate the impact of online reviews on consumer decision making for booking a hotel
- To obtain the consumer opinions for comparing the impact of online reviews on UK and Indian consumers for booking Hilton Hotels & Resorts Via [Booking.Com](https://www.booking.com)

2.3 Research Questions:

The research would be effective to explore the below research questions:

- What are the major factors that influence consumer decision making for online booking of a hotel?
- Why the online reviews are important for consumers for making decision making to book a hotel online?
- How effective online customer reviews are to influence decision making of consumers to book Hilton Hotels & Resorts Via [Booking.Com](https://www.booking.com) and how it is different or similar among UK and Indian consumers?

3. Literature Review

There are number of factors that influence the consumer decision making for booking a hotel as the studies of Leong et al, (2019); Chakraborty (2019); Hu and Yang (2020); El-Said (2020) found that brand image, star category, price, online reviews, word of mouth, value to price, promotional discounts, volume of reviews, attributes are the major factors that influence the consumer decision making in the context of hotel booking. In addition, the social media platforms also create the brand image of the firm among the consumers that also affect the consumers to determine their decisions for booking the hotel for their visits (Ho et al, 2022). While, study of Mody et al, (2023) stated that availability of the options for the consumers on the basis of price and facilities are the major factors that influence their decision making for a hotel booking online. But there are many other factors also with the changing business environment and customer expectations that influence their decision making, which will be explored through this research in light of current environment.

With the growing use of ecommerce and internet technology among the consumers for buying a product or service, makes the online reviews of the customers an important source of information. In this context, the studies of Thomas et al, (2019); Ventre and Kolbe (2020); and Kim and Kim (2020) found that trust on online reviews, credibility, authenticity due to being the real users are some of the major aspects that make the consumers to look towards online reviews for getting the information for a product. In this, the study of Kim and Kim (2022) discussed that online reviews are given by the customer from their experience whether they are satisfied or not from the product or service that make the consumers to make the right decisions and to increase their satisfaction level. While, Quan et al, (2023) stated that consumers find the online reviews more credible and right than the sellers' information that makes them to look towards online reviews before making a decision. But all these studies focus on the single country consumers and also lack with a focus on cultural aspects that also influence their focus on online reviews, which will be explored through this study by comparing the opinion of Indian and UK consumers.

Further, it can be analysed from study of Li et al, (2019) that online reviews are effective to lead towards positive buying of consumers and it increases overall sales for the product. The similar has been reviews in the study of Wang et al, (2022) as it also found that online reviews develop a positive sentiment among the consumers, which increases overall product sales. It is because the review is effective to create a credibility perception that also enhances consumer decision making. Although the study of Gulfranz et al, (2022) discussed that online reviews create an impulsive buying among the consumers without being an impact on their trust and credibility aspects. These studies found the different perspectives and due to this, the study will be conducted to identify how different geographic consumers react towards the online reviews by comparing UK and Indian consumers.

In this context, the above literature is effective to give an understanding of the major theories and models and to develop a gap in existing literature to address the undertaken research problem that will be used for developing further research to get required information for addressing research problem.

4. Methodology

The potential methods and methodologies that will be used for this research purpose are explained and justified as below:

4.1 Research Methods

For the purpose of this research, quantitative method will be used as it is effective to develop objective knowledge and understanding and quantify the variables that will assist in getting knowledge for relationship among the variables. The quantitative method will also benefit to collect a large amount of information and to develop the objectivity for the factors that create the relationship among the online reviews and consumer decision making for hotel booking (Stockemer et al, 2019). The quantitative method can also be justified with the study as proposed research is focused on the consumer responses that are needed to be quantified for generalizing the research results for explaining the relationship among the research variables. It can also be justified with the studies of Floh et al, (2013); Dwidienawati et al, (2020); Quan et al, (2023) as these also used quantitative method while collecting customer opinions for getting the impact of online reviews on consumer purchasing intentions.

4.2 Sampling method and Sample size

As the research will be conducted quantitatively, it is required to choose the right population and sample size, so that the reliability and validity of the research results can be enhanced. In the context of this research, there is need to collect the responses from a large population for making a proper comparison of the UK and Indian consumers. In this context, the population will be the people who have used or use Booking.com as a platform for selecting and booking Holton hotels and resorts. For this, purposive sampling method will be used and with the use of this, the people who are involved and accessible by me will be selected and approached for taking the participation in the study (Pandey and Pandey, 2021). With the use of this sampling method approx. 30-40 customers from UK and 30-40 customers from India will be chosen to get their responses towards the role of online reviews on their decision making for booking hotel via booking.com. It will enable to compare the impact of cultural differences also on the decision making while looking towards online reviews for booking of the hotel.

4.3 Data Collection method

The data for research can be collected with the use of secondary and primary data. For the purpose of this research, primary data collection method will be used as it will enable to collect the opinions and views of the target respondents and provide reliable results. Primary data will be effective to get the information directly associated with the topic that will also assist to address the research problem. For collecting primary data, questionnaire method will be used as it is the instrument that

The data will be analysed with the use of statistical method by using SPSS program and Excel sheet as it will enable to facilitate a better comparison of the responses by developing descriptive statistics and also by making charts for comparison that will increase the effectiveness to understand the information and conclude the overall results (Patten, 2016). This method is also suitable with quantitative data as the studies of Li et al, (2019); Wang et al, (2022); Gulfraz et al, (2022) also used the similar method to present the data in more integrated manner.

To ensure research ethics, the prior consent of the participants will be taken along with briefing them for the research purpose. The participants will also be kept anonymous and their privacy and confidentiality will be secured. Along with this, the ethical committee guidelines will also be followed to conduct the research ethically.

The major limitation with this study is that the service experience and impact of online reviews is a subjective aspect and it might affect the ability to generalize the research results due to difference in the views of participants. Further, the limited time might also be a reason to get the less views and opinions of the target population that might also affect the research results.

The below table shows the time frame to complete each chapter over the time period of 12 weeks:

[illegible]

[illegible]

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