

## THE IMPACT OF RATINGS ON CONSUMER PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR IN THE SMARTPHONE MARKET

M. Akhila<sup>1</sup> Rayangari Shiva Prasad<sup>2</sup>

1. Assistant Professor, CMR Institute of Technology, Hyderabad, Telangana, India. Email ID: [akhilareddymuskulla4@cmritonline.ac.in](mailto:akhilareddymuskulla4@cmritonline.ac.in).

2. Student of MBA, CMR Institute of Technology, Hyderabad, Telangana, India. Email ID: [shivaprasadrayangari@gmail.com](mailto:shivaprasadrayangari@gmail.com)

### ABSTRACT:

The impact of ratings on consumer purchase behavior in the smartphone market is significant and multifaceted. In today's digital era, consumers heavily rely on online ratings and reviews as a critical source of information before making purchase decisions. Ratings act as social proof, influencing the perceived quality and reliability of smartphones among potential buyers. High ratings generally create a positive image of the product, increasing consumer trust and reducing perceived purchase risk.

Additionally, ratings impact consumer behavior by shaping expectations and guiding comparisons across different models. Consumers tend to prioritize products with higher average ratings, often reading detailed reviews to confirm that the product aligns with their needs and preferences. The influence of ratings also extends to post-purchase satisfaction, as positive reviews reinforce buyer confidence, while negative feedback may lead to cognitive dissonance or regret. Furthermore, the credibility of ratings is crucial; consumers are more likely to trust verified and detailed reviews rather than generic or suspiciously positive comments. The role of ratings in smartphone purchases also reflects broader trends in e-commerce and digital marketing, where peer feedback has become a powerful tool for shaping market dynamics.

Retailers and manufacturers actively manage ratings to enhance brand reputation and drive sales through encouraging satisfied customers to leave positive feedback. Overall, understanding the impact of ratings on consumer purchase behavior helps businesses strategize better product positioning and

improve customer engagement, while consumers benefit from more informed and confident buying decisions in the competitive smartphone market.

**Keywords:** *Consumer purchase behavior, Online rating, Product review, Smartphone market, E-commerce, Consumer trust, post-purchase satisfaction, Brand reputation.*

### I. INTRODUCTION:

In the digital age, online ratings have become a crucial factor shaping consumer behavior, especially for high-involvement purchases like smartphones. Traditionally, buyers depended on brand reputation and word-of-mouth, but today, easily accessible star ratings and reviews on platforms like Amazon and Flipkart strongly influence decisions.

Smartphones are expensive, widely used, and tied to personal identity, so buyers rely on ratings to judge performance and reliability quickly. When features and prices are similar, a higher rating or more positive reviews often decides the purchase. Positive ratings boost trust, highlight bestsellers, and increase visibility through platform algorithms, while poor ratings can reduce sales and force discounts.

Psychologically, ratings act as quick shortcuts that help buyers avoid risks and align with what the majority prefers. However, challenges like fake reviews, biased feedback, and herd mentality can distort true product quality.

Beyond star scores, detailed written reviews, photos, and video tests (e.g., on YouTube) add context and help buyers evaluate specific features like camera quality or battery life.

For smartphone brands and retailers, ratings are not just feedback—they impact pricing, brand image, and repeat sales. Many brands

actively manage ratings, respond to negative feedback, and adjust products based on user opinions. Overall, online ratings have become an integral part of the smartphone purchase journey and marketing strategy.

#### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:**

1. To analyse the extent to which online product ratings influence consumer purchase decisions for smartphones.
2. To understand consumer perception and trust levels associated with highly rated vs. poorly rated smartphones.
3. To assess the role of negative ratings in deterring potential smartphone buyers.
4. To evaluate how online platforms and brands can strategically use ratings to enhance customer engagement and sales.

#### **NEED OF THE STUDY:**

The need for this study arises from the growing influence of online ratings on consumer decision-making, especially in the competitive and rapidly evolving smartphone market. With buyers increasingly relying on digital feedback rather than traditional advertising, understanding how ratings shape perceptions and drive purchases is essential. This study helps identify the psychological and behavioural patterns associated with rating-based decisions. It also offers insights for marketers and manufacturers to optimize their strategies and improve customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the findings can guide e-commerce platforms in designing more transparent and user-friendly rating systems.

#### **SCOPE OF THE STUDY:**

1. Analyses the impact of product ratings on consumer purchase behaviour in the smartphone industry.
2. Examines how online ratings influence consumer perceptions, preferences, and buying decisions across various digital platforms.
3. Evaluates the effects of both positive and negative ratings on brand trust and purchase intent.

4. Provides insights to help smartphone manufacturers, retailers, and e-commerce platforms improve marketing and product strategies.

#### **LIMITATION OF THE STUDY:**

- The study is limited to a relatively small sample size (100–150 respondents), which may not fully represent the broader population of smartphone consumers.
- The research is primarily conducted in selected urban and semi-urban areas, which may not capture the views and behaviours of consumers in rural regions.
- Due to limited time for data collection and analysis, the study might not include long-term consumer behaviour trends or seasonal variations in purchasing patterns.
- The study focuses specifically on ratings and does not consider other influential factors such as price, brand reputation, word-of-mouth, or detailed customer reviews.

## **II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:**

### **1. The Influence of Online Reviews on Consumers' Trust Among Senior High School Students**

Abegail N. Lucero, Lea R. Malobago, Blessy Miles (2025) The study emphasizes that a higher volume of reviews enhances consumer trust and purchase intentions, particularly among younger demographics. It indicates the importance of review quantity in building credibility.

### **2. Fake Google Restaurant Reviews and the Implications for Consumers and Restaurants**

Shawn Berry (2024) The study investigates the impact of AI-generated fake reviews on consumer decisions, emphasizing the confusion and potential harm caused by such deceptive practices. It calls for improved detection and regulation to protect consumers.

### 3. Influence of Brand Image, Product Quality, and Lifestyle on Smartphone Purchase Decision in Indonesia

Dinda Viorentina, Singgih Santoso (2023)

The research indicates that brand image, influenced by online reviews and ratings, significantly affects consumers' smartphone purchase decisions. It suggests that positive online feedback can enhance brand perception and drive sales

### 4. E-WOM anatomy of online product reviews: interaction effects of review number, valence, and star ratings on perceived credibility

Seoyeon Hong ,Matthew Pittman (2020) This study examines how star ratings, number of reviews, and review valence influence consumers' trust in online product reviews. Two experiments show that negative reviews outweigh star ratings in shaping credibility, with review count signalling argument strength. Positive reviews lead consumers to trust star ratings, while negative reviews shift trust toward the number of reviewers. Implications for theory and practice are discussed.

#### Research Gap:

Despite extensive studies on consumer behaviour and online reviews, there is limited research specifically focusing on how ratings influence smartphone purchase decisions in diverse demographic groups.

Most existing studies overlook the role of cultural and regional differences in rating perceptions. Additionally, the impact of fake or manipulated ratings on consumer trust remains underexplored.

There is also a lack of research on how different rating platforms affect buying behavior. This gap highlights the need for more nuanced studies on rating influence in the smartphone market.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

#### Research Design

This study employs a descriptive and quantitative research design to gather measurable and structured data on consumer behaviour. The aim is to identify the

relationship between product ratings and purchasing intentions in the context of smartphones.

#### Data Collection Methods

- **Primary Data:** Collected through a structured questionnaire distributed online and offline among individuals who have purchased or intend to purchase a smartphone. The questionnaire includes both multiple-choice and Likert scale questions that assess the role of ratings in shaping opinions, trust, and decisions.
- **Secondary Data:** Gathered from published journals, online articles, research papers, e-commerce websites (like Amazon, Flipkart, and Croma), smartphone brand portals, and consumer behaviour studies to provide background context and validate primary findings.

#### Sampling Method

A non-probability convenience sampling technique is used to select respondents based on accessibility and relevance. The sample includes smartphone users of various age groups, income levels, and education backgrounds, providing diversity in opinions.

#### Sample Size

The sample size comprises 100–150 respondents, which ensures sufficient data for analysis while maintaining practicality and manageability within the scope of the study.

#### Target Population

The target population includes existing and potential smartphone buyers in urban and semi-urban areas, particularly those who use online platforms to gather product information and reviews before making a purchase.

#### Data Analysis Techniques

Data collected from the questionnaire is analyzed using statistical tools such as:

- Percentage analysis
- Charts and graphs for visual representation
- Correlation analysis to understand the strength of association between rating

levels and consumer purchase decisions

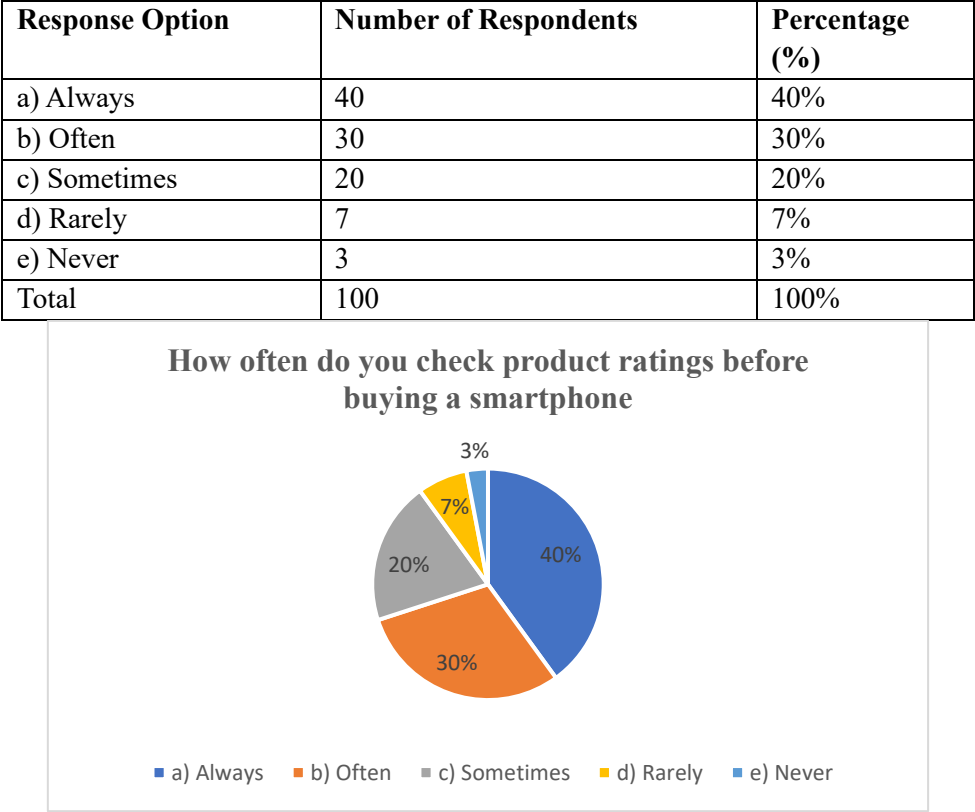
These tools help in identifying patterns, trends, and the strength of consumer reliance on product ratings.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES:

Descriptive statistics and Chi-square

RESULTS / FINDINGS:

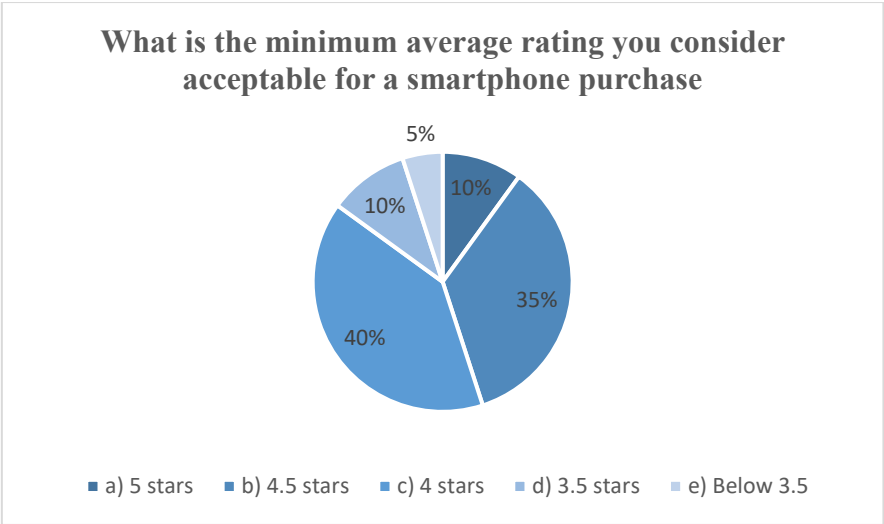
1. How often do you check product ratings before buying a smartphone?



**Interpretation:**  
The majority of respondents (40%) always check product ratings before buying a smartphone, indicating high consumer reliance on ratings. Another 30% often check ratings, showing that 70% regularly consider ratings in their decision-making. Only a small fraction (10%) rarely or never checks ratings, suggesting most buyers value online reviews as part of their purchase process. This highlights the importance of maintaining good product ratings to influence consumer behaviour

2: What is the minimum average rating you consider acceptable for a smartphone purchase?

Response Option	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
a) 5 stars	10	10%
b) 4.5 stars	35	35%
c) 4 stars	40	40%
d) 3.5 stars	10	10%
e) Below 3.5	5	5%
Total	100	100%

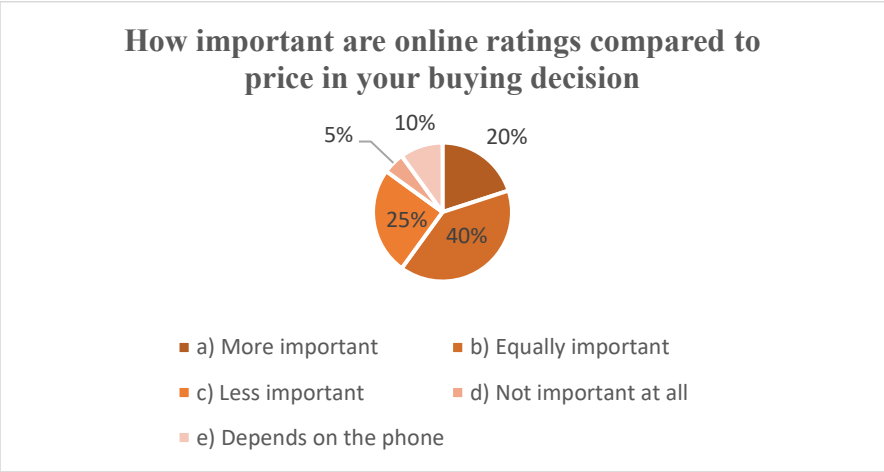


**Interpretation:**

Most respondents (75%) consider a minimum average rating of 4 stars or above acceptable, highlighting the importance of good ratings for purchase decisions. Only a small portion is willing to buy smartphones rated below 4 stars, indicating a high standard among buyers.

**3: How important are online ratings compared to price in your buying decision?**

Response Option	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
a) More important	20	20%
b) Equally important	40	40%
c) Less important	25	25%
d) Not important at all	5	5%
e) Depends on the phone	10	10%
Total	100	100%

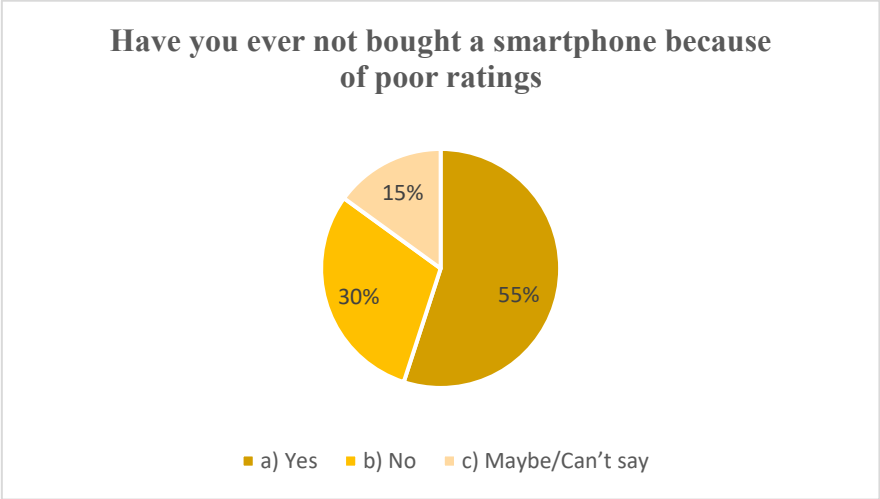


**Interpretation:**

Online ratings and price are equally important to 40% of respondents, indicating a balanced approach in decision-making. However, 20% prioritize ratings over price, while 25% focus more on price, reflecting diverse buying preferences.

4: Have you ever not bought a smartphone because of poor ratings?

Response Option	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
a) Yes	55	55%
b) No	30	30%
c) Maybe/Can't say	15	15%
Total	100	100%

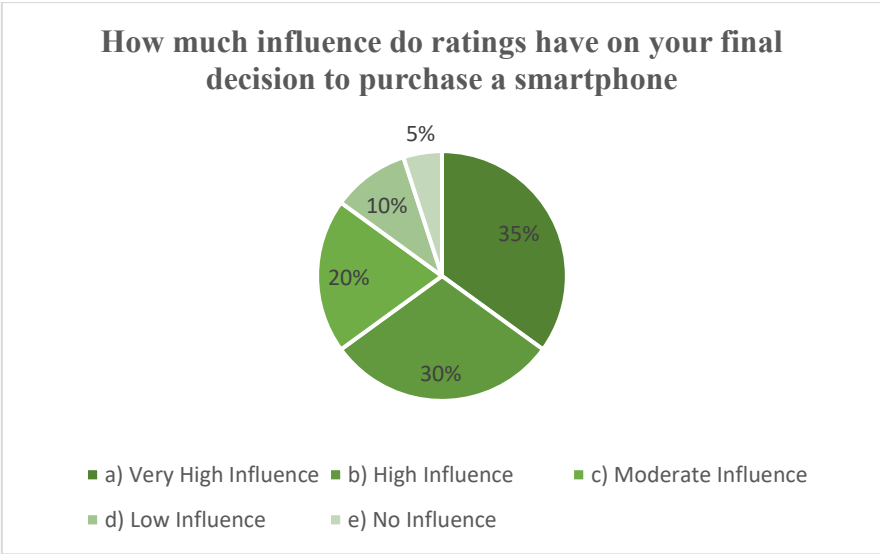


Interpretation:

More than half of respondents (55%) have refrained from purchasing a smartphone due to poor ratings, highlighting the significant impact of negative reviews on buying decisions. A notable minority is unsure or has never avoided a purchase for this reason.

5: How much influence do ratings have on your final decision to purchase a smartphone?

Response Option	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
a) Very High Influence	35	35%
b) High Influence	30	30%
c) Moderate Influence	20	20%
d) Low Influence	10	10%
e) No Influence	5	5%
Total	100	100%



**Interpretation:**

65% of respondents say ratings have very high or high influence on their purchase decisions, confirming the critical role of online ratings in smartphone buying behaviour.

**STATISTICAL TOOLS FOR ANALYSIS:**

**H0:** Ratings have no significant influence on the decision to purchase a smartphone

**H1:** Ratings have a significant influence on the decision to purchase a smartphone

**Chi-Square Calculation**

	Observed value	Expected value	$\chi^2$
a) Very High Influence	35	20	11.25
b) High Influence	30	20	5
c) Moderate Influence	20	20	0
d) Low Influence	10	20	5
e) No Influence	5	20	11.25
Total	100	100	32.5

$\chi^2$ table value	$\chi^2$ calculated value
9.488	32.5
H0 rejected	H1 accepted
As table value is less than calculated value. We reject H0 (null) and accept H1 (alternative)	

Note: -
$\chi^2$ = chi square
O = Observed value
E = Expected value
Formula: - " $\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$ "
Degree of freedom: -4
Significance: - 0.05

Since the table value is less than calculated value, H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted

So, ratings significant influence the decision to purchase a smartphone

**V. DISCUSSION**

1. 70% of respondents regularly check smartphone ratings before purchase. This indicates a strong reliance on reviews in the buying process.
2. 75% prefer a minimum rating of 4 stars or above when buying smartphones. This shows buyers have high quality expectations based on ratings
3. 40% value ratings and price equally, while 20% prioritize ratings more. This reflects a balanced approach, with many trusting ratings as much as price

4. 55% have avoided buying a smartphone due to poor ratings. Negative reviews significantly affect purchase decisions.
5. 65% say ratings have a high or very high influence on their final choice. This confirms the powerful role of online ratings in decision-making.

**VI. CONCLUSION:**

Product ratings play a crucial role in shaping consumer purchase behaviour in the smartphone market. As smartphones are significant investments, buyers trust ratings and peer reviews more than brand ads to judge product quality and value. High ratings boost



credibility and sales, while low ratings can harm a product's appeal, regardless of its features.

With online shopping replacing physical inspection, star ratings and detailed reviews have become key decision tools. Genuine, detailed feedback builds trust, so brands must ensure transparency and actively manage reviews to maintain a strong reputation.

Ultimately, ratings influence not just individual purchases but also brand image and market position. To stay competitive, businesses must prioritize customer satisfaction, encourage authentic reviews, and use feedback to improve products and build long-term loyalty.

#### REFERENCES / BIBLIOGRAPHY:

1. The Influence of Online Reviews on Consumers' Trust Among Senior High School Students Abegail N. Lucero, Lea R. Malobago, Blessy Miles (2025)

<https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRIS.2025.9020161>

2. Fake Google Restaurant Reviews and the Implications for Consumers and Restaurants Shawn Berry (2024)

<https://search.proquest.com/openview/9a02a80bb550063e4310dbe1bdcf05d6/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>

3. Influence of Brand Image, Product Quality, and Lifestyle on Smartphone Purchase Decision in Indonesia

Dinda Viorentina, Singgih Santoso (2023)

<https://marketing.expertjournals.com/23446773-1103/>

4. E-WOM anatomy of online product reviews: interaction effects of review number, valence, and star ratings on perceived credibility

Seoyeon Hong ,Matthew Pittman (2020)

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02650487.2019.1703386>

#### Books:

1. Armstrong, G., & Kotler, P. (2017). *Principles of Marketing* (17th Edition). Pearson Education.

2. Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing Management* (15th Edition). Pearson Education.

3. Loudon, D. L., & Della Bitta, A. J. (1993). *Consumer Behavior: Concepts and Applications*. McGraw-Hill.

4. Solomon, M. R. (2018). *Consumer Behavior: Buying, Having, and Being* (12th Edition). Pearson.

5. Schiffman, L. G., & Kanuk, L. L. (2010). *Consumer Behavior* (10th Edition). Pearson Education.