

Click, Read, Buy: The Power of Online Reviews in Shaping Electronic Gadget Purchases on E-Commerce

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In the contemporary e-commerce environment, online reviews represent a vital form of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) that influences consumers' purchasing behavior, particularly in competitive marketplaces such as Shopee. Grounded in the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and social proof theory, this study examines how review valence, review quality influence consumers' purchase intentions. Using a quantitative approach, survey data were collected from 205 Shopee users through Google Forms. The results show that review valence has a positive effect on consumers' purchase intentions ($\beta = 0.138$, $p < 0.05$), while review quality demonstrates a strong positive influence ($\beta = 0.675$, $p < 0.001$). In contrast, review volume does not significantly affect purchase intentions ($\beta = 0.060$, $p > 0.05$). These findings highlight that detailed, credible, and high-quality reviews play a more critical role than the number of reviews in shaping consumer behavior. This study offers practical insights for sellers and marketers seeking to optimize review strategies and strengthen consumer trust on e-commerce platforms.

Keywords: Consumer Behavior; Electronic Gadgets; Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM); Online Reviews; Purchase Intention; Review Valence

INTRODUCTION

Technological developments have expanded the ways in which Malaysians engage in commerce, particularly through online shopping. Today, e-commerce encompasses multiple transaction types, including B2B, B2C, and C2C interactions (Ru et al., 2021), making it a central component of everyday life. In the current digital marketplace, customer reviews represent an influential form of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). Within today's online shopping environment, product reviews serve as a crucial form of eWOM that significantly influences consumers' purchase decisions, particularly on platforms such as Shopee. This is especially relevant for electronic gadgets, which often involve substantial financial and functional risks. As a result, consumers rely on the experiences and opinions of other buyers to reduce uncertainty and enhance confidence in their purchase decisions. Trust, developed through credible online reviews, strongly shapes consumers' online buying behavior (Kee et al., 2025). Technological advancement has also influenced consumer decision-making in other domains. For example, Xia et al (2025) show how technological innovation and sustainability considerations influence consumer adoption of battery electric vehicles in Guangdong Province. Their findings underline a broader pattern: as consumers engage with increasingly complex technologies, whether electric vehicles or electronic gadgets, they rely heavily on credible information sources to guide decisions, reinforcing the importance of reliable online product reviews in e-commerce.

Prior studies have shown that trust, convenience, platform reliability, and perceived value are central to customers' online shopping satisfaction. Hui et al. (2024) identified key platform-related factors that directly influence customer satisfaction in online shopping, reinforcing the role of trustworthy information and user-friendly features. Earlier, Warriar et al. (2021) demonstrated how Amazon's success is driven by factors such as reliability, customer-centric design, and seamless user experience, all of which cultivate strong consumer trust and encourage continued online purchasing. Likewise, Lim et al. (2024) emphasize that for Generation Z shoppers, trust remains a decisive factor shaped by transparency, platform credibility, and the authenticity of online product reviews. Today, online shopping has become a convenient and flexible alternative (Jamaludin et al., 2024). In this context, online product reviews have gained importance as they offer reviews about product quality and serve as indicators of the trustworthiness of both sellers and platforms. Lim et al. (2024) highlight that trust is one of the key factors influencing online purchase behavior and that positive, detailed, and authentic reviews can substantially affect purchase intentions. Aryani et al. (2021) highlight that the global pandemic accelerated consumers' transition from traditional shopping to online platforms, which played a role in influencing purchase decisions during this period.

Shopee, as one of Malaysia's leading e-commerce platforms, offers a wide range of electronic gadgets that attract considerable consumer interest. Understanding which review attributes most strongly influence purchasing decisions is, therefore, timely and relevant. Based on recent studies on Shopee, which have examined its digital marketing strategies, customer satisfaction, and success factors in the e-commerce market (Kee et al., 2023; Lim et al., 2025; Madan et al., 2022; Yo et al., 2021), this research considers three key review-related factors, namely, review valence, review volume, and review quality, as important determinants of consumers' purchase decisions for electronic gadgets on Shopee. Past studies on e-commerce have highlighted its role in influencing consumer behavior and loyalty, showing that digital marketing strategies enhance customer engagement and trust (Kee et al., 2025), while well-designed e-commerce platforms strongly influence consumers' purchasing decisions and online buying behavior (Madan et al., 2022).

This study aims to examine how different characteristics of online reviews influence consumers' purchase intentions for electronic gadgets in e-commerce environments. Specifically, the study investigates the roles of review valence, review volume, and review quality in shaping consumers' purchasing intentions. The novelty of this research lies in its integrated examination of multiple review attributes within a single analytical framework in the context of online shopping platforms. This study contributes to the growing literature on online consumer behavior by demonstrating how different online review features influence consumers' purchasing intentions in e-commerce environments.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Purchase Intention

Purchase intention itself can be understood as the likelihood that a consumer will decide to buy a product or service after considering available information and perceived advantages (Kee et al., 2023). In online shopping environments, such as Shopee, Lazada, or GrabFood, purchase intention is shaped by a variety of factors, including product attributes, brand reputation, and environmental considerations. For instance, eco-friendly packaging has been found to positively influence consumers' purchase intention by enhancing perceptions of corporate social responsibility and environmental stewardship (Duarte et al., 2024). Furthermore, detailed and credible eWOM helps buyers evaluate product reliability, reduces perceived risk, and allows consumers to form realistic expectations before purchasing (Amarullah et al., 2022). The types of reviews examined in this study enable consumers to evaluate product reliability, reduce perceived risk, and form realistic expectations prior to making a purchase (Mallik et al., 2025). Similarly, customer satisfaction, brand trust, and brand loyalty have been shown to significantly impact purchase intention, particularly in the fast-food sector, where trust and consistent service quality foster repeat purchasing behavior (Kee et al., 2023). The incorporation of AI-based tools into online platforms can further support these decisions by offering personalized recommendations, predictive insights, and targeted promotional offers, all of which may positively influence the likelihood of purchase.

Hypotheses Development

Review Valence

Review valence describes the overall positive or negative sentiment conveyed in online consumer feedback (Jia & Liu, 2018). It captures consumers' emotional reactions and subjective evaluations toward a product and serves as an affective cue during online decision-making. In e-commerce environments where physical product inspection is impossible, consumers often rely on such affective information to form initial impressions and reduce uncertainty. As a result, review valence plays an important role in shaping consumers' perceptions, particularly in high-involvement product categories such as electronic gadgets.

In the context of electronic gadget purchases on Shopee, review valence critically influences consumer trust and perceived product quality. Predominantly positive reviews tend to signal product reliability, reduce perceived risk, and increase consumers' confidence in the seller and the product. Conversely, a high proportion of negative reviews may raise doubts about product performance, durability, or after-sales service, thereby discouraging purchase intentions. Prior research indicates that review valence significantly predicts consumer expectations and evaluations before purchase (Li et al., 2021), while also strengthening confidence in product credibility and increasing behavioral intention (Setiawati & Rani, 2025).

Beyond purchase intention, review valence has also been linked to post-purchase outcomes. Positive review valence not only enhances consumers' intention to buy but also contributes to higher levels of satisfaction and customer loyalty (Daiya & Maheshwari, 2025). This suggests that valence functions as both a pre-purchase persuasive cue and a post-purchase evaluative benchmark. When consumers' experiences align with the positive sentiments expressed in reviews, satisfaction and repeat purchase likelihood are reinforced.

Within the Shopee ecosystem, consumers often face substantial information asymmetry due to the inability to physically examine electronic gadgets prior to purchase. As a result, the emotional tone of online reviews becomes a key heuristic that helps consumers simplify complex decision-making processes. Emotional review content can partially substitute for direct product experience, allowing consumers to infer product quality and performance based on the sentiments expressed by other buyers (Wang et al., 2020). Therefore, review valence serves as an important signal that guides consumers' initial judgments and expectations in online marketplaces.

H1: Review valence has a significant and positive relationship with consumers' purchase intentions for electronic gadgets on Shopee.

Review Volume

In addition to review valence, review volume can be understood as the total number of consumer evaluations associated with a product on an e-commerce platform. It reflects the extent of consumer engagement and serves as an important signal of product popularity and market acceptance. From a consumer perspective, a high volume of reviews suggests that the product has been tried by a broader group of buyers, which may help reduce uncertainty when making purchase intentions in an online setting. As a result, review volume often functions as a heuristic cue that simplifies evaluation, especially in online environments where direct product inspection is not possible.

Review volume also contributes to the bandwagon effect and reinforces social proof, as consumers tend to infer that products with a large number of reviews are more widely accepted and trusted by the community. This perception of widespread usage increases consumers' confidence in the product, lowers perceived risk, and enhances the likelihood of purchase. Empirical findings support the importance of review volume in shaping consumer decision-making. Higher review quantity has been shown to boost consumer confidence and strengthen perceived brand credibility, as consumers associate popularity with product reliability (Iqbal et al., 2023).

Similarly, products with larger review counts tend to attract more clicks, higher conversion rates, and increased overall sales, indicating that review volume plays a meaningful role in influencing online shopping behavior (Cheong et al., 2020). Furthermore, a recent meta-analysis confirms that review volume retains a stable, medium-sized positive effect on purchase intention across different contexts and cultures, suggesting that its influence is robust across different markets and product categories (Qiu & Zhang, 2024). This highlights the role of review volume as a general indicator of collective consumer endorsement.

In the context of Shopee's electronic gadget category, products with a large number of reviews are likely to be perceived as more credible, legitimate, and widely accepted compared to those with only a limited number of reviews. For high-involvement products such as electronic gadgets, where performance uncertainty and financial risk are relatively high, consumers may rely on review volume as an initial screening mechanism before examining detailed review content. Consequently, review volume acts as a proxy

for product demand and community endorsement, helping consumers reduce perceived risk and increasing their likelihood of purchase (Yadav et al., 2024).

H2: Review volume has a significant and positive relationship with consumers' purchase intentions for electronic gadgets on Shopee.

Review Quality

Review quality refers to the usefulness, credibility, and level of detail provided in online consumer reviews. High-quality reviews are typically specific, descriptive, and supported by a clear user experience. Such reviews provide diagnostic information that helps consumers better evaluate products prior to purchase. In contrast, poor-quality reviews that are vague, overly brief, or lacking meaningful content offer limited value and may weaken consumer confidence. Detailed and well-articulated reviews also promote trust in both the product and the platform, a relationship that is supported by previous research demonstrating the role of trust in sustaining digital platform usage (Ng & Kee, 2025).

Building on this evidence, existing studies further demonstrate the critical role of review quality in online purchasing intentions. Review usefulness has been identified as a key determinant of consumer buying behavior, as it provides essential information that enables consumers to evaluate products more accurately, reduces perceived risk, and supports informed decision-making (Majali et al., 2022). In addition, the credibility of online reviews plays a crucial role in enhancing consumer trust, particularly for high-involvement products such as electronic gadgets, where purchase intentions involve higher financial and functional risks (Ali, 2023).

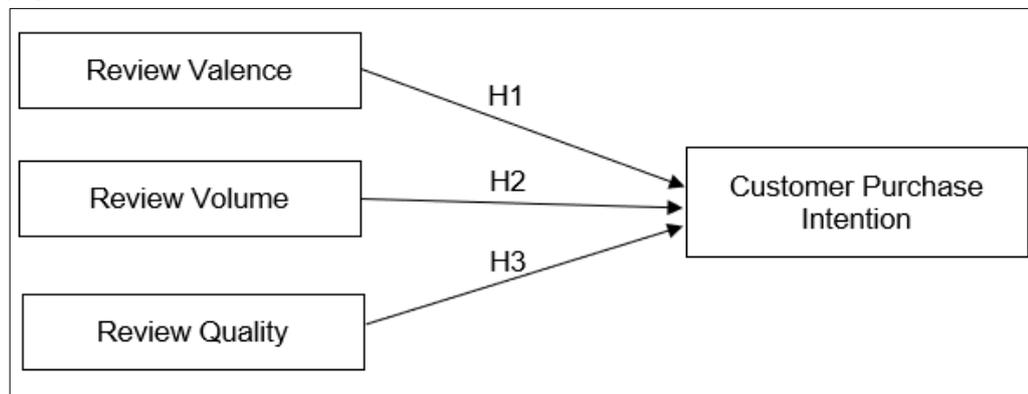
From a cognitive perspective, informative and well-structured reviews facilitate deeper information processing, allowing consumers to form more stable and favorable attitudes toward a product. Reviews perceived as informative improve consumers' cognitive evaluation and reduce uncertainty, which in turn strengthens purchase intention (Liu et al., 2022). For Shopee users shopping for electronic gadgets, detailed feedback regarding product specifications, performance, durability, delivery experience, and seller responsiveness is particularly valuable. Such diagnostic information enhances consumers' ability to judge product suitability and increases trust in both the seller and the platform.

Consequently, review quality not only enhances consumer confidence but also serves as a critical driver of purchase decisions in online marketplaces. By providing reliable and useful information, high-quality reviews reduce perceived risk and support rational decision-making, especially for complex and high-involvement products.

H3: Review quality has a significant and positive relationship with consumers' purchase intentions for electronic gadgets on Shopee.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1. Research Framework



The hypotheses presented in Figure 1 constitute the conceptual framework of this study. The model illustrates the proposed relationships between key characteristics of online reviews, including review valence, review volume, and review quality, and consumers' purchase decisions in the context of electronic gadget purchases. These hypothesized relationships provide the analytical foundation for examining how different aspects of online reviews influence consumers' decision-making processes in online marketplaces.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Approach

This study adopted a quantitative research approach using a survey method to investigate the influence of online review characteristics on consumers' purchase intention toward electronic gadgets on Shopee.

Sampling Method

The survey targeted consumers who had previous experience purchasing electronic gadgets via Shopee. Data were collected through self-administered questionnaires, resulting in 205 usable responses for subsequent analysis.

Data Collection Method

The questionnaire was pretested and subsequently pilot-tested before full-scale data collection. The questionnaire items were reviewed and validated by academic experts. Prior to data collection, the questionnaire was examined by academic experts to confirm content validity and alignment with the study objectives.

Data Analysis Procedure

The collected data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 27. Several statistical techniques, including descriptive analysis, reliability testing, and regression analysis, were employed to examine the relationships among the research variables.

Measures

All measurement items were assessed using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 5 ("Strongly Agree"). The questionnaire was designed to capture key aspects of online reviews, namely review valence, review volume, and review quality, as well as their effects on consumers' purchase intention. The measurement items were adapted from previously validated scales and carefully reworded to suit the context of electronic gadget purchases on Shopee.

Review Valence

Three questions were designed to evaluate how the positivity or negativity of online reviews and comments influences consumers' perceptions of a product. These questions aimed to measure the emotional tone in the comment and how it shapes consumers' trust and eventual purchasing intention. An example question is: "I am influenced by the positive tone of the review."

Review Volume

Three questions were developed to assess the extent to which the number of online reviews and comments affects consumer confidence in a product. These questions aimed to measure whether a higher volume increases the credibility and reliability of the product information. An example question is: "A high number of reviews increases my trust in the electronic gadgets."

Review Quality

Eight questions were used to analyze the clarity and usefulness of the online review and comment. These questions were designed to determine whether well-written, describe about the product and informative review provide consumer with a deeper understanding of the product that they want to purchase and influence their evaluation and purchasing intention. An example question is: "The review is more helpful if the message is unambiguous."

Purchase Intention

Four questions were developed to measure consumers' likelihood of purchasing the product after being exposed to online reviews. These questions assessed how the information provided in the review shapes consumers' confidence, attitudes, and readiness to proceed with purchase. An example question is: "I am confident about buying electronic gadgets after reading the reviews."

RESULTS

Table 1. Summary of Respondent's Demography (N=205)

	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	20-29	63	30.7
	30-39	50	24.4
	Below 20	36	17.6
	40-49	28	13.7
	50 and above	28	13.7
Gender	Female	106	51.7
	Male	99	48.3
Race	Chinese	90	43.6
	Indian	67	32.7
	Malay	48	23.4
Frequency of using Shopee	Once a month	73	35.6
	Once a week	60	29.3
	Every day	37	18
	Rarely	35	17.7
Education Level	Bachelor's Degree	49	23.9
	Secondary School	45	22
	Diploma	34	16.6
	Master's Degree	30	14.6

	Ph.D. Degree	27	13.2
	Primary School	20	9.8
Occupation	Government Sector	59	28.8
	Student	52	25.4
	Private Sector	38	18.5
	Self-employed	29	14.1
	Unemployed	27	13.2

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of respondents who participated in the survey. In terms of age distribution, the largest group of respondents falls within the 20–29 age range (30.7%), followed by those aged 30–39 (24.4%). Participants below 20 years old account for 17.6% of the sample, while equal proportions of respondents are aged 40–49 (13.7%) and 50 years and above (13.7%). The sample shows a nearly even gender distribution, with females representing 51.7% and males 48.3%. In terms of ethnicity, the majority of participants are Chinese (43.6%), followed by Indian respondents (32.7%) and Malay respondents (23.4%).

Regarding platform usage frequency, most respondents reported using Shopee once a month (35.6%), followed by once a week (29.3%), daily (18.0%), and rarely (17.7%). For educational background, a considerable portion of respondents hold a bachelor's degree (23.9%), followed by secondary school (22%) and diploma holders (16.6%). Smaller proportions reported having a master's degree (14.6%), Ph.D. qualification (13.2%), or primary school education (9.8%). Regarding occupation, respondents are primarily from the government sector (28.8%), followed by students (25.4%), private-sector employees (18.5%), self-employed individuals (14.1%), and unemployed participants (13.2%).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics, Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficients, and Zero-Order Correlations for All Study Variables

Variable		1	2	3	4
1	Perceived Review Valence	0.704			
2	Perceived Review Volume	0.734**	0.704		
3	Perceived Review Quality	0.754**	0.739**	0.872	
4	Purchase Intention	0.690**	0.659**	0.820**	0.751
Number of items		3	3	8	4
Mean		3.519	3.502	3.449	3.423
Standard Deviation		1.019	1.028	0.982	0.994

Note: N=205; *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001. The bold diagonal entries indicate Cronbach's alpha.

Table 2 summarizes the descriptive statistics, reliability coefficients, and correlation results for the four study variables. Overall, the findings indicate that the study variables are positively and significantly correlated with one another. Perceived review valence shows moderate to strong correlations with perceived review volume ($r = 0.734$), perceived review quality ($r = 0.754$), and purchase intention ($r = 0.690$). Perceived review volume is also positively associated with perceived review quality ($r = 0.739$) and purchase intention ($r = 0.659$).

In addition, perceived review quality demonstrates the strongest correlation with purchase intention ($r = 0.820$), suggesting that higher-quality reviews may play a particularly influential role in shaping consumers' intentions to purchase. The Cronbach's alpha values displayed on the diagonal range from 0.704 to 0.872, indicating that all measurement scales possess acceptable to high internal reliability. The mean scores for

the variables fall between 3.423 and 3.509, while the standard deviations range from 0.982 to 1.028, reflecting moderate dispersion in participants' responses.

Table 3. Summary of Regression Analysis

Variable		Purchase Intention
1	Review Valence	0.138*
2	Review Volume	0.060
3	Review Quality	0.675***
R-Square		0.685
F-Value		145.964
Durbin-Watson Statistic		1.933

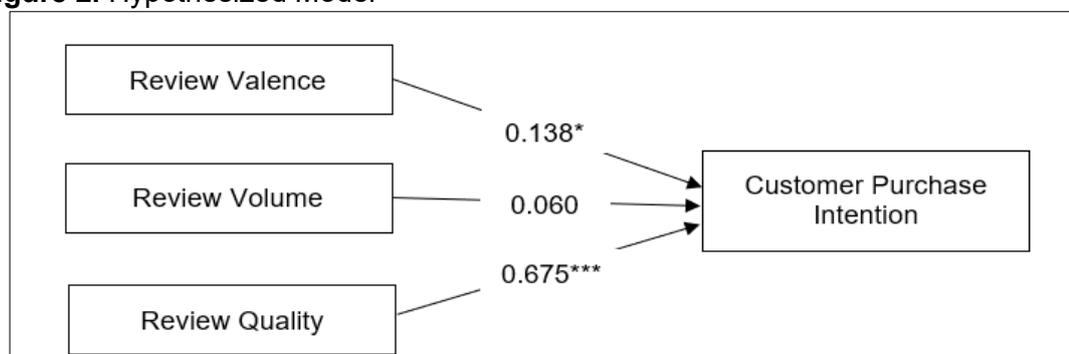
Note. $N = 205$. $p < 0.05$, $p < 0.01$, $p < 0.001$. Standardized regression coefficients (β) are reported.

Table 3 presents the multiple regression analysis examining the hypothesized relationships between review valence, review volume, review quality, and consumers' purchase behavior. H1 proposed that review valence has a positive and significant relationship with purchase intention. The regression results show that review valence has a positive and statistically significant effect on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.138$, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, H1 is supported, indicating that more positive review sentiment modestly increases consumers' likelihood of purchasing electronic gadgets.

H2 hypothesized that review volume shows a positive but not significant relationship with consumers' purchase intention. However, the findings reveal that review volume does not have a statistically significant effect on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.060$, $p > 0.05$). As a result, H2 is not supported. This suggests that the number of reviews alone does not significantly shape consumers' purchase decisions for electronic gadgets on Shopee.

H3 predicted a positive and significant relationship between review quality and purchase intention. The results demonstrate that review quality has a significant and positive effect on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.675$, $p < 0.001$), providing strong support for H3. This indicates that consumers place substantial importance on detailed, informative, and credible reviews when evaluating electronic gadgets. Overall, the regression model explains a substantial proportion of variance in purchase intention ($R^2 = 0.685$), indicating strong explanatory power. In addition, the Durbin–Watson statistic of 1.933 suggests no autocorrelation issues, confirming the reliability of the regression estimates. Figure 2 presents the findings.

Figure 2. Hypothesized Model



DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide insights into how different review characteristics influence consumer decision-making on Shopee, particularly for high-involvement

electronic products. When reviews are detailed and appear trustworthy, they help consumers reduce uncertainty and judge the product more confidently (Ngo et al., 2025).

Review Quality

The results indicate that review quality is the strongest predictor of purchase intention for electronic gadgets on Shopee. High-quality reviews are detailed, specific, and credible, providing diagnostic information that helps consumers assess product suitability and reduce perceived risk. Consumers evaluate review quality both in terms of the depth of content and the perceived trustworthiness of the reviewer, reflecting a preference for informed and reliable opinions. Trust is especially placed in reviews authored by knowledgeable individuals, those with firsthand product experience, or verified accounts, highlighting the role of reviewer credibility in shaping purchase intentions (Fernandes et al., 2022).

High-quality reviews improve positive attitudes toward the product, while subjective norms may also be influenced as consumers observe the opinions of other credible reviewers. In addition, consumers actively engage in information-seeking behaviors regarding product quality, delivery reliability, and seller responsiveness (Ali, 2025). From the perspective of the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), review quality operates as a central cue, meaning consumers process it carefully when making decisions about high-value or technically complex products (Moradi & Zihagh, 2022). This careful evaluation allows consumers to filter out potentially misleading or superficial reviews, prioritizing content that is both credible and relevant. In the context of electronic gadgets, where technical specifications and performance can vary significantly, such scrutiny helps reduce perceived financial and functional risks.

Moreover, review quality may interact with social proof mechanisms, as consumers interpret credible, detailed reviews not only as product information but also as signals of broader community endorsement. This interaction reinforces purchase confidence, as buyers perceive that a product valued by informed peers is more likely to meet their expectations. These insights underscore why review quality emerged as the strongest predictor in this study: consumers deliberately focus on detailed, experience-based information to reduce uncertainty, enhance trust, and support confident purchasing decisions. Consequently, sellers should prioritize fostering high-quality reviews rather than merely increasing review quantity, as detailed and credible feedback directly influences consumers' intentions to purchase electronic gadgets.

Review Valence

In this study, review valence was found to have a significant but relatively smaller effect on purchase intention compared to review quality. This indicates that while consumers are influenced by the overall positivity or negativity of reviews, this factor is less critical than the detailed content and credibility of the information provided. Both positive and negative reviews shape consumers' attitudes toward electronic gadgets, serving as affective cues that guide perceptions of product reliability and quality. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and related technology adoption models such as TAM, attitudes toward a behavior, Consumers' decisions to purchase online are strongly influenced by how useful and easy to use they perceive an e-commerce platform to be (Choi & Song, 2020). In practical terms, positive reviews increase consumer trust and make them more willing to consider a product as the right choice, whereas negative reviews can generate doubt and reduce purchase intention.

Interestingly, while positive reviews help create favorable impressions, negative reviews often attract more attention because consumers perceive them as more realistic and informative. However, for high-involvement products such as electronic gadgets,

consumers tend to prioritize detailed, diagnostic information over simple sentiment cues (Chen & Kou, 2016). From a theoretical perspective, this aligns with the ELM, where review valence functions as a peripheral cue, which is less influential than central cues such as review quality. Consumers may notice the emotional tone of reviews, but their actual decision-making relies more heavily on the substantive content that reduces uncertainty and informs judgment. Therefore, although review valence contributes to shaping purchase intentions, its impact is comparatively smaller because it primarily affects consumer attitudes indirectly rather than providing concrete, actionable information about product performance.

Review Volume

Although some electronic gadgets on Shopee accumulate a large number of reviews, the findings indicate that review volume has little direct influence on purchase intention. In fact, compared to review quality and review valence, review volume emerged as the weakest predictor of consumers' buying decisions. This suggests that simply having a high number of reviews is not sufficient to convince buyers of a product's value. One explanation is that consumers no longer view quantity alone as a reliable indicator of quality, since a large number of reviews does not guarantee authenticity (García et al., 2024). Many Shopee users are aware that review counts can be artificially inflated through promotional tactics or automated submissions, which reduces trust in volume as a cue (Affifa, 2025).

Another important factor is information overload. When a product has hundreds or even thousands of reviews, consumers may find it difficult to carefully read and evaluate each one, which can lead to confusion or decision fatigue (Lin & Wang, 2023). In this context, review volume may signal popularity at a superficial level, but it provides limited diagnostic information to guide actual purchasing intentions. Consequently, consumers tend to focus on individual reviews that are detailed, credible, and informative, rather than relying on the sheer number of comments. From a theoretical perspective, review volume can be considered a peripheral cue according to the ELM, where indicate that it may attract attention, but it does not carry the substantive content necessary for high-involvement decision-making. Therefore, although volume can contribute to social proof and initial interest, its practical impact on purchase intention is relatively minor compared to the quality and emotional tone of reviews.

The results suggest that consumers prioritize quality over quantity because detailed, credible, and informative reviews provide diagnostic information, which is crucial for high-involvement products like electronic gadgets. Although star ratings act as a quick heuristic, they are less influential than detailed review content because they lack context and explanatory value. Similarly, high review volume alone is no longer trusted due to potential fake reviews, review inflation, and information overload, particularly in platforms like Shopee. Overall, the results are consistent with previous work showing that consumers rely more on the usefulness and trustworthiness of review content rather than simple popularity cues.

Research Implications

Theoretical Implications

The findings reinforce the social proof perspective, where online reviews serve as normative cues that validate consumers' choices, particularly when technical specifications or product reliability cannot be directly assessed from seller descriptions (Rachmiani et al., 2024). Consumers often rely on evaluations such as online reviews shared by other consumers when making purchasing decisions (Ahn & Lee, 2024).

Practical Implications

The findings of the study provide critical insight for stakeholders in the electronic gadget market on Shopee. Since consumers prioritize review quality over review volume, the following implications outline how sellers, platform developers, and consumers can make better decisions based on the significant variables identified in this study.

Implications for Sellers

This study highlights that review quality has a larger impact on purchase intention than review volume, emphasizing that consumers prioritize detailed, credible, and informative evaluations over the sheer number of reviews. This aligns with prior research showing that consumers actively seek other buyers' experiences before finalizing purchase decisions (Fernandes et al., 2022). High-quality reviews provide diagnostic information regarding product specifications, performance, durability, and seller responsiveness, which helps reduce perceived risk and enhances trust in both the product and the seller.

Given these findings, sellers should shift their focus from simply accumulating a high quantity of reviews to encouraging the submission of high-value, informative content. Unlike seller-generated promotional content, consumer reviews are perceived as more credible because they are based on genuine experiences, which strengthens trust and positively influences purchasing behavior. To encourage high-quality reviews, sellers can implement incentive mechanisms such as Shopee Coins, points, or badges for detailed feedback. For instance, reviews that receive a higher number of "like" or "agree" reactions from other consumers indicate perceived accuracy and usefulness. It can be rewarded with additional points or tokens. This approach not only motivates consumers to provide more substantial reviews but also indirectly signals product credibility to prospective buyers.

By prioritizing review quality over volume, sellers can create a self-reinforcing system. High-quality reviews can enhance consumer confidence, increase perceived trustworthiness of the product and platform, and ultimately encourage more informed purchasing decisions. In practical terms, this strategy helps sellers differentiate their products in a competitive marketplace, reduce uncertainty for buyers, and strengthen long-term customer loyalty.

Implication for Platform Developer

The finding that review volume does not significantly influence purchase intention suggests that consumers may face information overload or perceive high review counts as an unreliable indicator of product quality (Lin & Wang, 2023). On platforms like Shopee, excessive reviews can create cognitive strain, making it challenging for consumers to extract meaningful insights and make informed decisions. Moreover, inflated review counts, often driven by repeated submissions from the same users or automated bot activity, may further reduce consumer trust in volume-based metrics.

To address these challenges, Shopee could implement advanced Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools to manage and optimize review presentation. For example, AI could automatically summarize extensive review content, filter out duplicate or low-value reviews, and identify comments that lack substantive information. This approach ensures that consumers are exposed primarily to high-quality, informative reviews that provide genuine insights into product performance, usability, and reliability (Wang et al., 2024).

In addition, AI could categorize and tag reviews based on key product attributes such as "Battery Life," "Fast Charging," or "Durability." Grouping reviews under such thematic tags would allow consumers to quickly locate relevant information, significantly reducing the time and effort needed to process hundreds of reviews. This not only enhances the efficiency of decision-making but also increases the perceived helpfulness and

trustworthiness of the review system (Wang et al., 2024). By improving the organization and accessibility of reviews, Shopee can support consumers in making more informed and confident purchase intentions, ultimately strengthening user satisfaction and loyalty on the platform.

Implication for Consumers

The findings of this study indicate that review valence alone does not reliably reflect product quality, as it can be misleading due to review inflation, fake reviews, or artificially boosted positive ratings (García et al., 2024). On competitive e-commerce platforms like Shopee, some sellers actively encourage only positive reviews to enhance their overall rating, creating a false impression of high review valence. Consequently, relying solely on the general sentiment of reviews may lead consumers to overestimate product performance and make suboptimal purchase intentions.

To make more informed choices, consumers should critically evaluate the content and quality of individual reviews rather than focusing exclusively on star ratings or overall positivity. Specifically, reviews that include visual evidence, detailed descriptions of technical specifications, and personal experiences allow buyers to better verify the authenticity of product claims (Wang et al., 2024). By actively seeking out such high-quality and informative reviews, consumers can gain more accurate insights into product performance, durability, and usability.

This proactive information-seeking behavior enables consumers to reduce uncertainty and mitigate the risks associated with purchasing high-involvement products, such as electronic gadgets, online (Ngo et al., 2025). Furthermore, by prioritizing reviews that provide concrete, experience-based evidence, consumers can improve their confidence in purchasing decisions, avoid being misled by inflated review counts, and increase overall satisfaction with their online shopping experience.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the impact of online reviews on the purchasing intentions of electronic products on the Shopee platform. The results of this study are consistent with existing literature, indicating that the quality of the reviews is a key factor influencing the purchase intention of electronic gadgets. Consumers are more inclined to trust detailed and authentic reviews, which can enhance their confidence in the product and prompt the formation of the purchasing intention.

An important finding of this research is that review volume shows a positive but not significant effect on purchase intention. This suggests that consumers no longer equate a high number of reviews with trustworthiness, which is likely due to review inflation, fake reviews, and information overload commonly observed on large e-commerce platforms such as Shopee may weaken the value of quantity as a trust cue, making content quality a more meaningful basis for evaluation.

However, this research presents some limitations as well. The sample size was relatively small and focused solely on Shopee users, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research might not only make the sample wider but also increase the number of people and include various e-commerce platforms or industries to confirm the correctness of the conclusions (Qiu & Zhang, 2024). Additionally, incorporating variables such as seller reputation, product pricing, or previous shopping experience may provide a more comprehensive understanding of purchase behavior.

LIMITATION

This study has several limitations that should be mentioned. First, the sample of 205 respondents was obtained mainly through personal networks, which may introduce sampling bias and limit the representativeness of Shopee users in Malaysia (Etikan et al., 2016). The research also relies on self-reported questionnaire data, which may be affected by response biases such as selective memory and social desirability, potentially influencing how participants rate online reviews or report their purchasing behavior (Donaldson & Grant-Vallone, 2002; Podsakoff et al., 2012). Additionally, the cross-sectional research design captures consumer perceptions at only one point in time. This limits the ability to observe how attitudes may change as users gain more online shopping experience or as Shopee updates its platform features and marketing strategies. A longitudinal approach would be better suited to identify such changes over time (Ployhart & Vandenberg, 2010; Rindfleisch et al., 2008). Finally, the three constructs on review are the same ones of review valence, volume, and quality that are considered in the study as review-related constructs.

Future studies can look at other variables that might affect the purchase intentions, including reputation of the seller, trust of the platform, experience of delivery or price of products. Other more varied sampling methods could also be helpful in enhancing generalizability by the researchers. Moreover, longitudinal or experimental designs of the research would offer more powerful evidence and be able to capture consumer behavior variations over time (Hair et al., 2017).

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The authors have declared no potential conflicts of interest concerning the study, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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