universität wien

MASTERARBEIT / MASTER'S THESIS

Titel der Masterarbeit / Title of the Master's Thesis

„Investigating the effects of online consumer reviews on customers' decision-making process and purchasing behavior – a structured literature review"

verfasst von / submitted by

Virdzhinia Stefanova, BA

angestrebter akademischer Grad / in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science (MSc)

Wien, 2023 / Vienna, 2023

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Abbreviations

OCRs – Online Consumer Reviews

eWOM – electronic Word-of-Mouth

WOM – Word-of-Mouth

SLR - Structured Literature Review

AJG – Academic Journal Guide

ABS – Association of Business Schools

CPY – Citations per year

PDF – Portable Document Format

CSV – Comma-separated values

B2B – Business-to-Business

USA – United States of America

1. Introduction

In light of the Covid-19 pandemic that began in 2020, people all over the world have increasingly turned to online shopping as an alternative to traditional physical stores. (Young et al., 2022, p. 162) Over the past 8 years, the percentage of E-commerce sales in the global retail industry has consistently risen, as reported by Statista (2022), and this trend is expected to continue in the future. This shift in consumer behavior has significant implications for businesses operating in the digital world, as well as for consumers themselves.

As the popularity of online shopping grows, so does the reliance on online consumer reviews (OCRs) as a valuable source of information, as pointed out by Malbon (2013, p. 139). OCRs play a vital role in shaping consumers' decision-making process and purchasing behavior. One of the reasons why OCRs are so important is that they provide social proof. In a situation in which consumers cannot physically examine products before making a purchase, they have to rely on the experiences and opinions of others to inform their decisions (Paul Arunkumar et al. 2023, p. 31). By reading reviews left by previous customers, potential buyers gain insights into the quality, features, and overall satisfaction associated with a particular product or service. Positive reviews can increase confidence, while negative reviews can serve as red flags, alerting consumers to potential issues (Duan et al., 2008a, p. 1007).

Moreover, OCRs contribute to transparency and accountability in the marketplace. In traditional retail settings, consumers have the opportunity to interact directly with salespeople who can answer their questions and address their concerns. Online shopping lacks this personal interaction, making it crucial for businesses to provide detailed information and respond to customer feedback promptly. When businesses actively engage with their customers through review platforms, it demonstrates their commitment to customer satisfaction and builds trust (Hu et al. 2008, p. 201).

The research conducted so far on the impact of OCRs and their influence on customers' decision-making process and purchasing behavior is crucial for both businesses and academics. The main goal of this research is to thoroughly explore the topic by conducting a structured literature review (SLR) in order to provide an extensive overview of current research on this subject. Consequently, the paper will address the following three research questions:

1. What is the current state of research on the effects of OCRs on customers' decision-making process and purchasing behavior?

2. What are the main areas of focus and critique in the existing literature on the topic?

3. What are the potential directions for future research on the topic?

As explained by Massaro et al. (2016a, p. 768; 2016c, p. 67), an SLR establishes a basis of previous findings, which then serve as a foundation for identifying possible future research directions by finding gaps in the existing knowledge and areas that require further examination. This process involves recognizing common topics and trends, as well as differing perspectives or conflicting opinions. The general aim of this research is to develop a comprehensive understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of current research and to identify areas that require further examination. By studying OCRs as a rapidly evolving phenomenon that is transforming the online marketplace, the paper provides an opportunity to gain new insights from the existing literature.

2. Theoretical Background

In the digital era, OCRs have emerged as a critical aspect of the consumer decision-making process. These reviews represent user-generated feedback, opinions, and evaluations and can take various forms, including textual comments, star ratings, and multimedia content. OCRs are found on dedicated review websites, e-commerce platforms, and social media, playing a pivotal role in shaping the perceptions of potential customers. Consumers use online reviews to gather information about the quality, features, and overall satisfaction of products and services offered by businesses before making purchasing decisions.

Numerous scholarly studies have explored the significance of OCRs in influencing consumer behavior and impacting businesses' success. Research suggests that OCRs have a significant influence on the decision-making process of customers. Zhu and Zhang (2010) have conducted a notable meta-study investigating the impact of online reviews on product sales. Their research finds that positive reviews have a significant positive effect on product sales, while negative reviews have a detrimental impact. According to a study by Chevalier and Mayzlin (2006), positive reviews can create a sense of trust and credibility, positively impacting consumers' attitudes towards a product or service. In contrast, negative reviews can raise concerns and lead to skepticism, influencing consumers to reconsider their initial preferences. Moreover, the volume of OCRs of a product or a service contributes to the formation of social proof, a phenomenon identified by Cialdini (2015). When individuals are uncertain about a decision, they tend to rely on the actions and opinions of others. In the context of OCRs, positive reviews serve as a form of social validation, reinforcing the desirability of a product or service. Duan et al. (2008a) find that the presence of negative reviews can lead to a decrease in sales, highlighting the importance of managing and responding to customer feedback. Addressing negative reviews promptly and transparently can mitigate their impact and demonstrate a commitment to customer satisfaction.

However, not all online consumer reviews carry the same weight in influencing decision-making and purchasing behavior. The characteristics of reviews, such as their source, content, and overall sentiment, play a crucial role. A study by Lee and Youn (2009) finds that consumers are more likely to trust reviews from other consumers rather than those from marketers or anonymous sources. Moreover, reviews that provide specific details about the user experience are considered more helpful and influential.

Another important term in this field of research is electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) which is a broader concept that encompasses all forms of word-of-mouth (WOM) communication taking place on digital platforms (Cheung and Lee 2012, p. 219). eWOM includes not only written OCRs on e-commerce websites but also recommendations, opinions, and experiences shared through social media, online forums, blogs, and other websites. Given the digital nature of OCRs and their dissemination through electronic channels, they are often referred to as a form of eWOM. The terms "OCRs" and "eWOM" are used interchangeably in scholarly research (Cheung and Lee 2012, p. 218) and will also be used as synonyms in the paper.

In conclusion, OCRs have become a fundamental aspect of the modern consumer landscape, influencing decision-making processes and purchasing behavior. The trust and credibility associated with positive reviews, combined with the psychological impact of social proof and the detrimental effect of negative reviews, create a dynamic environment in which consumers navigate their choices in the digital marketplace. As businesses and consumers continue to engage in the online review ecosystem, understanding the mechanisms and effects of this phenomenon is crucial for both academic research and practical applications in the business world.

3. Methodology

As mentioned in the introductory chapter, to delve further into the topic of OCRs and their effects on consumers' decision-making process and purchasing behavior, the study uses the method of SLR. According to Massaro et al. (2016a, p. 769), an SLR is a well-structured method that follows specific rules and can be considered an enhancement of traditional systematic reviews. It is particularly suitable for analyzing large amounts of literature and helps identify inconsistencies, research gaps, and conflicting results in the field of study. By conducting an SLR, researchers can systematically examine the literature and gain insights into areas that require further exploration and clarification.

In the context of OCRs, employing an SLR approach offers several advantages. First, it ensures a comprehensive and systematic analysis of the relevant OCR literature (Massaro et al., 2016a, p. 789). This approach reduces biases and enhances the reliability of the outcomes. Given the vast amount of literature available on OCRs, a systematic and well-structured approach is crucial for synthesizing and analyzing the findings effectively. Second, the SLR methodology incorporates a quality control process to ensure that only high-quality studies are included in the analysis. This is particularly important in OCR research, where the quality of studies can vary significantly. By applying rigorous inclusion criteria and quality assessment measures, the SLR method helps maintain the integrity and validity of the research (Palmatier et al. 2018, p. 4). Furthermore, the SLR method allows for the synthesis of findings from multiple studies, facilitating the identification of trends and patterns in the OCR literature. Through the systematic coding and analysis of selected articles, researchers can gain a comprehensive understanding of the current state of knowledge in the field and identify gaps that need further investigation. Another important characteristic of the method is that it is highly replicable, enabling other researchers to replicate the study and validate the results. This enhances the credibility and robustness of the research findings (Palmatier et al., 2018, p. 4).

The SLR methodology employed in this research is based on previous studies conducted by Massaro et al. (2015; 2016a), and Dumay et al. (2016). Following the framework established in these studies, the research follows a ten-step process to ensure a rigorous research process:

1. Creating a research protocol that outlines the methodology and procedures of the SLR.
2. Clearly defining the research questions to guide the research process.
3. Conducting a comprehensive literature search to identify relevant articles for inclusion in SLR.
4. Assessing the impact of the selected articles, considering factors such as overall citations and citations per year.
5. Developing a coding framework to systematically analyze the selected articles and extract relevant information.
6. Ensuring the reliability of the research through an intercoder reliability check.
7. Testing the validity of the research findings by critically examining the selected articles and assessing the robustness of the conclusions.
8. Coding the articles according to the established framework to enable systematic analysis.
9. Conducting a critical analysis of the coded data to identify key themes, trends, and patterns in the literature.
10. Identifying research gaps and making recommendations for future research based on the findings of the SLR.

By following this ten-step process, the research aims to provide a comprehensive and insightful analysis of the OCR literature, contributing to a better understanding of the topic and offering valuable insights relevant for future research.

3.1. Literature Review Protocol

The start of every SLR project involves developing a literature review protocol. This crucial process involves the creation of a detailed plan that provides clear guidelines for the creation of the SLR. As highlighted by Massaro et al. (2016a, p. 772), by following such a protocol, it can be ensured that the study is replicable and transparent, which adds credibility to its findings. The protocol serves as a blueprint for the entire research process, outlining the specific steps and procedures that need to be followed.

1. Protocol

2. Questions

3. Search

4. Impact

5. Framework

6. Reliability

7. Validity

8. Code

9. Insights and critique

10. Future research and questions

Literature review protocol

1. What is the current state of research?
2. What are the primary areas of focus and critique in the existing literature?
3. What are the potential directions for future research?

Research Field

Citation classics

Emerging Field

Single journal

Total citation analysis
Citation per year analysis

Research method

Organizational focus

Jurisdiction

Research focus/topic

Location

Year

Contributions

Author/jurisdiction/ journals

Coder triangulation
Reliability measures

Internal validity

External validity

Construct validity

Code papers

Develop insights

Develop critique

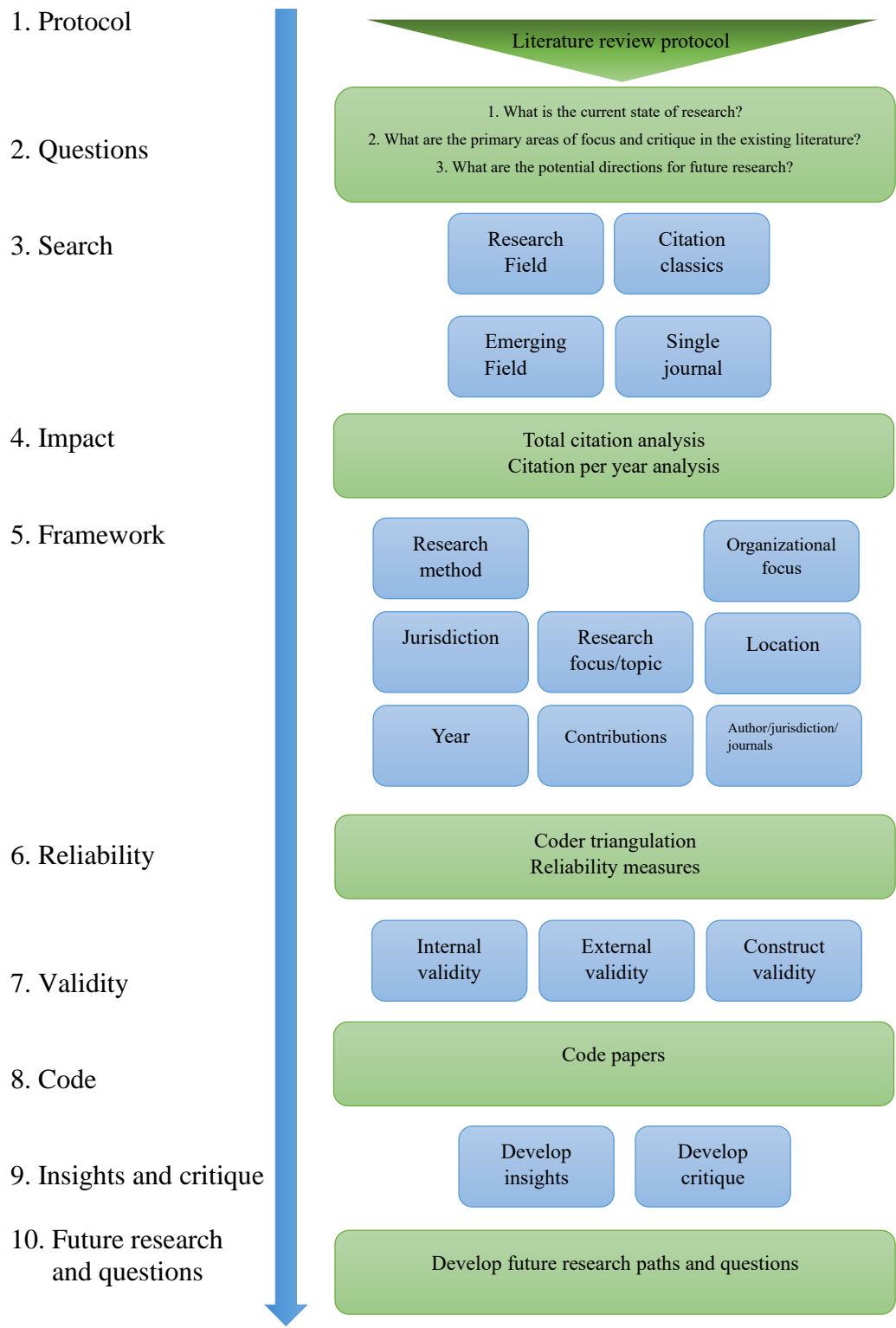Develop future research paths and questions

Figure 1: Literature review protocol (Massaro et al., 2016a, p.773)

In the context of the current research project, a literature review protocol has been developed, replicating the methodology proposed by Massaro et al. (2016a, p. 773). This protocol acts as a roadmap for the SLR, providing a systematic approach to identify, select, and evaluate relevant literature. It outlines the search strategy, inclusion and exclusion criteria, data extraction process, and quality assessment methods. The literature review protocol in the paper ensures consistency and comparability with existing studies. This approach strengthens the validity and reliability of the research findings, as it aligns with established best practices in conducting SLRs.

Figure 1 above illustrates the literature review protocol adopted for this research project. It highlights the various steps involved in the SLR, providing a visual representation of the methodology. This visual aid enhances the understanding and communication of the review process, making it easier for other researchers to follow and replicate.

In summary, the creation of a literature review protocol is a crucial step in conducting a structured literature review. It ensures the replicability of the study and provides clear guidelines for the review process. By adhering to a well-defined protocol, researchers can enhance the credibility and transparency of their research findings.

3.2. Research Questions

Analyzing OCRs using the method of SLR is a process that involves a deep dive into the existing literature in order to understand and evaluate the current state of knowledge on the topic. To get a better understanding and insights and to propose future research directions on OCRs, the following three research questions are formulated:

1. What is the current state of research on the effects of OCRs on customers' decision-making process and purchasing behavior?

2. What are the main areas of focus and critique in the existing literature on the topic?

3. What are the potential directions for future research on the topic?

By asking the first research question, the study aims to understand the existing body of research on OCRs and how they influence customers' decision-making process and purchasing behavior. This question is important because it provides a foundation for the research and allows to examine the current knowledge and understanding in this area. When reviewing existing scholarly literature on the topic, knowledge gaps or inconsistencies can be identified, which can inform future studies and contribute to the advancement of knowledge.

The second research question addresses the primary areas of focus and critique within the existing literature on OCRs. By identifying the specific aspects that have received the most attention, insights into the key factors influencing customers' decision-making and purchasing behavior can be gained. Additionally, examining critique and limitations can help identify gaps in the literature that require further investigation or potential refinements to existing theories and methodologies.

The third research question explores potential directions for future research on the topic. By considering the gaps and limitations in the existing literature, new exploration directions can be proposed. This question is important because it encourages identification of unexplored areas, the proposal of alternative perspectives, and the advancement of theories and methodologies related to OCRs.

By addressing these research questions, the study aims to assess the current state of research, critique the existing literature, and propose potential future directions. Through this comprehensive approach, the paper contributes to the knowledge base in the field of OCRs and their impact on customers' decision-making process and purchasing behavior, ultimately advancing the understanding and further development of this important research area.

3.3. Literature Search

To identify relevant literature for the research, a systematic search strategy and selection criteria are implemented. The search strategy involves the use of specific keywords and the application of inclusion criteria. The search is conducted across three databases: Google Scholar, Science Direct, and ProQuest. The selected articles meet certain criteria to ensure their suitability for the study.

The searched keywords and key phrases are "online consumer reviews" AND "effect" AND "decision-making process" AND "purchasing behavior" in the title, abstract and the body text of the papers. These keywords are selected to target studies specifically related to the impact of OCRs on decision-making and purchasing behavior. To enhance the precision of the search, the key phrases are enclosed in brackets in order to search for the exact phrases "online consumer reviews","decision-making process" and "purchasing behavior" rather than the individual words. This ensures that the search software focuses on finding articles where the specified phrases appear in the title, abstract, or body text, thus refining the search results.

Several inclusion criteria are established to filter the articles and ensure their relevance and quality:

1. The articles have to be written in English, as it is a dominant language in academic research and provides access to a wide range of studies on the topic.
2. Only articles published in Marketing journals listed in the Academic Journal Guide (AJG) 2021 of the Chartered Association of Business Schools (ABS) are considered. This criterion ensures the inclusion of reliable and reputable sources.
3. The articles are published between 2010 and 2021, allowing for an examination of the development of the topic over the past decade and consideration of the most recent research.

Selecting English as the publication language helps ensure that influential and highly cited papers on OCRs are included in the search results, while limiting the search to journals listed in the AJG 2021 adds another layer of quality assurance.

The first step of the search involves compiling a list of all Marketing journals included in the AJG 2021, resulting in a total of 76 journals. In the second step, the keyword search is performed using "Harzing's Publish or Perish" software, specifically targeting the three selected databases. The search results are filtered to include only articles from Marketing journals listed in the AJG 2021 and published between 2010 and 2021.

Table 1 displays the relevant journals, their AJG 2021 ratings, the number of articles per journal, and the percentage of articles in each journal as a proportion of the entire dataset. The overview offers insights into the concentration of research in specific journals.

Table 1: Articles per journal

Journal title	AJG 2021 rating	Number of papers	% of whole dataset
Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics	1	2	1.26%
Australasian Marketing Journal	1	2	1.26%
Electronic Markets	2	7	4.40%
European Journal of Marketing	3	4	2.52%
International Journal of Advertising	2	10	6.29%
International Journal of Consumer Studies	2	2	1.26%
International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising	1	8	5.03%
International Journal of Market Research	2	6	3.77%
International Journal of Research in Marketing	4	5	3.14%
International Journal of Technology Marketing	1	2	1.26%
International Marketing Review	3	3	1.89%
International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research	1	1	0.63%
Journal of Brand Management	2	1	0.63%
Journal of Consumer Behaviour	2	3	1.89%
Journal of Consumer Marketing	1	7	4.40%
Journal of Consumer Psychology	4*	1	0.63%
Journal of Consumer Research	4*	5	3.14%
Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising	1	1	0.63%
Journal of Global Fashion Marketing	1	1	0.63%
Journal of Global Marketing	1	3	1.89%
Journal of Interactive Advertising	1	5	3.14%
Journal of Interactive Marketing	3	10	6.29%
Journal of International Marketing	3	1	0.63%
Journal of Marketing	4*	6	3.77%
Journal of Marketing Analytics	1	2	1.26%
Journal of Marketing Communications	1	7	4.40%
Journal of Marketing Management	2	4	2.52%
Journal of Marketing Research	4*	4	2.52%
Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice	2	4	2.52%
Journal of Public Policy and Marketing	3	3	1.89%
Journal of Retailing	4	3	1.89%
Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	2	12	7.55%
Journal of Services Marketing	2	2	1.26%
Journal of Strategic Marketing	2	1	0.63%
Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science	4*	6	3.77%
Marketing Intelligence and Planning	1	4	2.52%
Marketing Letters	3	1	0.63%
Psychology and Marketing	3	3	1.89%
Qualitative Market Research	2	2	1.26%
Recherche et Applications en Marketing	1	1	0.63%
Services Marketing Quarterly	1	1	0.63%
Journal of Product and Brand Management	1	3	1.89%
Total		159	100.00%

Out of the 76 Marketing journals listed in the AJG 2021, 42 journals contain articles that meet the specified criteria to be included in the research. The top five journals with the most relevant articles

are the International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising (14 articles), Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services (12 articles), International Journal of Advertising (10 articles), Journal of Interactive Marketing (10 articles), and Electronic Markets (9 articles).

The search results are exported from the databases and imported into Microsoft Excel, where they were merged into a standardized table. Initially, 432 articles are identified, but after removing duplicates, 322 articles remain. Given the substantial number of articles, a two-phase screening process based on titles and abstracts is conducted to identify the most relevant articles. This results in the selection of 159 articles for inclusion in the SLR.

3.4. Article Impact

In this step of the SLR, the impact of the identified 159 articles published in the period between 2010 and 2021 is evaluated based on two rankings: overall number of citations and number of citations per year (CPY). Evaluating the impact of articles is essential in determining their significance and influence within the academic community.

To gather citation data, the software "Harzing's Publish or Perish", which retrieves information from Google Scholar, is used. Massaro et al. (2016a, p. 781) confirm that Google Scholar is a reliable source for citation data. The articles are categorized into two separate tables: the top ten articles based on overall citations and the top ten articles based on CPY. This categorization allows for a comprehensive understanding of the articles that have received significant attention and citations over time, as well as those that have garnered increasing interest in recent years. The data retrieval process was conducted on 5 April 2023.

Table 2: Top 10 articles by overall citations

	Reference	Article	Google Scholar total citations
1	Zhu and Zhang (2010)	Impact of online consumer reviews on sales: The moderating role of product and consumer characteristics	3077
2	Reza Jalilvand and Samiei (2012)	The effect of electronic word of mouth on brand image and purchase intention: An empirical study in the automobile industry in Iran	1502
3	King, Racherla and Bush (2014)	What we know and don't know about online word-of-mouth: A review and synthesis of the literature	1376
4	Pan and Zhang (2011)	Born unequal: a study of the helpfulness of user-generated product reviews	724
5	Bambauer-Sachse and Mangold (2011)	Brand equity dilution through negative online word-of-mouth communication	702
6	Floyd, Freling, Alhoqail, Cho and Freling (2014)	How online product reviews affect retail sales: A meta-analysis	692
7	Wu and Wang (2011)	The influences of electronic word-of-mouth message appeal and message source credibility on brand attitude	649
8	Ho-Dac, Carson and Moore (2013)	The effects of positive and negative online customer reviews: do brand strength and category maturity matter?	565
9	You, Vadakkepatt and Joshi (2015)	A meta-analysis of electronic word-of-mouth elasticity	543
10	Chan and Ngai (2015)	Conceptualising electronic word of mouth activity: An input-process-output perspective	479

Table 3: Top 10 articles by CPY

	Reference	Article	Google Scholar CPY
1	Zhu and Zhang (2010)	Impact of online consumer reviews on sales: The moderating role of product and consumer characteristics	236.69
2	Tata, Prashar and Gupta (2020)	An examination of the role of review valence and review source in varying consumption contexts on purchase decision	152.89
3	Chen and Huang (2013)	An investigation into online reviewers' behavior	136.55
4	Babić Rosario, De Valck and Sotgiu (2020)	Conceptualizing the electronic word-of-mouth process: What we know and need to know about eWOM creation, exposure, and evaluation	87
5	Srivastava and Kalro (2019)	Enhancing the helpfulness of online consumer reviews: the role of latent (content) factors	79
6	Feng and Papatla (2011)	Advertising: stimulant or suppressant of online word of mouth?	78.6
7	Murtiasih, Sucherly and Siringoringo (2014)	Impact of country of origin and word of mouth on brand equity	76.89
8	You, Vadakkepatt and Joshi (2015)	A meta-analysis of electronic word-of-mouth elasticity	67.88
9	Reza Jalilvand and Samiei (2012)	The effect of electronic word of mouth on brand image and purchase intention: An empirical study in the automobile industry in Iran	60.33
10	Ahani, Nilashi and Yadegaridehkordi (2019)	Revealing customers' satisfaction and preferences through online review analysis: The case of Canary Islands hotels	59

Table 2 presents the top ten articles based on overall citations, while Table 3 displays the top ten articles based on CPY. The number of total citations refers to all citations an article has been cited since its publication, while CPY reflects how often other scholars and researchers reference a particular study on average per year, indicating its relevance and value within the academic community.

When assessing the articles' impact based on the total number of citations, it is crucial to consider that older articles generally accumulate more citations over time, as emphasized by Massaro et al. (2016a, p. 782). An increasing number of citations per year suggests growing research interest and recognition. When more researchers reference a study over time, it signifies that the study holds significance and contributes to the advancement of the field. This growing interest and recognition within the academic community can be an indication of the research's impact. Dumay et al. (2019, p. 170) support this notion and emphasize the value of tracking the number of citations per year.

Table 2 and Table 3 reveal that approximately one third of the articles appear in both rankings. Table 2 predominantly consists of articles published in 2015 or earlier, highlighting the significant influence of these studies based on their accumulated total number of citations. In contrast, Table 3, which represents CPY, includes newer articles, indicating a growing interest in the latest research OCRs. Notably, the articles by Tata et al. (2020), Babić Rosario et al. (2020), Srivastava and Kalro (2019), and Ahani et al. (2019), published relatively recently, in 2019 and 2020, are part of the top ten most-cited articles based on CPY. This suggests a surge in academic interest in OCRs as a field of marketing research.

In summary, evaluating the impact of articles through rankings based on overall citations and CPY is a vital step in the SLR process. The rankings provide insights into the significance, influence, and evolving research interest in the field of OCRs, ultimately contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the research landscape.

3.5. Analytical Framework

The use of an analytical framework is of utmost importance in SLRs as it offers researchers a systematic and transparent methodology for analyzing research literature (Massaro et al., 2015, p. 783). It typically includes a set of categories and variables that are relevant to the research topic

and questions, and is used as a guideline for the process data extraction, categorisation and analysis. By implementing such a framework, researchers are able to discern patterns, relationships, and gaps within the existing body of knowledge. The framework's ability to establish a clear structure ensures consistency and objectivity throughout the review process. Furthermore, it empowers researchers to draw substantial conclusions, generate insights, and make significant contributions to the advancement of knowledge within their respective fields.

The analytical framework used in the study, displayed on Table 4, is based on similar ones developed by Massaro et al. (2015, p. 535; 2016b, p.262). The goal is to adopt a systematic approach to extract relevant information from previous studies. To better understand key topics, trends, and research gaps within the area of study, the analytical framework used in the study is created after coding five random articles of the 159 articles that are selected to be included in the dataset. The result is an analytical framework consisting of five categories depicted on Table 4.

Table 4: Analytical framework

A Research method			B Location		
A1	Quantitative	125	B1	North America	52
A2	Qualitative	24	B2	Europe	40
A3	Mixed	10	B3	Asia	30
	Total	159	B4	Not specified	27
			B5	Australia and New Zealand	8
			B6	Africa	1
			B7	South America	1
				Total	159

C Research focus			D Publication time period		
C1	Review perception & helpfulness	68	D1	2019-2021	64
C2	Other	44	D2	2016-2018	45
C3	Purchasing behavior	25	D3	2013-2015	28
C4	Source credibility	8	D4	2010-2012	22
C5	Decision-making	7		Total	159
C6	Consumer satisfaction	7			
	Total	159			

E Industry		
E1	Online retail - general	124
E2	Tourism & Hospitality	13
E3	Other	10
E4	Entertainment	5
E5	Beauty & Fashion	4
E6	Electronics	3
	Total	159

1. Research method

The first category refers to the implemented research method. A list of 3 different research methods is used to classify the articles, addressing the challenge of studies using different research methods and the generalizability and validity of their findings.

2. Location

The second category is focused on location, where articles are categorized based on the research location. This aspect of the coding framework seeks to facilitate the comprehension of how literature contributes to knowledge advancement in different continents and regions. It sheds light on the geographical distribution of research, highlighting regions with significant research activity and those with comparatively less.

3. Research focus

The third category is the focus of the research, which enables the identification of specific areas of interest for scholars, discovering new research opportunities, and understanding scientific dialogue.

4. Publication Time Period

The fourth category pertains to the year of publication. Categorizing the articles into one of four 3-year time periods based on their publication year enables the identification of distinct time periods characterized by varying levels of research activity

5. Industry

In this category, the researched industries are grouped into 6 attributes. This analysis helps identify underinvestigated areas and differences with respect to specific industries.

In summary, the coding framework utilized in the study draws on previous research frameworks and encompasses five categories, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of the characteristics of the articles. Each of the five categories is analyzed separately in detail in Chapter 3.9.

3.6. Reliability

According to Massaro et al. (2016a, p. 785), establishing reliability measures is crucial to ensure the trustworthiness and accuracy of the coding process in an SLR. Such measures help identify and minimize any potential distortion or bias in the selected data. In content analysis, Krippendorff's alpha is considered the most reliable method for assessing reliability (Massaro et al., 2016a, p. 785). Krippendorff's alpha is a statistical measure that can be applied irrespective of the number of observers, levels of measurement, sample sizes, or missing data (Krippendorff, 2013, p. 325). It provides a comprehensive assessment of intercoder agreement, allowing researchers to evaluate the consistency and reliability of the coding process. Massaro et al. (2016a, p. 785) suggest that variables with reliabilities exceeding 0.800 should be considered highly reliable, while variables with reliabilities ranging from 0.667 to 0.800 can be conditionally used to draw conclusions.

By employing reliability measures such as Krippendorff's alpha and utilizing software like NVivo, a software commonly used for qualitative data analysis, the rigor and credibility of the SLR can be enhanced. According to Massaro et al. (2016a, p. 785) and Krippendorff (2013, p. 325), these measures provide a systematic and standardized approach to the coding and analysis of the selected articles, minimizing the potential for errors, biases, and inconsistencies. The reliability assessment helps establish confidence in the findings and strengthens the overall quality of the research process.

The coding process in the study is conducted as follows:
The selected 159 articles are downloaded in Portable Document Format (PDF) and imported into the software NVivo. The latest version of NVivo available at the time of conducting the study is utilized to code the papers in accordance with the established analytical framework. Subsequently, the articles in PDF format and the NVivo file with the predefined categories are shared with a second researcher who codes them again independently. By doing this, the consistency and agreement between the coders can be assessed using a reliability measure (Massaro et al., 2016a, p. 785).

In order to prepare the data for the calculation of Krippendorff's alpha, the results of the two codings are exported from NVivo into a Microsoft Excel worksheet and the document is formatted according to the requirements of the the tool ReCal2 - an online tool designed to assess intercoder

reliability for nominal data that has been coded by two researchers. The worksheet is formatted so that each attribute in each category is represented by a numeric value, each row represents an article and the two coders' results are in a different column for each category. The file is saved in Comma-separated values (CSV) format. The CSV file is then imported into ReCal 2 and the calculation of Krippendorff's alpha is carried out. The results of the calculation are depicted in Table 5.

Table 5: Krippendorff's alpha

Category	Percent Agreement	Krippendorff's alpha	N Agreements	N Disagreements	N Cases	N Decisions
A Research Method	98,11	0,947	156	3	159	318
B Location	100	1	159	0	159	318
C Research Focus	97,48	0,965	155	4	159	318
D Publication Time Period	100	1	159	0	159	318
E Industry	99,37	0,983	158	1	159	318

For the first category, Research method, a Krippendorff's alpha value of 0,947 is obtained, indicating a sufficient level of agreement. This suggests some variations in interpretation when identifying and categorizing the research methods used in the articles, but the overall reliability remains high.

The second category, Location, achieves a perfect agreement with a Krippendorff's alpha value of 1. This indicates a consensus among the coders regarding how the articles' geographical information is categorized, ensuring high reliability in this aspect.

The third category, Research focus, obtaines a Krippendorff's alpha value of 0,965, indicating a good but slightly lower agreement. This suggests some minor differences in interpreting the focus areas of the literature. However, the reliability is high enough to be able to draw conclusions based on the information in this category.

In the fourth category, Publication time period, a Krippendorff's alpha value of 1 is achieved, indicating the highest possible level of agreement in identifying the publication year and categorizing it into one of the four 3-year time periods in the analytical framework.

In the sixth category, Industry, the Krippendorff's alpha score of 0,983 indicates a high level of agreement with minor differences. The value suggests that there might be some small differences in how the different industries have been interpreted.

In summary, all the categories achieve results higher than the threshold of 0.8, ensuring the credibility and trustworthiness of the coding process. Each category exhibits high reliability, as indicated by the Krippendorff's alpha values very close to 1 or 1. Even in the categories that do not demonstrate a perfect agreement between the coders, there are only minor differences in interpretation, maintaining a very high overall reliability.

3.7. Validity

To ensure the precision and accuracy of the study's findings, validity tests are conducted to verify the robustness of the results. Massaro et al. (2016a, p. 785) identify three types of validity commonly recognized within academic literature: internal validity, external validity, and construct validity. In this study, tests are conducted to assess all three types of validity.

External validity refers to the generalizability of the study's results to a broader population or context (White and McBurney, 2012, p. 145). However, it is crucial to avoid drawing premature conclusions based on initial evidence that may appear interesting (Silverman, 2021, p. 440). To ensure external validity, a rigorous selection process is employed. As mentioned in the Chapter 3.3., only journals listed in the AJG 2021 ranking, which represents internationally recognized source quality, are included in the study.

In order to enhance the internal validity of the study, the appropriate starting and ending points for the research are considered (Yin, 2014, p. 145). It is crucial to recognize that the available data points may only represent a segment of a broader trend. In the case of SLRs, it is essential to define a clear timeframe for the analysis, including the rationale for selecting the start and end points. As discussed in Chapter 3.3., the selected timeframe for this study spans from 2010 to 2021. This deliberate selection enables an exploration of the topic's evolution over the past decade and allows for an examination of the most up-to-date research in this rapidly evolving field.

An evaluation of construct validity is performed by assessing the impact and significance of the 159 articles in the dataset in Chapter 3.4. In accordance with Massaro et al. (2016a, p. 786), an

examination of total citations and CPY is undertaken. By conducting this step, the reliability and importance of the sources used in the research are ensured.

By conducting assessments of external, internal and construct validity, this study ensures the rigor and reliability of its findings. The careful selection of journals, consideration of impact measures, defining a specific timeframe and analyzing the articles' citation numbers contribute to the generalizability and accuracy of the study's results.

3.8. Article Coding

According to Massaro et al. (2016a, p. 787), researchers have the option to use either computer-aided or manual coding when conducting an SLR. They highlight that manual coding allows for a deeper understanding of the data, but it is not as efficient as computer-aided coding in terms of time and effort. Hayes and Krippendorff (2007, p. 77) emphasize that SLRs involve subjective coding, as they rely on human judgment during the analysis of selected articles. Due to the inherent subjectivity, it is crucial to have clearly defined categories for content analysis (Lakshman, 2012, p. 482). This ensures consistency and reliability in the coding process.

In the study, the software NVivo is utilized to code the selected 159 papers, as mentioned in previous chapters. The software provides researchers with a systematic and organized approach to coding and analyzing qualitative data. By using NVivo, researchers can manage large amounts of textual data and easily identify patterns and themes within the literature

To ensure the reliability of the coding process, the selected articles are coded by two coders. This approach aligns with the recommendation of conducting double coding to enhance the accuracy and consistency of the analysis (Massaro et al., 2016a, p. 787). By conducting a second independent coding, any discrepancies or inconsistencies in the initial coding can be identified and resolved, resulting in more reliable and trustworthy findings.

Overall, the combination of using NVivo for coding and conducting two independent codings by two researchers enhances the rigor and reliability of the content analysis in this SLR. It allows for a comprehensive examination of the selected articles while minimizing biases and ensuring consistency in the interpretation and categorization of the data.

3.9. Insights and Critique

To gain deeper insights and provide a comprehensive critique of the selected literature, the results of the study are tabulated and subjected to statistical descriptions. This approach facilitates a systematic examination of the primary topics, emerging trends, and research gaps within the OCR literature. By employing statistical techniques, the study aims to uncover underlying patterns, variations, and associations, enabling a deeper understanding of the research landscape.

As suggested by Massaro et al. (2016a, p. 788), the development of insightful and innovative analyses relies on posing specific questions that probe the structure of knowledge and the historical development of the topic. By doing so, the study seeks to go beyond a surface-level exploration of the literature and instead aims to identify gaps in existing research and propose directions for future investigation. This approach aligns with the goal of the SLR methodology, which is not merely to provide a comprehensive summary of all knowledge on a subject, but to address specific research questions (Petticrew and Roberts, 2008, p. 354).

In this section, the primary objective is to answer the first and second research questions posed in the study:

1. What is the current state of research on the effects of OCRs on customers' decision-making process and purchasing behavior?

2. What are the main areas of focus and critique in the existing literature on the topic?

By carefully examining the literature, the focus is on determining the key areas of emphasis in previous research regarding the effects of OCRs on customers' decision-making process and purchasing behavior. Additionally, critical areas of focus and critique within the existing literature are identified, shedding light on potential limitations and areas for improvement. Lastly, by synthesizing the findings and analyzing the identified gaps and limitations, the study aims to propose potential directions for future research on the topic, thereby contributing to the advancement of knowledge in the field.

Through the systematic organization and methodical approach employed in this literature review, a comprehensive understanding of the existing research landscape is achieved. By answering the

research questions and highlighting the primary areas of focus, critique, and potential directions for future research, the paper aims to make a meaningful contribution to the field of OCR research.

3.9.1. Research Method

In this chapter, an in-depth exploration is undertaken to analyze the research methods utilized in the selected 159 studies. The category focuses on the implemented research method, employing a list of three distinct research methods to which the articles are classified. This categorization is essential in addressing the challenge posed by studies employing different research methods and assessing the generalizability and validity of their findings. Through this examination, the chapter aims to offer an understanding of the diverse research methods employed, revealing insights into their strengths, limitations, and implications for the overall quality of the evidence presented. Figure 2 provides a visual representation of the research methods employed in the 159 articles.
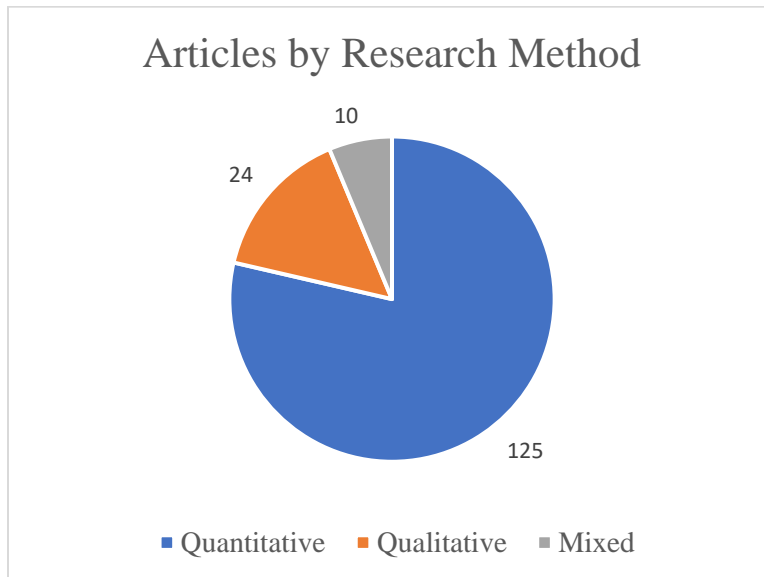

Figure 2: Articles by research method

Quantitative approaches emerge as the most commonly employed research method, with 125 articles (Zhu and Zhang, 2010; Tata et al., 2020; Babić Rosario et al., 2020; You et al., 2015; Reza

Jalilvand and Samiei; 2012), constituting approximately 79% of the total sample. This finding underscores the widespread utilization of quantitative methodologies in OCR research. These methods are valued for their ability to generate numerical data, allowing researchers to apply statistical analyses and draw objective conclusions. The prevalence of quantitative approaches in the selected literature suggests a strong emphasis on empirically examining the effects of OCRs on customers' decision-making process and purchasing behavior.

Following quantitative methods, qualitative methods are the second most prevalent research approach, accounting for 24 papers (Pan and Zhang, 2011; Moore, 2015; Ngarmwongnoi et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2018; Nunan et al., 2019) or 15% of the sample. According to Aspers and Corte (2019, p. 151), qualitative approaches are highly valued in research as they allow for controlled manipulation of variables and provide insights into cause-and-effect relationships. The significant presence of experimental studies in the literature reflects researchers' interest in investigating the causal effects of OCRs on customers' behavior and perceptions. By designing and implementing controlled qualitative research methods, researchers can draw valid conclusons about the impact of OCRs on consumers and assess the effectiveness of different interventions or strategies.

In addition to quantitative and qualitative methods, 10 papers (Wu and Wang, 2011; Leong et al., 2021; O'Reilly and Marx, 2011; O'Cass and Carlson, 2012; Eslami and Ghasemaghaei, 2018) or 6% of the dataset employ mixed-method approaches, combining both qualitative and quantitative elements and offering a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

The utilization of different research methods reflects the diverse approaches employed by scholars in exploring the effects of OCRs on customers' decision-making process and purchasing behavior. This methodological diversity contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon from various angles, allowing for a more nuanced interpretation of the findings.

By presenting an overview of the primary research methods employed in the selected literature, Figure 2 provides valuable insights into the methodological landscape of OCR research. The prevalence of quantitative methods signifies the empirical nature of the field, while the occasinal inclusion of qualitative and mixed methods approaches highlights the importance of capturing the richness and complexity of customers' experiences and behaviors in relation to OCRs. However, it is also important to mention that the utilized research method have changed across the four 3-year periods defined in the research. This reveals different patterns and trends, which are depicted
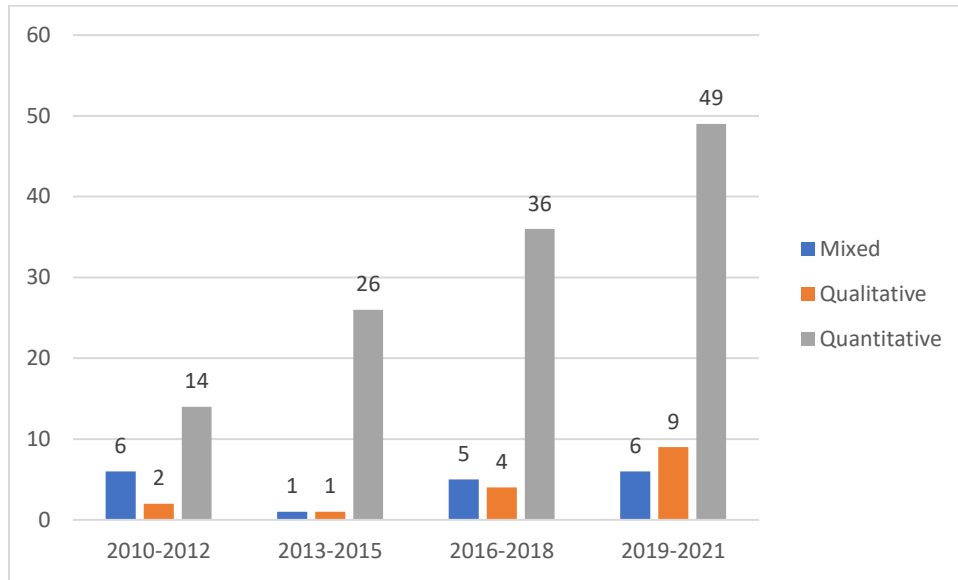
on Figure 3.

Figure 3: Research methods per time period

Over the years, OCR research has predominantly relied on quantitative methods across all four time periods. However, there has been a noticeable increase in the use of qualitative methods in the most recent period (2019-2021). Mixed methods have generally remained consistent. This historical evolution in terms of research methods indicates a growing interest in understanding qualitative aspects of OCRs such as consumer opinions, perceptions and motivations.

3.9.2. Location

This chapter analyzes in detail the second category in the analytical framework, which focuses on the countries of research in the 159 articles. This categorization serves to enhance the understanding of the literature's contributions to knowledge advancement in various regions. The analysis of continents and countries of research sheds light on the geographical distribution of research activities in the area of OCRs, revealing regions characterized by significant engagement and those with comparatively less. The chapter aims to unravel the diverse landscape of research locations, contributing to a comprehensive exploration of global dynamics influencing knowledge dissemination and development in the field.

The analysis of geographical location within the selected literature shown on Figure 4 provides valuable insights into the distribution of research on OCRs across different regions. It reveals that North America has been the most studied region, with 52 papers (Zhu and Zhang, 2010; Babić Rosario et al., 2020; You et al., 2015; Langan et al., 2017; Pan and Zhang, 2011) accounting for approximately 33% of the total number of papers examined in the study.
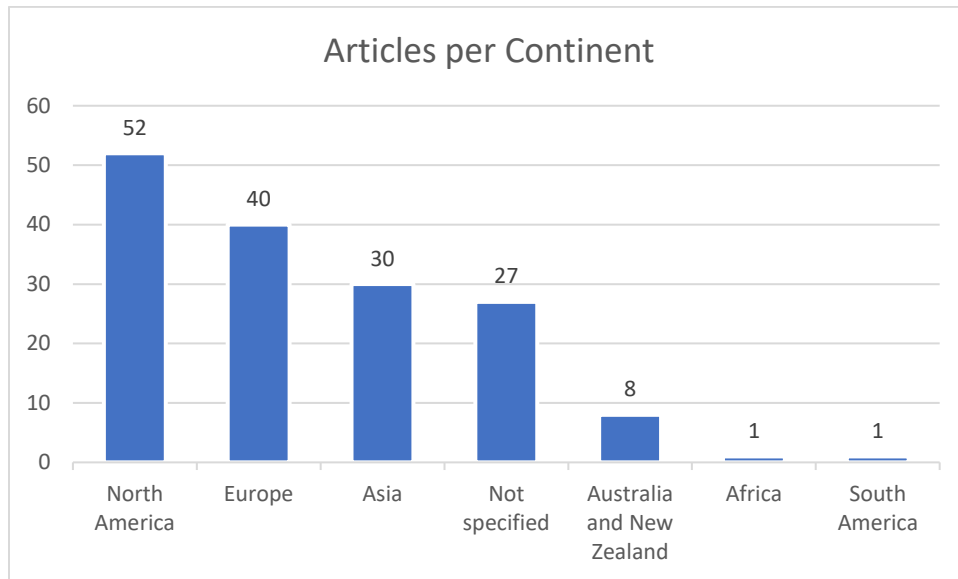

Figure 4: Articles per continent

Further examination of individual countries within North America highlights the dominance of the United States of America (USA) as the most analyzed country, with 50 papers representing approximately 31% of the dataset. This finding can be attributed to the significant role the USA play in the global economy (Statista, 2022), as well as the presence of renowned academic institutions and research centers in the country (Statista, 2023). This emphasis on North America can also be attributed to the USA's status as a leading market for various industries and its significant influence on consumer behavior. On the other hand, Canada accounts for only 2 articles (Eslami and Ghasemaghaei, 2018; Kim et al., 2021), constituting approximately 1% of the entire dataset. This disparity in research representation between the two countries may be not only a result of the USA's economy and the country's academic research intensity, but also due to variations in the availability of data, research funding, or specific industry dynamics.

Europe emerges as the second most studied region, with 40 articles (Duarte et al., 2018; Purnawirawan et al., 2012; Schindler and Bickart, 2012; Marchand et al., 2017; Wu, 2013) accounting for around 25% of all papers. Within Europe, several countries stand out as the primary with a higher number of published articles. The United Kingdom leads with 14 articles (Schindler and Bickart, 2012; Marchand et al., 2017; Wu, 2013; Ngarmwongnoi et al., 2020; Dai et al., 2020), followed by Germany with 8 articles (Furner and Zinko, 2017; Mafael, 2019; Lis and Fischer, 2020; Buttle and Groeger, 2017; Cox and Kaimann, 2015), the Netherlands with 4 articles (Maslowska et al., 2017; Park and Jeon, 2018; Risselada et al., 2018; Situmeang et al., 2020), and both Portugal and Switzerland with 4 (Duarte et al., 2018; Barreto, 2014; Babić Rosario et al., 2021) and 3 articles (Bae and Lee, 2011; Wan, 2015; Bambauer-Sachse and Mangold, 2011), respectively. These countries likely garner attention due to their strong economic presence, diverse consumer markets, and established research communities.

Moving beyond North America and Europe, Asia emerges as the third most studied continent with 30 articles (Tata et al., 2020; Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012; Wu and Wang, 2011; Kim et al., 2021; Kronrod and Danziger, 2013) reflecting the growing interest in understanding the dynamics of OCRs in this diverse and economically significant region. However, it should be noted that the number of papers related to Asia is comparatively lower than North America and Europe.

Australia shows a relatively low number of research articles on OCR, with only 8 papers investigating the topic (Ahani et al., 2019; O'Cass and Carlsom, 2012; Zinko et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2020; Yu et al., 2019). Lastly, Africa and South America have the lowest number of papers, with only 1 paper each (Duh, 2021; López and Sicilia, 2014), indicating a very limited research focus on these regions within the context of OCRs.

It is important to mention that the location was not specified in 27 articles (Ho-Dac et al., 2013; Liu et al., 2019; Moore, 2015; Rocklage and Fazio, 2020; He and Bond, 2015), accounting for approximately 17% of all papers. This lack of specificity may be due to various factors such as the nature of the research or limitations in data reporting. It highlights the importance of ensuring accurate and complete reporting of location information in future research studies to facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of the global landscape of OCR research.

By analyzing the distribution of research across different geographical regions, the study provides valuable insights into the regional focus of OCR literature. Understanding these patterns can

contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the global context and help identify potential gaps or areas for further investigation. Geographically, OCR research has been conducted on a global scale, with contributions from various regions. In conclusion, North America has consistently been the most significant contributor, with a total of 52 articles across all time periods. Europe also plays a substantial role, especially during the 2016-2018 period. Asia has recently emerged as a prominent player, with 16 articles in the most recent time period (2019-2021). This global distribution underscores the worldwide relevance of OCR research and its implications for businesses engaged in e-commerce across the globe.

3.9.3. Research Focus

By systematically examining and categorizing the research topics present in the dataset, the study provides an overview of the prevailing areas of investigation within the field of OCRs. The diverse range of topics explored underscores the multidimensional nature of OCRs and highlights the diversity of research paths available for further exploration. Furthermore, this category helps explore the focus of the articles published in the most recent time period (2019-2021) and thus provide an answer to the study's first research question, which refers to the current stage of knowlende on OCRs.
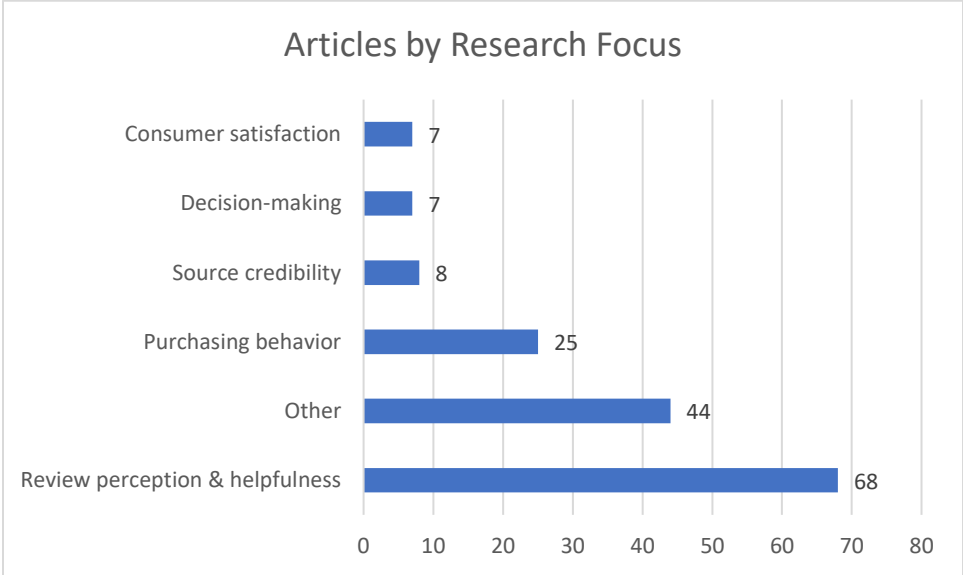

Figure 5: Articles by research focus

Figure 5 presents a comprehensive overview of the distribution of topics explored in the selected literature. It is evident that the papers cover a wide range of topics, indicating a diverse research landscape in the field of OCRs

The most prominent topic that emerges from the analysis is the examination of customers' perception of OCRs and their helpfulness, specifically investigating how different OCR characteristics and environments impact their evaluation and interpretation. This topic is investigated in 68 articles (You et al., 2015; Langan et al., 2017; Ho-Dac et al., 2013; Pan and Zhang, 2013; Purnawirawan, 2012), accounting for around 43% of the sample. By examining the factors that influence customers' review perception, researchers aim to shed light on the cognitive and psychological processes involved in the consumption of online reviews. This knowledge can assist businesses in understanding how to effectively manage and leverage OCRs to enhance their brand reputation and attract customers. The fact that such a notable proportion of papers addresses review helpfulness indicates its relevance in the context of OCRs. This reflects the research community's recognition of the importance of understanding the factors that contribute to the perceived helpfulness and usefulness of online reviews.

The second most explored topic is customers' purchasing behavior as an effect of OCRs. A total of 25 papers (Tata et al., 2020; Reza Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012; Liu et al., 2019; Grewal and Stephen, 2019; Ngarmwongnoi et al., 2020), constituting approximately 16% of the dataset, delve into this topic. This focus on customers' purchasing behavior highlights the significance of OCRs in influencing customers' actions in the online marketplace. Researches in this area aim to uncover the underlying factors and mechanisms through which OCRs shape customers' behaviors, providing valuable insights for businesses and marketers seeking to optimize their strategies.

Source credibility is another notable aspect of the analysis, with 8 articles (Wu and Wang, 2011; Carr and Hayes, 2014; O'Reilly and Marx, 2011; Hong and Pittman, 2020; Pihlaja eet al., 2017) dedicated to this topic, making up about 5% of the dataset. These studies delve into the trustworthiness and reliability of the sources providing online reviews. Examining the credibility of sources is crucial for both consumers and businesses because consumers often rely on reviews to make informed decisions (Paul Arunkumar et al. 2023, p. 31). Researches in this area investigate factors such as reviewer expertise, reviewer and platform reputation, review content and the overall quality of reviews.

Decision-making, a topic explored in 7 articles (Ahani et al., 2019; Duarte et al., 2018; Kuo and Nakhata, 2019; Situmeang et al., 2020; Luong et al., 2021), comprising approximately 4% of the dataset, is another essential area of research in the field of OCRs. These studies aim to uncover how OCRs, and more specifically how the volume, tone, and content of reviews influence impact consumers' decision-making process and choices. Such insights can be valuable for businesses looking to optimize their product or service offerings, as well as their marketing strategies, to align with consumers' preferences and decision-making patterns.

Consumer satisfaction is another significant topic within the dataset, addressed in 7 articles (López and Sicilia, 2014; Jin et al., 2014; Lee et al., 2020; O'Reilly et al., 2018; Ahmad and Guzmán,, 2021a), accounting for around 4% of the sample. These studies delve into the post-purchase experience and examine how online reviews affect consumer satisfaction levels. The papers concentrated on this topic explore factors such as the role of reviews in setting customer expectations, how reviews impact post-purchase evaluations, and the relationship between online reviews and consumer satisfcaction in general. Understanding these relationships in the context of OCRs is crucial for businesses aiming to enhance customer loyalty and retention.

Lastly, the category Other, represented by 44 articles (Zhu and Zhang, 2010; Babić Rosario et al., 2020; Marchand et al., 2017; Moon et al., 2021; Hajli et al., 2014), comprises a substantial portion of the dataset, making up about 28% of the sample. This category encompasses a wide range of research topics that do not fit into the previously mentioned categories. These studies explore issues such as the ethical implications of online reviews, the role of emotions in reviewing behavior, the effects of negative reviews, fake reviews, comparissons between online and offline WOM and more. The diversity within this category highlights the multidimensional nature of OCR research and showcases the diversity of interests within the field. It reflects the dynamics of the digital age and the evolving landscape of online consumer interactions.

The diversity of research topics observed in the dataset is noteworthy, as it signifies a broad range of interests within the field of OCRs. From source credibility to decision-making, consumer satisfaction, and the variety of other subjects explored, it is evident that OCR research has far-reaching implications for businesses, consumers, and the digital ecosystem as a whole. The evolution of research focus within OCR studies reveals interesting patterns. Review perception and helpfulness have consistently been a primary area of interest across all time periods. This focus

suggests a lasting interest in understanding how consumers perceive and utilize online reviews. Purchasing behavior has also gained significant attention, with 25 articles across the four time periods, reflecting the importance of OCRs in shaping consumer choices. Additionally, consumer satisfaction, decision-making, and source credibility have been explored over the years, indicating a broadening scope of research. Decision-making, in particular, gained prominence in the 2016-2018 and 2019-2021 periods, suggesting a growing interest in deciphering the role of OCRs in consumer choices.

Narrowing the analysis to the articles from the most recent time period (2019-2021) that specifically focus on purchasing behavior and the decision-making process, deeper insights into the current state of research regarding how OCRs influence customers' decision-making process and purchasing behavior can be gained and thus the first research question referring to the current state of knowledge on OCRs can be answered.

Kaur and Singh (2020) and Grewal and Stephen (2019) shed light on the motivations of consumers in respect of writing and utilizing online reviews. Leymre and Kim identify seven key drivers of online review writing, while Grewal and Stephen emphasize that the perceived effort required to write online reviews can enhance their credibility. These motivations, in turn, indirectly affect the influence of reviews on consumers' purchasing behavior.

Expanding on this, Tata et al. (2020) examine how the valence and source of reviews affect customer attitudes and purchase decisions. Their research highlights the critical role that review content and context play in shaping consumer choices. Similarly, Dai et al. (2019) underline that consumers rely less on reviews for experimental purchases, indicating that purchasing behavior varies based on context. These findings collectively underscore the pivotal role of review content and context in influencing purchasing decisions.

Visual content also plays a significant role in shaping customers' purchasing behavior. Zinko et al. (2019) stand out for their exploration of how images enhance trust and purchase intent in online reviews. They suggest that visual content, particularly in cases where textual information is lacking or overwhelming, can directly impact purchasing behavior.

Additionally, Rosário and Loureiro (2021) draw attention to platform-specific strategies for eWOM. Their research compares the effectiveness of eWOM across various social media

platforms, revealing variations in efficacy. This highlights that the choice of platform can significantly impact the effectiveness of eWOM in influencing consumer purchasing decisions. Different platforms may elicit varying responses from consumers, thereby affecting purchasing behavior.

Information characteristics are another critical aspect to consider. Roy et al. (2021) investigate how online review valence and the nature of the reviewed product interact to affect purchase intentions. This aligns with Leong et al. (2021), who emphasize the importance of information quality, credibility, and relevance in shaping purchase intentions. These information characteristics have a direct impact on how eWOM influences purchasing behavior.

Lastly, Kuo and Nakhata (2019) examine the impact of eWOM on the consumer-retailer relationship through the lens of consumer satisfaction. Their study reveals that exposure to positive or negative eWOM directly influences the decision-making process, as consumers often anchor their choices based on eWOM, simplifying the decision-making process.

In summary, these articles represent the state of OCR research in the most recent time period 2019-2021 and collectively provide insights into the interconnected aspects of consumer behavior in the context of online reviews, particularly their effects on purchasing behavior and decision-making process. They reveal the significance of motivations, review content and context, visual content, platform choices and information characteristics in shaping how eWOM influences consumer purchasing decisions.

3.9.4. Publication Time Period

This chapter focuses on the analysis of the fourth category related to the year of publication of the articles included in the study. Articles are sorted into one of four 3-year time periods based on their publication year, allowing to identify distinct time frames characterized by different levels of research activity.

This chapter is particularly important as it enables a deeper exploration of the characteristics of articles across different time periods. Categorizing the papers by their publication years helps reveal insights into how the research landscape has changed over time, allowing the identification of trends and patterns associated with each period.This temporal analysis goes beyond a simple

chronological sequence and is crucial for understanding the broader research context, laying the groundwork for future investigations and contributing to a more informed discussion on the scope of research on OCRs.

As mentioned in previous chapters, the literature research identified 159 relevant articles, with 109 or 69% of them published after 2015. Figure 5 shows an increasing trend in the number of publications per year from 2010 to 2021 in four 3-year time periods: 2010-2012, 2013-2015, 2016-2018 and 2019-2021. The data are presented in a line chart format, where each point on the line represents a specific time period and its corresponding number of publications and the dotted line shows the trend.
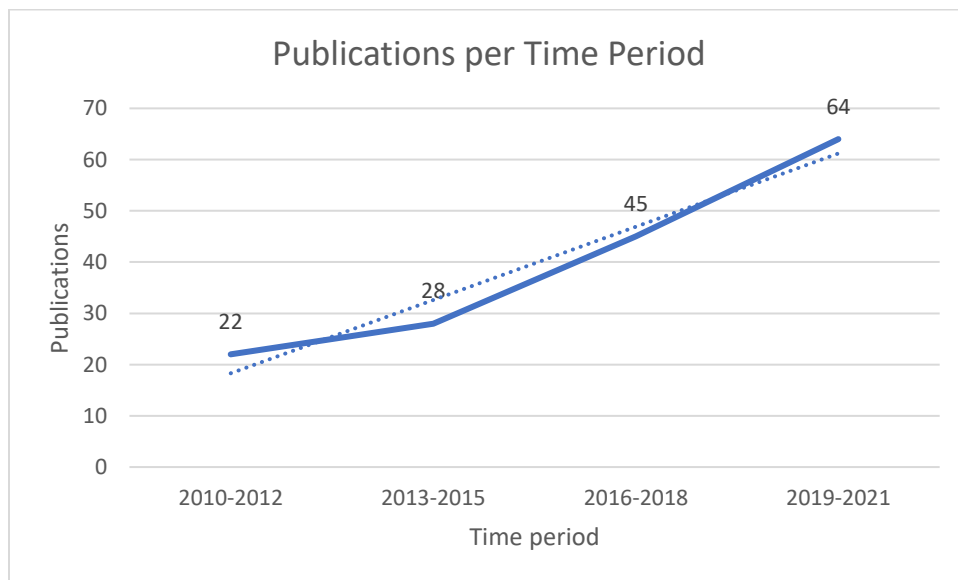

Figure 6: Publications per time period

The chart starts with the time period 2010-2012 with 22 publications (Zhu and Zhang, 2010; Reza Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012; Pan and Zhang, 2011; Purnawirawan et al., 2012; Wu and Wang, 2011). Moving to the next period, 2013-2015, the line is higher, indicating an increase in the number of publications to 28 (You et al, 2015; Ho-Dac et al., 2013; Hajli et al., 2014; Moore, 2015; Kronrod and Danziger, 2013). In the time period 2016-2018, the number of publications shows a

consistent and sharp upward trend rising to 45 articles (Langan et al., 2017; Duarte et al., 2018; Marchang et at., 2017; Chu and Kim, 2018; Pentina et al., 2018). The most recent time period represented in the graphic is 2019-2021, which shows another increase to 64 publications (Tata et al., 2020; Babić Rosario et al., 2020; Ahani et al., 2019; Moon et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2019). Overall, the graph demonstrates an increasing trend in the number of OCR publications per year, whereas the increase from the first to the second time period is moderate, and the increases in the next two time periods are comparatevely larger.

3.9.5. Industry

Figure 6 illustrates a breakdown of the various industries that have been examined the dataset. This categorization of research papers into different industries serves as one of the key apects for the paper's analysis and discussion. Understanding the distribution of research across these industries is crucial for contextualizing the research landscape and identifying trends or gaps in knowledge.
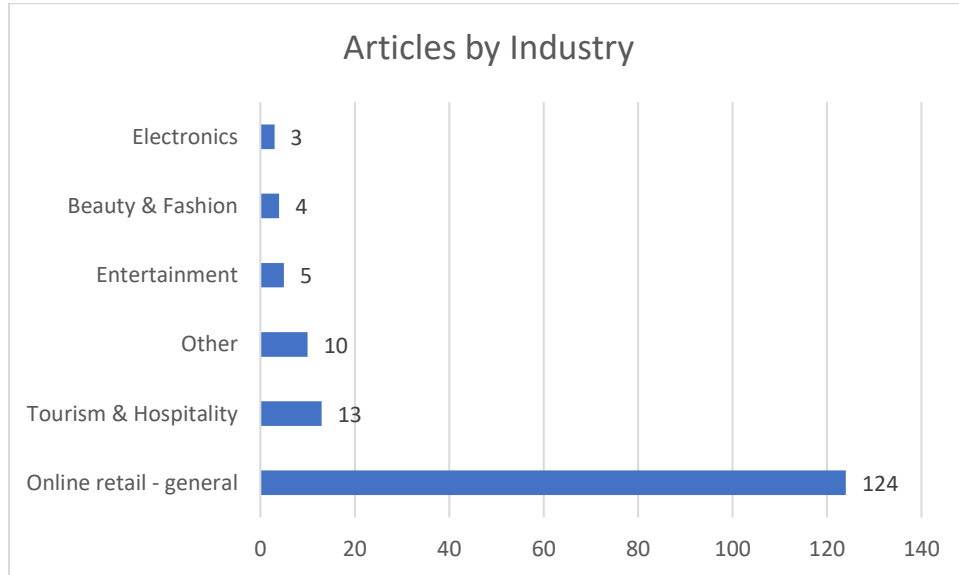

Figure 7: Articles by industry

The category "Online Retail – General", with 124 research papers (Tata et al., 2020; Babić Rosario, 2020; Yu et al., 2015; Langan et al., 2017; Pan and Zhang, 2011), or 78% of the dataset, emerges

as a dominant focal point of scholarly investigation. The articles in this category predominantly revolve around general research within the area of online retail. These studies typically do not specify particular types of online stores or platforms as their primary focus. In essence, these articles are more concerned with capturing the overarching trends and phenomena that characterize the online retail landscape as a whole, rather than individual e-commerce platforms or stores. This category serves as a comprehensive exploration of the broader online retail environment, shedding light on the industry's general dynamics. The large number of articles in this category highlights the significance of the e-commerce sector.

"Tourism & Hospitality", with 13 research papers (Ahani et al., 2019; Moon et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2021; Grewal and Stephen, 2019; Filieri and Mariani, 2021), accounting for 8% of all articles, represents another important sector of study. The tourism and hospitality industry has long been a subject of research due to its economic importance and vulnerability to external factors such as natural disasters and global events. The relatively smaller number of research papers in this category may indicate a need for further exploration of specific issues within this industry.

Entertainment, Beauty & Fashion, and Electronics represent industries with 5 (Marchand et al., 2017; Zhu and Zhang, 2010; Cox and Kaimann., 2015), 4 (Reich and Maglio, 2020; Labsomboonsiri et al., 2017) and 3 (Ho-Dac et al., 2013) research papers, respectively. These industries are characterized by their unique dynamics and consumer preferences. The relatively fewer research papers in these categories suggest that there is room for further exploration and scholarly inquiry into these domains, potentially uncovering opportunities for innovation and growth.

The "Other" category, encompassing 10 research papers (Reza Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012; Yin et al., 2017; Leong et al., 2021; Hu and Li, 2011; Robson et al., 2013), consists studies that do not fit into the predefined industry categories. These papers pertain to industries that are not well represented in OCR research, such as healthcare services, education or the automobile industry. Investigating the content of these research papers can reveal novel insights or innovative areas of study.

In summary, the results in this category reveal a broad spectrum of industries, some of which have been extensively researched, and other belonging to the less-explored category "Other" with limited research. The general online retail sector, has consistently been the dominant industry of

interest, with 124 articles across all time periods. This reflects the widespread impact of OCRs on e-commerce and retail businesses. Entertainment and electronics industries have also received significant attention, in the most recent period (2019-2021). Beauty & fashion, tourism & hospitality, and other industries have seen varying levels of research interest, with a noticeable increase in tourism & hospitality research during the most recent 2019-2021 period, possibly reflecting the growing importance of online reviews in the travel and hospitality sectors.

3.10. Future Research Directions

In this chapter, the objective is to address Research Question 3 by exploring potential directions for future research within the scope of the study.

2. *What are the potential directions for future research on the topic?*

The intention is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the existing landscape and offer insights that may guide future research efforts. The future research paths and recommendations presented in this chapter are not intended as conclusive endpoints but rather as starting points for future investigations. By identifying potential directions for further research, the aim is to contribute to the ongoing academic discourse and inspire continued exploration in the field of OCRs.

3.10.1. Underinvestigated industries

The field of OCR research has evolved significantly over the years, yet there remain underinvestigated industries that can be subject to deeper research in future studies. These industries offer opportunities for scholars and researchers to expand their understanding of how online reviews impact consumer behavior, decision-making processes, and industry dynamics.

One notable underexplored area within OCR research is the beauty and fashion industry. While there have been sporadic studies (Reich and Maglio, 2020; Labsomboonsiri et al., 2017; Duh, 2021; Lee, 2012), the comprehensive examination of how online reviews influence consumer choices in the realm of beauty and fashion remains limited. Researchers could investigate the impact of user-generated content on beauty trends, brand loyalty, and sales performance in the

fashion sector. Exploring how online reviews shape consumers' perceptions of beauty and fashion brands can shed light on this industry's underinvestigated dynamics.

The electronics sector, although not entirely overlooked (Ho-Dac et al., 2013; Beneke et al., 2016; Rosário and Loureiro, 2016), offers opportunities for more in-depth OCR research. Future studies might delve into the ways in which online reviews impact low- and high-involvement consumer decisions related to different types of electronics. Examining the role of online reviews in technology adoption, brand perception, and product sales within the electronics industry could be an intresting direction for future research.

Beyond the industries listed above, there are emerging sectors that have so far gained a very small portion of OCR research attention. These include the healthcare and wellness industry (Lantzy et al., 2021; Lockie et al., 2015), where understanding how online reviews influence patient decisions, healthcare provider choices, and wellness product and service adoption can be highly beneficial. Additionally, the sustainability and eco-friendly product sector presents an opportunity to explore how eco-conscious consumers rely on online reviews to make environmentally responsible choices.

In conclusion, OCR research continues to evolve, and there are both established industries and emerging sectors that remain underinvestigated. By exploring these areas, researchers can contribute to a deeper understanding of the influence of online reviews on consumer behavior and industry dynamics, providing valuable insights for businesses.

3.10.2. Underinvestigated topics

OCRs have become a focal point of research over the years, shedding light on various aspects of consumer behavior and decision-making. However, there are certain underinvestigated topics within the OCR field that offer promising paths for future studies. These topics, which have not received as much attention as others, present opportunities for researchers to deepen the understanding of how online reviews influence consumers' choices and perceptions.

While there has been notable research on the role of online reviews in consumer decision-making (Ahani et al., 2019; Duarte et al., 2018; Kuo and Nakhata, 2019; Situmeang et al., 2020; Luong et al., 2021), there are facets of this topic that remain underexplored. Future studies could focus on

the cognitive processes underlying decision-making when consumers encounter online reviews. This may involve investigating how the content and sentiment of reviews influence choices and the strategies consumers employ in navigating and interpreting vast amounts of review information.

The impact of online versus offline WOM on consumer decisions remains a compelling and underinvestigated area (Huang et al., 2014). While OCRs are widely recognized as influential, there's much more to uncover about how they compare to the traditional offline WOM. Researchers can look into whether eWOM has special benefits in terms of reach, speed, or credibility, or offline WOM still has a strong influence in specific situations and decisions.

Negative reviews and their influence on customers' decision-making and purchasing behavior, which often a cause of concern for businesses (Ahmad and Guzmán, 2021b; Ullrich and Brunner, 2015; Lis and Fischer, 2020; He et al., 2020; Nejad et al., 2016), offer a large territory for deeper exploration. Researchers can delve into the types of negative reviews that wield the most impact by affecting strongly customers' decisions and examine effective strategies for businesses to respond to such feedback. Another interesting topic that could be further investigated is whether negative reviews consistently have a negative impact or if they might have a different effect under certain circumstances.

The spread of fake reviews presents a pressing issue within the area of online reviews (Munzel, 2015; Moon et al., 2021). Future research can focus on uncovering the influence of deceptive evaluations on consumer choices. Strategies to detect and combat fake reviews, the ways in which consumers distinguish between authentic and fake reviews, as well as the legal and ethical implications of fake reviews, are possible areas that can be further explored.

Beyond the rational assessment of product or service quality, the emotional responses evoked by online reviews remain an intriguing but underexplored dimension. Investigating the emotions (e.g., trust, anger, satisfaction) that reviews trigger and how these emotions shape purchasing decisions is an interesting future research direction. Furthermore, consumers are a diverse group, and their unique characteristics (e.g., personality, culture, age, gender) can significantly influence their interactions with OCRs. Future research can explore how personalized marketing strategies can be crafted based on these individual characteristics to enhance the efficacy of online reviews in influencing consumer decisions.

While OCR research predominantly centers on consumer-oriented reviews, the Business-to-Business (B2B) domain remains relatively uncharted. There is a pressing need to comprehend how businesses engage with OCRs in supplier selection. Investigating the distinctive features of B2B OCR interactions and the influence of industry-specific factors is a promising path to untangle.

In conclusion, OCR research is a dynamic field that continues to evolve. While certain topics have received substantial attention, there are still underinvestigated areas that could be promising subjects of future research. By delving into these topics, researchers can contribute to a deeper understanding of how online reviews shape consumers' behavior and decision-making process.

3.10.3. Underinvestigated countries and regions

OCR research has covered a wide range of geographical regions to understand the impact of online reviews on consumer behavior and decision-making. However, there are certain locations that have been underrepresented in the literature, presenting opportunities for future research to broaden the global perspective on OCRs.

Africa has shown just one OCR research article (Duh, 2021) in the most recent time period (2019-2021), and even no research in the earlier time periods. This underrepresentation in the research landscape calls for more attention to understand how online reviews influence consumer behavior in African markets. Researchers can explore the unique characteristics of e-commerce in Africa, as well as cultural and economic factors that may affect consumers' interactions with online reviews.

Similarly, South America has a limited presence in OCR research (López and Sicilia, 2014). Investigating how online reviews are utilized by consumers in South American countries can provide valuable insights into the continent's e-commerce landscape. Factors such as language preferences, cultural influences, and economic dynamics may play a significant role in shaping consumers' interactions with online reviews in South America.

While Australia is included in the data (Ahani et al., 2019; O'Cass and Carlsom, 2012; Zinko et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2020; Yu et al., 2019), it has received relatively less attention in OCR research compared to other regions. Further exploration of the Australian market can help uncover unique consumer behaviors and preferences regarding online reviews.

In conclusion, while OCR research has made significant steps in understanding the impact of online reviews on consumer behavior across the globe, there are still underrepresented locations in need of further investigation. Expanding research efforts into these regions can provide a more comprehensive view of how online reviews shape consumer choices on a global scale. Furthermore, considering the unique characteristics and cultural contexts of these locations can contribute to more tailored strategies for businesses operating in those markets.

3.10.4. Utilization of different research methods

OCR research employs various research methods to investigate the impact of online reviews on consumer behavior and decision-making. While there has been extensive research in this field, the distribution of research methods across different time periods highlights different paths for further exploration.

Mixed methods research (Wu and Wang, 2011; Leong et al., 2021; O'Reilly and Marx, 2011; O'Cass and Carlson, 2012; Eslami and Ghasemaghaei, 2018), which combines qualitative and quantitative approaches, has been used in OCR research but to a relatively limited extent. Researchers have the opportunity to employ mixed methods to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how online reviews influence consumer behavior. Combining qualitative insights into consumer perceptions and motivations with quantitative data on review volume and ratings can provide a holistic view of the online review ecosystem.

Qualitative research methods, such as content analysis and in-depth interviews, have been underutilized in OCR research, particularly in the earlier time periods (Pan and Zhang, 2011; Chan and Ngai, 2011; King et al., 2014; Robson et al., 2013; Whitehead, 2011). Qualitative methods can delve into the dimensions of consumer interactions with online reviews, uncovering important insights into the decision-making process. Future research could utilize qualitative methods more frequently to provide a deeper understanding of consumer perspectives

Quantitative methods have been the dominant approach in OCR research (Zhu and Zhang, 2010; Tata et al., 2020; Babić Rosario et al., 2020; You et al., 2015; Reza Jalilvand and Samiei; 2012), but there is an opportunity to further diversify quantitative research by exploring advanced statistical analyses, machine learning techniques, and big data analytics, which have so far been

utilized only ocasionally in the OCR field, to uncover hidden patterns and trends in online review data. Furthermore, given the interdisciplinary nature of OCR research, there is an opportunity to integrate research methods from other fields such as psychology, sociology, and data science. Collaborative efforts that bring together diverse expertise can lead to innovative research designs and a deeper understanding of the multifaceted aspects of online consumer reviews.

In conclusion, while quantitative methods have dominated OCR research and provided valuable insights, there are underutilized research methods that offer untapped potential for gaining a more comprehensive understanding of online reviews' influence on consumer behavior. Researchers can explore mixed methods, qualitative approaches, and emerging techniques to uncover new dimensions of consumer interactions with online reviews and contribute to the body of knowledge on OCRs.

4. Limitations and Recommendations

An SLR is a valuable research method for synthesizing existing knowledge and working with large amounts of literature However, like any research approach, it has its limitations. In the case of an SLR conducted with 159 articles, several notable constraints should be considered.

One of the most significant limitations of SLRs is the potential for publication bias, which can occur if the literature emphasizes only the positive effects of OCRs due to their relevance in marketing research. Negative or neutral effects may be underrepresented, leading to an incomplete picture of their impact and thus a biased conclusion of the SLR.

Additionally, while publication bias is a significant concern, it is crucial to recognize that the geographical diversity of the studies included in the SLR may also influence the comprehensiveness of the findings. A more extensive exploration of studies from various regions could potentially mitigate the impact of publication bias, providing a better understanding of the effects of online consumer reviews

Moreover, the quality of the studies included in the review is crucial. Not all 159 articles may be of equal quality, and some may suffer from methodological flaws, which can undermine the credibility and reliability of the study's findings. Recognizing this, future research endeavors should prioritize the assessment of study quality and consider implementing more strict inclusion criteria to ensure the robustness of the SLR's outcomes.

Furthermore, SLRs primarily rely on quantitative data and may not capture the qualitative insights that can provide a deeper understanding of the mechanisms at play in consumers' decision-making processes. This limitation can restrict the study's ability to explore the reasons and relationships behind the observed effects. As a recommendation for future research, a complementary qualitative analysis could be integrated into SLRs, offering a more comprehensive view of the multifaceted factors influencing consumers' decision-making in the context of online reviews

Furthermore, gaining insights into trends and patterns within the dynamic realm of OCRs cannot be fully achieved through a singular focus on marketing perspectives. This presents an opportunity for future research to embrace cross-disciplinary analyses, delving into the intersections of marketing, psychology, and other disciplines. Such an approach promises a more holistic and comprehensive perspective on the subject.

In summary, notable challenges in the study include the risk of publication bias, the influence of geographical diversity on findings, and variations in the quality of included studies. Future research is encouraged to address these limitations by prioritizing assessments of study quality, implementing strict inclusion criteria, and incorporating qualitative analyses to enrich the depth of research outcomes. Additionally, the call for a cross-disciplinary perspective, exploring intersections with psychology and other relevant fields, emerges as an essential consideration for a more comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted dynamics within the realm of OCRs and their effects on customers' decision-making progress and purchasing behavior. This holistic viewpoint underscores the ongoing necessity for flexible and adaptive methodologies in navigating the fast-evolving landscape of OCRs.

5. Conclusion

The analysis of OCR research trends underscores the dynamic nature of this field. Over time, research has primarily favored quantitative methods, although recently, there has been a surge in the use of qualitative approaches. Geographically, OCR research has taken place worldwide, with North America consistently serving as a major contributor. Following North America, Europe has also played a significant role, and Asia has emerged as a prominent region for research. The primary research focus has traditionally revolved around review perception and helpfulness, but its scope has expanded to include purchasing behavior and decision-making as prominent topics as well. While the general online retail industry has consistently received the most attention, other sectors, like entertainment and electronics, have also become subject to growing academic interest.

The most recent articles from the 2019-2021 time period have shed light the current state of knowledge regarding various aspects of OCRs, particularly regarding their impact on consumer behavior. They have shown that review content and the source of reviews significantly shape customer attitudes and influence purchase decisions. Moreover, it has been revealed that the context of a purchase can influence the extent to which customers rely on reviews. Additionally, these recent studies have emphasized the importance of visual content, such as images, in enhancing trust and purchase intent. They have also underscored how specific information characteristics, including the sentiment of the review and the nature of the product being reviewed, can impact purchase intentions.

Future research directions include exploring underinvestigated industries such as beauty & fashion, healthcare, electronics and entertainment. Furthermore, there is also potential for exploring emerging sectors eco-friendly products and services. Additionally, the influence of fake reviews, as well as the impact of consumers' individual characteristics on their interactions with OCRs, present valuable research opportunities. The B2B domain is another underexplored area, which could offer insights into supplier selection and business relationships. Finally, underrepresented regions, such as Africa, South America, and Australia, offer opportunities for global OCR research expansion.

In conclusion, the world of OCRs is a dynamic and evolving field that continues to shape consumer behavior and influence the strategies of businesses operating in the digital marketplace. By

examining past and current research, as well as outlining potential future directions, this paper seeks to inspire scholars and businesses as they navigate the rapidly changing digital landscape. As online shopping and consumer reliance on OCRs continue to grow, understanding the power of this phenomenon becomes ever more critical for both academics and businesses.

6. References

Abubakar, A. M., Ilkan, M., & Sahin, P. (2016). eWOM, eReferral and gender in the virtual community. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 34(5), 692–710.

Ahani, Nilashi, M., Yadegaridehkordi, E., Sanzogni, L., Tarik, A. R., Knox, K., Samad, S., & Ibrahim, O. (2019). Revealing customers' satisfaction and preferences through online review analysis: The case of Canary Islands hotels. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 51, 331–343.

Ahmad, F., & Guzmán, F. (2021a). Consumer skepticism about online reviews and their decision-making process: the role of review self-efficacy and regulatory focus. *The Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 38(5), 587–600.

Ahmad, F., & Guzmán, F. (2021b). Negative online reviews, brand equity and emotional contagion. *European Journal of Marketing*, 55(11), 2825–2870.

Ahmad, S. N. (2017). Uncovering the paths to helpful reviews using fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis. *Journal of Marketing Analytics*, 5(2), 47–56.

Aspers, P., & Corte, U. (2019). What is Qualitative in Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Sociology*, 42(2), 139–160.

Babić Rosario, A., de Valck, K., & Sotgiu, F. (2020). Conceptualizing the electronic word-of-mouth process: What we know and need to know about eWOM creation, exposure, and evaluation. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 48(3), 422–448.

Bae, S., & Lee, T. (2011). Product type and consumers' perception of online consumer reviews. *Electronic Markets*, 21(4), 255–266.

Bambauer-Sachse, S., & Mangold, S. (2011). Brand equity dilution through negative online word-of-mouth communication. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 18(1), 38–45.

Bao, T. & Chang, T., (2018). Timing effects of opinion leader's electronic word of mouth. *International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising*. 12(1), 69-90.

Bao, T., Chang, T. S., Kim, A. J., & Moon, S. H. (2019). The characteristics and business impact of children's electronic word of mouth in marketing communications. *International Journal of Advertising*, 38(5), 731–759.

Barreto, A. M. (2014). The Word-of-Mouth Phenomenon in the Social Media Era. *International Journal of Market Research*, 56(5), 631–654.

Beneke, J., de Sousa, S., Mbuyu, M., & Wickham, B. (2016). The effect of negative online customer reviews on brand equity and purchase intention of consumer electronics in South Africa. *The International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research*, 26(2), 171–201.

Biswas, B., Sengupta, P., & Ganguly, B. (2022). Your reviews or mine? Exploring the determinants of "perceived helpfulness" of online reviews: a cross-cultural study. *Electronic Markets*, 32(3), 1083–1102.

Buttle, F., & Groeger, L. (2017). Who says what to whom in what channel? A rules theoretic perspective on word-of-mouth marketing. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 33(13-14), 1035–1059.

Byun, K., Ma, M., Kim, K., & Kang, T. (2021). Buying a New Product with Inconsistent Product Reviews from Multiple Sources: The Role of Information Diagnosticity and Advertising. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 55(1), 81–103.

Camilleri, A. R. (2017). The Presentation Format of Review Score Information Influences Consumer Preferences Through the Attribution of Outlier Reviews. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 39, 1–14.

Carr, C. T., & Hayes, R. A. (2014). The Effect of Disclosure of Third-Party Influence on an Opinion Leader's Credibility and Electronic Word of Mouth in Two-Step Flow. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 14(1), 38–50.

Chan, Y. Y. Y., & Ngai, E. W. T. (2011). Conceptualising electronic word of mouth activity. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 29(5), 488–516.

Chartered Association of Business Schools (2021). Academic Journal Guide 2021. https://charteredabs.org/academic-journal-guide-2021-view/

Chen T., Samaranayake P., Cen X., Qi M. and Lan Y-C. (2022) The Impact of Online Reviews on Consumers' Purchasing Decisions: Evidence From an Eye-Tracking Study. *Front. Psychol.* 13:865702.

Chen, H.-N., & Huang, C.-Y. (2013). An investigation into online reviewers' behavior. *European Journal of Marketing*, 47(10), 1758–1773

Cheung, C. M. K., & Lee, M. K. O. (2012). What drives consumers to spread electronic word of mouth in online consumer-opinion platforms. *Decision Support Systems*, 53(1), 218–225.

Chevalier, J. A., & Mayzlin, D. (2006). The Effect of Word of Mouth on Sales: Online Book Reviews. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 43(3), 345–354.

Chiu, Y.-L., Chen, K.-H., Wang, J.-N., & Hsu, Y.-T. (2019). The impact of online movie word-of-mouth on consumer choice. *International Marketing Review*, 36(6), 996–1025.

Chu, S.-C., & Kim, J. (2018). The current state of knowledge on electronic word-of-mouth in advertising research. *International Journal of Advertising*, 37(1), 1–13.

Cialdini, R. B. (2015). Influence: *The psychology of persuasion*. Joosr.

Cox, J., and Kaimann, D. (2015) How do reviews from professional critics interact with other signals of product quality? Evidence from the video game industry. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour.*, 14: 366–377.

Dahka, Z.Y., Haji Heydari, N. and Rouhani, S. (2020) User response to e-WOM in social networks: how to predict a content influence in Twitter. *International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising*, 14 (1). 19-47.

Dai, H., Chan, C., & Mogilner, C. (2020). People Rely Less on Consumer Reviews for Experiential than Material Purchases. *The Journal of Consumer Research*, 46(6), 1052–1075.

De Pelsmacker, P., Dens, N., & Kolomiiets, A. (2018). The impact of text valence, star rating and rated usefulness in online reviews. *International Journal of Advertising*, 37(3), 340–359.

Decker, R., & Trusov, M. (2010). Estimating aggregate consumer preferences from online product reviews. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 27(4), 293–307.

Duan, W., Gu, B., & Whinston, A. B. (2008). Do online reviews matter? - An empirical investigation of panel data. *Decision Support Systems*, 45(4), 1007-1016.

Duan, W., Gu, B., & Whinston, A. B. (2008a). Do online reviews matter? An empirical investigation of panel data. *Decision Support Systems*, 45(4), 1007-1016.

Duan, W., Gu, B., & Whinston, A. B. (2008b). The Dynamics of Online Word-of-Mouth and Product Sales: An Empirical Investigation of the Movie Industry. *Journal of Retailing*, 84(2), 233–242.

Duarte, P., Costa e Silva, S., & Ferreira, M. B. (2018). How convenient is it? Delivering online shopping convenience to enhance customer satisfaction and encourage e-WOM. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 44, 161–169.

Duh, H.I. (2021). Cosmetics Interest and Behaviour Generated from Social Media Advertising and e-WOM among Female Millennials. *International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising*, 15, 453-476.

Dumay, J., Bernardi, C., Guthrie, J., & Demartini, P. (2016). Integrated reporting: A structured literature review. *Accounting Forum*, 40(3), 166–185.

Dumay, J., Garanina, T., & Guthrie, J. (2019). Intellectual capital research: A critical examination of the third stage. *Journal of Intellectual Capital*, 20(2), 169-186.

Eslami, S. P., & Ghasemaghaei, M. (2018). Effects of online review positiveness and review score inconsistency on sales: A comparison by product involvement. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 45, 74–80.

Feng, J., & Papatla, P. (2011). Advertising: Stimulant or Suppressant of Online Word of Mouth? *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 25(2), 75–84.

Filieri, R., & Mariani, M. (2021). The role of cultural values in consumers' evaluation of online review helpfulness: a big data approach. *International Marketing Review*, 38(6), 1267–1288.

Filieri, R., Javornik, A., Hang, H., & Niceta, A. (2021). Environmentally framed eWOM messages of different valence: The role of environmental concerns, moral norms, and product environmental impact. *Psychology & Marketing*, 38(3), 431–454.

Floh, A., Koller, M., & Zauner, A. (2013). Taking a deeper look at online reviews: The asymmetric effect of valence intensity on shopping behaviour. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 29(5-6), 646–670.

Floyd, K., Freling, R., Alhoqail, S., Cho, H. Y., & Freling, T. (2014). How Online Product Reviews Affect Retail Sales: A Meta-analysis. *Journal of Retailing*, 90(2), 217–232.

Fox, A. K., Deitz, G. D., Royne, M. B., & Fox, J. D. (2018). The face of contagion: consumer response to service failure depiction in online reviews. *European Journal of Marketing*, 52(1/2), 39–65.

Furner, C. P., & Zinko, R. A. (2017). The influence of information overload on the development of trust and purchase intention based on online product reviews in a mobile vs. web environment: an empirical investigation. *Electronic Markets*, 27(3), 211–224.

Garanina, T., Ranta, M., & Dumay, J. (2022). Blockchain in accounting research: current trends and emerging topics. *Accounting, Auditing, & Accountability*, 35(7), 1507–1533.

Grewal, L., & Stephen, A. T. (2019). In Mobile We Trust. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 56(5), 791–808.

Hajli, N., Lin, X., Featherman, M., & Wang, Y. (2014). Social Word of Mouth: How Trust Develops in the Market. *International Journal of Market Research*, 56(5), 673–689.

Hayes, A. F., & Krippendorff, K. (2007). Answering the Call for a Standard Reliability Measure for Coding Data. *Communication Methods and Measures*, 1(1), 77–89.

He, S. X., & Bond, S. D. (2015). Why Is the Crowd Divided? Attribution for Dispersion in Online Word of Mouth. *The Journal of Consumer Research*, 41(6), 1509–1527. D

He, Y., Ju, I., Chen, Q., Alden, D. L., Zhu, H., & Xi, K. (2020). Managing negative word-of-mouth: the interplay between locus of causality and social presence. *The Journal of Services Marketing*, 34(2), 137–148.

Ho-Dac, N. N., Carson, S. J., & Moore, W. L. (2013). The Effects of Positive and Negative Online Customer Reviews: Do Brand Strength and Category Maturity Matter? *Journal of Marketing*, 77(6), 37–53.

Hong, S., & Pittman, M. (2020). eWOM anatomy of online product reviews: interaction effects of review number, valence, and star ratings on perceived credibility. *International Journal of Advertising*, 39(7), 892–920.

Hoskins, J., Gopinath, S., Verhaal, J. C., & Yazdani, E. (2021). The influence of the online community, professional critics, and location similarity on review ratings for niche and mainstream brands. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 49(6), 1065–1087.

Hu, N., Liu, L., & Zhang, J. J. (2008). Do online reviews affect product sales? The role of reviewer characteristics and temporal effects. *Information Technology and Management*, 9(3), 201–214.

Hu, Y., & Li, X. (2011). Context-Dependent Product Evaluations: An Empirical Analysis of Internet Book Reviews. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 25(3), 123–133.

Huang, L., Zhang, J., Liu, H., & Liang, L. (2014). The effect of online and offline word-of-mouth on new product diffusion. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 22(2), 177–189.

Huang, Y., Liu, H., Li, W., Wang, Z., Hu, X., & Wang, W. (2020). Lifestyles in Amazon: Evidence from online reviews enhanced recommender system. *International Journal of Market Research*, 62(6), 689–706.

Hurriyati, R., Lisnawati, & Rhamdani, F. (2017). Online Consumer Reviews on Using E-Shopping Service of E-Commerce. IOP Conference Series: *Materials Science and Engineering*, 180(1), 12287.

Ismagilova, E., Dwivedi, Y. K., & Slade, E. (2020). Perceived helpfulness of eWOM: Emotions, fairness and rationality. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 53, 101748.

Jin, L., Hu, B., & He, Y. (2014). The Recent versus The Out-Dated: An Experimental Examination of the Time-Variant Effects of Online Consumer Reviews. *Journal of Retailing*, 90(4), 552–566.

Johnson Jorgensen, J., & Ha, Y. (2019). The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth via Social Networking Sites on the Socialization of College-Aged Consumers. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 19(1), 29–42.

Karabas, I., Kareklas, I., Weber, T. J., & Muehling, D. D. (2021). The impact of review valence and awareness of deceptive practices on consumers' responses to online product ratings and reviews. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 27(7), 685–715.

Karakaya, F., & Ganim Barnes, N. (2010). Impact of online reviews of customer care experience on brand or company selection. *The Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 27(5), 447–457.

Kaur, K., & Singh, T. (2021). What Motivates Consumers to Write Online Reviews? Qualitative Research in the Indian Cultural Context. *Journal of Global Marketing*, 34(3), 170–188.

Kim, K., Cheong, Y., & Kim, H. (2017). User-generated product reviews on the internet: the drivers and outcomes of the perceived usefulness of product reviews. *International Journal of Advertising*, 36(2), 227–245.

Kim, M., Lee, S. M., Choi, S., & Kim, S. Y. (2021). Impact of visual information on online consumer review behavior: Evidence from a hotel booking website. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 60, 102494.

Kim, S. J., Maslowska, E., & Malthouse, E. C. (2018). Understanding the effects of different review features on purchase probability. *International Journal of Advertising*, 37(1), 29–53

Kim, S., Moore, S. G., & Murray, K. (2021). "Don't buy" or "do not buy"? How negation style in online reviews influences consumer product evaluations. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 29(3), 308–322.

King, R. A., Racherla, P., & Bush, V. D. (2014). What We Know and Don't Know About Online Word-of-Mouth: A Review and Synthesis of the Literature. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 28(3), 167–183.

Krippendorff, K. (2013) Content analysis: an introduction to its methodology. 3. ed. Los Angeles [u.a.]: Sage.

Kronrod, A., & Danziger, S. (2013). "Wii Will Rock You!" The Use and Effect of Figurative Language in Consumer Reviews of Hedonic and Utilitarian Consumption. *The Journal of Consumer Research*, 40(4), 726–739.

Kunst, K., & Vatrapu, R. (2019). Understanding electronic word of behavior: conceptualization of the observable digital traces of consumers' behaviors. *Electronic Markets*, 29(3), 323–336

Kuo, H.-C., & Nakhata, C. (2019). The Impact of Electronic Word-of-Mouth on Customer Satisfaction. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice,* 27(3), 331–348.

Kusawat, P., & Teerakapibal, S. (2023). The Roles of Culture in Online User Reviews: An Empirical Investigation. *Journal of Global Marketing*, 34(3), 189–204.

Labsomboonsiri, S., Mathews, S., & Luck, E. (2017). An investigation of problem-solving support and relaxation motivations on e-WOM. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 23(3), 273–292.

Lakshman, C. (2012). Structured content analysis in leadership research: a new method for international contexts. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 33(5), 477–493.

Langan, R., Besharat, A., & Varki, S. (2017). The effect of review valence and variance on product evaluations: An examination of intrinsic and extrinsic cues. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 34(2), 414–429.

Lantzy, S., Hamilton, R. W., Chen, Y.-J., & Stewart, K. (2021). Online Reviews of Credence Service Providers: What Do Consumers Evaluate, Do Other Consumers Believe the Reviews, and Are Interventions Needed? *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 40(1), 27–44.

Lee, D., Ng, P. M. L., & Bogomolova, S. (2020). The impact of university brand identification and eWOM behaviour on students' psychological well-being: a multi-group analysis among active and passive social media users. *Journal of Marketing Management,* 36(3-4), 384–403.

Lee, H.-H. (2012). Attributes of Online Review Systems : An Environmental Design Perspective. *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, 3(4), 158–171.

Lee, M., & Youn, S. (2009). Electronic word of mouth (eWOM). *International Journal of Advertising*, 28(3), 473–499.

Leong, C.-M., Loi, A. M.-W., & Woon, S. (2021). The influence of social media eWOM information on purchase intention. *Journal of Marketing Analytics*, 10(2), 145–157.

Liang, W. K., & Corkindale, D. (2016). The Effect of Online Word-of-Mouth on Risk Assessment for an Experience Service as Price Acceptability Changes. *Services Marketing Quarterly*, 37(3), 156–170.

Liang, W. K., & Corkindale, D. (2019). How eWord of Mouth valences affect price perceptions. *International Journal of Market Research*, 61(1), 50–63.

Lin, H.-C., & Kalwani, M. U. (2018). Culturally Contingent Electronic Word-of-Mouth Signaling and Screening: A Comparative Study of Product Reviews in the United States and Japan. *Journal of International Marketing*, 26(2), 80–102.

Lis, B., & Fischer, M. (2020). Analyzing different types of negative online consumer reviews. *The Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 29(5), 637–653.

Liu, S. Q., Ozanne, M., & Mattila, A. S. (2018). Does expressing subjectivity in online reviews enhance persuasion? *The Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 35(4), 403–413.

Liu, X., Lee, D., & Srinivasan, K. (2019). Large-Scale Cross-Category Analysis of Consumer Review Content on Sales Conversion Leveraging Deep Learning. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 56(6), 918–943.

llard, T., Dunn, L. H., & White, K. (2020). Negative Reviews, Positive Impact: Consumer Empathetic Responding to Unfair Word of Mouth. *Journal of Marketing*, 84(4), 86–108.

Lockie, M., Waiguny, M. K. J., & Grabner-Kräuter, S. (2015). How style, information depth and textual characteristics influence the usefulness of general practitioners' reviews. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 23(3), 168–178.

López, M., & Sicilia, M. (2014). eWOM as Source of Influence: The Impact of Participation in eWOM and Perceived Source Trustworthiness on Decision Making. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 14(2), 86–97.

Luong, D. B., Wu, K.-W., & Vo, T. H. G. (2021). Difficulty is a possibility: turning service recovery into e-WOM. *The Journal of Services Marketing*, 35(8), 1000–1012.

Mafael, A. (2019). How Regulatory Orientation and Feelings of Gratitude Shape Online Review Helpfulness. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 29(4), 601–622.

Mafael, A., Gottschalk, S. A., & Kreis, H. (2016). Examining Biased Assimilation of Brand-related Online Reviews. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 36, 91–106.

Malbon, J. (2013). Taking Fake Online Consumer Reviews Seriously. *Journal of Consumer Policy*, 36(2), 139–157.

Mangold, W. & Babakus, Emin & Smith, Katherine. (2013). Trust and the online conversation: The case of online reviews. *Int. J. of Internet Marketing and Advertising*. 8. 143 - 160.

Marchand, A., Hennig-Thurau, T., & Wiertz, C. (2017). Not all digital word of mouth is created equal: Understanding the respective impact of consumer reviews and microblogs on new product success. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 34(2), 336–354.

Maslowska, E. et al. (2020) 'How consumers attend to online reviews: an eye-tracking and network analysis approach'. *International journal of advertising*. 39(2), pp. 282–306.

Maslowska, E., Malthouse, E. C., & Bernritter, S. F. (2017). Too good to be true: the role of online reviews' features in probability to buy. *International Journal of Advertising*, 36(1), 142–163.

Massaro, Dumay, J., & Garlatti, A. (2015). Public sector knowledge management: a structured literature review. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 19(3), 530–558.

Massaro, Handley, K., Bagnoli, C., & Dumay, J. (2016b). Knowledge management in small and medium enterprises: a structured literature review. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 20(2), 258–291.

Massaro, M., Dumay, J., & Guthrie, J. (2016a). On the shoulders of giants: undertaking a structured literature review in accounting. *Accounting, Auditing, & Accountability*, 29(5), 767–801

Massaro, M., Dumay, J., & Huybers, T. (2016c). An investigation into the roles of systematic review in accounting research. *Journal of Accounting Literature*, 36, 67-85.

Moon, S., Kim, M.-Y., & Iacobucci, D. (2021). Content analysis of fake consumer reviews by survey-based text categorization. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 38(2), 343–364.

Moore, S. G. (2015). Attitude Predictability and Helpfulness in Online Reviews. *The Journal of Consumer Research*, 42(1), 30–44.

Moran, G., & Muzellec, L. (2017). eWOM credibility on social networking sites: A framework. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 23(2), 149–161.

Moriuchi, E. (2018). IS THAT REALLY AN HONEST ONLINE REVIEW? THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DISCLAIMERS IN ONLINE REVIEWS. *Journal of Marketing Theory* and Practice, 26(3), 309–327.

Moriuchi, E. (2020). "Social credit effect" in a sharing economy: A theory of mind and prisoner's dilemma game theory perspective on the two-way review and rating system. *Psychology & Marketing*, 37(5), 641–662.

Motyka, S., Grewal, D., Aguirre, E., Mahr, D., de Ruyter, K., & Wetzels, M. (2018). The emotional review–reward effect: how do reviews increase impulsivity? *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 46(6), 1032–1051.

Munzel, A. (2015). Malicious practice of fake reviews: Experimental insight into the potential of contextual indicators in assisting consumers to detect deceptive opinion spam. *Recherche et Applications En Marketing* (English Edition), 30(4), 24–50.

Muralidharan, S., Yoon, H. J., Sung, Y., Miller, J., & Lee, A. (2017). Following the breadcrumbs: An analysis of online product review characteristics by online shoppers. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 23(2), 113–134.

Murtiasih, S., Sucherly, S., & Siringoringo, H. (2014). Impact of country of origin and word of mouth on brand equity. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 32(5), 616–629

Narwal, P., & Nayak, J. K. (2020). How consumers form product quality perceptions in absence of fixed posted prices: Interaction of product cues with seller reputation and third-party reviews. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 52, 101924.

Nazlan, N. H., Tanford, S., & Montgomery, R. (2018). The effect of availability heuristics in online consumer reviews. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 17(5), 449–460.

Nejad, M. G., Amini, M., & Sherrell, D. L. (2016). The profit impact of revenue heterogeneity and assortativity in the presence of negative word-of-mouth. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 33(3), 656–673.

Ngarmwongnoi, C., Oliveira, J. S., AbedRabbo, M., & Mousavi, S. (2020). The implications of eWOM adoption on the customer journey. *The Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 37(7), 749–759.

Nguyen, P., Wang, X., Li, X., & Cotte, J. (2021). Reviewing Experts' Restraint from Extremes and Its Impact on Service Providers. *The Journal of Consumer Research*, 47(5), 654–674.

Nunan, D., & Di Domenico, M. (2019). Older Consumers, Digital Marketing, and Public Policy: A Review and Research Agenda. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 38(4), 469–483.

O'Cass, A., & Carlson, J. (2012). An e-retailing assessment of perceived website-service innovativeness: Implications for website quality evaluations, trust, loyalty and word of mouth. Australasian Marketing Journal, 20(1), 28–36.

O'Reilly, K. A., MacMillan, A., Mumuni, A. G., & Lancendorfer, K. M. (2018). Factors affecting consumers' online product review use. *Qualitative Market Research*, 21(3), 375–400.

O'Reilly, K., & Marx, S. (2011). How young, technical consumers assess online WOM credibility. *Qualitative Market Research*, 14(4), 330–359.

Ozanne, M., Liu, S. Q., & Mattila, A. S. (2019). Are attractive reviewers more persuasive? Examining the role of physical attractiveness in online reviews. *The Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 36(6), 728–739.

Palmatier, R. W., Houston, M. B., & Hulland, J. (2018). Review articles: purpose, process, and structure. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 46(1), 1–5.

Pan, Y., & Zhang, J. Q. (2011). Born Unequal: A Study of the Helpfulness of User-Generated Product Reviews. *Journal of Retailing*, 87(4), 598–612.

Park, H. H., & Jeon, J. O. (2018). The impact of mixed eWOM sequence on brand attitude change: cross-cultural differences. *International Marketing Review*, 35(3), 390–411.

Paul Arunkumar J, Dr. K. Subathra, Dr. S. Senthilkumar, Prabhavathy R, & Rohan Thomas Jinu. (2023). Leveraging the power of social proof on online consumer behaviour. *Journal of Scientific Research and Technology*, 1(5), 31–39.

Pee, L. G. (2016). Negative Online Consumer Reviews. *International Journal of Market Research*, 58(4), 545–567.

Peng, L., Cui, G., Zhuang, M., & Li, C. (2016). Consumer perceptions of online review deceptions: an empirical study in China. *The Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 33(4), 269–280.

Pentina, I., Bailey, A. A., & Zhang, L. (2018). Exploring effects of source similarity, message valence, and receiver regulatory focus on yelp review persuasiveness and purchase intentions. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 24(2), 125–145.

Pentina, Iryna & Basmanova, Oksana & Sun, Qin. (2017). Message and source characteristics as drivers of mobile digital review persuasiveness: does cultural context play a role?. *International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising*. 11. 1-21.

Petrescu, M., O'Leary, K., Goldring, D., & Ben Mrad, S. (2018). Incentivized reviews: Promising the moon for a few stars. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 41, 288–295.

Petticrew, M., & Roberts, H. (2006). Systematic reviews in the social sciences : a practical guide. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Pfeuffer, A., Lu, X., Zhang, Y., & Huh, J. (2021). The Effect of Sponsorship Disclosure in YouTube Product Reviews. *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, 42(4), 391–410.

Pihlaja, J., Saarijärvi, H., Spence, M. T., & Yrjölä, M. (2017). From Electronic WOM to Social eWOM: Bridging the Trust Deficit. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 25(4), 340–356.

Pizzamiglio, Laura & Jensen, Jan. (2016). Reading of online reviews across different product types by Generation Y consumers. *International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising*. 10. 302-320.

Pongjit, C., & Beise-Zee, R. (2015). The effects of word-of-mouth incentivization on consumer brand attitude. *The Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 24(7), 720–735.

Punj, G. N. (2013). Do consumers who conduct online research also post online reviews? A model of the relationship between online research and review posting behavior. *Marketing Letters*, 24(1), 97–108.

Purnawirawan, N., De Pelsmacker, P., & Dens, N. (2012). Balance and Sequence in Online Reviews: How Perceived Usefulness Affects Attitudes and Intentions. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 26(4), 244–255.

Purnawirawan, N., Eisend, M., De Pelsmacker, P., & Dens, N. (2015). A Meta-analytic Investigation of the Role of Valence in Online Reviews. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 31, 17–27.

Reich, T., & Maglio, S. J. (2020). Featuring Mistakes: The Persuasive Impact of Purchase Mistakes in Online Reviews. *Journal of Marketing*, 84(1), 52–65.

Reza Jalilvand, M., & Samiei, N. (2012). The effect of electronic word of mouth on brand image and purchase intention. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 30(4), 460–476.

Risselada, H., de Vries, L., & Verstappen, M. (2018). The impact of social influence on the perceived helpfulness of online consumer reviews. *European Journal of Marketing*, 52(3/4), 619–636.

Robson, K., Farshid, M., Bredican, J., & Humphrey, S. (2013). Making Sense of Online Consumer Reviews: A Methodology. *International Journal of Market Research*, 55(4), 521-537.

Rocklage, M. D., & Fazio, R. H. (2020). The Enhancing Versus Backfiring Effects of Positive Emotion in Consumer Reviews. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 57(2), 332–352

Rosário, J. F. do & Loureiro, S. M. C. (2021). The effectiveness of e-word-of-mouth communication about smartphones purchase intention: digital influencer. International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising. 15 (4), 429-449

Roy, Gobinda & Datta, Biplab & Mukherjee, Srabanti & Basu, Rituparna & Shrivastava, Avinash. (2021). Effect of eWOM valence on purchase intention: the moderating role of product. *International Journal of Technology Marketing*. 15. 158-180.

Rynarzewska, A. I. (2019). It's not fake, it's biased: insights into morality of incentivized reviewers. *The Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 36(3), 401–409.

Schindler, R. M., & Bickart, B. (2012). Perceived helpfulness of online consumer reviews: The role of message content and style. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 11(3), 234–243.

Shahab, M. H., Ghazali, E., & Mohtar, M. (2021). The role of elaboration likelihood model in consumer behaviour research and its extension to new technologies: A review and future research agenda. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 45(4), 664–689.

Shi, Z., Zhang, C., & Wu, L. (2020). Sales or reviews, which matters more to consumer preference and online advertising? - evidence from eye-tracking and self-reporting. *International Journal of Advertising*, 39(8), 1274–1300.

Silverman, D. (2021) *Doing qualitative research*. Washington, D.C.: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Situmeang, F., de Boer, N., & Zhang, A. (2020). Looking beyond the stars: A description of text mining technique to extract latent dimensions from online product reviews. *International Journal of Market Research*, 62(2), 195–215.

Srivastava, V., & Kalro, A. D. (2019). Enhancing the Helpfulness of Online Consumer Reviews: The Role of Latent (Content) Factors. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 48, 33–50.

Statista. (2022). E-commerce as percentage of total retail sales worldwide from 2015 to 2026. https://www-statista-com.uaccess.univie.ac.at/statistics/534123/e-commerce-share-of-retail-sales-worldwide/

Statista. (2022). The 20 countries with the largest gross domestic product (GDP) in 2022. https://www.statista.com/statistics/268173/countries-with-the-largest-gross-domestic-product-gdp/

Statista. (2023). The 2023 Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) https://www.statista.com/statistics/226665/academic-ranking-of-world-universities/

Steward, M. D., Burns, A. C., Morgan, F. N., & Roehm, M. L. (2020). Credible Effects: The Impact of Disclosure of Material Connections Within Online Product Reviews. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 39(3), 353–368.

Steward, M. D., Narus, J. A., & Roehm, M. L. (2018). An exploratory study of business-to-business online customer reviews: external online professional communities and internal vendor scorecards. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 46(2), 173–189.

Tata, S. V., Prashar, S., & Gupta, S. (2020). An examination of the role of review valence and review source in varying consumption contexts on purchase decision. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 52, 101734.

Thakur, R. (2018). Customer engagement and online reviews. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 41, 48–59.

Toder-Alon, A., Brunel, F. F., & Fournier, S. (2014). Word-of-mouth rhetorics in social media talk. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 20(1-2), 42–64.

Ullrich, S., & Brunner, C. B. (2015). Negative online consumer reviews: effects of different responses. *The Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 24(1), 66–77.

Vallurupalli, V., & Bose, I. (2020). Exploring thematic composition of online reviews: A topic modeling approach. *Electronic Markets*, 30(4), 791–804.

Van Laer, T., & Izberk-Bilgin, E. (2019). A discourse analysis of pilgrimage reviews. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 35(5-6), 586–604.

Verma, S., & Yadav, N. (2021). Past, Present, and Future of Electronic Word of Mouth (EWOM). *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 53(1), 111–128.

Verma, S., Yadav, N., & Chikhalkar, R. (2023). An integrated measure of eWOM usefulness in the leisure travel: conceptualisation, scale development, and validation. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 29(3), 211–237.

Wan, Y. (2015). The Matthew Effect in social commerce. *Electronic Markets*, 25(4), 313–324.

Wang, F., Zhang, Y., Li, X., & Zhu, H. (2010). Why Do Moviegoers Go to the Theater? The Role of Prerelease Media Publicity and Online Word of Mouth in Driving Moviegoing Behavior. *Journal of Interactive Advertising,* 11(1), 50–62.

Wang, S., Cunningham, N. R., & Eastin, M. S. (2015). The Impact of eWOM Message Characteristics on the Perceived Effectiveness of Online Consumer Reviews. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 15(2), 151–159.

Watson, J., Ghosh, A. P., & Trusov, M. (2018). Swayed by the Numbers. *Journal of Marketing*, 82(6), 109–131.

Weisstein, F. L., Song, L., Andersen, P., & Zhu, Y. (2017). Examining impacts of negative reviews and purchase goals on consumer purchase decision. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 39, 201–207.

White, T. and McBurney, D. (2012), *Research Method*, 9th ed., Cengage Learning, Belmont, CA

Whitehead, L. (2011). Identifying future research opportunities in online consumer reviews: the case study of TripAdvisor. *International Journal of Technology Marketing*, 6(4), 341-354.

Wilson, A. E., Giebelhausen, M. D., & Brady, M. K. (2017). Negative word of mouth can be a positive for consumers connected to the brand. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 45(4), 534–547.

Wu, H.-H., Tipgomut, P., Chung, H. F. L., & Chu, W.-K. (2020). The mechanism of positive emotions linking consumer review consistency to brand attitudes A moderated mediation analysis. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 32(2), 575–588.

Wu, P. C. ., & Wang, Y.-C. (2011). The influences of electronic word-of-mouth message appeal and message source credibility on brand attitude. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 23(4), 448–472.

Wu, P. F. (2013). In Search of Negativity Bias: An Empirical Study of Perceived Helpfulness of Online Reviews. *Psychology & Marketing*, 30(11), 971–984.

Wu, R., Wu, H., & Wang, C. L. (2021). Why is a picture 'worth a thousand words'? Pictures as information in perceived helpfulness of online reviews. *International Journal of Consumer Studies,* 45(3), 364–378.

Ye, L., Gai, L., Youssef, E., & Jiang, T. (2019). Love Consumption at the Digital Age: Online Consumer Reviews and Romantic Gift Giving. *Journal of Global Marketing*, 32(5), 335–355.

Yin, D., Bond, S. D., & Zhang, H. (2017). Keep Your Cool or Let It Out: Nonlinear Effects of Expressed Arousal on Perceptions of Consumer Reviews. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 54(3), 447–463.

Yin, R.K. (2014), *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 5th ed., SAGE, Los Angeles, CA.

Yoon, Y., Kim, A. J., Kim, J., & Choi, J. (2019). The effects of eWOM characteristics on consumer ratings: evidence from TripAdvisor.com. *International Journal of Advertising*, 38(5), 684–703.

You, Y., Vadakkepatt, G. G., & Joshi, A. M. (2015). A Meta-Analysis of Electronic Word-of-Mouth Elasticity. *Journal of Marketing*, 79(2), 19–39.

Young, M., Soza-Parra, J., & Circella, G. (2022). The increase in online shopping during COVID-19: Who is responsible, will it last, and what does it mean for cities? *Regional Science Policy & Practice*, 14(S1), 162–178.

Yu, M., Liu, F., & Lee, J. A. (2019). Consumers' responses to negative publicity: the influence of culture on information search and negative word-of-mouth. *The Journal of Brand Management*, 26(2), 141–156.

Zhu, D. H., Deng, Z. Z., & Chang, Y. P. (2020). Understanding the influence of submission devices on online consumer reviews: A comparison between smartphones and PCs. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 54, 102028.

Zhu, F., & Zhang, X. (2010). Impact of Online Consumer Reviews on Sales: The Moderating Role of Product and Consumer Characteristics. *Journal of Marketing*, 74(2), 133–148.

Zinko, R., Stolk, P., Furner, Z., & Almond, B. (2020). A picture is worth a thousand words: how images influence information quality and information load in online reviews. *Electronic Markets*, 30(4), 775–789.

7. Appendix

Abstract in English

Purpose: This research paper investigates the impact of online consumer reviews on customers' decision-making process and purchasing behavior. The paper aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the past and current state of OCR research, identifying trends and outlining areas of focus and critique within the existing literature. Moreover, this study explores potential future research directions.

Design/Methodology/Approach: A structured literature review approach is employed to systematically analyze existing scholarly literature, offering insights into the dynamic nature of OCR research, its evolution across the years, geographic distribution, primary research industries and focus areas, and methodological preferences. It also highlights emerging trends, common topics, and areas requiring further exploration.

Findings: The paper uncovers that OCRs play an important role in shaping customers' decision-making process and purchasing behavior. The analysis of research trends shows a growing number of research articles across the years, a historical reliance on quantitative methods, with an emerging interest in qualitative approaches. Geographic representation encompasses a global scale, with growing contributions from Asia in the most recent time periods. Research focuses primarily on review perception and helpfulness, and the broad online retail industry.

Research Limitations/Implications: The research paper is based on 159 scholarly articles, which may not fully represent the entirety of the field.

Practical Implications: The paper provides insights into regions, topics and industries with untapped potential for OCR research, offering opportunities for scholars to contribute further to the academic OCR knowledge by exploring these future research paths.

Originality/Value: The research paper contributes to the ongoing discourse on OCRs by presenting a comprehensive overview of the current state of OCR research and charting future research directions. It offers valuable insights for both scholars and businesses seeking to understand the influence of online consumer reviews in the digital age.

Keywords: Online consumer reviews, OCRs, electronic word of mouth, eWOM, customers, purchasing behavior, decision-making, structured literature review, digital marketplace, research

trends.

Papertype: Master's thesis.

Abstract in German

Zweck: Diese Studie untersucht die Auswirkungen von Online-Kundenbewertungen auf den Entscheidungsprozess der Kund*innen und das Kaufverhalten. Das Papier zielt darauf ab, eine eingehende Analyse des bisherigen und aktuellen Standes der Forschung zu Online-Kundenbewertungen vorzulegen, Trends zu identifizieren und Schwerpunkte und Kritikpunkte in der bestehenden Literatur herauszuarbeiten. Darüber hinaus erforscht diese Studie potenzielle zukünftige Forschungsrichtungen.

Design/Methodik/Ansatz: Es wird eine strukturierte Literaturrecherche verwendet, um systematisch die vorhandene wissenschaftliche Literatur zu analysieren und Einblicke in die dynamische Natur der Forschung zu Online-Kundenbewertungen, deren Entwicklung im Laufe der Jahre, geografische Verteilung, Hauptforschungsbranchen und Schwerpunktbereiche sowie angewendete Forschunsmethoden zu bieten. Es hebt auch aufkommende Trends, übliche Themen und Bereiche hervor, die weitere Erkundungen erfordern.

Ergebnisse: Die Studie enthüllt, dass Online-Kundenbewertungen eine wichtige Rolle bei der Gestaltung des Entscheidungsprozesses der Kund*innen und ihres Kaufverhaltens spielen. Die Analyse der Forschungstrends zeigt eine steigende Anzahl von Forschungsartikeln im Laufe der Jahre, eine historische Dominanz quantitativer Methoden, mit einem aufkommenden Interesse an qualitativen Ansätzen. Die geografische Vertretung erstreckt sich weltweit, mit wachsenden Beiträgen aus Asien in den jüngsten Zeiträumen. Die Forschung konzentriert sich hauptsächlich auf die Wahrnehmung und Nützlichkeit von Bewertungen sowie auf die breite Online-Einzelhandelsbranche.

Forschungsbeschränkungen/Auswirkungen: Diese Forschungsarbeit stützt sich auf 159 wissenschaftliche Artikel, die möglicherweise nicht das gesamte Spektrum des Fachgebiets vollständig repräsentieren.

Praktische Implikationen: Die Studie bietet Einblicke in Regionen, Themen und Branchen mit ungenutztem Potenzial für Forschung zu Online-Kundenbewertungen und bietet Forscher die Möglichkeit, durch die Erforschung dieser zukünftigen Forschungswege weiter zum akademischen Wissen über Online-Kundenbewertungen beizutragen.

Originalität/Wert: Diese Forschungsarbeit trägt zur laufenden Diskussion über Online-Kundenbewertungen bei, indem sie einen umfassenden Überblick über den aktuellen Stand der Forschung zu Online-Kundenbewertungen bietet und zukünftige Forschungsrichtungen aufzeigt.

Sie bietet wertvolle Erkenntnisse sowohl für Forscher als auch für Unternehmen, die das Einfluss von Online-Kundenbewertungen im digitalen Zeitalter verstehen möchten.

Stichwörter: Online-Kundenbewertungen, OCRs, elektronische Mundpropaganda, eWOM, Kunden, Kaufverhalten, Entscheidungsfindung, strukturiertes Literaturrecherche, digitaler Marktplatz, Forschungstrends.

Papierart: Masterarbeit.