

## Online reviews on E-commerce platforms in Vietnam: The role of trust in behavioral intention

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### ABSTRACT

This comprehensive study thoroughly explores the factors related to online reviews that influence users' purchase intention through trust. Drawing on robust theoretical foundations and relevant research, the study establishes connections between trust-promoting factors and user behavioral intentions on e-commerce platforms in Vietnam. The study, which involved a survey of 680 users for data collection and partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis, unveils that the usefulness of online reviews is the key driver of behavioral intention. Moreover, trust plays a pivotal mediating role in linking the quality and rating of online reviews to users' purchase intentions. These findings not only enrich the theoretical foundation of behavioral research on online platforms but also offer practical managerial implications, empowering e-commerce platforms to develop a comprehensive review system and enhancing users' online shopping experience.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The online shopping market in Vietnam is not just growing, it's skyrocketing. The post-pandemic period since early 2022 has seen an unprecedented surge, with an average growth rate of over 20% per year. eMarketer, in 2023, ranked Vietnam among the top 5 countries with the highest e-commerce growth rate globally [1]. Nikkei Asia also considers Vietnam one of the fastest-growing e-commerce markets in Southeast Asia, with a forecast of reaching 39 billion USD by 2025.

According to data provided by the Ministry of Industry and Trade of Vietnam, in 2023, 2.2 billion product units were successfully delivered on the five largest e-commerce platforms in Vietnam, a 52.3% increase compared to 2022. These platforms, Shopee, Lazada, Tiki, and Sendo, are not just players, they are the game-changers, dominating the market. And let's not forget the emerging Tiktok Shop, a formidable competitor. The trend of shopping combined with entertainment, accounting for nearly half of the total industry's merchandise value, with 8.1 billion USD, is being pioneered by platforms like TikTok Shop, as highlighted by data from the metric platform. Forbes magazine also emphasizes the importance of shoppertainment in attracting and retaining consumers on e-commerce platforms [2].

The development of shopping platforms combined with entertainment has also highlighted the role of KOLs and KOCs in influencing user behavior. The importance of online reviews has recently become a topic of interest, with many studies delving into various aspects of online product reviews to understand their impact on consumer behavior and decision-making processes. Du *et al.* [3] emphasized the importance of

feature selection in predicting the usefulness of online product reviews. Focusing on product functionality helps potential buyers understand whether those features meet their needs. Rokhman and Andiani [4] focused on understanding the role of customer reviews, price, trust, and security in the online purchasing decisions of young Muslim consumers. The study found that these factors significantly influence consumer decisions when shopping online, emphasizing the importance of trust and security in the online shopping experience. Su and Niu [5] explored the influence of popular reviews on consumer purchasing decisions, focusing on the interaction between online review ratings, review volume, and their impact on online sales. From a different perspective, Chen *et al.* [6] studied the impact of online product reviews on consumer purchasing decisions through eye-tracking, examining the role of gender and visual attention in comments.

Studies in Vietnam also mention the importance of online reviews in promoting user purchase time. Duy and Khoa [7] showed the importance of online reviews in making quick purchasing decisions during flash sales. Giang *et al.* [8] also assessed the potential of online reviews concerning trust and intention to purchase food. However, most studies still need to address the perspective of the role of trust in each online review. Are there significant differences between reviews from celebrities and reviews from ordinary shoppers? How can we assess the quality or trustworthiness of product comments to decide whether to refer to them? These issues remain unaddressed in the research. This study aims to clarify these issues, specifically (i) building a research model to explore the factors related to online reviews that affect users' intention to purchase products online through trust in the Vietnamese online shopping market; (ii) assessing the impact of each factor related to online reviews on online purchase intention and user trust through a linear structural model; (iii) understanding the mediating role of trust with behavioral intention; (iv) proposing management implications and solutions to increase user trust, as well as online purchase intention through online reviews.

With the research objectives mentioned above, after shaping the research model, we proceed to build appropriate research methods. The research is conducted in two phases. The first is conducting qualitative research by collecting scales to measure variables in the research model. Then, expert discussion techniques are conducted to adjust and supplement the scale to serve further exploratory research on the nature of online reviews in Vietnam. Phase 2 is conducted using quantitative methods based on a questionnaire built from the final adjusted version of the scale. The research results are then deployed using the partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) on SmartPLS software through the following analyses: descriptive statistics of the research sample, analysis of measurement, and structural models; finally, hypotheses are tested through bootstrapping. The authors expect the research to contribute to the theoretical foundation of users' online shopping behavior through electronic word-of-mouth, specifically through online reviews. In addition, management implications are also proposed in-depth, providing a multidimensional perspective on ways businesses can rely on to enhance trust and the behavioral intention to use online products.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Relevant background theory

Understanding purchase intention is not just a key aspect, but a cornerstone in the study of consumer behavior. It encompasses the consumer's perception, behavior, and attitude toward a product, service, or even the seller [9]. Given that other people influence consumers during the purchase process, the marketing literature is keen on unraveling the relationship between word of mouth (WOM) and purchase intention [10]. This study delves into the definition of purchase intention as an individual's willingness to buy an item [11]. Intention, a motivation that influences the formation of a particular behavior, is used as an indicator of the extent to which a person must desire and exert effort to perform that behavior [12]. Based on the argument of Pavlou [13], online purchase intention is the consumer's willingness to build a relationship and conduct a transaction with a retailer on their website. WOM communication determines new product success [14], [15]. The rise of the Internet and social media created new digital channels for WOM exchange, causing the fragmentation of ideas. In addition to traditional face-to-face WOM communication, effective WOM communication occurs in the digital realm. Digital WOM is not a homogeneous concept because it is shared through different digital channels that fundamentally shape how consumers interact. WOM is defined differently in the marketing and consumer behavior literature; however, the consensus is that it is voluntary verbal communication between individuals [16]. One of the earliest studies on the influence of WOM, conducted by [17], describes WOM as a form of direct communication related to a product or service. Zaltman and Wallendorf [18] view WOM as a direct communication process based on voluntary action.

With the proliferation of the Internet, online product reviews have become a cornerstone of consumer decision-making. Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) has not just emerged, but firmly established itself as a pivotal component of online marketing strategies. In marketing, eWOM refers to information communications on the Internet about products, services, brands, and companies [19]. It has not only become

a tool for online marketers to influence consumer buying behavior but also a means for companies to gauge customer opinions [20]. Hennig-Thurau *et al.* [21] defined e-WOM as any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company made available to a multitude of people over the Internet. Online consumer reviews are one of e-WOM's most valuable forms of communication. Over the years, online reviews have become an essential source of information, enabling consumers to identify products that suit their needs and preferences and make better purchasing decisions [22].

This definition helps to understand that eWOM needs to meet two main requirements to be considered as such: first, it is an online statement, comment, or review about a product/service or company, regardless of its merits, and second, it can be provided by any individual regardless of their experience with the product or service. eWOM has been widely regarded as an essential source of information for online purchases [23] and an essential factor in facilitating popularity variables of online information [24]. In the last decade, traditional WOM has changed and transformed into different eWOM types. This phenomenon is Internet-mediated written communication between potential and existing consumers [25]. The number of people sharing and exchanging information about products is increasing significantly. The Internet and the explosive growth of available information sources allow today's consumers to rely more heavily on information in their online shopping process.

## 2.2. Research hypotheses

### 2.2.1. Timeliness of online reviews

The timeliness of online reviews plays a crucial role in influencing various aspects of consumer behavior and decision-making processes. Timeliness refers to whether messages are current, timely, and up-to-date, and the higher the timeliness of the message, the higher the perceived credibility by consumers [26]. Additionally, timeliness also refers to the novelty and up-to-dateness of online reviews, thus reflecting the current state of a product or service [27], [28]. It is considered an essential element of information quality or, in this context, argument quality [26]. Previous research has also shown that timeliness plays an essential role in the reliability of information, especially in the context of the Internet [29].

The study of Ventre and Kolbe [30] focused on emerging online marketplaces and found that the perceived usefulness of reviews, trust, and perceived risk significantly impact online purchase intention. Many other studies have also explored the influence of online communities and electronic word-of-mouth on purchase intention, emphasizing the mediating role of brand trust [31]. However, it's worth noting that only a few other recent studies have shown this, underscoring the novelty and importance of this research. In the field of tourism, Shariffuddin *et al.* [32] explored the relationship between the affordability of online travel websites, technology readiness, and their impact on tourists' online purchase intentions, focusing on the moderating role of trust. Ngo *et al.* [33], an experimental study investigated the role of the reliability of electronic word-of-mouth information in shaping online purchase intentions, emphasizing the importance of timely information in the evaluated information. Therefore, in this study, all H1 hypotheses related to timeliness are proposed as follows:

- H1a. Timeliness of online reviews has a positive impact on trust.
- H1b. Timeliness of online reviews has a positive impact on purchase intention.
- H1c. The relationship between timeliness and purchase intention is mediated by trust.

### 2.2.2. Usefulness of online reviews

The usefulness of online reviews has been proposed as an effective predictor of consumers' intention to comply with reviews [26]. Usefulness occurs when online reviews are perceived to facilitate consumers' purchase decision-making process [34]. In many independent studies, all have found that usefulness is an essential element of eWOM in driving user behavior, such as detailed reviews of product functionality, reviews that include videos and images [35], [36]. In order to confirm the importance of usefulness, Ventre and Kolbe [30] conducted a study in Mexico City to investigate the influence of the perceived usefulness of online reviews, trust, and perceived risk on online purchase intention in emerging markets. Zhang and Wang [37], an experimental study on online-to-offline trust and content transfer in e-commerce confirmed the positive impacts of the number of reviews and images on customer trust and purchase intention. Usefulness is often used in behavioral models to assess user acceptance in the technology field, and in evaluating these platforms, it is also operated similarly. Many studies also confirm that the usefulness of online reviews has a significant positive correlation with user trust and behavioral intentions [38], [39]. The H2 hypotheses related to usefulness are mentioned as follows:

- H2a. The usefulness of online reviews has a positive impact on trust.
- H2b. The usefulness of online reviews has a positive impact on purchase intention.
- H2c. The relationship between usefulness and purchase intention is mediated by trust.

### 2.2.3. Quality of online reviews

Quality is a pivotal factor in online consumer reviews (OCR), enabling consumers to access reviews from others, thereby enhancing the quality of reviews and product ratings [40]. Unlike the previously discussed characteristics of value and volume, quality pertains to the qualitative aspect of online customer feedback. The quality of reviews is intricately linked to product relevance, specifically the mention of a product's usefulness and reliability based on actual use [34], [41]. As Park *et al.* [42] assert, higher quality reviews, due to the reasoning involved in the review process, lead to more reasonable and persuasive information for consumers, thereby influencing their purchase intention, in this case, positively.

Many recent studies have also mistakenly confirmed this relationship, Zahratu and Hurriyati [43] emphasized consumers' reliance on EWOM in reviews to make purchase decisions, highlighting the importance of the quality of online reviews in shaping purchase intention. Images in online reviews influence trust and purchase intention by reducing uncertainty [44]. The quality of the reviewed information can come from complete information with a clear layout that will affect users' purchase intentions through increased trust [39]. Kevin *et al.* [45] studied the impact of online consumer review dimensions on Tokopedia, including source trust, review quality, number of reviews, and review value, on online purchase intention. There, the author also highlights the role of trust in behavioral intention. Therefore, to re-examine this relationship in the Vietnamese market, the study proposes the following H3 hypotheses:

- H3a. The quality of online reviews has a positive impact on trust.
- H3b. The quality of online reviews has a positive impact on purchase intention.
- H3c. The relationship between quality and purchase intention is mediated by trust.

### 2.2.4. Online review rating

Review ratings are the average rating of consumer opinions regarding a particular product, considering that ratings can be positive, neutral, or negative [23], [46]. It should be noted that from this index, consumers can easily perceive the product's overall quality, as it allows for quick and intuitive observation of the average rating given by consumers who have previously purchased the product [47]. Purnawirawan *et al.* [48] reported that moderated reviews tend to contain ambiguous information, while positive or negative comments have clear implications for purchase decisions.

In online shopping, Zhang *et al.* [49] investigated the moderating effect of inconsistent reviews on consumers' purchase intentions, finding that emotional trust affects purchase intention more in the context of inconsistent reviews, with a more substantial impact on female consumers. Meanwhile Elwalda and Lu [46] highlighted the significant impact of online customer reviews (OCR) on customer purchase decisions, focusing on the perceived derivative attributes of OCR and their influence on customer trust and intentions. Similarly, Carbonell *et al.* [50] conducted an experimental study to understand how emotions and trust signals in online reviews affect the perceived reliability of reviews and subsequent purchase intentions. Not all 5-star reviews will bring absolute trust to users, but it also depends on the quality of the reviews, assuming the number of positive and negative reviews are evenly distributed. In that case, consumers face a conflict of opinion, making choosing the product being evaluated more difficult. Therefore, Forman *et al.* [51] stated that decision-making is less complicated when there is a dominant opinion about the product being evaluated, whether positive or negative. Features such as customer reviews, ratings, and excellent sellers positively and significantly impact customer trust and purchase decisions on online platforms [52]. The concept and scales measuring valence in online reviews in this study will be built in a positive direction, meaning that if customers rate more points, the more star ratings will increase trust, for example. So, the H4 hypotheses are proposed as follows:

- H4a. Online review rating has a positive impact on trust.
- H4b. Online review rating has a positive impact on purchase intention.
- H4c. The relationship between online review ratings and purchase intention is mediated by trust.

### 2.2.5. Trust in online reviews

Trust is often described as a belief [53]. It has been extensively studied for years and viewed through many different lenses and filters: economics, psychology, and sociology [54]. Trust in online shopping is becoming a fundamental issue because commercial relationships are based on the fake nature of the internet. In particular, consumers face challenges when buying a product or service that they cannot see or touch from a stranger. However, trust in this study refers to factors related to online reviews. Utz *et al.* [55] found that the value of online reviews, whether positive or negative, plays a vital role in shaping consumer perceptions of credibility and initial trust. Similarly, Lee and Hong [56] explored how consumer reviews impact the perceived reliability of online stores. The study emphasizes the influential role of consumer-generated content in shaping consumer perceptions of trust on online platforms, thereby promoting

behavioral intentions. Nurillah *et al.* [57] emphasized the importance of trust transfer between related targets in shaping consumer evaluations of online reviews. The research team also suggested that trust in the reliability of the origin of online review messages significantly affects consumers' trust in that source and their willingness to engage in transactions. Another experimental study, Zhang and Wang [37] focused on trust transfer and the impact of online content on purchase intention in e-commerce. It also showed that customers switch from online to offline buying behavior if they do not trust online reviews. Therefore, the final hypothesis in the study is proposed as follows:

- H5. Trust in online reviews has a positive impact on purchase intention.

### 3. RESEARCH METHOD

Based on the research model and related studies, as the first step in developing the research methodology, we established scales to measure six variables: timeliness, usefulness, quality, online review ratings, trust, and purchase intention. These scales, which are widely recognized in the field, provide a solid foundation for our research. The scales and their references are provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of scales and factor loadings

Items	Scales	Loadings
<b>Timeliness of online reviews [36]</b>		
TOR1	For me, the reviews posted immediately are very important.	0.883
TOR2	For me, the reviews posted recently are very important.	0.905
TOR3	Most recent reviews probably reflect product/service updates.	0.917
<b>Usefulness of online reviews [36]</b>		
UOR1	Online customer reviews improve my online shopping.	0.846
UOR2	Customer reviews improve the efficiency of my online shopping.	0.812
UOR3	Online customer reviews help increase diversity when shopping online.	0.785
UOR4	Online customer reviews make it easier for me to shop online.	0.804
UOR5	Online customer reviews make it easy for me to research and search for information about the product.	0.854
UOR6	Online customer reviews allow me to complete my shopping more quickly.	0.789
<b>Quality of online reviews [42]; QOR3, QOR4: supplemented from qualitative research</b>		
QOR1	Online reviews are easy to understand	0.841
QOR2	Online reviews provide enough information	0.865
QOR3	User reviews on the Internet are objective	0.850
QOR4	User reviews on the Internet generally meet my expectations.	0.783
<b>Online review rating [58]</b>		
ORR1	Customer ratings have helped me to learn about the product	0.872
ORR2	The (overall) ranking of different accommodations facilitates the evaluation of the alternatives available	0.883
ORR3	(Overall product) rankings help me to rapidly select the best accommodation among several	0.872
<b>Trust in online reviews [35]; TR4: supplemented from qualitative research</b>		
TR1	I think online reviews are reliable.	0.845
TR2	I think online reviews are real.	0.854
TR3	I think the reviewer doesn't coordinate with the seller to make a one-sided review.	0.767
TR4	I've been following many online sources about the product.	0.819
<b>Purchase intention [59]; PI4: supplemented from qualitative research</b>		
PI1	Online reviews help me to decide which product I am likely to buy	0.841
PI2	Online reviews facilitate me to determine what product I would consider procuring	0.779
PI3	Online reviews guide me to consider the product that I am likely to obtain	0.878
PI4	In the future, I will buy products that I have viewed reviews online when the need arises.	0.842

In the second step, qualitative research was used to adapt the scales to the online shopping market on e-commerce platforms in Vietnam. We invited a group of experts for in-depth interviews, including e-commerce experts, Shopee and Lazada platform operation experts, lecturers, and training experts in the field of e-commerce. In step 3, sampling is carried out according to the saturation principle [7], and the interviews stopped when no new findings emerged from the experts' opinions. In step 4, the scales were adjusted based on these expert opinions, as shown in Table 1, with notes from the qualitative research included for each scale. All scales in Table 1 were then used to design the final questionnaire based on a 5-point Likert scale. In addition, the questionnaire also included additional survey questions on sample information, as shown in Table 2. Quantitative research was then conducted based on the sample size determined according to [60]:

$$n \geq \frac{N * Z^2 * p * (1-p)}{d^2 * (N-1) + Z^2 * p * (1-p)}$$

Where “N” is the total population, determined to be 57 million users according to Statista’s statistics in 2024. “Z” is the confidence level statistic; based on a 95% confidence level, Z is determined to be 1.96. The value “p” is the expected proportion (the most likely possibility is 50%). The value “d” is the margin of error (the level of statistical significance in economic research is 5%). The sample size “n” can then be at least 385. Therefore, we determined the sample size in this study to be  $n = 680$ , from 700 questionnaires sent out and maintaining the validity of the collected results. The sampling method then used stratified sampling based on application platforms. The selection ratio then depends on the market share held according to Younet ECI market research company data for the first quarter of 2024 in Vietnam: ShopeeFood holds 67.9%; TikTok shop accounts for 23.2%; Lazada accounts for 7.6%; the remaining 1.3% market share belongs to Tiki and other platforms. The survey data will then be analyzed using the PLS-SEM. We use PLS instead of CB-SEM for three reasons: (i) to reduce the risk of data not achieving normal distribution; (ii) to make it suitable for exploratory research; (iii) to make it easy to compare results with previous studies, as most of these studies use PLS-SEM.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Preliminary assessment of the research sample

As mentioned, the study developed 700 questionnaires to meet the minimum required sample size of 385. After collecting and filtering the questionnaires that met the requirements, 680 observations were included in the data analysis with basic demographic parameters and frequency of use in Table 2. All the criteria below were randomly selected based on a stratified sampling technique according to the market share of the platforms provided in the research method.

Table 2. Respondents’ demographic characteristics

Criteria	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	224	32.94%
	Female	456	67.06%
Career	Student	319	46.91%
	Officer	241	35.44%
	Teacher	67	9.85%
	Worker	42	6.18%
	Other	11	1.62%
	<6 mil VND	234	34.41%
Income	6 – 13 mil VND	218	32.06%
	14 – 21 mil VND	142	20.88%
	>21 mil VND	86	12.65%
	<2 times	290	42.65%
Frequency of participation in assessment per month	3-6 times	238	35.00%
	>6 times	152	22.35%
	<10 times	144	21.18%
Frequency of reading comments when purchasing during the year	10 - 20 times	288	42.35%
	21 - 30 times	180	26.47%
	> 30 times	68	10.00%

### 4.2. Structural equation model analysis

SEM analysis aims to show the multi-dimensional relationship between the relationships in the research model. This begins with assessing the model’s fit by measuring the reliability of the linear structure. This study uses composite reliability (CR) greater than 0.7 to confirm the relationship between variables and the measurement structure [61]. Table 3 shows that the CR values are all greater than 0.8, which is suitable for confirmatory studies. The average variance extracted (AVE) value is used to test the convergence and discrimination of the scale. If the AVE value is more significant than 0.5, the factors will explain at least half of the variance of the indicators [62]. Table 3 shows that the AVE values all reach a high level of explanation, specifically greater than 0.6 in all scales. In addition, the outer loading index is shown in Table 2, showing that all these values are more significant than 0.708, ranging from 0.767 and above. This confirms the high quality of the observed variables, meaning that the latent variables explain more than 50% of the scale variation [63] and, therefore, the measurement model and its scales.

The results of the data analysis in Table 3 also demonstrate that all indicators related to the discriminant validity test meet the requirements. In this section, we also conduct discriminant validity tests to examine the distinctiveness of a construct when compared to other constructions in the model. The traditional approach to assessing discriminant validity uses the AVE square root index proposed by [64]. Henseler *et al.*

[64] recommends that discriminant validity is ensured when the square root of AVE for each latent variable is higher than all correlations between the latent variables. This matrix of coefficients is shown in Table 3, showing that the indicators on the diagonal are more significant than the indicators on the same row or column. Therefore, we conclude that the scales used in the model have significant discriminant validity.

Table 3. Composite reliability, average variance extracted, and discriminant validity

Variable	CR*	AVE*	PI	QOR	ORR	TOR	TR	UOR
Purchase intention (PI)	0.902	0.698	<b>0.836</b>					
Quality (QOR)	0.902	0.698	0.589	<b>0.836</b>				
Rating (ORR)	0.908	0.767	0.631	0.597	<b>0.876</b>			
Timeliness (TOR)	0.929	0.813	0.604	0.573	0.534	<b>0.902</b>		
Trust (TR)	0.893	0.676	0.627	0.644	0.577	0.54	<b>0.822</b>	
Usefulness (UOR)	0.922	0.665	0.725	0.633	0.622	0.648	0.599	<b>0.815</b>

\*CR = Composite reliability; AVE = Average variance extracted

The structural model is presented in Figure 1, and some accompanying indicators are provided in Table 4. The test results show that the adjusted R-square value represents the independent measures' degree of explanation with the path model's operating variables. This value is shown in Table 4 or directly on the diagram in Figure 1. The adjusted R-square of the Trust (TR) variable is 0.502, indicating that the variables Timeliness (TOR), Usefulness (UOR), Quality (QOR), and Rating (ORR) explain more than 50% of the variance of TR. This conclusion will be similarly described for the adjusted R-square of the Purchase Intention (PI) variable; however, this number is higher, reaching 61.3%. In addition, we conducted thorough multicollinearity tests, ensuring VIF coefficient  $< 5$ , meeting the requirements according to [63], and creating confidence in the research method being conducted. The meticulousness of these tests should reassure you of the robustness of our research. As mentioned, the adjusted R-square indicates the explanatory power of the independent variables on a dependent variable of the sample dataset being analyzed. The adjusted R-square does not reflect the model's predictive power; instead, we use the Q-square index. This value is mentioned in Table 4. It is important to note that the model's predictive ability is relatively good when all values are more significant than 0.25.

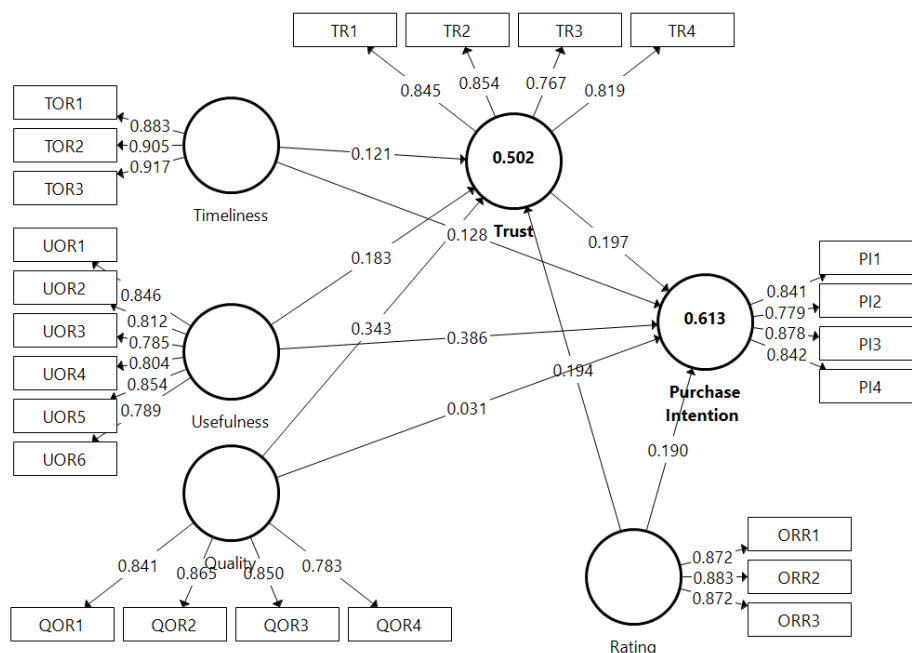


Figure 1. The results of the linear structural model inspection

#### 4.3. Testing research hypotheses

To further emphasize the reliability of the study, the authors continued to use the Bootstrapping analysis technique with a resampling technique of 5000 observations to test the research hypotheses.

The results are presented in Table 4. From these results, we can decide which hypotheses are supported in concluding that a significant impact occurs in the structural model through T statistics. The results show that the hypotheses about the impact relationship in the linear structural model are all accepted, except for hypothesis H3b, which shows the impact of Quality (QOR) on Purchase Intention (PI). This hypothesis does not support acceptance because the P-value in the T statistic is  $> 0.05$ , and therefore. However, there is still an impact outside the allowed statistical significance threshold. The f-square value of this factor is also shallow, so it hardly shows a significant impact. This may be due to the mediating role of the Trust (TR) variable, so the impact of QOR may have been chiefly expressed through TR. These conclusions will be considered in more detail in the hypothesis testing of the mediating relationship, which has yet to be found in related studies. The research results in Table 4 also show that Usefulness has a superior impact on PI compared to other factors when the f-square reaches a value of 0.164. Meanwhile, QOR has a superior impact on TR compared to other factors.

Finally, the hypotheses related to the mediating relationship are tested through an assessment of direct, indirect, and total effects. The results in Table 5 show that hypotheses H1c and H2c are not supported for acceptance because the indirect effects from Timeliness (TOR) and Usefulness (UOR) are insignificant, with P-values greater than 0.5. Meanwhile, hypothesis H3c supports the conclusion that Quality (QOR) affects Purchase Intention (PI) through complete mediation of Trust (TR). On the other hand, from the Rating (ORR) perspective, TR shows partial mediation for ORR to affect Trust and indirectly affect PI directly. This supports the conclusion to accept hypothesis H4c.

Table 4. Hypotheses testing results and index result of f square

Hypotheses	Bootstrapping analysis			f square	
	Relationships	Coefficient	T statistics	P values	TR* PI*
H1a: Supported	Timeliness -> TR	0.121	2.185	***	0.016
H1b: Supported	Timeliness -> PI	0.128	2.533	***	0.022
H2a: Supported	Usefulness -> TR	0.183	2.479	***	0.029
H2b: Supported	Usefulness -> PI	0.386	5.659	****	0.164
H3a: Supported	Quality -> TR	0.343	5.284	****	0.121
H3b: Not supported	Quality -> PI	0.031	0.583	0.560	0.001
H4a: Supported	Rating -> TR	0.194	3.090	***	0.041
H4b: Supported	Rating -> PI	0.190	3.845	****	0.049
H5: Supported	Trust -> PI	0.197	3.084	***	0.050
*TR: Trust	**** Pvalue $< 0.001$ ; *** Pvalue $< 0.05$			$Q^2_{TR} = 0,335$	
*PI: Purchase intention	$R^2_{TR} adjusted = 0,502$ ; $R^2_{PI} adjusted = 0.613$ ; $VIF < 5$			$Q^2_{PI} = 0,422$	

Table 5. Results of Trust intermediary relationship analysis

Hypotheses	Relationships	Direct effects		Specific indirect effects		Total effects		Results
		$\beta$	P-value	$\beta$	P-value	$\beta$	P-value	
H1c	Timeliness -> Trust -> Purchase Intention	0.128	***	0.024	0.058	0.152	***	Not supported
H2c	Usefulness -> Trust -> Purchase Intention	0.386	****	0.036	0.060	0.422	****	Not supported
H3c	Quality -> Trust -> Purchase Intention	0.031	0.560	0.068	***	0.099	***	Supported
H4c	Rating -> Trust -> Purchase Intention	0.190	****	0.038	***	0.228	****	Supported
**** Pvalue $< 0.001$ ; *** Pvalue $< 0.05$								

#### 4.4. Discussion

With the initial goal of exploring the antecedents related to online reviews that impact user trust and purchase intention, the study explored four factors, from literature reviews to theoretical model construction, including Timeliness, Usefulness, Quality, and Rating. Each factor contributes to explaining the variation in Trust and Purchase Intention. However, the Usefulness of online reviews demonstrates a superior impact on user intention, partly because usefulness directly affects Purchase Intention rather than through the mediation of Trust. Therefore, the quickest way to approach changes in user behavior may come from the usefulness of online reviews.

The number of online reviews, both in quantity and quality, is also significant. Users may have a positive first impression of sellers with high Rating reviews, which will quickly boost their trust, as Trust has shown its importance in connecting with purchase intention. Trust also shows superior importance in the relationship between the quality of online reviews and behavioral intention, as the quality of reviews will be a

factor in keeping customers longer to grasp more information about the product. Finally, although there are no positive results to support the conclusion of the mediating role of Trust in the relationship between Timeliness and Purchase Intention, timeliness still significantly impacts both trust and purchase intention. Closer, newer reviews may contribute to creating trust and promoting user buying behavior more quickly.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Research shows that the usefulness of online reviews directly impacts purchase intention rather than through trust. This suggests that ‘usefulness stimuli’, which refer to the specific aspects of a review that are particularly helpful in influencing a purchase decision, will increase immediate behavioral intention. To increase the usefulness of online reviews, it is necessary to create interaction between online sellers and customers. This interaction is not just a one-way street, but a mutual benefit between buyers and sellers. Post-purchase reviewers must provide detailed and complete reviews of the online products they have purchased to inform buyers. Others and sellers must also reward those who take the time to leave good reviews of their products. From quality and detailed reviews will create usefulness for review readers when they intend to buy that product online.

A consumer will not just read a review and make a buying decision. Instead, they will read more than two reviews; some even read dozens of reviews on many websites. Thus, consumers’ trust depends on the content of the reviews and the quality of the review content they read. Therefore, accumulating quality reviews is indispensable if you want to improve the quality of online reviews to influence consumer purchase intention. The solution has two goals: (1) improve the quality of evaluation content and (2) strengthen the accumulation of quality product reviews.

Trust in online reviews is a significant factor and a cornerstone of customers’ online purchase intentions. This influence is not merely direct but also plays a crucial mediating role in connecting other factors. This suggests that when customers intend to make online purchases, they pay attention to trust in online reviews when shopping for products online. Enhancing factors such as usefulness, value, and quality of review information increase consumers’ trust in online reviews and thereby promote future online purchases through online reviews. Combined with the analyzed events and causes, the author considers proposing solutions to limit negative impacts and improve some of the existing conditions of trust-building programs. One of the important factors to enhance trust and positively impact consumer purchase intention is the belief that online reviews of a product meet customer expectations as well as provide unique features for customers to easily shop and feel more comfortable. This underscores the need for continuous improvement in online consumer reviews, making your work even more urgent and important. Online sellers and e-commerce platforms must continuously improve online consumer reviews and constantly update current customer trends to promptly offer solutions to increase trust.

The study is set in a specific context, focusing solely on factors related to online reviews on e-commerce platforms, and excluding other forms of electronic word-of-mouth. However, this unique focus opens up the possibility for future research to integrate these other electronic word-of-mouth methods into the same context for a more comprehensive assessment. The sampling method primarily follows stratification, with the random sampling method used based on the previous stratification. This choice is driven by the large population size, which makes more systematic methods prohibitively expensive. The authors used a linear structural model to construct and analyze the research model in this study. PLS-SEM was chosen over CB-SEM due to concerns about the normal distribution of the collected dataset. In the future, research could potentially expand the sample size to introduce a wider range of statistical analysis tools, thereby enhancing the scalability of the study.

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