

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
Master Degree**

**Specialty:** Electronic Business

**THEME:**

**The Influence of Online Reviews on Consumer  
Decision Making Process  
Case: HEETCH EL DJAZAIR**

**Submitted by:**

Mme, BEKHOUCHE Nestrine

Mme, CHOHRA Maram

**Supervised by:**

Mme, MERABTI MANAL

**Academic year**

**2024-2025**



**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
Master Degree**

**Specialty:** Electronic Business

**THEME:**

**The Influence of Online Reviews on Consumer  
Decision Making Process  
Case: HEETCH EL DJAZAIR**

**Submitted by:**

Mme, BEKHOUCHE Nesrine

Mme, CHOHRA Maram

**Supervised by:**

Mme, MERABTI MANAL

**Academic year**

**2024-2025**

## **Summary**

<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>List of figures .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>List of tables .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>List of abbreviations.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>List of appendices .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Abstract .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>General Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter 1 : Online reviews and consumer decision-making process .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1. Section 1: Online reviews .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Section 1: Online reviews .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2. Section 2: Consumer decision making process .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Section 2: Consumer decision making process.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Chapter 2: Empirical study: the influence of Heetch's online reviews on consumer-</b>	
<b>decision making process.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>1. Section 1: presentation of Heetch.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Section 1: Presentation of Heetch .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>2. Section 2: analysis and interpretation of research results .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Section 2: Analysis and interpretation of research results .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>General conclusion .....</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>Appendices .....</b>	<b>105</b>

## Acknowledgements

*First and foremost, we praise and thank **Allah**, for it is by His grace that we have achieved our goal. All praise be to Allah for His countless blessings.*

*We are deeply grateful to our supervisor, **Mme MERABTI MANAL**, for her insightful guidance and invaluable support. Our sincere thanks also go to our school for its continuous encouragement and for providing the environment for growth and success.*

*We would also like to express our appreciation to ourselves, for enduring so much to reach this stage and achieve this milestone. Thank you to us for not giving up, for persevering despite all the challenges and hardships along the way.*

*We cannot forget our families, for as the saying goes, "Whoever does not thank people does not thank Allah." Our parents and siblings were a true source of support, a strong wall we leaned on whenever life weighed us down, physically or emotionally. Thank you for every support, for every kind word, and for every moment in which you were the light guiding our path.*

*To our friends, thank you for standing by us in difficult times, and for turning this five-year journey into a beautiful and unforgettable memory.*

*And once again, thank you to ourselves (**Nesrine** and **Maram** ) for our unwavering faith in God, in ourselves, and in our ability to complete this journey and succeed. Thank you for our growth, for every small transformation along the way. It wasn't easy, but we did it.*

## List of figures

Figure 1 : How reviews boost SEO .....	18
Figure 2 : The five stages of consumer decision making process .....	24
Figure 3 : Approaches to search for problem solutions .....	27
Figure 4 : Sources that influence buying decision .....	29
Figure 5: Role of online reviews throughout the consumer decision-making process. ....	43
Figure 6 : Technical Sheet of Heetch el djazair .....	49
Figure 7 : Organizational chart of Heetch GLOBAL .....	49
Figure 8 : Departments of Heetch el djazair .....	50
Figure 9 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Gender .....	55
Figure 10 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Age .....	56
Figure 11 : Distribution of the Study Sample by occupation .....	57
Figure 12 : Distribution of the Study Sample by salary .....	58
Figure 13 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Use of Ride-Hailing Apps.....	59
Figure 14 : Distribution of the Study Sample by most frequently Used Ride-Hailing App .....	60
Figure 15 : Distribution of the Study Sample by their main reason for using a ride-hailing app.....	62
Figure 16 : Distribution of the Study Sample by wilaya .....	63
Figure 17 : Distribution of the Study Sample by using ride hailing apps .....	64
Figure 18 : Distribution of the Study Sample by frequency of use ride-hailing apps .....	65
Figure 19 : Distribution of the Study Sample by online reviews checking.....	66
Figure 20 : Distribution of the Study Sample by preferred review platforms.....	68
Figure 21 : Distribution of the Study Sample by the influence of online reviews .....	69
Figure 22 : Distribution of the Study Sample by the influence of reviews .....	70
Figure 23 : Distribution of the Study Sample by avoiding use ride hailing because of negative.....	71
Figure 24 : Distribution of the Study Sample by using ride hailing apps because of positive online reviews.....	72
Figure 25 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Preferred Online Review Format When Choosing Ride-Hailing Apps .....	73
Figure 26 : Distribution of the Study Sample by frequency of leaving online reviews after using ride-hailing apps .....	75

<b>Figure 27 : Distribution of the Study Sample by leaving a bad review .....</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>Figure 28 : Distribution of the Study Sample by leaving a good review .....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>Figure 29 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Agreement with the Statement .....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Figure 30 :Distribution of the Study Sample by the Most Influential Aspect of Online Reviews in Ride-Hailing Services .....</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Figure 31 :Distribution of the Study Sample Regarding the Applicability of Previous Answers to the Heetch App.....</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Figure 32 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Most Liked Aspect of Heetch’s Service .....</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>Figure 33 : Distribution of the Study Sample by satisfaction.....</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>Figure 34 : Distribution of the Study Sample by recommendation .....</b>	<b>83</b>

## List of tables

<b>Table 1 : The difference between online reviews and traditional reviews .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Table 2 : Impact of positive &amp; negative reviews .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Table 3 : Stages of the purchase decision process for products/ services .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Table 4 : Type of factors influencing consumer decision making process .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Table 5 : Scale Reliability Statistics – Cronbach’s Alpha.....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Table 6 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Gender.....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Table 7 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Age .....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Table 8 : Distribution of the Study Sample by occupation .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Table 9 : Distribution of the Study Sample by salary .....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Table 10 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Use of Ride-Hailing Apps .....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Table 11: Distribution of the Study Sample by most Frequently Used Ride-Hailing App .....</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Table 12 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Ranking of Ride-Hailing Service Selection Factors .....</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Table 13 : Distribution of the Study Sample by their main reason for using a ride-hailing app.....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Table 14 : Distribution of the Study Sample by wilaya .....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Table 15 : Distribution of the Study Sample by using ride hailing apps.....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Table 16 : Distribution of the Study Sample by frequency of use ride-hailing apps.....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Table 17 : Distribution of the Study Sample by online reviews checking .....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>Table 18 : Distribution of the Study Sample by App Usage Frequency Rankings.....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>Table 19 : Distribution of the Study Sample by preferred review platforms .....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Table 20 : Distribution of the Study Sample by the influence of online reviews .....</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Table 21 : Distribution of the Study Sample by the influence of reviews .....</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Table 22 : Distribution of the Study Sample by avoiding use ride hailing because of negative.....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Table 23: Distribution of the Study Sample by using ride hailing apps because of positive online reviews.....</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Table 24 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Preferred Online Review Format When Choosing Ride-Hailing Apps .....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Table 25 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Influence Ranking.....</b>	<b>74</b>



<b>Table 26 :Distribution of the Study Sample by frequency of leaving online reviews after using ride-hailing apps .....</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>Table 27 : Distribution of the Study Sample by leaving a bad review.....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Table 28 : Distribution of the Study Sample by leaving a good review .....</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>Table 29 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Agreement with the Statement.....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>Table 30 : Distribution of the Study Sample by the Most Influential Aspect of Online Reviews in Ride-Hailing Services .....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Table 31 : Distribution of the Study Sample by the three key factors.....</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Table 32 : Distribution of the Study Sample Regarding the Applicability of Previous Answers to the Heetch App.....</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Table 33 :Distribution of the Study Sample by Most Liked Aspect of Heetch’s Service.</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Table 34 : Distribution of the Study Sample by satisfaction .....</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>Table 35 : Distribution of the Study Sample by recommandation .....</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>Table 36 : Descriptive Statistics .....</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Table 37 : One-Sample Statistics.....</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Table 38 : T test for one sample .....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Table 39 : Effect sizes for one simple.....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Table 40 : Descriptive Statistics Comparative Influence of Negative vs. Positive Online Reviews on Ride-Hailing App Usage (n = 174) .....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Table 41 : One-Sample Statistics.....</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>Table 42 : T test for one sample .....</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>Table 43 : Effect sizes for one simple.....</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>Table 44 : T test for one simple .....</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Table 45 : T test for one simple .....</b>	<b>89</b>

## **List of abbreviations**

**NOR:** Negative Online Reviews.

**OCR:** Online Customer Reviews.

**SEO:** Search Engine Optimization.

**FOMO:** Fear Of Missing Out.

**AI:** Artificial Intelligence.

**WOM:** Word Of Mouth.

**E-WOM:** Electronic Word Of Mouth.

**CEO:** Chief Executive Officer.

**FR:** France.

**EU:** European Union.

**WA:** West Africa.

## **List of appendices**

<b>Appendix 1 : Questionnaire .....</b>	<b>105</b>
---	------------

## Abstract

Online reviews have significantly transformed how consumers make decisions. With the rise of digital platforms, people increasingly depend on others' online opinions before choosing products or services. Seen as more authentic than traditional advertising, online reviews greatly influence perceptions, build trust, and guide purchasing decisions. In this context, online reviews have become a crucial element in the consumer decision-making process, offering insights. As more consumers rely on these reviews, understanding their influence on each stage of the consumer decision-making process becomes essential for companies seeking to build trust and stay competitive. This is the foundation of our research titled **"The Influence of Online Reviews on the Consumer Decision-Making Process: Case Study Heetch."** The study is structured into two main chapters. The theoretical chapter includes two sections: one focused on the concept of online reviews, and the other on the consumer decision-making process and its link to digital feedback. The second chapter is empirical, presenting the Heetch company and analyzing data from our quantitative study. Our goal is to explore how online reviews influence consumer choices in the ride-hailing industry and how Heetch can leverage these insights to enhance its services, improve customer satisfaction, and boost its competitive edge.

**keywords:** online reviews, consumer decision-making process, ride-hailing, purchase decision, customer experience.

## ملخص

لقد غيّرت المراجعات عبر الإنترنت بشكل كبير طريقة اتخاذ المستهلكين لقراراتهم. فمع تزايد استعمال المنصات الرقمية، أصبح الناس يعتمدون بشكل متزايد على آراء الآخرين عبر الإنترنت قبل اختيار المنتجات أو الخدمات. وتُعتبر هذه المراجعات أكثر مصداقية من الإعلانات التقليدية، حيث تؤثر بشكل كبير على التصورات، وتشكل ثقتهم، وتوجه قرارات الشراء. وفي هذا السياق، أصبحت المراجعات عبر الإنترنت عنصراً حيوياً في عملية اتخاذ القرار لدى المستهلك، حيث توفر رؤية قيمة. ومع اعتماد المزيد من المستهلكين على هذه المراجعات، يصبح من الضروري فهم تأثيرها على كل مرحلة من مراحل اتخاذ القرار، بالنسبة للشركات التي تسعى لبناء الثقة مع العملاء والحفاظ على تنافسيتها. هذا هو الأساس الذي بُنيت عليه دراستنا بعنوان: "تأثير المراجعات عبر الإنترنت على عملية اتخاذ القرار لدى المستهلك". تتكون الدراسة من فصلين رئيسيين. يشمل الفصل النظري قسمين: الأول يركّز على مفهوم المراجعات عبر الإنترنت، والثاني على عملية اتخاذ القرار لدى المستهلك وصلتها بالتغذية المراجعات الرقمية. أما الفصل الثاني فهو فصل تطبيقي، يتم فيه تقديم شركة هيبنتش وتحليل بيانات دراستنا الكمية. هدفنا هو استكشاف كيفية تأثير المراجعات عبر الإنترنت على اختيارات المستهلكين في قطاع خدمات النقل بسيارة مع سائق، وكيف يمكن لشركة هيبنتش الاستفادة من هذه الرؤى لتعزيز خدماتها، وتحسين رضا العملاء، وزيادة قدرتها التنافسية.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** المراجعات عبر الإنترنت، عملية اتخاذ القرار لدى المستهلك، حجز سيارات الأجرة عبر التطبيقات، قرار الشراء، تجربة العميل.

## Résumé

Les avis en ligne ont profondément reconfiguré le processus décisionnel des consommateurs, influençant de manière significative leurs choix d'achat. Avec l'évolution des plateformes numériques, les gens dépendent de plus en plus des opinions d'autrui en ligne avant de choisir un produit ou un service. Perçus comme plus authentiques que la publicité traditionnelle, les avis en ligne influencent fortement les perceptions, instaurent la confiance et orientent les décisions d'achat. Dans ce contexte, les avis en ligne sont devenus un élément crucial du processus de décision du consommateur, en offrant des perspectives précieuses. À mesure que de plus en plus de consommateurs se fient à ces avis, il devient essentiel de comprendre leur impact à chaque étape du processus décisionnel, pour les entreprises souhaitant établir la confiance et rester compétitives. C'est sur cette base que repose notre recherche intitulée : « L'influence des avis en ligne sur le processus de décision du consommateur : étude de cas Heetch ». L'étude est structurée en deux chapitres principaux. Le chapitre théorique comporte deux sections : l'une consacrée au concept des avis en ligne, l'autre au processus de décision du consommateur et à son lien avec les retours numériques. Le second chapitre est empirique : il présente l'entreprise Heetch et analyse les données issues de notre étude quantitative. Notre objectif est d'explorer comment les avis en ligne influencent les choix des consommateurs dans le secteur du transport à la demande, et comment Heetch peut tirer parti de ces enseignements pour améliorer ses services, renforcer la satisfaction client et accroître son avantage concurrentiel.

**Mots-clés :** avis en ligne, processus de décision du consommateur, service VTC, décision d'achat, expérience client

## **General Introduction**

## **General Introduction**

In the past, consumers primarily relied on word-of-mouth from friends and family, in-store experiences, or advice from sales representatives to learn about a product or service. However, in today's digital age, the way people gather information has drastically evolved. Consumers now turn to digital platforms (search engines, social media, online marketplaces, and review sites) to explore and evaluate products. These platforms have become vital sources of influence, offering immediate access to a wealth of shared experiences and opinions.

Among the most impactful tools in this digital landscape are online reviews, these reviews provide real-world insights into the performance, quality, and reliability of a product or service, helping potential buyers make their decisions. Online reviews not only reduce uncertainty but also shape consumer expectations, build trust, and influence brand perception.

This growing influence of online reviews is closely tied to the consumer decision-making process, which refers to the series of steps a customer goes through before, during, and after purchasing a product or service. In this context, consumers not only evaluate the product itself but also pay attention to the brand's reputation, responsiveness, and credibility.

The motivation for selecting this research topic arises from both objective and subjective considerations. Objectively, With the rapid growth of ride-hailing services and intensifying competition among platforms, understanding how the digital transformation has changed consumer decision-making, people now widely share both positive and negative feedback across various online platforms. These online reviews significantly influence customers when selecting and using products or services. This growing reliance on online feedback underscores the need to better understand its influence on consumer decision-making process and business strategies. Subjectively, we chose this theme after observing how online reviews played a central role in shaping public reaction to recent events in Algeria's ride-hailing market. When Yassir collaborated with Carrefour, a brand widely accused of supporting genocide, online platforms were quickly flooded with negative reviews condemning the partnership. These reviews didn't just reflect outrage; they actively influenced others to uninstall the app, join the boycott, and amplify the criticism across social networks. Similarly, in the case of InDrive, disturbing incidents such as car theft and the kidnapping of young women were shared widely online, sparking a wave of negative reviews and testimonials. These reviews spread rapidly,



shaping a collective sense of insecurity and encouraging users to abandon the platform. In both cases, the accumulation of online reviews created a powerful ripple effect, reinforcing negative perceptions and prompting real-life decision changes. At the same time, Heetch began receiving a surge of positive reviews and recommendations, positioning it as a safer and more reliable alternative. These experiences highlighted for us how deeply online reviews can influence consumer trust, perception, and decision-making process in the digital age. Therefore, this study focuses on understanding how online reviews influence consumer decision-making process in the ride-hailing industry, with Heetch as a case study. The principal research problem is:

**« How do online reviews of Heetch influence the consumer decision-making process? »**

To explore this problem more deeply, the following sub-questions have been formulated:

**Q1.** How do negative reviews compared to positive reviews influence consumer decisions to use Heetch's ride-hailing services?

**Q2.** Which online review format do consumers prioritize text-based reviews, photo-based reviews, or video-based reviews, when making decisions based on Heetch's online reviews?

**Q3.** What specific aspects of online reviews (e.g., safety, pricing, or driver behavior) have the strongest influence on consumer decisions when choosing Heetch?

From these questions, the following hypotheses have been proposed:

The principal hypothesis is: **« Online reviews significantly influence the consumer decision-making process by shaping perceptions and guiding choices »**

To confirm this hypothesis, the following sub-hypotheses have been formulated

**H1:** Negative reviews have a stronger influence on consumer decisions than positive reviews.

**H2:** Consumers prioritize text-based reviews over photo-based and video-based reviews when making decisions based on Heetch's online reviews.

**H3:** Safety-related aspects of online reviews have the strongest influence on consumer decisions when choosing Heetch.

To address the main research question and test the proposed hypotheses, a quantitative research approach based on real-world data was adopted. The study centers on online reviews related to the ride-hailing service Heetch, with the aim of analyzing their influence on the consumer decision-making process. This data-driven methodology allowed for the formulation of broader conclusions and the generalization of findings.

As part of this research, a professional internship was conducted within Heetch, a ride-hailing company operating in multiple countries, including Algeria. This internship provided privileged access to internal data and customer interactions. Immersion in the organizational environment offered a comprehensive understanding of the role online reviews play in influencing consumer behavior and shaping the company's reputation, both from a theoretical and practical standpoint.

The structure of our research is divided into two chapters. The first chapter is dedicated to the theoretical framework, exploring key concepts of online reviews, the stages of the consumer decision-making process, and the relationship between the two. To build this framework, we consulted a range of sources including academic publications, books, scientific journals, research articles, and reputable websites.

The second chapter presents the empirical component of our study, with Heetch serving as a case study. This section includes an overview of the company, followed by a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the survey results related to the influence of Heetch's online reviews on the consumer decision-making process. The chapter concludes with a set of practical recommendations and proposed solutions based on the findings.

**Chapter 1: Online reviews and consumer decision-making  
process**

## **Introduction**

In 2025, around 60% of the world's population are connected due to the use of the internet, and another 60% are actively using social media which has significantly changed the way we communicate and share feedback.

The increasing influence of social media and feedback shared on it, has altered the way consumers make decision in the current digital era. Nowadays consumers rely heavily on online reviews when making judgement about what to buy, consumers today play an active role in shaping brand reputations through their feedback and reviews.

This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section focuses on the concept of online reviews, beginning with a clear definition, followed by their key characteristics and formats. It further explores the different aspects in online reviews, the distinction between positive and negative reviews, and emphasizes the importance of online reviews.

The second section examines the consumer decision-making process. It outlines the different stages of this process and investigates the factors that influence consumer decision. The section concludes by analyzing the influence of online reviews on consumer decision-making process.

## Section 1: Online reviews

Before the internet, customers had to rely on in-person conversations to gather information about the quality or reputation of products and services. This approach was often inefficient and time-consuming. However, people now have access to millions of online reviews across various platforms. With just a single click, they can find ample feedback and detailed information about any product or service, so they can make their decision. It is on this concept that we will expand throughout this section.

### 1.1. Overview of online reviews

#### 1.1.1. Definition of online reviews

In Pre-Internet Era, we had to ask in person people around if we want to know about an experience, quality or reputation of a business or product/service, hoping we find an answer. However, after the 90s, we witnessed a transition of traditional reviews to online reviews.

Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) in the form of online customer reviews, is a part of many customers' purchase journey, e-WOM exists in various forms, such as user-generated content, personal emails, and social media post.<sup>1</sup>

Online reviews are a form of digital feedback shared online by consumers, including their experience and satisfaction about a products or services<sup>2</sup>, commonly published on e-commerce websites, social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, YouTube ... etc) and reviews platforms<sup>3</sup>. Online reviews have become an important element in consumer decision making process, they make consumers aware for a product/service<sup>4</sup> and allow consumers to infer the quality of these goods/services, in result, consumers will save personal time, reduce the perceived risk and make best decisions<sup>5</sup>. More than 90% of consumers around the world trust earned media, same as friends and family recommendations, more than any type of advertising,

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/display/document/obo-9780199756841/obo-9780199756841-0267.xml>, consulted [19/03/2025]

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.business.qld.gov.au/running-business/marketing-sales/marketing/websites-social-media/online-communication-customer-reviews>, consulted [19/03/2025]

<sup>3</sup> Mehryar, H., Saeed, M., Baroom, H., Al-Ja'afreh, A., & Al-Adaileh, R. (2020). The impact of electronic word of mouth on consumers' purchasing intention. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Information Technology*, 98(2), 185

<sup>4</sup> López, M., & Sicilia, M. (2011). The impact of e-WOM: Determinants of influence. In *Advances in Advertising Research (Vol. 2) Breaking New Ground in Theory and Practice* (pp. 215-230).

<sup>5</sup> Nacereddine, S. (2018). The Effect of Online Reviews on Hotel Booking Intention, 1(1), pp.03.

and they consider online reviews as the second most trusted source of information and feedback about a brand <sup>1</sup>

The Internet provides a shared space where people can express opinions about satisfaction with products or services. These online reviews are unevaluable for gaining insights into consumer behavior and build good reputation. Positive reviews can enhance a company's reliability and credibility, while negative feedback, if not managed properly, can harm its reputation, this highlights the importance of user's evaluations and reviews<sup>2</sup>.

In the current context of e-commerce, both consumer and expert reviews play a key role in shaping online purchase decisions<sup>3</sup>. They help shoppers reduce uncertainty and feel more confident about the products they're considering. Consumer and expert reviews are both user-generated evaluations available online that significantly influence consumers' purchasing intentions. The key distinction between the two lies in the level of expertise of the reviewer, which plays a crucial role in assessing the authority and usefulness of the review. When consumer and expert reviews present conflicting opinions, customers often face a dilemma. While many consumers are inclined to trust products with numerous consumer reviews, those with limited prior knowledge of the product tend to rely more heavily on expert reviews to inform their purchase decisions.<sup>4</sup> Also in the context of online reviews, there are a large number of Fake reviews created by copying and pasting on the Internet, and it is also common to interfere with comments with elaborate text and text, which directly affects the effectiveness of the system for users to refer to when making decisions<sup>5</sup>.

### **1.1.2. History of online reviews**

The evolution of online reviews began with the emergence of early platforms like RateItAll, Deja, and Opinions, enabling consumers to share feedback on products and services. Over time, major players like Yelp, Amazon, Google, and Facebook dominated the market, while niche platforms emerged for specific industries. The rise of smartphones and apps allowed users to share instant, multimedia reviews, enhancing their credibility and impact. Today, AI and big

---

<sup>1</sup> icha, o. (2015). *effectiveness of social media networks as a strategic tool for organizational marketing management*. j internet bank commer, s2.

<sup>2</sup>md anisuzzaman (2024) *the influence of online customer reviews on brand perception and purchasing decisions*

<sup>3</sup> Chakravarty, A., Liu, Y., & Mazumdar, T. (2010). *The differential effects of online word-of-mouth and critics' reviews on pre-release movie evaluation*.

<sup>4</sup>Guo, F., Chen, J., Li, M., Ye, G., & Li, J. (2022). *How do expert reviews and consumer reviews affect purchasing decisions? An event-related potential study*. *Journal of Neuroscience, Psychology, and Economics*, 15(2), 101.

<sup>5</sup>Cao, Chuhua. *The Impact of Fake Reviews of Online Goods on Consumers*. Available at: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/369430148\\_The\\_Impact\\_of\\_Fake\\_Reviews\\_of\\_Online\\_Goods\\_on\\_Consumers](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/369430148_The_Impact_of_Fake_Reviews_of_Online_Goods_on_Consumers)[Last accessed: May 27, 2025].

data analytics revolutionize eWOM, enabling businesses to analyse consumer sentiment and trends, driving personalized marketing strategies and influencing purchasing decisions. Online reviews have become a cornerstone of modern consumer behaviour and business strategy.

**a) 1990 – 2009: the birth and evolution of online reviews**

**1999:** The first internet reviews appeared in this year, with the appearance of three original gangsters of online reviews: RateItAll.com, Deja.com, Epinions.com. They collected a total of 1,146,201 online reviews on everything from products, movies and sports.<sup>1</sup>

**2001:** Customers were able to evaluate services and products before making the purchase decision in Yellow Pages and City Search online reviews section of local businesses

**2002:** Deja's Usenet search technology acquired by Google, and it used as Google groups, enabling people to make research about companies and products, and leave comments about them.

**2003:** Shoppers had access to reviews of products and services after DealTime (later shopping.com) acquired opinions, which made the choice of products easier.

**2007:** The partnership of RateItAll with MuseStorm to create widgets, which enables companies to feature good reviews directly on their site.

**2009:** Response function is introduced by Yelp. Companies were able to reply to reviews and alleviate customer grievances<sup>2</sup>.

**b) 2010-2019: Big Platforms and Mobile dominance**

**2010:** Big companies dominated the online reviews market: Yelp, Amazon, Google, Facebook, and TripAdvisor.

Facebook was the dominator business reviews from 2012 to 2016, next year in 2017 Google took the lead and Amazon dominated product reviews.

**2018:** Niche review websites like Vitals.com and Healthgrades.com emerged, focusing on healthcare professionals and centers.

**Mobile Revolution:** The propagation of smartphones and different apps made customers able to share reviews instantaneously in various formats (photos, texts, videos, ...etc.), which rendering online reviews credible and impactful<sup>3</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> [https://reviewconcierge.com/lessons/online\\_review\\_survival\\_course/5/understanding-the-history-of-online-reviews/](https://reviewconcierge.com/lessons/online_review_survival_course/5/understanding-the-history-of-online-reviews/), consulted [23/03/2025]

<sup>2</sup> <https://reviewinc.com/2021/09/07/a-history-of-online-reviews/>, consulted [24/03/2025]

<sup>3</sup> Xiang, Z., & Gretzel, U. (2010). Role of social media in online travel information search. *Tourism Management*, 31(2), 179-188.

### c) 2020s-Present: AI and Big Data Era

**2020:** Artificial intelligence (AI) and big data analytics revolutionized eWOM and online reviews. Businesses now leverage AI and big data analytics to analyse large volume of review data and gain deep insights into consumer sentiment, behaviour and trends, this has led to the increase of personalized marketing strategies driven by reviews and feedback data, reinforce customer engagement and influencing the purchase decision<sup>1</sup>.

#### 1.1.3. Difference between traditional reviews and online reviews

Since online reviews are a form of electronic word of mouth (eWOM), Table 01 summarizes the main differences between traditional reviews and online reviews. The characteristics presented were extracted from the literature on word of mouth (WOM) and electronic word of mouth (eWOM).

**Table 1 : The difference between online reviews and traditional reviews**

Particular	Traditional reviews	Online reviews
<b>Medium</b>	Talk, personal meeting, telephone	Social networking sites, review websites, discussion forum, blogs, etc.
<b>Form of communication</b>	Oral	Written, audio, photo
<b>Relationship</b>	Real social ties	Mostly virtual ties
<b>Type of interaction</b>	Face to face	Virtual
<b>Ease of transmission</b>	Difficult	Easy
<b>Communication format</b>	Linear	Non-linear

**Source:** Rani, A. and Shivaprasad, H.N. (2019b) ‘Electronic word of mouth (ewom) strategies to manage innovation and Digital Business Model’, Advances in Human Resources Management and Organizational Development, pp.45.

---

<sup>1</sup> Hannat, A. (2024). *Electronic word of mouth and its impact on online decision making (purchase intention) (Master's thesis)*. Higher School of Management and Digital Economy, Algeria.



## 1.2. Characteristics of online reviews

Online reviews play a crucial role for modern businesses and the consumer feedback posted online is one of the most dominant channels creating a progressive online WOM<sup>1</sup>. An online review could be either a positive or negative description of a customer about a brand's product or service, published on the internet<sup>2</sup>, in another term online review is a kind of self-expression of emotion, it may include positive emotions or negative emotion. These online customer review generally has two parts: quantity (for example, star ratings) and quality (for example, survey meaningfulness)<sup>3</sup>. Online reviews have two goals. First one, the online review serves information of a product/service (features, quality etc.), and secondly it plays the role of a recommendation<sup>4</sup>. as it mentioned before online customer reviews and recommendations have become a significant source of product data. These are regularly portrayed by the valence (for example, average star rating), and the volume (for examples, number of reviews). valence, volume, recentness and length of the online reviews are considered as dimensions and elements of the independent variable online customer reviews<sup>5</sup>.

### 1.2.1. Valence

Valence concerns the positive or negative information about an experience with an object or situation. purchasing experience differs from a purchaser to another, and to measure purchaser's satisfaction through their review's object, review valence is a significant indicator that could help. Review valence can be positive, negative, or neutral. The positive online review is a comment left by a customer or client who is satisfied with your company, product or service, and negative online reviews contain negative information, and it have an unfavorable valence<sup>6</sup>.

The influence of positive and negative reviews is more important than neutral reviews on potential consumers, Positive online reviews are positively related to sales, but negative data is

---

<sup>1</sup> Duan, W., Gu, B. & Whinston, A. B., 2008. Do online reviews matter? - An empirical investigation of panel data. *Decision Support Systems*, pp. 1007 - 1016.

<sup>2</sup> Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K. P., Walsch, G. & Gremler, D. D., 2004. Electronic Word-of- Mouth Via Consumer-Opinion Platforms: What Motivates Consumers to Articulate Themselves on the Internet?. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 18(1), pp. 38-52.

<sup>3</sup> Agnihotri, A. & Bhattacharya, S., 2016. Online Review Helpfulness: Role of Qualitative Factors. *Psychology & Marketing*, 33(11), pp. 1006 - 1017.

<sup>4</sup> Nacereddine, S. (2018). The Effect of Online Reviews on Hotel Booking Intention. , (1)1 مجلة الاقتصاد الدولي والعولمة, 11-01

<sup>5</sup> Idem

<sup>6</sup> Cite as: L. G. Pee (2016) Negative Online Consumer Reviews: Can the Impact be Mitigated? *International Journal of Market Research*, 58 (4), pp. 545-568

better remembered for customers, and they take it in consideration over the positive one.<sup>1</sup> The negativity effect means that consumers attach less value to positive information in comparison with the negative one.

Valence decreases the asymmetry of information that exist in the marketplace<sup>2</sup>, to make the purchase decision, consumers prefer to use review valence as a measure to a quick judgement of a product quality and performance<sup>3</sup>. the review valence can directly affect the perceived usefulness of online reviews and the buying decisions, The effect of reviews valence <sup>4</sup>

### 1.2.2. Volume

Volume is the number of online reviews or ratings about a product, service or a brand. The big number of online reviews help to convince consumers, when an opinion shared by a massive groupe of consumers will enhance this opinion. Furthermore, consumers can become more informed about a specific product when there is considerable volume of online reviews, which influences their purchasing decision, affects positively the sales and increase awareness and believability of the online reviews<sup>5</sup>.

### 1.2.3. Recentness

Recentness is simply the date the online review was published, and it considered as one of the critical factors that are related with the reaction. The recentness can be divided into “recent” postdates and “old” postdates. the impact of old online reviews may be less than the most recent online reviews. People with not-so-distant future purchases read new reviews unlike people with far off future purchases. Also, members with further future purchase intention read more old reviews unlike members with close future purchases<sup>6</sup>. shoppers find reading old online reviews, untrustworthy when using it to decide purchasing decisions. they may also consider that the content of old review content is too ancient and useful<sup>7</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> Mudambi, S.M.; Schuff, D. What makes a helpful online review? A study of customer reviews on amazon.com. *MIS Q.* 2010, 34, 185–200.

<sup>2</sup> Kordrostami, E. (2016). *Valence or volume? Maximizing online review influence across consumers, products, and marketing tactics* [Doctoral dissertation, Old Dominion University]

<sup>3</sup> Muzumdar, P. (2021). Impact of review valence and perceived uncertainty on purchase of time-constrained and discounted search goods. [Conference paper]. ResearchGate. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355391538\\_Impact\\_of\\_review\\_valence\\_and\\_perceived\\_uncertainty\\_on\\_purchase\\_of\\_time-constrained\\_and\\_discounted\\_search\\_goods](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355391538_Impact_of_review_valence_and_perceived_uncertainty_on_purchase_of_time-constrained_and_discounted_search_goods)

<sup>4</sup> Zhao, Y., Tang, B., Yang, X., & Nawijn, J. (2024). How Review Valence Shapes Visit Intention: Affective Commitment and Destination Reputation. *Sustainability*, 16(9), 3584

<sup>5</sup> Godes, D. & Mayzlin, D. (2004). “Using online conversations to study word of mouth communication”, *Marketing Science*, 23 (4), pp. 545–560

<sup>6</sup> 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), pp. 552 - 566.

<sup>7</sup> Ibrahim, M. M., & Mamdouh, H. A. (2025). The impact of online customer reviews (OCRs) on consumer purchasing decision. *Arab Journal of Administration*, 45(2), 387–406.

#### 1.2.4. Length

Length of online reviews refers to the total number of typed characters in one review<sup>1</sup>, longer online reviews include more information than the shorter online reviews that don't offer lot of details. Customers can be more convinced by long online reviews because they offer more details and information, Besides, longer online reviews attract more customers' attention because for them longer reviews can contain the content they are looking for and they hope to find. when it comes to decision making, the customer the "decision maker" will have more confidence about what he decides if there is more information available, this implies that shorter online reviews are not helpful comparing with longer online reviews.<sup>2</sup>

### 1.3. Online reviews formats and aspects

#### 1.3.1. Formats of online reviews

Online reviews can be multimodal, including text, images, and videos, and introduced on different platforms with diverse design elements like, colour, font etc, these elements may differently impact consumer information processing and the decision making.

Nowadays, the data can be of any type, such as; images, text, numbers, etc, a review that contains textual elements considered as text-based review<sup>3</sup>, we consider an image-based review as a review that includes photo elements, and a video-based review is a review that includes video elements, and a one review may contain one of these elements or a combination of all of them.

A text review is a written format of customer feedback who recently purchased a product or service, posted publicly on Google, social media, or on the brand's website or app through a review page. Text based reviews may include detailed descriptions<sup>4</sup>.

Furthermore, the reviews content can include of either text with emotions or textual with picture<sup>5</sup>, the picture in reviews equals thousands of words and it can depict the consumer feelings easily. consumers are more likely to give attention to reviews with pictures, no matter

---

<sup>1</sup> Chevalier, J. & Mayzlin, D., 2004. *The Effect of Word of Mouth on Sales: Online Book Reviews*. *Journa of Marketing Research*, 43(3), pp. 345 - 354.

<sup>2</sup> Nacereddine, S. (2018). *The Effect of Online Reviews on Hotel Booking Intention*. *مجلة الاقتصاد الدولي والعولمة*, 1(1), 11-01

<sup>3</sup> Kanwal, S., Nawaz, S., Malik, M. K., & Nawaz, Z. (2021). *A review of text-based recommendation systems*. *IEEE Access*, 9, 31638–31661

<sup>4</sup><https://www.uschamber.com/co/grow/marketing/benefits-of-text-based-testimonials>, consulted [07/04/2025]

<sup>5</sup>Hossin, M. A., Mu, Y., Fang, J., & Frimpong, A. N. K. (2019). *Influence of picture presence in reviews on online seller product rating: Moderation role approach*. *KSII Transactions on Internet and Information Systems*, 13(12), 6097–6120

what types of products is, because that type of reviews improve their cognitive ability,<sup>1</sup>The review images impact the helpfulness of the review, these photos capable to reduce information asymmetries by reducing the uncertainty of customers about a product or service. Another format of Peer-generated reviews is video testimonial, which is like text reviews, except that the customer makes a video instead of writing out his review.<sup>2</sup>

The development of sharing economy increased the popularity of short videos among individuals of all age groups around the world<sup>3</sup>, numerous videos posted on social media platforms like: Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, are created by users to express their feedback or personal experiences after purchasing a product or service.<sup>4</sup> moreover, Customer video testimonials considered as powerful social proof and encourage hesitate customers to buy. finally, images and video serve information that help consumers quickly understand product features or user experience. These review presentation formats are used by consumers not only to share their product experiences but also to gather information about the product. According to media theories, these rich information presentations have an impact on consumers' perceptions and purchasing behaviors. Therefore, online review presentation formats are reported to influence online purchase intention<sup>5</sup>.

### **1.3.2. Service/ product aspects in online reviews**

Users consider online reviews because they trust in the independent information from other users, most online reviews express consumers' overall opinion ratings on the product, and their opinions on multiple aspects of the product or the service, a product/service may have several aspects, but some aspects are more influential than the others on consumer's buying decision<sup>6</sup>. Internet reviews are also a channel to explain complaints, dissatisfied customers share their opinion about the perceived inequity of expectations<sup>7</sup>. The complaint is a statement about unsatisfied situation or an expectation that have not been met. it is also considered as an

---

<sup>1</sup> Luo, H., Zhou, W., Song, W., & He, X. (2022). *An Empirical Study on the Differences between Online Picture Reviews and Text Reviews*. *Information*, 13(7), 344

<sup>2</sup> Idem

<sup>3</sup> Zhai, L., Yin, P., Li, C., Wang, J., & Yang, M. (2022). *Investigating the Effects of Video-Based E-Word-of-Mouth on Consumers' Purchase Intention: The Moderating Role of Involvement*. *Sustainability*, 14(15), 9522

<sup>4</sup> Smith, A.N.; Fischer, E.; Yongjian, C. *How Does Brand-related User-generated Content Differ across YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter?* *J. Interact. Mark.* 2012, 26, 102–113

<sup>5</sup> Kiremitci, O., & Köroğlu, Ö. (2022). *The impact of online consumer reviews on purchasing decisions: An empirical study on electronics products*, *Atatürk University Journal of Social Sciences Institute*, 26(2), pp. 489–516

<sup>6</sup> Yu, J., Zha, Z.-J., Wang, M., & Chua, T.-S. (2011). *Aspect ranking: Identifying important product aspects from online consumer reviews*. In *Proceedings of the 49th Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics: Human Language Technologies* (pp. 1496–1505)

<sup>7</sup> Maurer, C., & Schaich, A. (2011). *Online customer reviews used as complaint management tool*. In *ENTER 2011 Conference Proceedings* (pp. 499–511)

opportunity for an organization to satisfy a dissatisfied customer by fixing the problem, so, a complaint is a gift customers give to a business<sup>1</sup>. generally, customer evaluation of product or service, implies the analyse of reviews that may involve the comment of quality, price, service attitude, etc.

#### **a) Price**

The price refers to the exchange of value of an amount of money with the desired item (goods/services). price apart from being the main factor, price is also a sensitive matter for consumers. Consumers always look at price of the product first before buying and compare it with similar product. Usually, customers will choose the cheaper one and will prefer products with these low prices.

The price is a major and sensitive factor, and product reviews are an important factor for the purchasing decision, because customers will check the previous purchasers' reviews to make their decision.<sup>2</sup>

#### **b) Safety and security**

The consumer usually will have a look about security aspect and try to find out more deeply whether the brand has a high level of security so that consumers can decide.

For example, in the case of ride hailing industry, safety becomes a critical determinant of service quality. Safety and security issues are concerns for the government and ride-hailing service providers because they directly impact passengers and impact their satisfaction, Driver safety protocols are integral to the ride-hailing industry, and they often include driver training, vehicle inspections, and respecting the traffic regulations, to ensure passenger safety<sup>3</sup>.

#### **c) Attitude**

*“Attitude influences most outcomes in life and sales is no exception. Our attitude comes through in how we interact with others, whether we’re aware of it or not. Clients and prospects notice, so having the right selling attitude can directly impact our income”.* **By Judy Preszcator.**

Attitude is an interaction can hang in the balance of this one word, this powerful word. Having the right attitude can make an unpleasant situation, at the very least, bearable and can,

---

<sup>1</sup> Barlow, J., & Møller, C. (1996). *A complaint is a gift: Using customer feedback as a strategic tool*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, p 11

<sup>2</sup> Dilla, N., & Usman, O. (2021). *The influence of prices, product reviews, and security on purchase decisions at the marketplace Shopee* (pp. 1–24)

<sup>3</sup> Afifudin, M. *et al.* (2024) ‘Driver safety protocols, emergency response systems, insurance coverage, and customer feedback on service quality in Indonesia’s ride-hailing industry’, *International Journal of Business, Law, and Education*, 5(2), pp. 2584–2595.

at the most, turn it into the best experience ever. The Greet, smile, ask if the customer needs help, and thank them. Somewhere along those lines is the formula, and somewhere in that script, the experience is lost<sup>1</sup>.

#### **1.4. Importance of online reviews**

Due to the rapid evolution of online retail platforms and the accelerated pace of consumer life, online shopping has become one of the mainstream ways for consumers to purchase products and services. A large number of online reviews of online shopping have been presented. Online reviews include much useful information about the experiences of a product or service submitted by consumers, which is an important way for consumers to obtain cognitive value<sup>2</sup>.

These reviews also are commonly found out on various platforms like media and e- websites. They have had a great effect on the way consumers behave<sup>3</sup>. There are several key reasons why online reviews are important. They:

##### **1.4.1. Influence Consumer Decisions**

The impact of online reviews on the attitudes and behaviors of customers should not be undervalued. Online reviews can cause ripples in consumer perception, particularly when it comes to making purchases. Regardless of whether these reviews are good or bad, the comments on them can hugely affect customer attitudes and actions. As a matter of fact, these reviews impact all sorts of things: product selection, willingness to pay, confidence, faithfulness every aspect of consumer enjoyment with a product. Businesses must conscientiously manage and monitor these reviews because they directly influence consumer opinions, determining the success or failure of a product. Furthermore, internet reviews do not only affect the choices of single consumers but have wider significance for companies<sup>4</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://medium.com/@joshuaskangley/its-all-about-attitude-when-it-comes-to-excellent-customer-service-f90352db8191> , consulted [13/04/2025]

<sup>2</sup> Zhang, N., Yu, P., Li, Y., & Gao, W. (2022). Research on the Evolution of Consumers' Purchase Intention Based on Online Reviews and Opinion Dynamics. *Sustainability*, 14(24), 16510.

<sup>3</sup> Srivastava, P., & Kalro, A. (2018), Importance of online reviews, *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, vol. 17, pp. 392–406.

<sup>4</sup> Chen, J. (2015), Online reviews influence on Consumer Decisions, *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 52, pp. 687–704.

A study has shown that as the number of reviews increases, consumers' intent to purchase also increases. It takes on this meaning when people regard other people's internet comments as an information source to help build confidence in a product<sup>1</sup>.

The perception of the shopping site and the product itself is influenced by customer feedback. Good reviews not only increase people's perception of an item. It also breeds in the customer's idea of trust for the shopping site.

It is this trust that can attract consumers and goes some way to fostering loyalty that leads to shopping decisions. On the other hand, negative customer reviews can affect consumers' purchase decisions. Upon reading reviews, consumers might start to feel tasteless and doubtful about a product's quality and reliability. Their indecision may then lead to their reluctance to buy later somehow, they may even be turned off to making a purchase<sup>2</sup>.

#### **1.4.2. Enhance the perceived trustworthiness**

Online reviews help to build trust and credibility with potential customers. Today, customers are naturally sceptical and rely on the opinions of others to help them decide whether to go ahead with something. Online reviews show that a company is active and credible, and companies with a high number of positive reviews are often perceived as more reliable and reputable. So, when a potential customer sees<sup>3</sup>.

Online reviews are long considered to be one of the most influential information sources during the pre-purchase searching stage, the effect of word of mouth (WOM) is found to be extraordinarily important. People are more willing to accept and trust information from people who are similar to themselves. OCRs, essentially WOM conversations conducted online (eWOM), can reach a significantly vast audience According to Dabholkar, P. A., Kumar, A., and Benbasat, the presence of OCRs on a website has been shown to improve consumer perception of the usefulness and social presence of the website.

Many shoppers distrust businesses that have negative reviews and ratings below (or even above) four stars. This leaves a small margin of error at the top, but companies with better average ratings are significantly more likely to see views converted to traffic and sales.

---

<sup>1</sup> Bhāle, S., & Tongare, S. (2018), *The effect of review volume on purchase intention*, *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, vol. 42, pp. 53–65.

<sup>2</sup> Kim, D., Ferrin, D. L., & Rao, H. R. (2008), *The influence of customer feedback on shopping site perception and product trust*, *Decision Support Systems*, vol. 45, pp. 556–557.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.bsa.org.uk/media-centre/bsa-blog/may-2024/guest-blog-the-importance-of-online-reviews>, consulted [01/04/2025]

A series of negative reviews on popular platforms like Google Reviews, Yelp, TripAdvisor, or social media can severely damage a company's image. Negative feedback can deter potential customers and erode trust in the brand, making it essential for businesses to actively manage their online presence<sup>1</sup>.

#### **1.4.3. Influence Sales Performance**

Online reviews have a significant bearing on a firm's financial performance, including such items as box-office receipts, sales of entertainments, even stock market valuations. These findings suggest that firms must manage online reviews effectively, for they directly affect consumer perceptions, and in the end the fate of a product or service may depend upon the degree of public recognition it receives from different sections of the consumer market<sup>2</sup>.

#### **1.4.4. Enhance Visibility**

Successful brands are often characterized by their strong presence and visibility in the market. Most shoppers use search engines like Google and Bing or social media platforms like Facebook to make purchase decisions. These review websites platforms have unique ways of indexing and surfacing content, and they value original and fresh content. Positive reviews on review sites can help feed the content machine, keeping your brand favored by algorithms and improve your search results<sup>3</sup>.

This relationship between user-generated content and improved search visibility can be further demonstrated in Figure 1, which highlights the steady increase in organic page visits observed across 30,000 businesses after integrating customer reviews into their platforms.

---

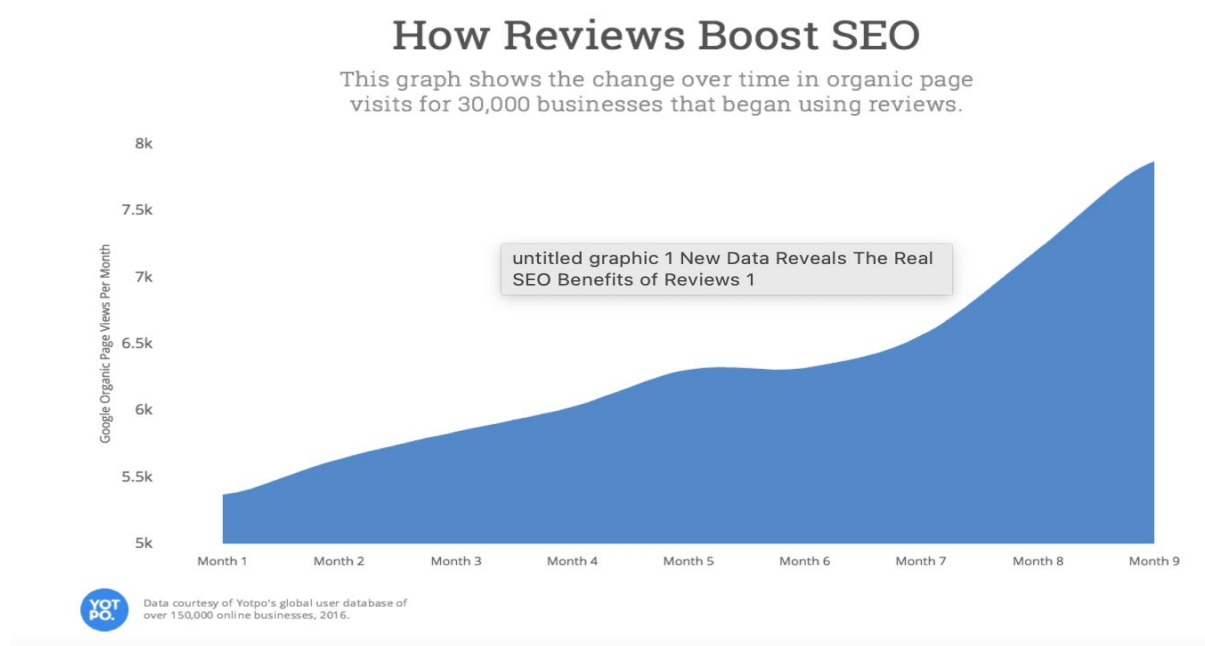
<sup>1</sup> Kim, J., & Gupta, P. (2019), *Impact of Negative Online Reviews on Brand Reputation: A Social Media Perspective*, *Journal of Digital Marketing Strategies*, vol. 15, pp. 89-101.

<sup>2</sup> Zhang, Y., Craciun, G., & Shin, D. (2014), *The Impact of Online Consumer Reviews on Firm Financial Performance*, *Marketing Science*, vol. 33, pp. 572–583.

<sup>3</sup> <https://blog.reputationx.com/how-positive-and-negative-reviews-affect-business-revenue> ,Consulted [14/04/2025]



**Figure 1 : How reviews boost SEO**



Source : <https://www.yotpo.com/blog/reviews-seo/> , consulted [14/04/2025]

### 1.5. Positive and negative online reviews

Maintain that contemporary shoppers no longer turn to sales staff or ads for advice to them nowadays online reviews are king. By providing people first-hand impressions of the quality and usefulness of products, they help them to figure out their options and reach a decision. The mood of the review helps determine consumer attitudes and behaviors too. Positive internet reviews have shown to influence people's buying decisions<sup>1</sup>.

In contrast, negative product evaluations can affect the way that people make decisions about buying certain things from others as well- based on how much trust and reliance is placed upon them. Negative reviews tend to influence the price people are willing to pay for a good and whether they will stick to it. In contrast, favorable responses are quite tempting and rich, able to attract custom. Furthermore, the volume of reviews also carries the meaning that we were able to demonstrate that more numerous consumer assessments influenced intentions to purchase more powerfully than favourable evaluations<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Chen, J., Samaranayake, V., Xiong, W., Cen, Y., Qi, L., & Lan, Y. (2022), *The Impact of Online Reviews on Consumer Decision Making: The Role of Positive and Negative Reviews*, *Journal of Consumer Behavior*, vol. 21, pp. 112-130.

<sup>2</sup> Yang, X., Xiong, L., Cao, Y., & Li, Z. (2019), *The Influence of Review Volume and Valence on Consumer Purchase Intentions*, *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 56, pp. 236-250.

Online reviews can be positive or negative and have significantly influenced the way companies apply their marketing strategies. An online review has two main roles, one as an informant, providing consumer-oriented information about products and services, the other providing either positive or negative suggestions from previous users, making recommendations about a product or a service. While sellers provide mainly product-oriented information and technical specifications and standards, online reviews provide more consumer-oriented information<sup>1</sup>.

Table 02 summarizes the key impacts of positive and negative online reviews. The identified effects were derived from relevant literature on positive and negative online reviews and consumer decision-making.

**Table 2 : Impact of positive & negative reviews**

	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Common impact</b>
<b>Positive online reviews</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve search performance.</li> <li>• Build trust.</li> <li>• Impact purchase decisions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact purchase decisions.</li> <li>• Impact Trust.</li> </ul>
<b>Negative online reviews</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative impact on purchase decision.</li> <li>• Negative impact on cash flow.</li> <li>• Negative impact on customer perception and trust.</li> </ul>	

**Source: Author's effort.**

### **1.5.1. Positive reviews**

A positive review expresses overall satisfaction with a product, service, or experience, highlighting specific aspects the reviewer enjoyed or found beneficial. It often includes personal experiences, constructive feedback, and recommendations for others. Written in a genuine tone and well-structured format, a positive review helps guide potential customers and provides valuable insights to businesses for improvement<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Lee, J., Park, D.-H., & Han, I. (2008), *The Effect of Negative Online Consumer Reviews on Product Attitude: An Information Processing View*, *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, vol. 7, pp. 341-352.

<sup>2</sup> <https://embedsocial.com/blog/positive-reviews-examples/>, consulted [12/04/2025]

### **a) The impact of positive online reviews**

With so many online options available today, it's crucial for a business to stand out from the competition. When faced with two choices, one with no or negative reviews and another with several positive ones, the average consumer will almost always choose the business with positive feedback.

Apart from this significant fact, here are additional reasons why should use positive reviews in the website and overall marketing strategy<sup>1</sup>.

#### **i) Improve search performance**

Google will also thank for the reviews displayed. The position on search engine result pages can improve after adding good customer reviews on the website.

Online reviews provide fresh material for the website. This, in turn, contributes to the SEO metrics<sup>2</sup>.

#### **ii) Build trust**

There is substantial proof that customers trust offers with ratings more than those without. People do not trust companies anymore. They need other customers to build trust before purchasing.

In the current digital era, customers are no longer passive consumers being led by billboards and TV ads. They won't be easily fooled by another boring sales pitch, and they certainly don't care about marketing objectives.

Customers are looking for a more human connection to the brands they choose and are choosing brands that promote the same values they do. When potential customers see other customers engaged with the brand by written reviews, it sends out a good message and creates trust, it helps to build a loyal community around the brand<sup>3</sup>.

#### **iii) Impact purchase decisions**

When it comes to making purchasing decisions, many individuals rely heavily on the opinions of trusted friends and family, as well as on reviews from strangers who have personal experience with the same product or service.

Reviews are more traditional and common, yet a very helpful form of UGC. When potential customers do an online search for your tours and activities, The company

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://embedsocial.com/blog/positive-reviews-examples/>, consulted [12/04/2025]

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*

reviews may be one of the first search results they notice. While the company may not always receive only positive reviews, it can still benefit from the negative as well<sup>1</sup>.

### **1.5.2. Negative reviews**

This negative diagnostic marketing material which is rarely marketed is referred to as the negativity effect, suggesting that people are more likely to put more value in negative information as a point of judgment. These individuals document negative experiences, which leads to devaluation. NOR amplifies perceived risks and increases the perceived costs associated with a purchase<sup>2</sup>.

Analyses of NOR show that most of them raise problems related to the product, technology, information, agreement, and settlement. Issues related to products include poor performance and bad quality. Problems related to technology include slow payment processing and system errors. Inadequate product description and erroneous price are among the complaints related to information. Online shoppers also raise issues related to agreement, such as the lack of conformance to the stated terms and conditions.

Problems related to settlement such as late delivery and tardy after-sale services are also frequently brought up in NOR. It is clear that NOR contain information that can deter online shoppers from purchasing the product and eventually decrease sales. This and other impacts of NOR are reviewed next<sup>3</sup>.

#### **a) The impact of negative online reviews**

Negative online reviews can significantly influence consumer perception and behavior. While they often serve as warnings for potential buyers, their impact goes beyond individual opinions they can damage or reduce consumer trust, and ultimately affect purchase decisions. Understanding the effects of negative feedback is essential for businesses aiming to manage their online presence and maintain consumer relationships.

##### **i) Negative impact on purchase decision**

Negative online reviews have they been shown to negatively influence consumers perceptions of the product <sup>4</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://embedsocial.com/blog/positive-reviews-examples/>, consulted [12/04/2025]

<sup>2</sup> Baumeister, R. F., Bratslavsky, E., Finkenauer, C., & Vohs, K. D. (2001), *Bad Is Stronger Than Good*, *Review of General Psychology*, vol. 5, pp. 323-370.

<sup>3</sup> Cho, Y., Im, I., Hiltz, S. R., & Fjermestad, J. (2002), *The Effects of Post-Purchase Evaluation Factors on Online vs. Offline Customer Complaining Behavior: Implications for Customer Loyalty*, *Journal of Customer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior*, vol. 15, pp. 26-34.

<sup>4</sup> Lee, J., Park, D.-H., & Han, I. (2008), *The Effect of Negative Online Consumer Reviews on Product Attitude: An Information Processing View*, *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, vol. 7, no. 3, pp. 341-352.

Bambauer-Sachse and Mangold found that NOR do they diminish brand equity. Which is the perceived value added to a product by its associations with a brand name, design, or symbol which enhances its value beyond functional purposes<sup>1</sup>.

Lin and al observed that NOR generates negative impressions and causes shoppers to reconsider their purchase decision<sup>2</sup>.

Ba and Pavlou and Hajli et al. showed that NOR decreases shoppers' trust in product vendors<sup>3</sup>.

In general, strong NOR can elicit a conformity effect where shoppers assimilate the negative views about a product and use them in purchase decision making.

At the aggregate level, the impact of NOR on individual shoppers can translate into declining product sales and even long-term impact such as decrease in stock market returns<sup>4</sup>.

## **ii) Negative impact on cash flow**

Luo found that NOR has a negative impact on cash-flow, stock return, and stock volatility and it takes several months for these effects to wear out. Overall, NOR poses significant risks to the bottom line of e-commerce businesses. Since NOR is inevitable, it is necessary to take steps to minimize the negative impact<sup>5</sup>.

Previous research has demonstrated that the impact of NOR may be moderated by characteristics of shopper, product, and quality of online reviews. Customers with more Internet experience have been found to be more strongly influenced by online reviews.

Duan et al, even observed that online reviews have no impact on the user adoption of highly popular products. In contrast, for less popular products, shoppers tend to be more strongly influenced by online reviews<sup>6</sup>.

## **iii) Negative impact on customer perception and trust**

Negative reviews can be a damaging factor to the prestige, credibility, and trustworthiness of the business. Many customers hesitate to buy from businesses with no reviews or with many negative reviews. Most of customers hesitate to purchase from

---

<sup>1</sup> Bambauer-Sachse, S., & Mangold, S. (2011), *Brand Equity Dilution through Negative Online Word-of-Mouth Communication*, *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, vol. 18, no. 1, pp. 38–45.

<sup>2</sup> Lin, C. H., Wu, C. M., & Chen, J. L. (2005), *The Influence of Negative Online Reviews on Consumers' Purchase Decisions*, *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*, vol. 9, no. 4, pp. 105–121.

<sup>3</sup> Ba, S., & Pavlou, P. A. (2002), *Evidence of the Effect of Trust Building Technology in Electronic Markets: Price Premiums and Buyer Behavior*, *MIS Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 243–268.

<sup>4</sup> *Idem*

<sup>5</sup> Luo, X. (2009), *Quantifying the Long-Term Impact of Negative Online Reviews on Stock Returns and Volatility*, *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 46, no. 1, pp. 39–52.

<sup>6</sup> Zhu, F., & Zhang, X. (2010), *Impact of Online Consumer Reviews on Sales: The Moderating Role of Product and Consumer Characteristics*, *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 74, no. 2, pp. 133–148.

companies with negative reviews. A single negative review can drive away 22% of customers and three negative reviews can drive away a whopping 59%. So, any negative reviews can adversely affect the business and lead to a decline in revenue.

Negative reviews may contribute to a notable decline in perceived brand value of products. Every time a negative review appears in Google search results, it has the potential to lose customers<sup>1</sup>.

The discussion of both positive and negative reviews offers a comprehensive view of how online feedback shapes consumer decision and business outcomes. Positive reviews are portrayed as key tools for building trust, improving SEO, and influencing purchase decisions, while negative reviews are shown to damage brand perception, reduce sales, and affect financial performance. This dual perspective highlights the power of online feedback in the digital marketplace. However, the analysis tends to treat the two types of reviews as opposites, without fully addressing how they interact. A mix of positive and negative feedback often enhances credibility more than overwhelmingly positive reviews alone. Moreover, the potential of negative reviews to drive improvement and demonstrate transparency is underexplored. A more critical and nuanced approach would consider how both types of reviews, when handled strategically, contribute to long-term brand resilience and consumer trust.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.yotpo.com/blog/reviews-seo/> consulted [18/04/2025]

## Section 2: Consumer decision making process

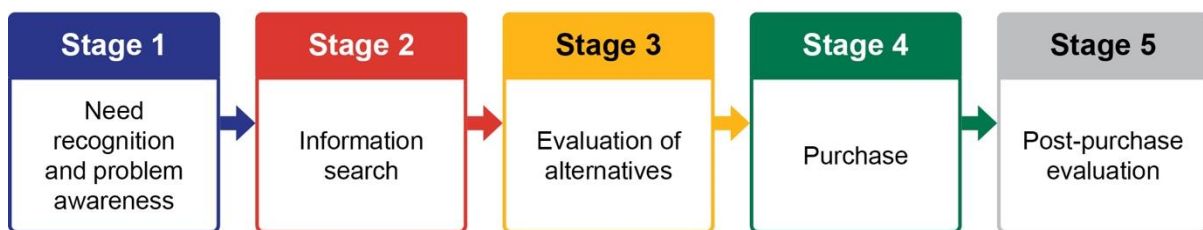
Individuals go through a series of stages when they consider buying a product or service<sup>1</sup>, these stages constitute the consumer decision-making process, which we will examine in this section, along with its influencing factors, and relationship to online reviews.

### 2.1. Consumer decision making process

#### 2.1.1. Definition

The consumer decision making process is complex, it involves all the stages from problem recognition to post purchase activities. Five Stage Model presented in figure 02, is one of the most common models of consumer decision making process and it contains five various stages. These stages are recognition of need or problem, information search, comparing the alternatives, purchase and post-purchase evaluation. This simple model clearly explains how the consumers make a buying decision.<sup>2</sup>

**Figure 2 : The five stages of consumer decision making process**



**Source :** Carrapichano Ana (2021), *Consumer Decision-Making [dans] Lappeman J., Egan P., Rightford G. et Ramogase T. (dirs.), Marketing to South African Consumers, University of Cape Town Libraries, Cape Town. Disponible en ligne : <https://openbooks.uct.ac.za/uct/catalog/download/29/52/1580?inline=1> [consulted 05/05/2025]*

Marketers can analyse and identify consumers behaviour throughout during the five-stage decision journey, from knowing about a product to making the purchase decision using this five stages model. It is important for a marketer to understand all the steps to properly move the consumer to buying the product, communicate effectively to consumers and close the sale<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/consumer-decision-making-process>, consulted [13/04/2025]

<sup>2</sup> Dudovskiy, J. (2013). *Consumer decision making process: a detailed analysis. Research Methodology*, 8(2), 34-48.

<sup>3</sup> Stankevich, A. (2017). *Explaining the Consumer Decision-Making Process: Critical Literature Review. Journal of International Business Research and Marketing*, 2(6), 7-14.

### 2.1.2. Stages of consumer decision making process

The consumer decision-making process involves several key stages, starting from recognizing a need or problem to post-purchase. Each stage plays a critical role in shaping the final decision and can be influenced by various factors such as personal experiences, marketing efforts, and external recommendations. Table 3 provides a detailed overview of these stages, offering definitions and methods specific to both product and service purchases.

**Table 3 : Stages of the purchase decision process for products/ services**

Stage	Definition for products	Definition for services
<b>Need/problem recognition</b>	<b>Definition:</b> This is the stage where the consumer identifies a need or problem that requires a solution. <b>Trigger:</b> It can be triggered by internal factors like personal needs or external factors like advertisements.	<b>Definition:</b> This stage involves realizing the necessity for a particular service to address a specific need. <b>Trigger:</b> Like products, triggers can be internal, such as personal goals, or external, such as promotional emails
<b>Information search</b>	<b>Definition:</b> After recognizing the need, the consumer actively seeks information about products that can satisfy their need. <b>Methods:</b> This can involve looking up online reviews, comparing product specifications, and seeking recommendations.	<b>Definition:</b> Consumers look for information about services that can meet their identified need. <b>Methods:</b> This might include reading testimonials, checking service provider ratings, and exploring service offerings Online.
<b>Evaluating alternatives</b>	<b>Definition:</b> Consumers compare different products to determine which one best meets their criteria. <b>Criteria:</b> This evaluation is based on features, price, quality, and reviews	<b>Definition:</b> Consumers assess various service providers to decide which one offers the best solution. <b>Criteria:</b> Evaluation is based on factors like features, cost, quality, availability, and customer testimonials.



<b>Purchase</b>	<p><b>Definition:</b> The consumer makes a decision on which product to purchase.</p> <p><b>Influences:</b> This decision can be influenced by promotions, brand loyalty, and the ease of the purchasing process.</p>	<p><b>Definition:</b> The decision- making process culminates in the selection of a service provider.</p> <p><b>Influences:</b> Factors such as discounts, reputation, and convenience of buying can affect the decision.</p>
<b>Post-purchase</b>	<p><b>Definition:</b> After purchasing, the consumer evaluates their satisfaction with the product.</p> <p><b>Implications:</b> This includes assessing product performance and interaction with customer service, which influences future purchase decisions and feedback.</p>	<p><b>Definition:</b> Post-purchase, the consumer reviews their experience with the service. <b>Implications:</b> This involves evaluating the service quality and customer support, which impacts repeat business and reviews.</p>

**Source:** Hannat, A. (2024). *Electronic word of mouth and its impact on online decision making (purchase intention)* (Master's thesis). Higher School of Management and Digital Economy.

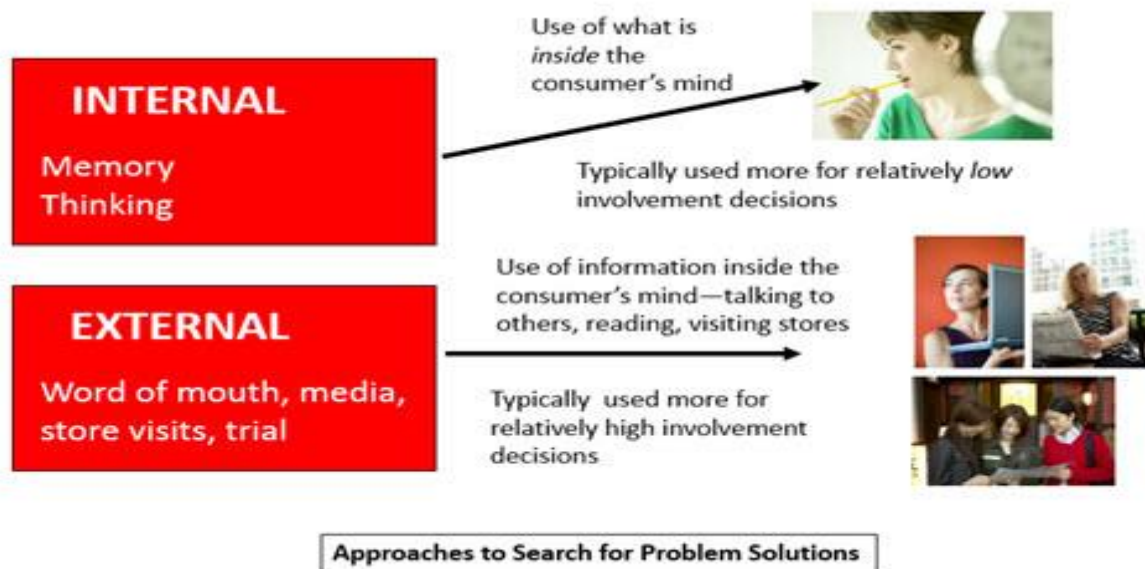
#### a) Need/problem recognition

Need/problem recognition when consumers recognize the need for a service or product. It hinges on the interplay between two key elements: the *desired state* (how a person ideally wants a need fulfilled) and the *actual state* (how adequately that need is currently being met). Problem recognition emerges when there's a noticeable gap between these two states regarding a specific want or need<sup>1</sup>.

This distinction between internal and external stimuli in need recognition can be further illustrated in figure 3, which outlines the different sources consumers rely on when identifying a problem or a need.

<sup>1</sup> Gordon C. Bruner II Richard J. Pomazal, (1988), "PROBLEM RECOGNITION: THE CRUCIAL FIRST STAGE OF THE CONSUMER DECISION PROCESS", *Journal of Services Marketing*, Vol. 2 Iss 3 pp. 43 – 53

**Figure 3 : Approaches to search for problem solutions**



Source: [https://www.consumerpsychologist.com/cb\\_Decision\\_Making.html](https://www.consumerpsychologist.com/cb_Decision_Making.html), consulted [16/04/2025]

- i) An internal stimulus can trigger an immediate need, which may manifest as a basic impulse<sup>1</sup>. These needs can be physiological (e.g., hunger, thirst, sleepiness) or emotional (e.g., sadness, jealousy), arising from the body's or mind's innate demands.
- ii) An external stimulus is when a person is affected by outside influences<sup>2</sup>. like an advertisement, the smell of yummy food, others reviews and experiences, etc.

In terms of problem recognition, there are various levels, depending upon the complexity of the problem, the time taken to realize and acknowledge about the need may be short or long<sup>3</sup>. There are two types of problem recognition: simple Problem Recognition and complex Problem Recognition.

Simple problem recognition occurs when a small, routine gap exists between the current situation and the desired outcome, and the solution is obvious and easy. An everyday example is an impulse purchase: a shopper notices a display of chocolate bars in a convenience store and suddenly craves one. Although there was no prior intention to buy chocolate, the gap ("no chocolate" vs. "desire for chocolate") is minor, so the decision happens almost instantaneously with very little thought. By contrast, complex problem recognition emerges when a significant

<sup>1</sup> Stankevich, A. (2017). *Explaining the consumer decision-making process: Critical literature review*. Journal of International Business Research and Marketing, 2(6), 7–14

<sup>2</sup> Idem

<sup>3</sup> Bruner, G. C., & Pomazal, R. J. (1988). *PROBLEM RECOGNITION: THE CRUCIAL FIRST STAGE OF THE CONSUMER DECISION PROCESS*. Journal of Services Marketing, 2(3), 43–53.

or consequential gap separates reality from the desired state, requiring extensive information gathering and deliberation. Purchasing a first car illustrates this process well. The prospective buyer must evaluate budget constraints, compare vehicle features, research brand reputations, and consider financing options. Acknowledging the need for reliable transportation triggers a prolonged, highly involved decision-making process reflecting the higher stakes and far-reaching impact of the choice.<sup>1</sup>

Once consumers recognize a need, they start collecting information they need to understand how they can fulfil that want and satisfy their desire, which leads to stage two: information search<sup>2</sup>.

Marketers often strive to deliberately widen the gap between a consumer's current situation and their ideal self. They do this through targeted advertising and promotional offers that highlight unfulfilled needs. Once a consumer perceives that a particular product can bridge that gap, a mere need transforms into a powerful want.

At this point, timing is everything. By understanding precisely when their audience becomes aware of these emerging needs and desires, marketers can deliver their message at the most opportune moment. They can even guide consumers toward recognizing problems or circumstances that call for a solution. In some cases, marketers go a step further—engineering situations that make consumers feel incomplete or vulnerable without a product or painting an appealing picture of a desired lifestyle.<sup>3</sup>

## **b) Information search**

Once a need or want is recognized, the next step is the information search. Consumers begin exploring different options to find the best way to satisfy that need. This search can be internal drawing on personal experiences and memory or external, like checking reviews, blogs, or asking friends and family. Marketing efforts also play a role, through sources like ads, brochures, and social media<sup>4</sup>. All these factors collectively shape the final purchase decision. Figure 4 presents the various sources that influence consumer buying behavior.

---

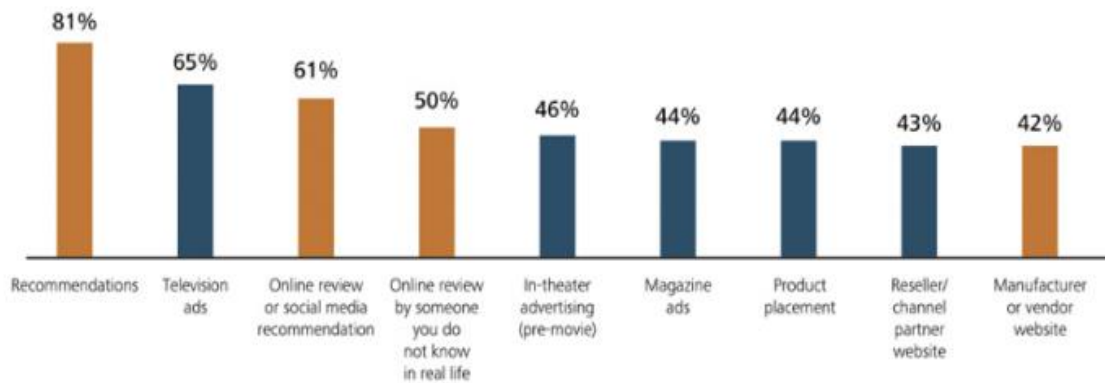
<sup>1</sup> <https://slm.mba/mmpm-001/problem-recognition-simple-vs-complex-needs/#simple-vs-complex-problem-recognition> consulted [16/04/2025]

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.lucidchart.com/blog/consumer-decision-making-process#:~:text=The%205%20steps%20are%20problem,decision%20and%20post%2Dpurchase%20evaluation.> consulted [18/04/2024].

<sup>3</sup> Stankevich, A. (2017). Explaining the consumer decision-making process: Critical literature review. Journal of International Business Research and Marketing, 2(6), 7–14

<sup>4</sup> Idem

**Figure 4 : Sources that influence buying decision**



**Source :** Stankevich, A. (2017). Explaining the consumer decision-making process: Critical literature review. *Journal of International Business Research and Marketing*, 2(6), 7–14

The time spent on this stage usually depends on factors like past experience, perceived risk, and the level of interest in the product. After gathering options, consumers form what's called an evoked set a shortlist of preferred choices. From there, they do further research to narrow it down even more.

This stage is a key moment in the decision-making journey. Marketers need to seize it by offering clear product information, appealing promotions, and relevant content. Recommendations from friends and family, online reviews, personal experiences with similar products, and even trying out samples all play an important role in shaping the final choice<sup>1</sup>.

### **c) Evaluating alternatives**

At the third stage (evaluating alternatives) consumers often reflect with questions like: "Do I really need this?" "Are there better options?" or "Is the original product even that bad?" Typically, one key attribute becomes the deciding factor, such as price, quality, or brand. Sometimes, the decision is made by applying a cut-off rule, where only products meeting certain criteria are considered.

This is a moment that can be influenced by emotional connections, past experiences, or the impact of marketing and advertising. For marketers, it's crucial that their brand is top-of-mind during this evaluation phase. Ideally, the consumer should clearly associate the brand with the key attribute they value most. This process is highly individual, as each person defines the “best

---

<sup>1</sup> Stankevich, A. (2017). Explaining the consumer decision-making process: Critical literature review. *Journal of International Business Research and Marketing*, 2(6), 7–14

deal” based on what matters most to them, whether it’s price, quality, brand reputation, availability, or expected results.

#### **d) Purchase**

Once a consumer decides which brand to go with, the next step is turning that decision into action, making the actual purchase. However, having the intention to buy doesn't always lead to a completed transaction. Other decisions may still come into play, such as when to buy, where to buy, or how much to spend.

For bigger, more complex purchases like cars or electronics, there’s often a time gap between deciding and actually buying. In contrast, for every day, low-involvement items, that gap is usually much shorter. At this stage, it’s crucial for marketers to maintain the consumer’s interest and motivation during that delay, keeping the brand top of mind and making it easy to move from intention to action.

#### **e) Post-purchase**

In the post-purchase stage (satisfaction or dissatisfaction), consumers reflect on whether the product met their expectations. Was it the right choice? Did it deliver on what was promised? If the experience was positive and the product lived up to or even exceeded expectations, the consumer may become a loyal advocate sharing their satisfaction and influencing others during their own decision-making process.

On the other hand, if the experience falls short, negative feedback can discourage potential customers early in their journey. That’s why it’s essential to identify dissatisfaction quickly and respond effectively. This stage is a key opportunity to either strengthen loyalty or recover trust. Follow-up actions, such as customer support, thank-you messages, or loyalty incentives, play a major role in turning a one-time buyer into a returning customer<sup>1</sup>.

To better illustrate the stages of the consumer decision-making process, consider the experience of a student in Algiers seeking reliable transportation. It begins with problem recognition, where the student realizes the inconvenience of relying on irregular public transport and becomes concerned after encountering negative reviews about public taxis being unsafe or expensive. This leads them to consider ride-hailing services like Heetch as a safer, more convenient alternative. In the information search phase, the student actively looks up

---

<sup>1</sup> Stankevich, A. (2017). Explaining the consumer decision-making process: Critical literature review. *Journal of International Business Research and Marketing*, 2(6), 7–14

“best ride-hailing app in Algeria” on platforms like Google, Facebook, Instagram, or YouTube. Positive reviews highlighting Heetch’s punctual drivers and user-friendly app build trust, while local influencers’ endorsements on TikTok or Instagram further enhance credibility. Moving to the evaluation of alternatives, the student compares Heetch with competitors such as Yassir and InDrive by consulting comparison blogs and review videos. Heetch may stand out for safety and good prices, while others receive criticism for delays or surge pricing, making the tone, volume, and richness of online reviews (texts, experiences, photos) decisive in shaping preferences. In the purchase decision stage, if reviews consistently emphasize professionalism, affordable prices and real-time tracking, the student is likely to download Heetch and book a ride. However, a recent negative review, like frequent cancellations could introduce doubt and influence the final choice. Finally, in the post-purchase behavior stage, the student assesses their own experience. A smooth, affordable ride with a courteous driver may prompt a glowing a good online review, while issues like app crashes or delays might lead to a negative post. This feedback loop feeds into the brand’s e-reputation and influences future consumers’ decisions.

Online reviews have evolved into powerful tools that actively shape each stage of the consumer decision-making process. From the initial recognition of a need to the post-purchase evaluation, reviews provide real-time insights that influence perceptions, trust, and final decisions. For example, during the information search and evaluation stages, consumers often consult reviews to assess product or service quality, safety, and value. Positive feedback can build confidence and drive conversions, while recurring negative comments may deter potential buyers altogether.

Beyond influencing individual decisions, online reviews significantly impact brand reputation. A single viral review whether positive or negative can rapidly sway public opinion and affect broader customer decision. Because reviews are perceived as authentic, they often carry more credibility than traditional advertising. This dynamic presents both risks and opportunities. Brands that engage with and respond to feedback can improve customer satisfaction and loyalty, while those that ignore reviews risk reputational damage. Ultimately, online reviews function not just as reflections of consumer experience, but as strategic levers that can drive or hinder market success<sup>1</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> Stankevich, A. (2017). Explaining the consumer decision-making process: Critical literature review. *Journal of International Business Research and Marketing*, 2(6), 7–14

## 2.2. Factors affecting consumer decision-making process

People make decisions about many things. They make political decisions; personal decisions, including medical choices, romantic decisions, and career decisions; and financial decisions, which may also include some of the other kinds of decisions and judgments. Quite often, the decision-making process is fairly specific to the decision being made. Some choices are simple and seem straight forward, while others are complex and require a multi-step approach to making the decisions<sup>1</sup>.

Consumers decision-making and purchasing process is affected by various things. Purchasing behavior is influenced by demographic and psychological factors together with external factors such as social factors and companies marketing efforts. However, all these factors have different influences into the process. Demographic and social factors and a company's marketing mix are viewed as stimuli that can be detected via psychological factors in consumers behavior<sup>2</sup>.

In Table 04, we present the types of factors and their main components that influence the consumer decision-making process, categorized into demographic, social, psychological, and marketing mix variables.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.inquiriesjournal.com/articles/180/decision-making-factors-that-influence-decision-making-heuristics-used-and-decision-outcomes>, consulted [20/04/2025]

<sup>2</sup> Majamäki Samuli, Consumer decision-making process – Differences between Millennials and older generations when buying newspaper, <https://digikogu.taltech.ee/en/Download/6d8c83ff-f58c-4189-9bca-9e3229f78c62>, consulted [20/04/2025].

**Table 4 : Type of factors influencing consumer decision making process**

<b>Types of factors</b>	<b>Their main components</b>
<b>Demographic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Age</li><li>• Gender</li><li>• Marital status &amp; life stage</li><li>• Profession, education, and income</li><li>• Location/habitation</li></ul>
<b>Social</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reference groups of family, friends and relatives</li><li>• Co-workers</li><li>• Role in society</li><li>• Social status</li></ul>
<b>Psychological</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Motivation</li><li>• Perception</li><li>• Learning</li><li>• Values, Attitudes, and beliefs</li></ul>
<b>Mix marketing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Price</li><li>• Product</li><li>• Place</li><li>• Promotion</li></ul>

**Source:** Author's effort.

### **2.2.1. Demographic factors**

Demographic factors in consumer behavior are the factors of individual that can be easily found, measured and analyzed. The main demographic factors are :

- Age
- Gender
- Marital status & life stage
- Profession, education, and income
- Location/habitation<sup>1</sup>

#### **Demographic factors – age**

According to Pratap, age is an essential variable that manipulates buyer behavior. As people grow, their requirements alter. Relative adjustments come in their purchase decision making. With changes in age, our health requirements change thus do numerous other needs. Age put across changes to people's lifestyle and with it their requirements and personal values are likewise affected. At the time when people are young, they expend extra on their lifestyle needs

---

<sup>1</sup> Kumar Praveen (2015), *Impact of Demographic Factors on Decision Making Effectiveness of Executives*, IJRAR – International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews, [www.ijrar.org](http://www.ijrar.org), consulted [20/04/2025].



from amusement and motion pictures to fashion. As they get older, their expenditures on these stuffs reduce. Older individuals for the most part stay indoors; in any case, their health connected costs may rise. Along these lines, age turn out to be the key demographic variable influencing buyer behavior and purchasing decisions<sup>1</sup>.

Even though the importance of age in purchasing behavior and decision seems to be lesser than before, people in similar life stages and age tend to have similarities in their purchasing habits. Self-image and perception of what it should be can control consumers preferences and expectations quite drastically<sup>2</sup>.

#### **a) Demographic factors – Gender**

Man, and women behave differently, they want different products, and they are likely to have different ways of liking and obtaining these <sup>3</sup>, and those differences can relate to biological and physical facts, but also to cultural norms and traditional gender roles of the society<sup>4</sup>, According to Swarna the differences between men and women about expectation, want, need, lifestyle, etc. reflect their consumption behaviors. For instance, studies have revealed that gender, education, income, and age differentiate the consumers' information search process. Men are less likely than women to complain when they are dissatisfied with a good or service in comparison to women, they do not spread word of mouth and they are significantly less likely than women going to use specialist magazines as a source of information<sup>5</sup>.

#### **b) Demographic factors – Marital status & life stage**

Consumers act differently in different stages of their lives and marital status also affects consumption <sup>6</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> Pratap, A. (2017). "Impact of Demographic Factors on Consumer's Purchasing Behavior," *Journal of Business & Tourism*, [online] Available at: <https://jbt.org.pk/jbt/article/download> [Accessed: 5 May 2025].

<sup>2</sup> Kumar Praveen (2015), *Impact of Demographic Factors on Decision Making Effectiveness of Executives*, *IJRAR – International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*, [www.ijrar.org](http://www.ijrar.org)

<sup>3</sup> <https://fristysato.medium.com/how-demographic-factors-influence-consumer-behavior-df7eae4a3e3e>, consulted [20/04/2025]

<sup>4</sup> Solomon, M., Bamossy, G., Askegaard, S., & Hogg, M. K. (2002). *Consumer Behaviour: A European Perspective*. Pearson Education.

<sup>5</sup> *Idem*

<sup>6</sup> Kumar Praveen (2015), *Impact of Demographic Factors on Decision Making Effectiveness of Executives*, *IJRAR – International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*, [www.ijrar.org](http://www.ijrar.org), consulted [20/04/2025].

The married couple has different necessities compared to the person who lives alone (single). The interaction between partners/spouses and the number and ages of children (if any) in the family can have a significant effect on purchasing decision <sup>1</sup>.

**c) Demographic factors – income, profession and education**

At the end of the day, money is what matters the most. Consumers simply can't buy products they can't afford. Loaning money is possible, but loans have to be paid back at some point. Income affects purchasing decisions by defining the amount of money available for spending<sup>2</sup>.

**d) Demographic factors – location/habitation**

Segmenting customers by location, the place they live in, is one of the oldest methods. Incentives that steer consumer behavior are very different in the downtown of big city than in countryside. City centers have more stimulants than country side, and people are more easily affected by advertising than the people who live in countryside where adverts might hardly exist <sup>3</sup>.

**2.2.2. Social factors**

A consumer's behavior is affected by other individuals, amongst other things. In consumer behavior, the influence of others is described as social factors. All social factors are external factors and they can be divided accordingly <sup>4</sup>.

- a) Reference groups
  - Family
  - Friends
  - Relatives
- b) Co-workers
- c) Role in society
- d) Social status

Humans are social beings, and social belonging is mentioned as a need even in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Craving for acceptance is natural for humans and we all want to be part of

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://fristysato.medium.com/how-demographic-factors-influenc>, consulted [19/05/2025].

<sup>2</sup> Majamäki Samuli, Consumer decision-making process – Differences between Millennials and older generations when buying newspaper, <https://digikogu.taltech.ee/en/Download/6d8c83ff-f58c-4189-9bca-9e3229f78c62>, consulted [19/05/2025].

<sup>3</sup> (Puustinen Arja, 2008, *Kuluttajakäyttäytyminen ja markkinointi*, WSOY, Helsinki, pp. 149–153)

<sup>4</sup> Ylikoski, K. (2000). *Social Factors in Consumer Behavior*, [Publisher], p. 82.

something, to belong somewhere. Everything and everyone surrounding us influences our behavior and shapes our decisions, and our close ones even more so<sup>1</sup>.

**a) Social factors - Reference groups:**

Reference groups in consumer behavior refer to groups of people that the consumer is more or less part of and that influence the consumer's decision-making process. These groups can be classified into primary (membership) groups and secondary (aspirational) groups. Primary groups include those with which the consumer has direct and regular contact, such as family, friends, co-workers, and relatives. In contrast, secondary groups may not involve direct interaction but still influence consumer behavior through aspiration or admiration. For example, an individual might seek the approval of a political party without having any personal ties to its members, which can shape their consumption patterns. A secondary group can also represent a social group that a consumer aspires to join, and this aspiration often affects their purchasing behavior<sup>2</sup>.

Consumers often align their behaviors with those of their reference groups, especially when surrounded by individuals who share common interests. For instance, someone whose friends are beauty bloggers who invest heavily in appearance-related products is likely to adopt similar consumption habits. In such cases, the consumer's values and preferences are shaped by the group's influence. This influence can lead individuals to make purchasing decisions not purely based on product value, but on the desire for group approval such as buying an expensive designer bag over a similar-looking generic one to gain social acceptance<sup>3</sup>.

**b) Social factors – Social status and role in society**

Income is one factor when sorting out people to social classes, but not the only one. Other factors are education, job, and overall wealth. Social classes have quite vague borderlines and a consumer can move to an upper or a lower class during his/her lifetime, even though it is not likely to happen. Some people work hard throughout their lives to be upper class but others are born to it and tied to it forever. People who are part of the same social class tend to act similarly in terms of consumption; the fitting way for the particular class<sup>4</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> Schiffman, L. G., Kanuk, L. L., & Hansen, H. (2012). *Consumer Behaviour: A European Outlook (2nd ed.)*. Pearson Education.

<sup>2</sup> (Kotler Gary, Armstrong Philip, 2005, *Principles of Marketing*, Pearson Education, London, p. 142; Ylikoski Petri, 2000, *Kuluttajakäyttäytyminen*, Edita, Helsinki, p. 82)

<sup>3</sup> (Korkeamäki Leila et al., 2000, *Kuluttajan käyttäytyminen*, WSOY, Porvoo, p. 103)

<sup>4</sup> Kotler Gary, Armstrong Philip, 2005, *Principles of Marketing*, Pearson Education, London, p. 141

### 2.2.3. Psychological factors

Psychological factors are characteristics traits of a person that appear in consumers' behaviour. External stimuli together with psychological factors and consumers personal traits influence the consumer's behaviour. Psychological factors answer questions of why, and therefore offer explanation to choices a consumer makes. Psychological factors are :

- Motivation
- Perception
- Learning
- Values, Attitudes, and beliefs <sup>1</sup>.

#### a) Psychological factors – Motivation

When a need emerges, so does the motivation to satisfy it. When the intensity of the need reaches an adequate level, it becomes a motive, which means a need that sufficiently presses a person to satisfy it<sup>2</sup>.

Motives can be divided into two categories. There are personal and social motives. Personal motives are things such as refreshing oneself or engaging in physical exercise. Social motives are related to desires such as striving for higher status or pressure from a reference group<sup>3</sup>.

#### b) Psychological factors – Perception

Perception is a process that involves selecting relevant information, then analyzing and interpreting it. Perception offers insight into how consumers react to their own motives<sup>4</sup>.

The world is full of different kinds of stimuli that can catch a consumer's eye, but only a small portion of those stimuli are noticed. We do not actively process all available information; rather, the information we perceive and retain is based on our individual processing, which combines our beliefs, needs, and past experiences<sup>5</sup>.

There exists an important interaction between an individual's needs and their perception of how their participation and performance in the decision-making process will be evaluated and rewarded by the organization. Thus, according to Webster, it is the individual decision-makers, rather than the organization as a whole, that should be the targets of marketing efforts<sup>6</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> Kotler Gary, Armstrong Philip, 2005, *Principles of Marketing*, Pearson Education, London, pp. 148–153; Bergström Sointu, Leppänen Arja, 2009, *Yrityksen asiakasmarkkinointi*, Edita Publishing, Helsinki, p. 105

<sup>2</sup> Idem

<sup>3</sup> Markkanen Mervi, 2008, *Kuluttajakäyttäytyminen ja markkinointiviestintä*, WSOY, Porvoo, p. 67

<sup>4</sup> Kotler Gary, Armstrong Philip, 2005, *Principles of Marketing*, Pearson Education, London, p. 151

<sup>5</sup> Solomon Michael R., et al., 2002, *Consumer Behavior: Buying, Having, and Being*, 5th edition, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ, pp. 35-36

<sup>6</sup> Webster, F. E., 1991, *The Changing Role of Marketing in the Corporation*, *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 55, pp. 1-16 [available at] <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:286750/FULLTEXT01.pdf>

### **c) Psychological factors – Learning**

Learning is a continuous process that happens all the time. Most behavioural patterns are learned through experiences in life, even though it may not always be deliberate. Learning can also be subconscious<sup>1</sup>.

Learning can be divided into stages. The lowest level is conditional learning, where the consumer learns to act in response to stimuli certain actions follow certain stimuli. Modelling, or observational learning, involves deliberately imitating an existing model of behavior or example. The fashion industry makes a good example of this: people see what their idols wear and attempt to dress similarly. The highest level is cognitive learning, where goal-directed problem-solving and intentional information searching fall under this category in consumer behavior<sup>2</sup>.

Memory and memorization are part of learning. It is a process of acquiring knowledge and storing it in memory for later use. New information is processed alongside existing memories, then added to them. Certain information can be in one's memory but still difficult to recall, and sometimes an incentive is needed to help retrieve a specific piece of information<sup>3</sup>.

Learning and memory are crucial components of decision-making, especially in the stages of information search and evaluation of alternatives<sup>4</sup>.

### **d) Psychological factors – Values, Beliefs, and Attitudes**

Values are goals that guide our thinking, choices, and actions. They are things that a person holds in high regard, such as safety and responsibility<sup>5</sup>.

Attitudes describe a person's relatively consistent feelings, evaluations, and tendencies toward something—in this case, a product or service. For example, "Japanese companies make the best electronics products" would be an example of an attitude. A belief is a more descriptive thought or idea that a person has about something. A belief can be based on almost anything, from real knowledge to nonsensical opinions<sup>6</sup>.

## **2.2.4. Marketing Efforts of Companies**

Companies actively try to influence the decisions of potential customers. Marketing efforts in this context refer to any activity taken by a company to reach, inform, and persuade

---

<sup>1</sup> Kotler Gary, Armstrong Philip, 2005, *Principles of Marketing*, Pearson Education, London, p. 152)

<sup>2</sup> Bergström Sointu, Leppänen Arja, 2009, *Yrityksen asiakasmarkkinointi*, Edita Publishing, Helsinki, p. 113

<sup>3</sup> Solomon Michael R., et al., 2002, *Consumer Behavior: Buying, Having, and Being*, 5th edition, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ, p. 75

<sup>4</sup> Idem

<sup>5</sup> Bergström Sointu, Leppänen Arja, 2009, *Yrityksen asiakasmarkkinointi*, Edita Publishing, Helsinki, p. 110

<sup>6</sup> Idem

consumers to buy its products or services. These inputs to the consumer's decision-making process include anything from promotional efforts to pricing strategies and the product itself (including packaging, guarantees, etc.). Store layout also affects consumer decision-making, and salespeople inside the store are an important component of the overall in-store experience. Personal selling, conducted by a capable salesperson, can make a huge difference<sup>1</sup>.

In the case of newspaper sales, the salespeople are often not located in a store but in a sales stand. These stands are typically located in hallways of shopping malls, so in these cases, the salespeople are brought to the consumer rather than the other way around<sup>2</sup>.

Companies strive to maintain an awareness of consumers' perceptions of their marketing efforts and products, as these perceptions reflect the company's marketing efforts<sup>3</sup>.

### **a) Marketing Mix Models**

Companies use a set of tools in their persuasion activities, which are called the marketing mix. The 4P model is a foundational marketing mix model consisting of the following components:

- Price
- Product
- Place
- Promotion<sup>4</sup>

The 4P model has been criticized as outdated because it focuses too much on the product. The 7P model, an advanced version created in the 1980s, adds three more P's to the original model:

- People
- Processes
- Physical Evidence<sup>5</sup>

Another widely used variation of the 4P model is the 4C model, which concentrates on the consumer rather than the product. The competitive advantage comes from understanding the consumer's needs at an actual level and satisfying them by developing products accordingly.

---

<sup>1</sup> Loudon David L., Della Bitta Albert J., 1993, *Consumer Behavior: Concepts and Applications*, 4th edition, McGraw-Hill, New York, pp. 550-559

<sup>2</sup> Idem

<sup>3</sup> (Schiffman Leon G., et al., 2012, *Consumer Behavior*, 10th edition, Pearson Education, New Jersey, p. 68

<sup>4</sup> Kotler, Philip, Armstrong, Gary, 2017, *Principles of Marketing*, 15th edition, Pearson Education, p. 53

<sup>5</sup> Bennett, Roger, 2015, *Marketing Strategy and Management*, 3rd edition, Pearson Education, p. 112

The 4C's are :

- Consumer
- Cost
- Convenience
- Communication<sup>1</sup>

These 4C's are consumer-oriented alternatives to the 4P's<sup>2</sup> .

While demographic, social, psychological, and marketing mix factors play a crucial role in shaping consumer decision-making, online reviews act as a bridge that amplifies their impact in the digital space. For example, consumers from different age groups or income levels may interpret online feedback differently based on their motivations, perceptions, and prior experiences. Social influences particularly reference groups are also strongly reflected in online platforms where people rely on peer opinions and influencers. Psychologically, online reviews can alter perceptions, build trust, or trigger emotional responses, influencing attitudes and beliefs. Even marketing efforts, such as promotional campaigns, are evaluated by consumers through the lens of online feedback. Ultimately, online reviews are a powerful, cross-cutting influence that reinforces or reshapes traditional decision-making factors in the digital age.

### **2.3. The influence of online reviews on consumer decision-making process**

The explosion of online reviews has transformed them into a cornerstone of consumer decision-making. Today's shoppers rely heavily on these reviews to navigate the vast online marketplace and make informed purchasing choices.

Online reviews serve as a rich source of user-generated content, providing valuable insights into product performance, functionality, and user experience. Consumers can glean real-world experiences from other customers, helping them assess a product's quality beyond the marketing claims of brands. This empowers them to identify potential drawbacks and make purchases with greater confidence<sup>3</sup>.

Online reviews are increasingly becoming an integral part of the consumer decision-making process. They influence consumers not only at the moment of purchase but throughout all

---

<sup>1</sup> Kotler, Philip, Armstrong, Gary, 2017, *Principles of Marketing*, 15th edition, Pearson Education, p. 72

<sup>2</sup> Bennett, Roger, 2015, *Marketing Strategy and Management*, 3rd edition, Pearson Education, p. 115

<sup>3</sup> Fatima, I., & Bhadauria, A. (2024). *The impact of online reviews and ratings on consumer decision-making*. *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*, 11(1), 73–74

phases of decision-making<sup>1</sup>. Online reviews can create a need to purchase by serving as powerful social proof. As Cialdini explains, people are largely imitators, and we tend to see a behavior as correct when many others are doing it. When consumers see that a product has been widely purchased and praised, they perceive it as trustworthy and necessary. The more people endorse a product, the more likely others are to follow, believing that what is popular must also be right. This creates pressure to conform and suggests that the product is desirable, further reinforcing the perception that owning it is both beneficial and socially validated<sup>2</sup>. Positive reviews trigger FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), making consumers feel they might be missing something valuable that others are already enjoying<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, online reviews often highlight problems that the customer hadn't previously recognized, which shifts the consumer into this stage: problem recognition stage of the decision-making process. Digital feedback plays a critical role in the information search stage of the consumer decision-making process. Once consumers recognize a need, they seek information to evaluate available options. Online reviews serve as a key source of external information, offering real user experiences, opinions, and detailed product insights. These reviews reduce uncertainty, and build trust in a product or brand. Because reviews often come from perceived peers rather than marketers, they are seen as more credible, guiding consumers toward or away from certain choices. As a result, online reviews not only inform but also shape the consumer's next steps in the buying journey<sup>4</sup>.

Online reviews significantly influence the evaluation of alternatives stage in the consumer decision-making process. Once consumers have gathered information, they begin comparing different products or brands to determine which best meets their needs. At this point, online reviews act as a decision-making aid by highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of each option based on real customer experiences. Star ratings, detailed pros and cons, and side-by-side user comparisons help consumers assess quality, value, reliability, and satisfaction. Reviews can either confirm a consumer's preference or cause them to reconsider their choices,

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid

<sup>2</sup> Cialdini Robert B. (2008), *Influence: Science and Practice*, 5<sup>e</sup> édition, Pearson Education, Boston. Disponible en ligne : [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/229067982\\_Influence\\_Science\\_and\\_Practice](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/229067982_Influence_Science_and_Practice) consulted [19/05/2025]

<sup>3</sup> Kahneman, D., & Tversky, A. (2013). *Prospect theory: An analysis of decision under risk*. In *Handbook of the fundamentals of financial decision making: Part I* (pp. 99-127).

<sup>4</sup> 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.



ultimately influencing which product they view as superior. This makes online reviews a powerful tool in shaping preferences and guiding purchase decisions<sup>1</sup>.

Online reviews play a decisive role in the purchase decision stage of the consumer decision-making process. After evaluating alternatives, consumers rely heavily on reviews to finalize their choice. Positive reviews increase trust in the product and reduce perceived risk, often serving as the final push toward making a purchase. On the other hand, negative reviews can deter consumers or delay their decisions. Reviews that appear authentic, detailed, and balanced tend to be more persuasive, influencing whether a consumer proceeds with the transaction or seeks other options. Ultimately, online reviews can either reinforce or reverse a consumer's purchase intention<sup>2</sup>. Furthermore, the impact of reviews extends beyond the point of purchase. Post-purchase, positive reviews can validate a consumer's choice and enhance brand loyalty, while negative experiences may lead to regret, harm future brand perceptions, and affect word-of-mouth communication<sup>3</sup>.

To better illustrate the influence of online reviews on each stage of the consumer decision-making process, consider the following example: Employee X, who resides in Blida and works in Hydra, Algiers, experienced daily challenges with unreliable and overcrowded public transportation, which began to negatively affect his punctuality and job performance. After reading online reviews on social media, where users expressed similar frustrations and recommended ride-hailing services such as Heetch and Yassir, he recognized the need for a more efficient commuting solution. Encouraged by this feedback, he conducted further research by consulting app store reviews and analysing the experiences shared by other users. He narrowed his choices to Yassir and Heetch, ultimately selecting Heetch based on specific criteria that aligned with his personal needs. Following a successful first ride that met his expectations and reflected the positive feedback he had read, he felt reassured in his decision. Satisfied with the service, he contributed his own positive review, thus participating in the ongoing cycle of online reviews that influence consumer decisions.

---

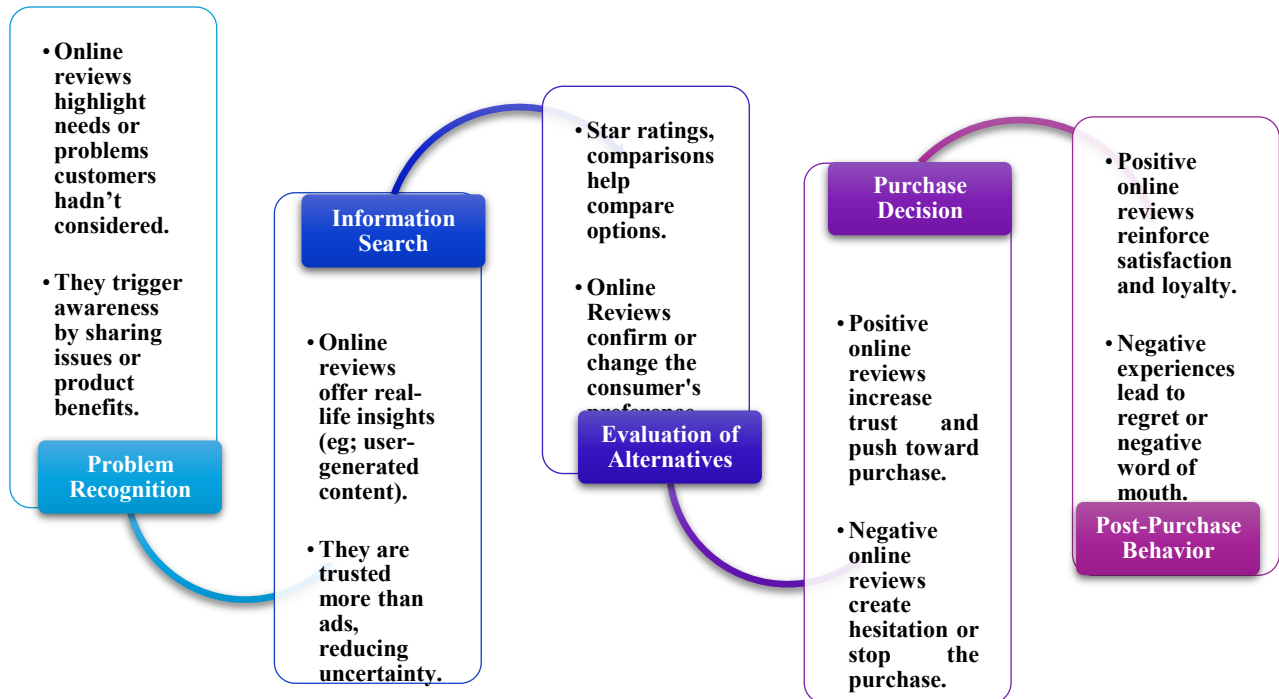
<sup>1</sup> Mudambi, S. M., & Schuff, D. (2010). *What makes a helpful online review? A study of customer reviews on Amazon.com*. *MIS Quarterly*, 34(1), 185–200

<sup>2</sup> Filieri, R. (2016). *What makes an online consumer review trustworthy?* *Annals of Tourism Research*, 58, 46–64

<sup>3</sup> Fatima Ibtesaam et Bhadauria Arun (2024), "The Impact of Online Reviews and Ratings on Consumer Decision-Making", *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews (IJRAR)*, vol. 11, n° 1, pp. 73-83. Disponible en ligne : <https://ijrar.org/papers/IJAR24A3199.pdf> [consulted 19/05/2025].

The figure 5 illustrates the key role of online reviews throughout the consumer decision-making process.

**Figure 5: Role of online reviews throughout the consumer decision-making process.**



**Source:** Author's effort.

Figure 5 highlights how reviews influence each stage, from problem recognition to post-purchase behavior. Initially, they help consumers identify needs or problems by sharing real experiences. During the information search and evaluation phases, reviews provide trusted insights and help compare alternatives. At the purchase decision stage, positive reviews encourage buying, while negative ones create hesitation. Finally, after purchase, reviews affect customer satisfaction, loyalty, and word-of-mouth. Overall, the diagram emphasizes how online reviews shape consumer decision and influence business outcomes.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this first chapter has established the theoretical foundation of the study by exploring key concepts related to online reviews, the consumer decision-making process, and the connection between the two.

In the first section, we began by defining online reviews, examined their characteristics, and discussed their growing importance in the digital landscape. Particular attention was given to the dual nature of online reviews, both positive and negative, and how each can influence purchase decisions, trust, and ultimately, behavior.

In the second section, we introduced the consumer decision-making process, its stages, and the different factors that influence it. Followed by analyzing how online reviews play a significant role at each stage from need recognition to post-purchase.

Drawing from previous studies and theoretical insights, we highlighted the pivotal role that online reviews play in guiding consumers through each stage of their decision journey. From creating initial awareness and shaping perceptions, to reducing uncertainty and building trust, online reviews empower consumers to make informed, confident choices, ultimately reinforcing or reversing purchase intentions and shaping post-purchase attitudes

In the context of Heetch, these insights have significant practical implications. By effectively leveraging online reviews, the company can enhance consumer trust, influence purchasing decisions, and reinforce its competitive position within the Algerian ride-hailing market. Building upon this theoretical foundation, the second chapter of this study transitions to a practical analysis, examining the influence of online reviews on the consumer decision-making process specifically in the case of Heetch in Algeria.

**Chapter 2: Empirical study: the influence of Heetch's online reviews on consumer-decision making process**

## **Introduction**

This chapter explores the empirical aspects of how online reviews influence consumer decision-making processes, with a particular focus on the ride-hailing service: Heetch. It begins by providing an overview of the ride-hailing industry then an introduction to the company Heetch, setting the context for the study.

Next, the chapter outlines the research methodology, including the design and distribution of a questionnaire aimed at understanding consumer perceptions. It details the data collection process, describes the sample characteristics, and explains the analytical methods used.

In the findings section of this study, we examine how online reviews influence consumers' decision when selecting Heetch. Our analysis delves into specific aspects highlighted in user reviews, such as pricing, safety, and driver behavior, assessing their influence on consumer trust and decision-making. We also differentiate between positive and negative reviews to understand their respective effects on customers. Furthermore, we explore the influence of various review formats - text, images, and videos - on purchasing decision.

By analysing these factors, we aim to validate our hypotheses regarding the influence of online reviews on consumer decision making process and provide practical recommendations for Heetch and similar companies on how to manage and leverage online reviews to strengthen consumer trust and convince them to make the purchase decision, highlighting the importance of encouraging positive feedback and effectively addressing negative comments.

## **Section 1: Presentation of Heetch**

In this section, we will present ride hailing industry and the study area of our research, the company Heetch. This presentation will provide a better understanding of the context in which we conducted our research.

### **1.1. Introduction to the company**

Heetch is a European startup, born in France five years ago, originally based on a "peer-to-peer" model, which later evolved into a platform connecting professional drivers with passengers.

Heetch was launched in Algeria (Algiers and surrounding areas), bringing new energy to urban transportation in the capital. Since September 2019, passengers have been able to order a car with a driver via their mobile phone for their trips within the capital and its surrounding areas.

Heetch is positioned in the Algerian market as a modern and user-friendly ride-hailing service, offering safe and affordable transportation mainly for young urban customers. Alongside Yassir and InDrive, Heetch is one of the top ride-hailing apps in Algeria, competing closely to capture the growing demand for reliable mobility solutions. These apps stand out by providing transparent pricing and easy-to-use platforms, while Heetch also emphasizes strong driver support to differentiate itself.

Heetch known with 4 values, that it ride with them:

- Make it Happen: we're efficient, focus and we decide quickly without going too fast.
- Be Kind: we treat each other's with respect and always assume good intentions.
- Play for the Team: we look out what's best for the company as a whole, no ego or politics.
- Think Different: we are not scared of showing our personality, we look for innovation and to think outside the box<sup>1</sup>.

Heetch, the ride-hailing app, connects drivers and passengers through a user-friendly mobile application, offering a modern and secure alternative to traditional transportation. As a ride-hailing service, Heetch dynamically matches the supply of drivers with customer demand,

---

<sup>1</sup> Internal data base

allowing users to book rides in real time and reach their destinations efficiently. One of the core strengths of the app lies in its use of the following features<sup>1</sup>:

**a) Geolocation and Real-Time Tracking**

The tracking method makes the use of GPS as well as logistics databases to determine the current location of a person, vehicle, or object at any moment in time is known as Real-time Tracking. When a parcel is scanned, it is assigned to a vehicle and its position is constantly monitored.

**b) Dynamic Pricing**

Dynamic Pricing refers to the dynamic adjustment of prices for rides based on real-time demand and supply conditions. DP is called also “surge pricing” and “prime time”.

**c) In-app communication**

In-app communication refers to messages sent to users while they are actively engaged with an application—be it on mobile, desktop, or web platforms. This type of communication is commonly known as in-app messaging and typically includes in-app notifications.

**d) Rider verification**

Rider verification is a process used by ride-hailing platforms to confirm user identity and promote mutual safety. It involves checking signup information or requesting an ID and selfie if needed. This helps ensure a safe and trusted environment for both riders and drivers, with personal data securely stored and only basic rider details shared with drivers.

**e) Safety Features**

Ride-hailing apps incorporate various safety measures, such as driver background checks, emergency SOS buttons, and ride-sharing details with trusted contacts, to ensure passenger security.

**1.1.1. Technical sheet of Heetch el djazair**

The following figure represent technical sheet of Heetch el djazair, it includes key information about the company

---

<sup>1</sup> Internal data base

**Figure 6 : Technical Sheet of Heetch el djazair**

Company logo:


Company name: Heetch el djazair

Date of establishment: 2019

Number of employees: 51-200 employees

Head office address: algiers, hussein dey.

Web site: [www.heetch.com](http://www.heetch.com)

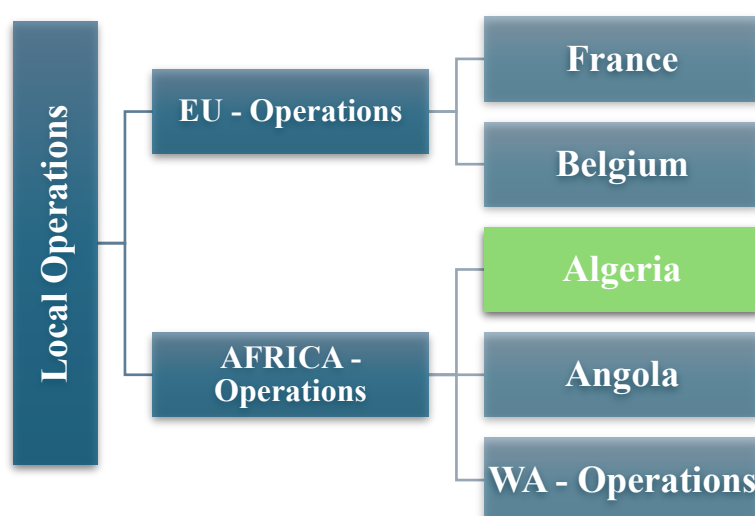
Sector: Technology, Information and the Internet

Source: Elaborated by us based on internal company data

## 1.2. Organizational chart

The following figures represent the organizational chart of **Heetch GLOBAL** and Heetch el djazaïr. They provide insight into the hierarchy, key departments, and the distribution of responsibilities.

**Figure 7 : Organizational chart of Heetch GLOBAL**



Source: Elaborated by us based on Internal company data base



Figure 7 illustrates the organizational structure of Heetch global, highlighting the geographical distribution of its local operations across different regions. The company's structure is divided into two main operational clusters: EU Operations, encompassing France and Belgium, and AFRICA Operations, which includes Algeria, Angola, and West Africa (WA Operations). This figure provides a clear overview of Heetch's international footprint and underscores the company's commitment to regional adaptation and management.

**Figure 8 : Departments of Heetch el djazair**



**Source:** Elaborated by us based on Internal company data base

Figure 8 presents a detailed view of the internal departmental organization of Heetch el djazair. The structure includes core functional units such as Direction, Marketing, Care & Operation, and Growth, alongside more specialized teams like Driver Care, Passenger Acquisition, Signup DZ/FR, growth and Local Experience. This departmental breakdown reflects the company's operational focus on user experience, localized service delivery, and driver management. The presence of distinct teams for both French-speaking and local operations suggests a strategy tailored to linguistic and cultural contexts, reinforcing the importance of localized approaches in the ride-hailing industry. Together, these charts provide foundational insight into the company's structural design, which informs both strategic decision-making and customer service delivery in the Algerian market.

### **1.2.1. Host department (Marketing department)**

HEETCH's marketing department includes a content manager whose main mission is to oversee the company's presence on social media and across various communication channels. This role involves creating engaging and strategic content that aligns with the company's vision and meets the expectations of its target audience. Key responsibilities include managing social media platforms, executing digital marketing campaigns, designing visual content, creating advertising materials, handling email marketing and promotional activities, and exploring new communication strategies such as influencer collaborations and strategic partnerships.

### **1.2.2. Social Media presence and reviews channels**

#### **a) Social media followers**

- Instagram: 121k.
- Facebook: 286k likes, 300k followers.
- TikTok: 12k followers.
- LinkedIn: 3k followers.

#### **b) Reviews channels**

- App store and play store.
- social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook, tiktok and LinkedIn).

## **Section 2: Analysis and interpretation of research results**

In this section, we presented the results of a quantitative study that explores the influence of online reviews on consumer decision-making process within the context of Heetch el djazair. The study involved analyzing the questionnaire results.

### **2.1. Data collection and evaluation tools**

To evaluate the influence of online reviews on consumer decision-making process within the context of Heetch el djazair, we conducted a quantitative study using a questionnaire on a sample of 175 customers. Data collection was facilitated through a meticulously designed questionnaire administered to the users of ride hailing apps. The questionnaire dissemination utilized two primary channels: an online distribution platform via Google Forms and a manual distribution method to ensure optimal efficiency.

In addition to the questionnaire, several tools were used to enrich and validate the data collected:

#### **a. Observation**

Observation was used throughout the research process to gain a better understanding of consumer interactions with online reviews related to ride-hailing services, particularly Heetch. This method involved monitoring how users engage with reviews on platforms such as social media, app stores, and forums. By observing patterns in user comments, reactions, and review trends, we were able to gain firsthand insights into consumer behavior and preferences beyond the structured questionnaire responses.

#### **b. Document Analysis**

To complement and support the findings from the questionnaire and observations, document analysis was also conducted. This included examining various secondary sources such as online articles, user review summaries, industry reports, and available internal reports related to Heetch's social media management reports and consumer feedback complaints management. This step was essential to verify the credibility of the data collected and to deepen the understanding of the role online reviews play in consumer decision making process.

## 2.2. Conducting the Survey

### 2.2.1. The Questionnaire

The questionnaire is a tool used to collect detailed and structured information from respondents. It consists of closed-ended questions only and was created using Google Forms and distributed online. We used different types of questions:

- **Dichotomous closed questions:** requiring a “yes” or “no” answer.
- **Single-choice questions:** the respondent selects only one answer.
- **Rating scale questions:** allowing the respondent to express degrees of opinion (e.g., from 0 to 5).

### 2.2.2. Questionnaire structure

To ensure the successful completion of our study, we designed a questionnaire structured into several key sections to collect relevant data on the influence of online reviews on consumer decisions in the ride-hailing industry in Algeria, using Heetch as a case study. The questionnaire is organized as follows:

- The first part of the questionnaire provides a brief introduction to the context of our research, informing participants that their responses will be used for the completion of a Master’s thesis.
- The second part consists of a personal data section, aimed at collecting demographic and socioeconomic information such as, age, gender, occupation, salary and frequency of using ride-hailing services. These details are essential for segmenting the sample and analyzing the influence of these variables on consumer decisions.
- The third part of the survey focuses on user behavior and preferences regarding ride-hailing services. Through a series of questions, it explores which apps are most frequently used, the reasons behind user preferences, frequency and duration of use, and the main criteria influencing their choices. This section aims to gather insights on user habits and expectations to evaluate the performance and positioning of various ride-hailing platforms such as Heetch, Yassir, and others.
- The fourth part of the survey examines the influence of online reviews on users’ decision-making process regarding ride-hailing apps with 15 questions. It explores whether users consult reviews before using a service, which platforms and formats they find most influential, and how much they trust online feedback. This section aims

to assess the influence of both positive and negative reviews on user behavior and understand the role of digital feedback in shaping customer choices.

- The fifth section of the survey is dedicated to the Heetch application. It assesses user perceptions of the service by analyzing how previously identified factors such as safety, pricing, and driver behavior specifically apply to Heetch. Participants are also invited to express their preferences, overall satisfaction, and willingness to recommend the service to others. This section aims to evaluate customer satisfaction and loyalty toward Heetch in comparison to other ride-hailing alternatives, while also exploring the influence of online reviews on consumer decision-making processes

## 2.3. Analysis and Interpretation of Results

After presenting the methodology adopted in this study, we proceed with the analysis of the results using SPSS software version 27, based on the data collected through the online questionnaire. This analysis aims to interpret the results in order to confirm or refuse the formulated hypotheses.

### 2.3.1. Reliability Test (Cronbach's Alpha)

Cronbach's Alpha is a fundamental statistical indicator used to assess the reliability of a questionnaire. It measures the internal consistency of the items, meaning the extent to which the different questions within a dimension evaluate a homogeneous concept. A high coefficient (close to 1) indicates that the items are well correlated with each other, thereby reinforcing the validity of the measurement tool. In this study, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated to verify the stability and reliability of the responses provided by participants.

#### a) Reliability Statistics

**Table 5 : Scale Reliability Statistics – Cronbach's Alpha**

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
0,750	14

**Source:** SPSS version 27.

The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient obtained is 0.750 for a scale comprising 7 ordinal items, indicating an acceptable level of internal consistency among the items. According to conventional thresholds (Nunnally, 1978), a Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.70 is considered acceptable for exploratory research. This suggests that the items used in the scale are sufficiently reliable for measuring the underlying construct.

## b) Description of the Study Sample

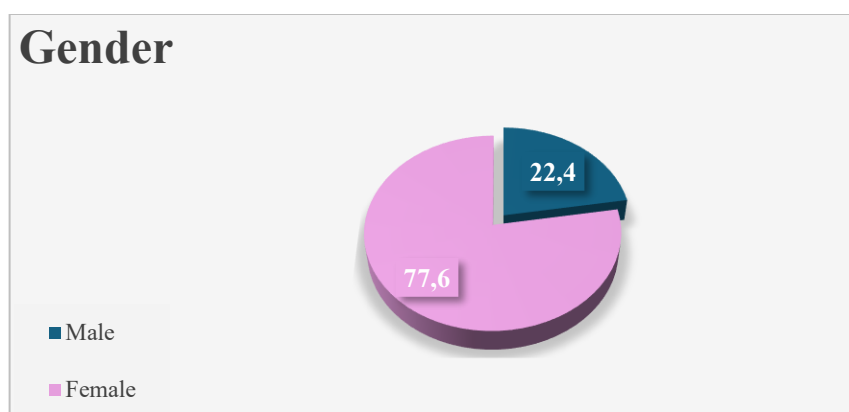
### 1) Sample Distribution by Gender

**Table 6 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Gender**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
<b>Valid</b>	<b>Male</b>	39	22,4	22,4	22,4
	<b>Female</b>	135	77,6	77,6	100,0
	<b>Total</b>	174	100,0	100,0	

**Source:** SPSS version 27.

**Figure 9 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Gender**



**Source:** SPSS version 27.

The distribution of respondents by gender indicates a marked majority of female participants, representing 77.6% of the sample, compared to only 22.4% of male participants. This shows an unbalanced distribution in terms of gender, with a dominance of female respondents.

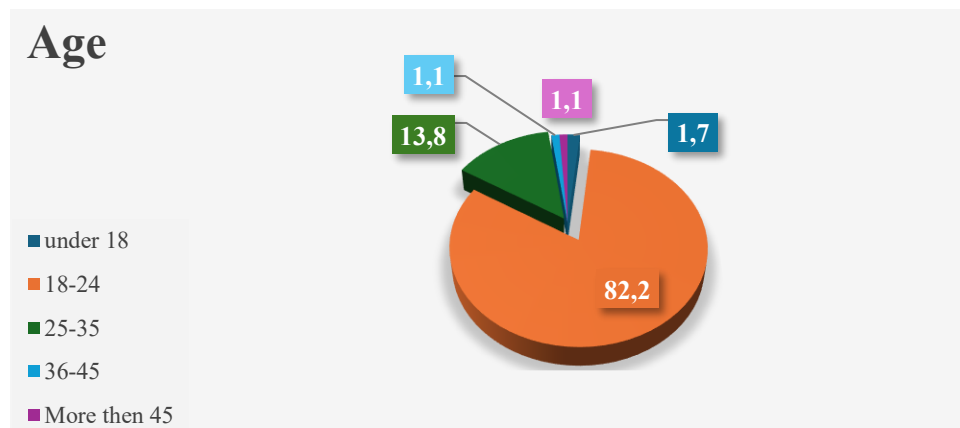
## 2) Sample Distribution by Age

**Table 7 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Age**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
<b>Valid</b>	<b>Under 18</b>	3	1,7	1,7	1,7
	<b>18-24</b>	143	82,2	82,2	83,9
	<b>25-35</b>	24	13,8	13,8	97,7
	<b>36-45</b>	2	1,1	1,1	98,9
	<b>+45</b>	2	1,1	1,1	100,0
	<b>Total</b>	174	100,0	100,0	

Source: SPSS version 27.

**Figure 10 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Age**



Source: SPSS version 27.

The age distribution of the sample reveals a significant concentration of respondents in the 18–24 age group, accounting for 82.2% of the total sample. This is followed by 13.8% in the 25–35 age group. Other age categories are minimally represented: under 18 (1.7%), 36–45 (1.1%), and over 45 (1.1%).

This indicates an unbalanced age distribution, with a strong predominance of young adults aged 18 to 24, suggesting that the study mainly reflects the perceptions and behaviors of Generation Z and young Millennials, who are typically more engaged with online platforms and likely more influenced by online reviews in their decision-making process.

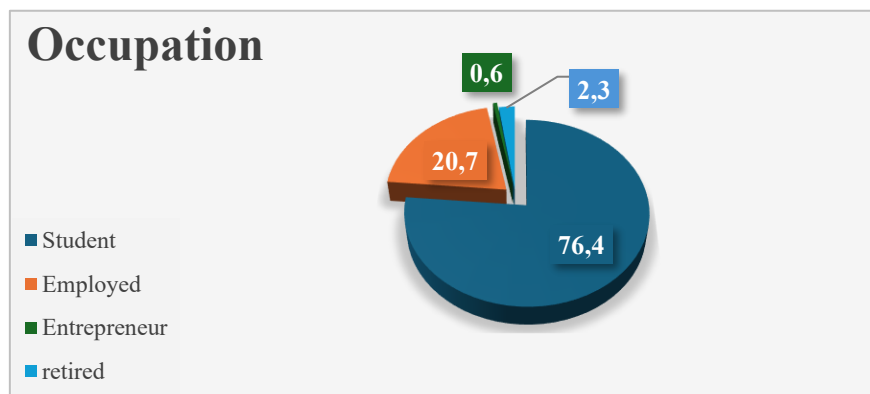
### 3) Sample Distribution by occupation

**Table 8 : Distribution of the Study Sample by occupation**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
<b>Valid</b>	<b>Student</b>	133	76,4	76,4	76,4
	<b>Employed</b>	36	20,7	20,7	97,1
	<b>Entrepreneur</b>	1	0,6	0,6	97,7
	<b>Retired</b>	4	2,3	2,3	100,0
	<b>Total</b>	174	100,0	100,0	

**Source:** SPSS version 27.

**Figure 11 : Distribution of the Study Sample by occupation**



**Source:** SPSS version 27.

The occupational distribution of the study sample shows a dominance of students, who represent 76.4% of respondents. This is followed by employed individuals at 20.7%, while entrepreneurs (0.6%) and retired individuals (2.3%) form a very small portion of the sample. This distribution suggests that the findings of the study largely reflect the views and behaviors of a younger, academically engaged population, likely with high internet usage and familiarity with online platforms. As such, their decision-making may be more influenced by online reviews compared to older or professionally diverse groups.



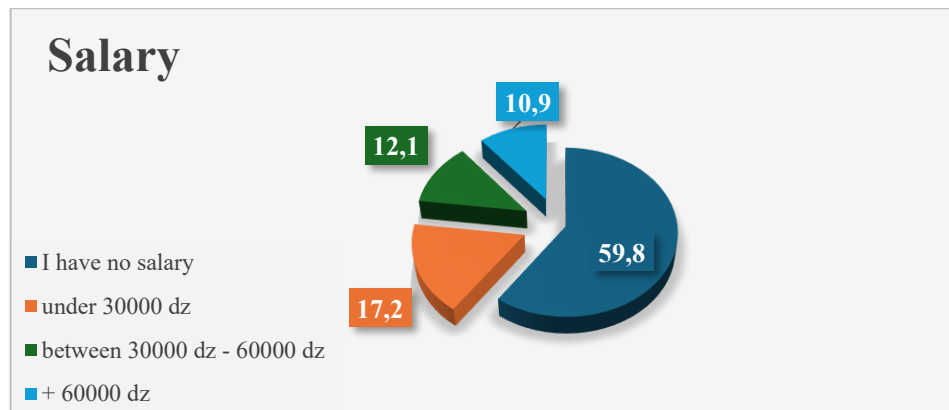
#### 4) Sample Distribution by salary

**Table 9 : Distribution of the Study Sample by salary**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
<b>Valid</b>	<b>I have no salary</b>	104	59,8	59,8	59,8
	<b>Under 30000 dz</b>	30	17,2	17,2	77,0
	<b>Between 30000 dz - 60000 dz</b>	21	12,1	12,1	89,1
	<b>+ 60000 dz</b>	19	10,9	10,9	100,0
	<b>Total</b>	174	100,0	100,0	

Source: SPSS version 27.

**Figure 12 : Distribution of the Study Sample by salary**



Source: SPSS version 27.

The distribution by salary reveals that the majority of respondents (59.8%) reported having no salary, which aligns with the earlier finding that most of the sample consists of students. Among those with income, 17.2% earn under 30,000 DZD, 12.1% earn between 30,000 and 60,000 DZD, and 10.9% earn more than 60,000 DZD.

This income imbalance, with a significant portion having no regular income, suggests that the sample is largely composed of financially dependent individuals, likely making price-sensitive purchasing decisions.

### c) Statistical Analysis of the Questionnaire Results

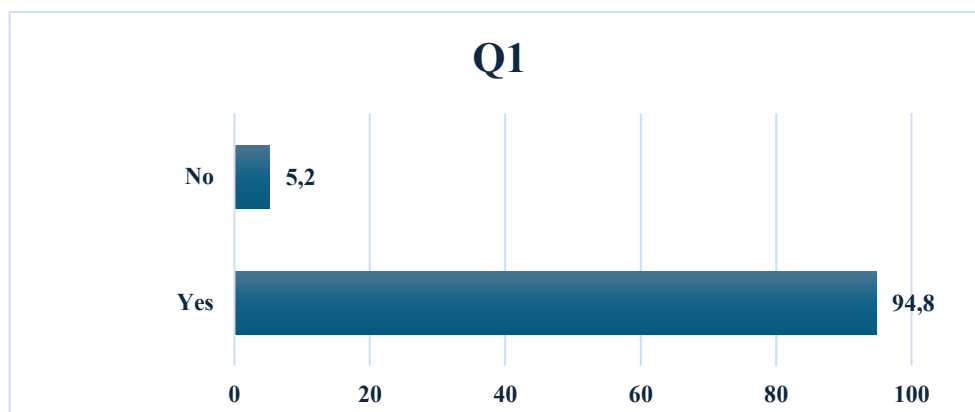
#### ❖ Do you use drive ride hailing apps like (Heetch, Yassir, ...)?

**Table 10 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Use of Ride-Hailing Apps**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
<b>Valid</b>	<b>Yes</b>	165	94,8	94,8	94,8
	<b>No</b>	9	5,2	5,2	100,0
	<b>Total</b>	174	100,0	100,0	

Source: SPSS version 27.

**Figure 13 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Use of Ride-Hailing Apps**



Source: SPSS version 27.

The distribution indicates that a vast majority of respondents (94.8%) use ride-hailing applications such as Heetch or Yassir, while only 5.2% do not.

This shows that ride-hailing services are widely adopted among the study sample, reflecting a high level of familiarity and engagement with digital platforms.

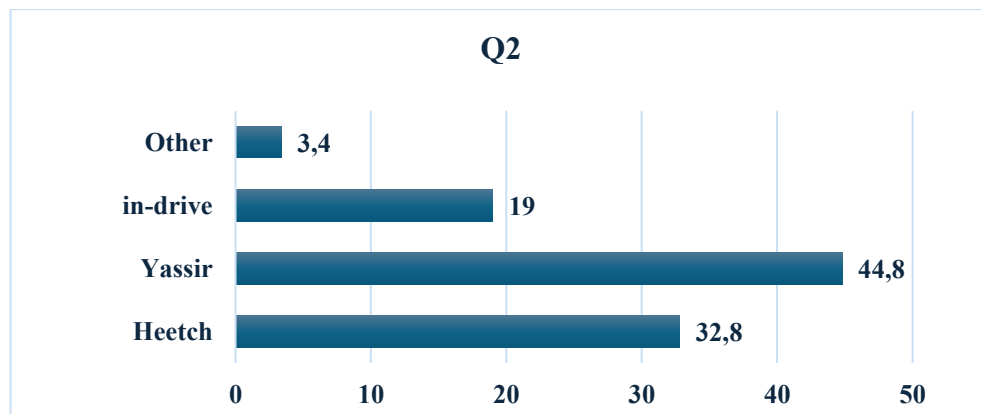
❖ Which ride hailing app do you use most frequently?

**Table 11: Distribution of the Study Sample by most Frequently Used Ride-Hailing App**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Heetch	57	32,8	32,8	32,8
	Yassir	78	44,8	44,8	77,6
	In-drive	33	19,0	19,0	96,6
	Other	6	3,4	3,4	100,0
	Total	174	100,0	100,0	

Source: SPSS version 27.

**Figure 14 : Distribution of the Study Sample by most frequently Used Ride-Hailing App**



Source: SPSS version 27.

The distribution the data shows that among respondents who use ride-hailing apps, 44.8% most frequently use Yassir, 32.8% prefer Heetch, 19.0% use inDrive, and only 3.4% rely on other platforms like yangoo or dont use ride hailing apps.

This distribution highlights that Yassir is the leading ride-hailing app among the sample, followed by Heetch. The preference for these platforms may be influenced by factors such as service quality, pricing, user experience, or customer reviews.

- ❖ **Rank the following factors in order of importance when choosing a ride-hailing service**

**Table 12 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Ranking of Ride-Hailing Service Selection Factors**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Rank 1</b>	<b>Rank 2</b>	<b>Rank 3</b>
<b>Safety</b>	<b>117 (67.2%)</b>	39 (22.4%)	18 (10.3%)
<b>Driver Behavior</b>	78 (44.8%)	52 (29.9%)	<b>44 (25.3%)</b>
<b>Pricing</b>	73 (42.0%)	<b>58 (33.3%)</b>	43 (24.7%)

**Source:** SPSS version 27.

The distribution of respondents by ranking of ride-hailing service selection factors reveals that **safety** is the most important criterion for the majority of users, with **67.2%** ranking it as their top priority. This suggests that passengers place a high value on feeling secure during their trips.

**Driver behavior** ranks second in importance, with **44.8%** selecting it as their primary factor. This highlights the importance of courteous and professional conduct from drivers in shaping user preferences.

**Pricing**, while still significant, comes in third, with **42.0%** identifying it as their top factor. Although cost remains a key consideration, it appears that users are more willing to pay slightly more in exchange for safety and good service.

Overall, the results indicate that while economic considerations are relevant, **safety and driver behavior play a more dominant role** in the decision-making process of ride-hailing service users.

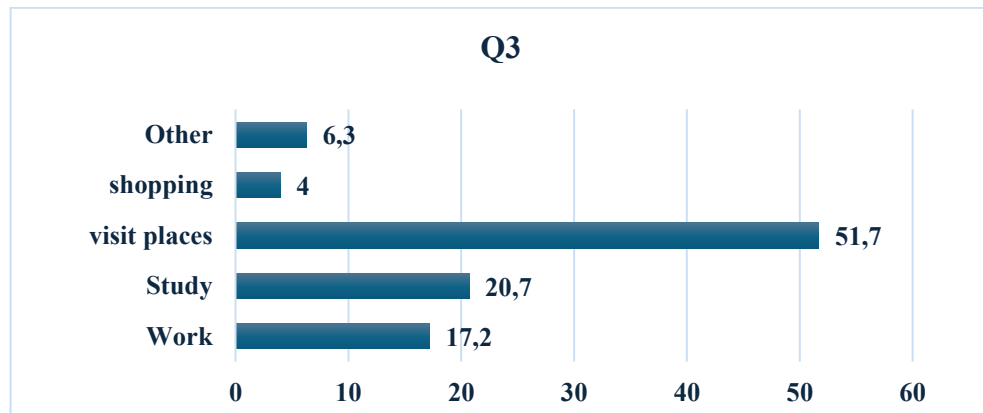
- ❖ **What is the main reason for using ride hailing app?**

**Table 13 : Distribution of the Study Sample by their main reason for using a ride-hailing app**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
<b>Valid</b>	<b>Work</b>	30	17,2	17,2	17,2
	<b>Study</b>	36	20,7	20,7	37,9
	<b>Visit places</b>	90	51,7	51,7	89,7
	<b>Shopping</b>	7	4,0	4,0	93,7
	<b>Other</b>	11	6,3	6,3	100,0
	<b>Total</b>	174	100,0	100,0	

**Source:** SPSS version 27.

**Figure 15 : Distribution of the Study Sample by their main reason for using a ride-hailing app**



**Source:** SPSS version 27.

The distribution shows that the majority (51.7%) use it primarily to visit places, making this the dominant motivation. This indicates that convenience in personal and leisure-related mobility is the leading driver behind ride-hailing usage.

Study-related travel ranks second at 20.7%, followed by work-related purposes at 17.2%, suggesting that a notable portion of users rely on ride-hailing for daily academic or professional commuting. Only 4.0% of respondents use the service mainly for shopping, while 6.3% indicated other purposes, highlighting a minimal use of ride-hailing for errands or unspecified

reasons. These findings imply that ride-hailing apps are primarily favored for flexible and spontaneous mobility, particularly for **leisure and social activities**, rather than structured daily routines.

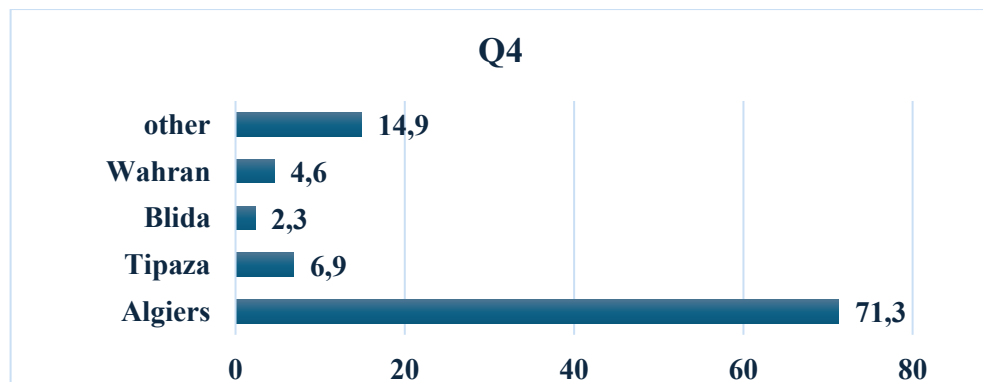
❖ **Which wilaya do you use ride hailing apps in the most?**

**Table 14 : Distribution of the Study Sample by wilaya**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
<b>Valid</b>	<b>Algiers</b>	124	71,3	71,3	71,3
	<b>Tipaza</b>	12	6,9	6,9	78,2
	<b>Blida</b>	4	2,3	2,3	80,5
	<b>Wahran</b>	8	4,6	4,6	85,1
	<b>Other</b>	26	14,9	14,9	100,0
	<b>Total</b>	174	100,0	100,0	

Source: SPSS version 27.

**Figure 16 : Distribution of the Study Sample by wilaya**



Source: SPSS version 27.

The data reveals that the majority of respondents (71.3%) use ride-hailing apps most frequently in Algiers, indicating that the capital city is the primary hub for ride-hailing activity. This is likely due to its high population density, and greater availability of such services.

Other wilayas such as Tipaza (6.9%), Wahran (4.6%), and Blida (2.3%) show lower but notable usage, while 14.9% of respondents reported using ride-hailing apps in other regions like Biskra, Batna, and Boumerdes.

These results suggest that while ride-hailing services are spreading across various wilayas, their usage remains concentrated in major urban centers, particularly Algiers, reflecting geographic disparities in service accessibility and demand.

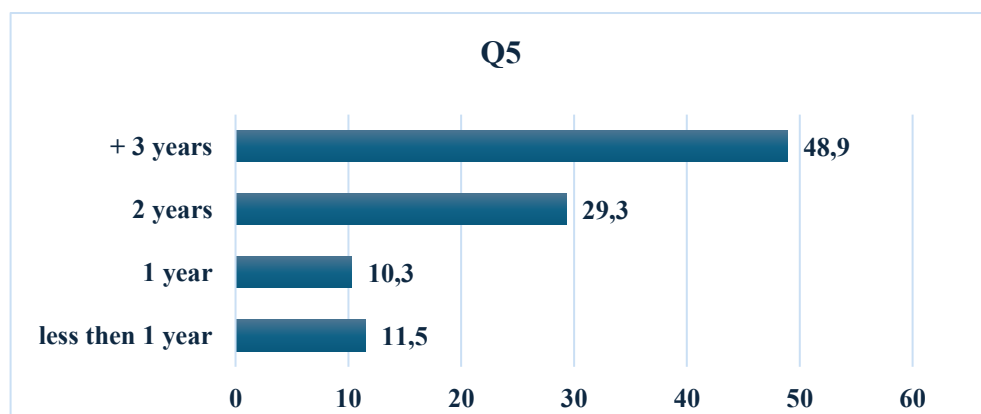
❖ **How long have you been using ride hailing apps?**

**Table 15 : Distribution of the Study Sample by using ride hailing apps**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
<b>Valid</b>	<b>Less than 1 year</b>	20	11,5	11,5	11,5
	<b>1 year</b>	18	10,3	10,3	21,8
	<b>2 years</b>	51	29,3	29,3	51,1
	<b>+ 3 years</b>	85	48,9	48,9	100,0
	<b>Total</b>	174	100,0	100,0	

Source: SPSS version 27.

**Figure 17 : Distribution of the Study Sample by using ride hailing apps**



Source: SPSS version 27.

The majority of respondents (48.9%) reported using ride-hailing apps for more than 3 years, indicating a strong level of adoption and long-term familiarity with these services. Additionally, 29.3% have been using them for 2 years, while only 11.5% and 10.3% have been users for less than a year and exactly one year, respectively.

This distribution highlights a trend of sustained and increasing engagement with ride-hailing apps over time, suggesting that these services have become an integrated part of users' mobility habits.

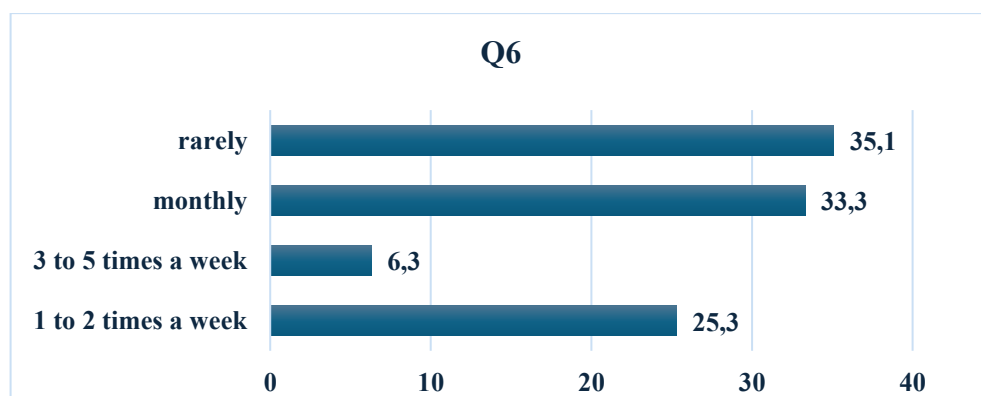
❖ **How often do you use ride hailing apps?**

**Table 16 : Distribution of the Study Sample by frequency of use ride-hailing apps**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
<b>Valid</b>	<b>1 to 2 times a week</b>	44	25,3	25,3	25,3
	<b>3 to 5 times a week</b>	11	6,3	6,3	31,6
	<b>monthly</b>	58	33,3	33,3	64,9
	<b>rarely</b>	61	35,1	35,1	100,0
	<b>Total</b>	174	100,0	100,0	

Source: SPSS version 27.

**Figure 18 : Distribution of the Study Sample by frequency of use ride-hailing apps**



Source: SPSS version 27.



The majority of respondents use ride-hailing apps infrequently, with 35.1% stating they use them rarely and 33.3% reporting monthly use. In contrast, only 25.3% use the apps 1 to 2 times a week, and a mere 6.3% use them 3 to 5 times a week.

This indicates that while ride-hailing apps are widely known and adopted, their frequency of use remains occasional, likely reserved for specific needs or circumstances rather than daily commuting.

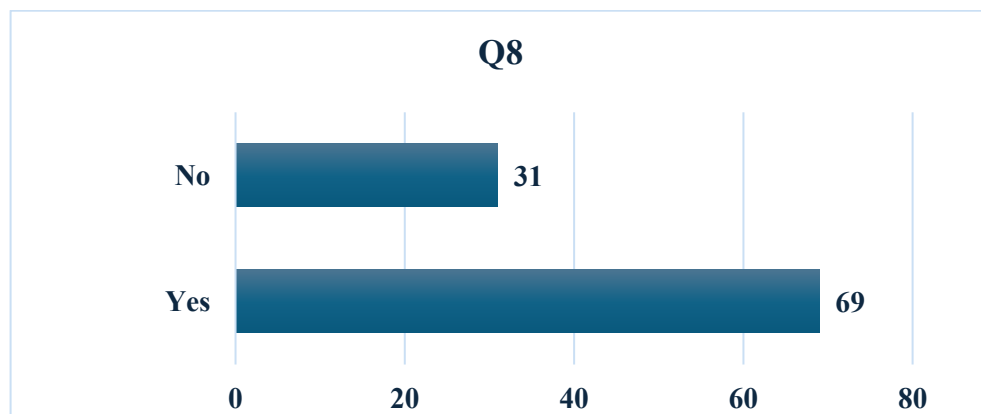
❖ **Do you check online reviews before using ride hailing apps?**

**Table 17 : Distribution of the Study Sample by online reviews checking**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
<b>Valid</b>	<b>Yes</b>	120	69,0	69,0	69,0
	<b>No</b>	54	31,0	31,0	100,0
	<b>Total</b>	174	100,0	100,0	

Source: SPSS version 27.

**Figure 19 : Distribution of the Study Sample by online reviews checking**



Source: SPSS version 27.

The results show that a significant majority of respondents (69%) check online reviews before using ride-hailing apps, indicating that user feedback and digital reputation play a critical role in building trust and influencing customer decisions.

In contrast, only 31% of respondents do not consider online reviews, possibly due to trust in the brand, or lack of concern about peer experiences.

❖ **Rank the following apps according to how frequently you use and browse them?**

**Table 18 : Distribution of the Study Sample by App Usage Frequency Rankings**

<b>App</b>	<b>Rank 1</b>	<b>Rank 2</b>	<b>Rank 3</b>	<b>Rank 4</b>	<b>Rank 5</b>
<b>Instagram</b>	<b>106 (60.9%)</b>	34 (19.5%)	9 (5.2%)	16 (9.2%)	9 (5.2%)
<b>TikTok</b>	40 (23.0%)	40 (23.0%)	26 (14.9%)	30 (17.2%)	38 (21.8%)
<b>Facebook</b>	32 (18.4%)	39 (22.4%)	52 (29.9%)	28 (16.1%)	23 (13.2%)
<b>Google</b>	25 (14.4%)	25 (14.4%)	54 (31.0%)	42 (24.1%)	28 (16.1%)
<b>YouTube</b>	18 (10.3%)	52 (29.9%)	42 (24.1%)	51 (29.3%)	11 (6.3%)

**Source:** SPSS version 27.

The distribution of app usage rankings reveals that Instagram is the most frequently used app among respondents, with a dominant 60.9% placing it in first position. TikTok follows at a distance, with 23% ranking it first but showing a more balanced distribution across all ranks, indicating mixed usage intensity. Facebook is most commonly placed in the middle rank (3rd by 29.9%), suggesting moderate usage, while Google and YouTube are primarily used as secondary or tertiary apps, with significant percentages in the 2nd and 3rd ranks. Notably, YouTube is also frequently placed in 4th position (29.3%), showing it is used often but not as intensively as social media apps. Overall, the results highlight a clear preference for Instagram, followed by varying engagement levels with the other apps based on user habits.

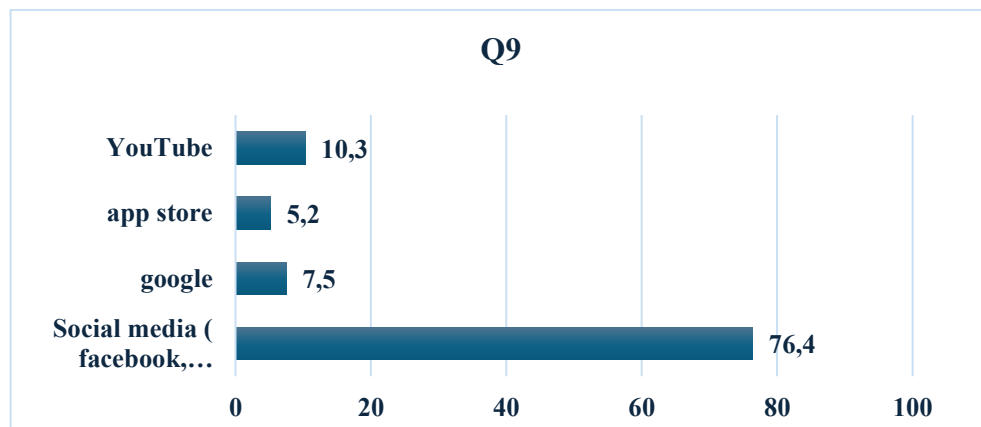
❖ **Which review platform do you prefer for reading or watching reviews to make your decision?**

**Table 19 : Distribution of the Study Sample by preferred review platforms**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Social media (facebook, instagram, tiktok ...)	133	76,4	76,9	76,9
	Google	13	7,5	7,5	84,4
	App store	9	5,2	5,2	89,6
	YouTube	18	10,3	10,4	100,0
	Total	174	100,0	100,0	

Source: SPSS version 27.

**Figure 20 : Distribution of the Study Sample by preferred review platforms**



Source: By us based on data from SPSS software (V.27).

The distribution of responses regarding preferred review platforms indicates a strong preference for social media (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, etc.), with 76.9% of participants relying on these platforms to read or watch reviews before making decisions. YouTube follows distantly with 10.4%, suggesting that while video content plays a role, it is not the dominant source. Google reviews are used by 7.5%, and only 5.2% turn to app stores. This highlights the significant influence of social media platforms as the primary source of consumer opinion and decision-making support in the context of ride-hailing apps.

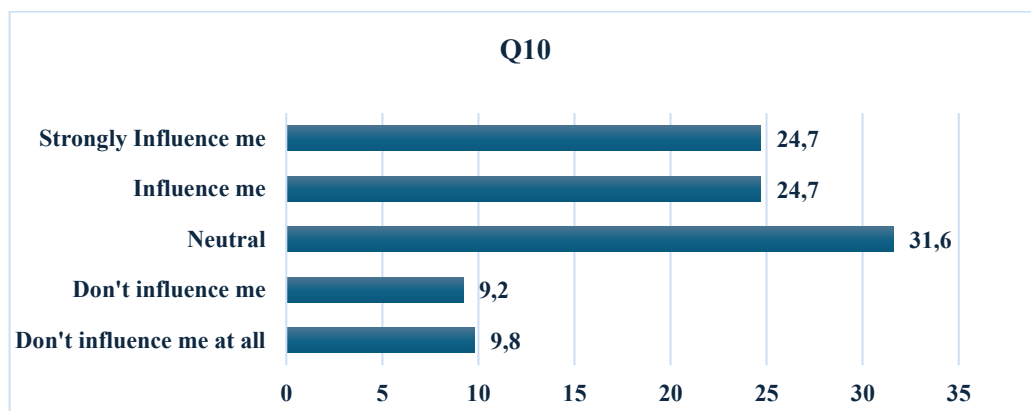
- ❖ On a scale of 1 to 5 ‘How much do online reviews influence your decision to use ride hailing apps?’

**Table 20 : Distribution of the Study Sample by the influence of online reviews**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
<b>Valid</b>	<b>Don't influence me at all</b>	17	9,8	9,8	9,8
	<b>Don't influence me</b>	16	9,2	9,2	19,0
	<b>Neutral</b>	55	31,6	31,6	50,6
	<b>Influence me</b>	43	24,7	24,7	75,3
	<b>Strongly Influence me</b>	43	24,7	24,7	100,0
	<b>Total</b>	174	100,0	100,0	

Source: SPSS version 27.

**Figure 21 : Distribution of the Study Sample by the influence of online reviews**



Source: SPSS version 27.

The distribution of responses regarding the influence of online reviews on the decision to use ride-hailing apps shows a relatively balanced trend, with a slight leaning toward positive

influence. Specifically, 49.4% of respondents stated that online reviews either influence (24.7%) or strongly influence (24.7%) their decisions, indicating that nearly half of the sample considers reviews a significant factor. Meanwhile, 19% said reviews don't influence them or don't influence them at all, and 31.6% remained neutral. This suggests that while opinions are varied, online reviews tend to play a notable role in shaping consumer behavior toward ride-hailing apps.

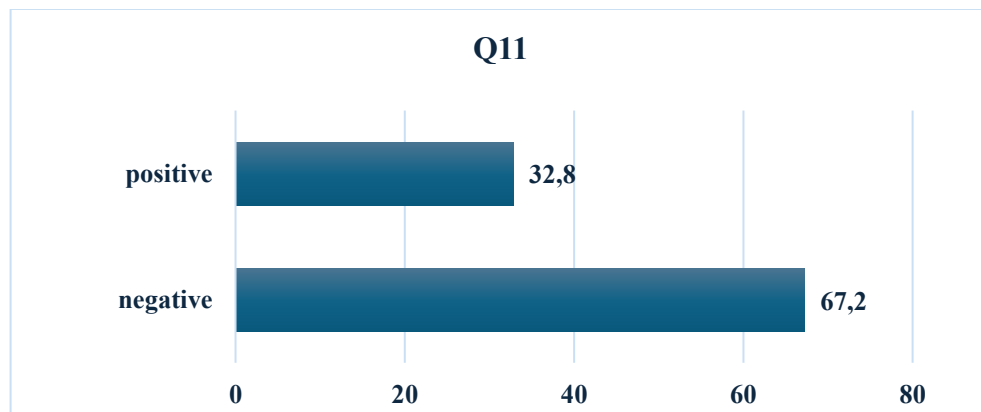
❖ **Do positive or negative reviews have a greater influence on your decisions?**

**Table 21 : Distribution of the Study Sample by the influence of reviews**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
<b>Valid</b>	<b>Negative</b>	117	67,2	67,2	67,2
	<b>Positive</b>	57	32,8	32,8	100,0
	<b>Total</b>	174	100,0	100,0	

Source: SPSS version 27.

**Figure 22 : Distribution of the Study Sample by the influence of reviews**



Source: SPSS version 27.

The data shows that **negative reviews have a much greater influence** on users' decisions regarding ride-hailing apps, with **67.2%** of respondents indicating that negative reviews affect them more. In contrast, only **32.8%** reported being more influenced by positive reviews. This highlights the stronger impact of negative feedback on consumer behavior, suggesting that users

pay closer attention to potential risks or problems than to positive experiences when choosing a service.

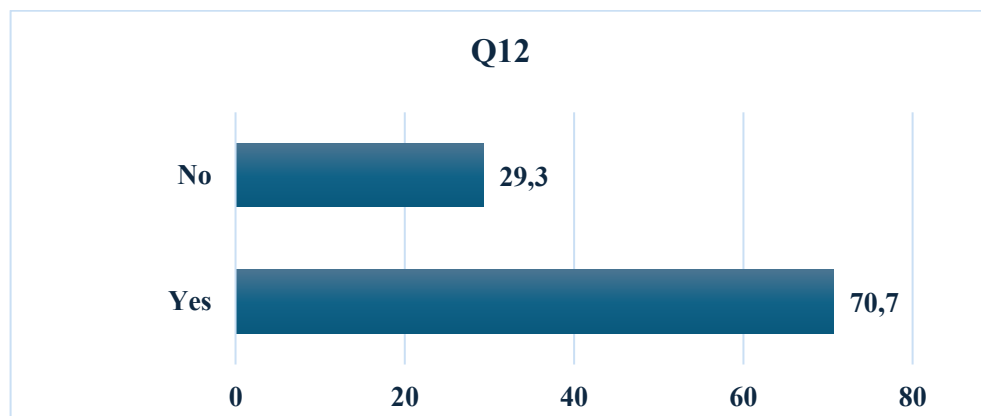
❖ **Have you ever avoided using ride hailing because of negative online reviews?**

**Table 22 : Distribution of the Study Sample by avoiding use ride hailing because of negative**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
<b>Valid</b>	<b>Yes</b>	123	70,7	70,7	70,7
	<b>No</b>	51	29,3	29,3	100,0
	<b>Total</b>	174	100,0	100,0	

Source: SPSS version 27.

**Figure 23 : Distribution of the Study Sample by avoiding use ride hailing because of negative**



Source: SPSS version 27.

The data indicates that a significant majority of respondents, 70.7%, have avoided using ride-hailing apps due to negative online reviews. Only 29.3% reported that they have never avoided these apps for this reason. This underscores the powerful effect that negative online feedback has on users' decisions, highlighting the importance for ride-hailing services to maintain a positive online reputation to retain and attract customers.

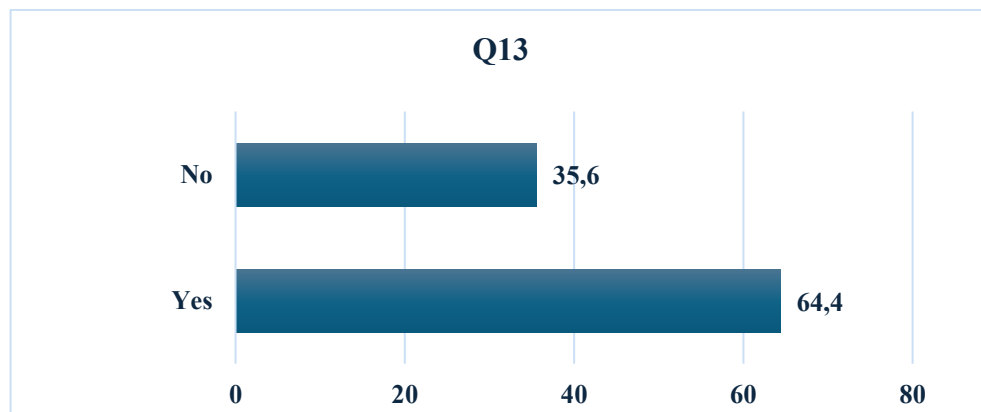
❖ **Have you ever uses ride hailing apps because of positive online reviews?**

**Table 23: Distribution of the Study Sample by using ride hailing apps because of positive online reviews**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
<b>Valid</b>	<b>Yes</b>	112	64,4	64,4	64,4
	<b>No</b>	62	35,6	35,6	100,0
	<b>Total</b>	174	100,0	100,0	

**Source:** SPSS version 27.

**Figure 24 : Distribution of the Study Sample by using ride hailing apps because of positive online reviews**



**Source:** SPSS version 27.

The results show that 64.4% of respondents have used ride-hailing apps because of positive online reviews, while 35.6% have not. This indicates that positive user feedback significantly influences consumer behavior and can enhance user confidence in the service, highlighting the importance of maintaining a favorable online reputation for ride-hailing platforms.

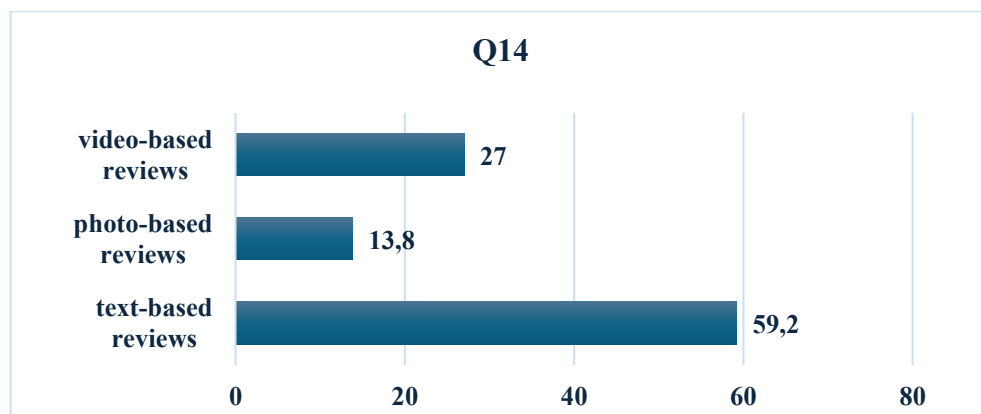
❖ **When choosing ride hailing apps, which online review format do you priorities most?**

**Table 24 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Preferred Online Review Format When Choosing Ride-Hailing Apps**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
<b>Valid</b>	<b>Text-based reviews</b>	103	59,2	59,2	59,2
	<b>Photo-based reviews</b>	24	13,8	13,8	73,0
	<b>Video-based reviews</b>	47	27,0	27,0	100,0
	<b>Total</b>	174	100,0	100,0	

Source: SPSS version 27.

**Figure 25 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Preferred Online Review Format When Choosing Ride-Hailing Apps**



Source: SPSS version 27.

The data reveals that 59.2% of respondents prioritize text-based reviews when choosing ride-hailing apps, followed by video-based reviews at 27.0%, and photo-based reviews at 13.8%. This indicates a clear preference for detailed written feedback, likely due to the depth of information it provides. However, the considerable interest in video-based reviews also suggests growing trust in more dynamic, visual content, particularly for verifying service quality and user experience.



- ❖ Rank the following reviews format from the most influential to the least influential when choosing a ride hailing app.

**Table 25 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Influence Ranking**

Review Format	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3
Text-based reviews	98 (56.3%)	24 (13.8%)	52 (29.9%)
Photo-based reviews	33 (19.0%)	95 (54.6%)	46 (26.4%)
Video-based reviews	68 (39.1%)	55 (31.6%)	51 (29.3%)

**Source:** SPSS version 27.

Text-based reviews are the most influential, with the majority of respondents (56.3%) ranking them first. Video-based reviews come next (39.1% ranked them first), while photo-based reviews are the least influential, with only 19.0% assigning them top rank.

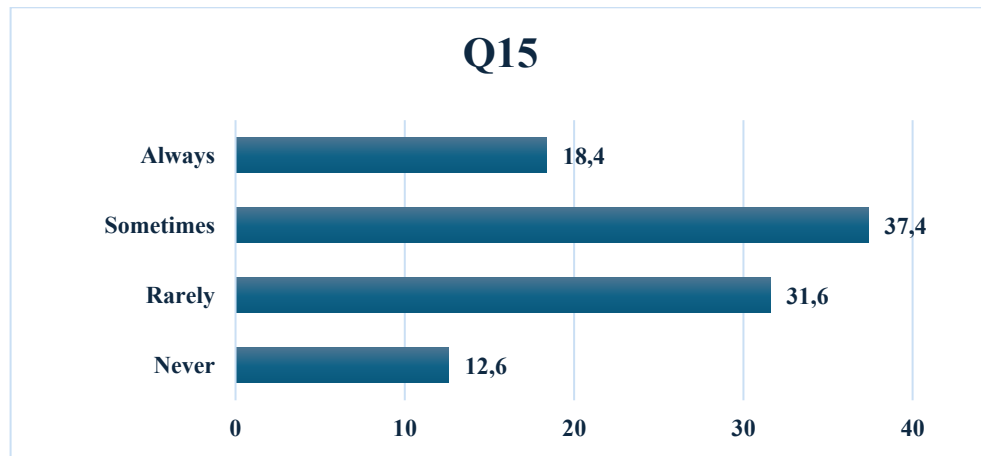
- ❖ How often do you leave online reviews after using ride hailing app?

**Table 26 :Distribution of the Study Sample by frequency of leaving online reviews after using ride-hailing apps**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
<b>Valid</b>	<b>Never</b>	22	12,6	12,6	12,6
	<b>Rarely</b>	55	31,6	31,6	44,3
	<b>Sometimes</b>	65	37,4	37,4	81,6
	<b>Always</b>	32	18,4	18,4	100,0
	<b>Total</b>	174	100,0	100,0	

**Source:** SPSS version 27.

**Figure 26 : Distribution of the Study Sample by frequency of leaving online reviews after using ride-hailing apps**



**Source:** SPSS version 27.

The distribution reveals that a significant portion tends to engage in this behavior occasionally. Specifically, 37.4% of respondents indicated that they sometimes leave reviews, followed by 31.6% who rarely do so. Meanwhile, 18.4% of participants reported always providing feedback, and only 12.6% never leave reviews. This suggests that while a majority of users do not consistently post reviews, most have participated in the feedback process at least occasionally, highlighting a moderate level of user engagement in review contribution.

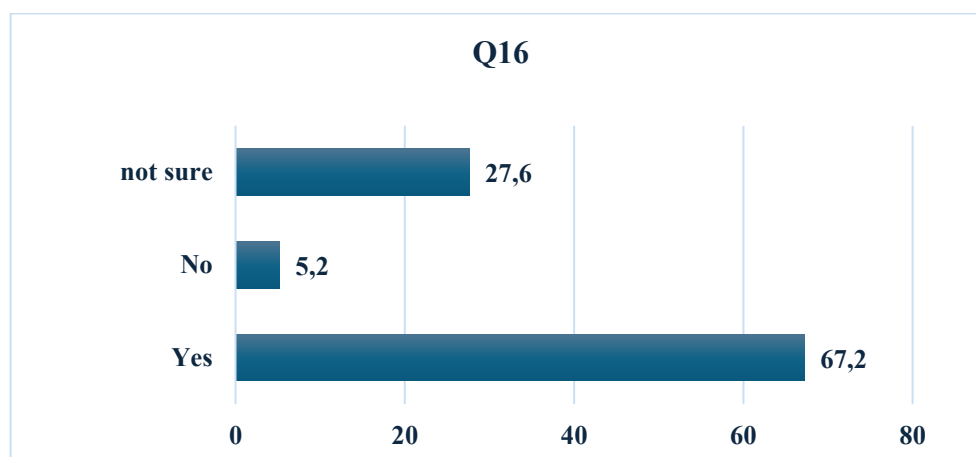
❖ **Would you leave an online review after a bad experience with a ride hailing app?**

**Table 27 : Distribution of the Study Sample by leaving a bad review**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Yes	117	67,2	67,2	67,2
	No	9	5,2	5,2	72,4
	Not sure	48	27,6	27,6	100,0
	Total	174	100,0	100,0	

**Source:** SPSS version 27.

**Figure 27 : Distribution of the Study Sample by leaving a bad review**



**Source:** SPSS version 27.

The results indicate that a substantial majority of respondents (67.2%) would leave an online review after a bad experience with a ride-hailing app, while only 5.2% stated they would not. Additionally, 27.6% were unsure about taking such action. This suggests that negative experiences are a strong motivator for user feedback, reflecting the tendency of consumers to express dissatisfaction publicly, which can significantly impact the reputation and perceived reliability of ride-hailing platforms.

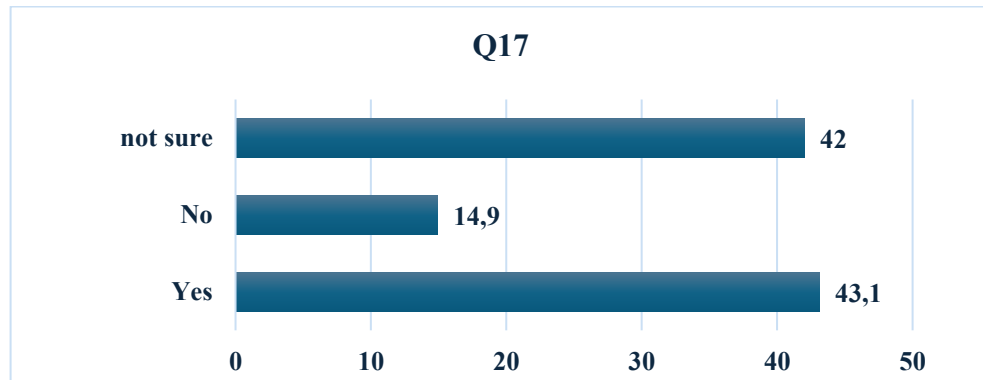
❖ **Would you leave an online review after a good experience with a ride hailing app**

**Table 28 : Distribution of the Study Sample by leaving a good review**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Yes	75	43,1	43,1	43,1
	No	26	14,9	14,9	58,0
	Not sure	73	42,0	42,0	100,0
	Total	174	100,0	100,0	

**Source:** SPSS version 27.

**Figure 28 : Distribution of the Study Sample by leaving a good review**



**Source:** SPSS version 27.

The findings show that only 43.1% of respondents would leave an online review after a good experience with a ride-hailing app, compared to 14.9% who would not, and a significant 42.0% who are uncertain. This indicates that while positive experiences may encourage some users to leave feedback, there is a general hesitation or lack of motivation to share favorable reviews, especially when compared to the stronger inclination to report negative experiences. This trend underscores the importance for ride-hailing platforms to actively encourage satisfied users to share their experiences in order to build a more balanced and representative online reputation.

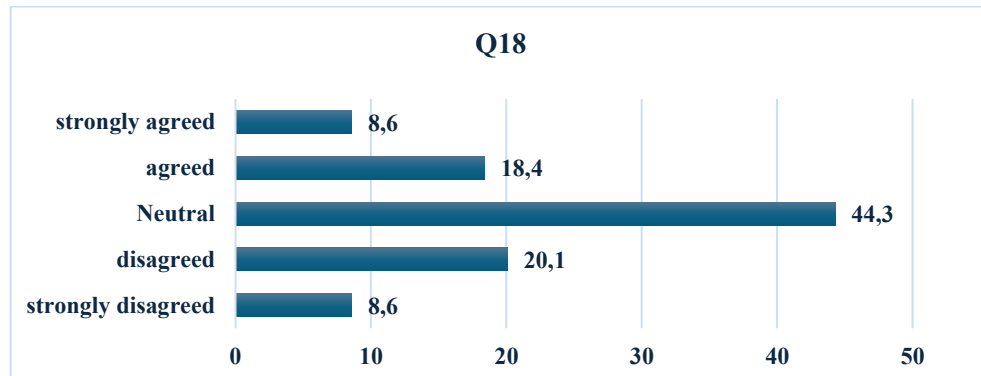
- ❖ **On a scale of 1 to 5, how much do you agree that online reviews give a true representation of a ride hailing services?**

**Table 29 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Agreement with the Statement**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
<b>Valid</b>	<b>Strongly disagreed</b>	15	8,6	8,6	8,6
	<b>Disagreed</b>	35	20,1	20,1	28,7
	<b>Neutral</b>	77	44,3	44,3	73,0
	<b>Agreed</b>	32	18,4	18,4	91,4
	<b>Strongly agreed</b>	15	8,6	8,6	100,0
	<b>Total</b>	174	100,0	100,0	

**Source:** SPSS version 27.

**Figure 29 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Agreement with the Statement**



**Source:** SPSS version 27.

The results indicate that 44.3% of respondents remain neutral regarding whether online reviews accurately represent ride-hailing services, while 26.9% agreed or strongly agreed, and 28.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed. This distribution reflects a general skepticism or uncertainty among users about the reliability and objectivity of online reviews. Although a portion of the sample sees reviews as trustworthy, the predominance of neutral and skeptical responses suggests that many users approach online feedback with caution, potentially due to perceived biases, fake reviews, or inconsistent user experiences.

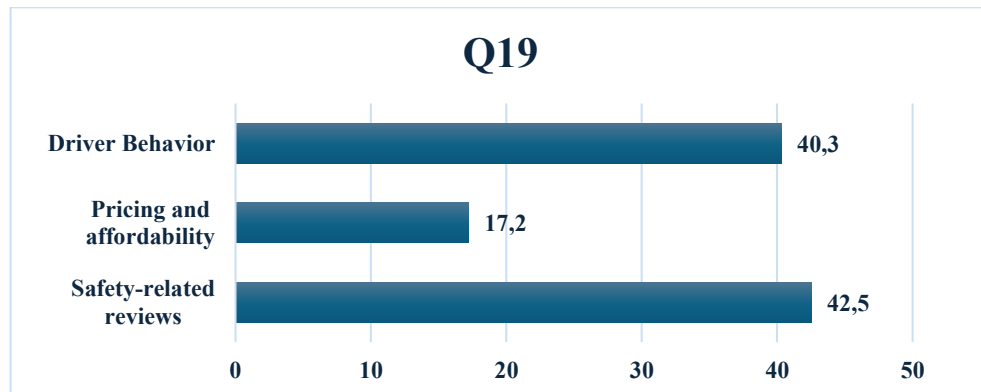
❖ **Which aspect of online reviews do you find most influential?**

**Table 30 : Distribution of the Study Sample by the Most Influential Aspect of Online Reviews in Ride-Hailing Services**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Safety-related reviews	74	42,5	43,5	43,5
	Pricing and affordability	30	17,2	17,6	61,2
	Driver Behavior	70	40,3	38,8	100,0
	Total	174	100,0	100,0	

**Source:** SPSS version 27.

**Figure 30 :Distribution of the Study Sample by the Most Influential Aspect of Online Reviews in Ride-Hailing Services**



**Source:** SPSS version 27.

The distribution of responses reveals that safety-related reviews are the most influential, with 43.5% of participants identifying them as the key factor when considering ride-hailing services. This is closely followed by reviews on driver behavior, cited by 38.8% of respondents, while pricing and affordability come last, influencing only 17.6% of users. These results highlight that safety and driver conduct are the primary concerns for users, outweighing cost considerations, and thus play a critical role in shaping user perceptions and choices regarding ride-hailing platforms.

- ❖ **Rank the online reviews aspects in order of importance when choosing a ride-hailing services.**

**Table 31 : Distribution of the Study Sample by the three key factors**

(Pricing, Safety, Driver Behavior) by order of importance based on the participants' responses:

Factor	Rank 1 (Most Important)	Rank 2	Rank 3 (Least Important)
Safety	87 (50.0%)	69 (39.7%)	18 (10.3%)
Driver Behavior	87 (50.0%)	47 (27.0%)	40 (23.0%)
Pricing	50 (28.7%)	51 (29.3%)	73 (42.0%)

**Source:** SPSS version 27.

The distribution of respondents' rankings regarding the importance of key aspects when choosing a ride-hailing service reveals clear user preferences:

**Safety** and **Driver Behavior** are tied as the top priorities, with **50% of respondents ranking each as the most important factor**. This underscores a strong consumer emphasis on personal security and respectful, professional driver conduct when using ride-hailing services.

**Safety** is further reinforced as a key concern, with only **10.3% ranking it as least important**, compared to **23% for Driver Behavior**, showing that safety is consistently valued more highly across the board.

**Pricing**, on the other hand, is ranked **least important by the majority of respondents (42%)**, and only **28.7%** consider it the most important factor. This suggests that while affordability matters, it is secondary to trust and user experience aspects such as safety and driver behavior.

The findings clearly indicate that ride-hailing users prioritize safety and driver behavior over cost. Companies aiming to increase user satisfaction and retention should therefore invest more in ensuring safe experiences and enhancing driver training rather than focusing solely on competitive pricing.

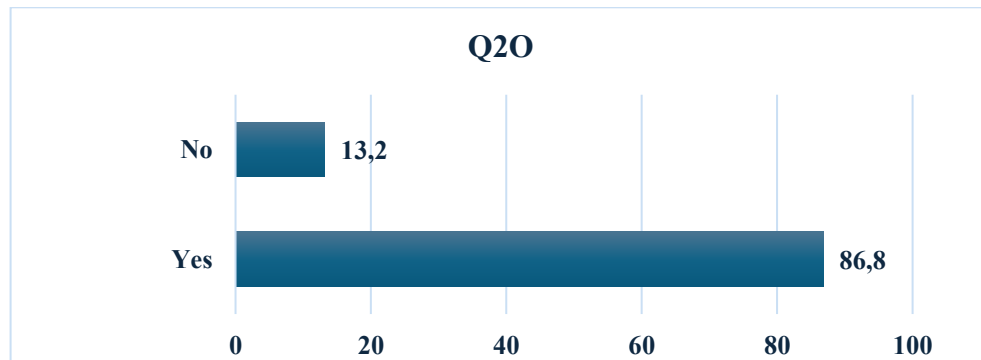
❖ **Do your previous answers also apply to the Heetch app?**

**Table 32 : Distribution of the Study Sample Regarding the Applicability of Previous Answers to the Heetch App**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Yes	151	86,8	86,8	86,8
	No	23	13,2	13,2	100,0
	Total	174	100,0	100,0	

Source: SPSS version 27.

**Figure 31 :Distribution of the Study Sample Regarding the Applicability of Previous Answers to the Heetch App**



**Source:** SPSS version 27.

**86.8% of respondents affirmed** that their previous evaluations regarding factors such as safety, pricing, driver behavior, and the influence of online reviews also apply to the **Heetch app**. Only **13.2% stated otherwise**, suggesting minimal differentiation in how Heetch is perceived compared to other ride-hailing services.

These results suggest that Heetch is generally evaluated by users using the same criteria and standards as other ride-hailing apps. This implies that Heetch's reputation and user experience are largely shaped by the same influential factors identified earlier (safety, driver behavior, and online reviews). For Heetch to maintain or improve its competitiveness, it should align its service strategy with the priorities highlighted by respondents in the broader ride-hailing context.

❖ **What do you like most about the service of Heetch?**

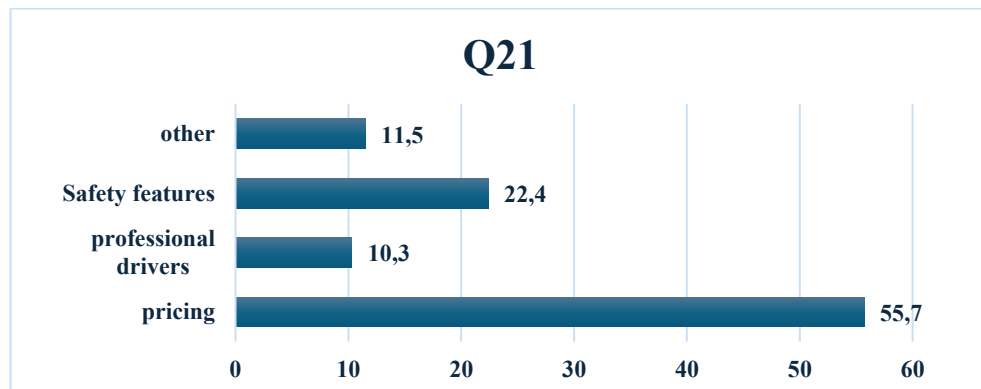
**Table 33 :Distribution of the Study Sample by Most Liked Aspect of Heetch's Service**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Pricing	97	55,7	55,7	55,7
	Professional drivers	18	10,3	10,3	66,1
	Safety features	39	22,4	22,4	88,5
	Other	20	11,5	11,5	100,0
	Total	174	100,0	100,0	

**Source:** SPSS version 27.



**Figure 32 : Distribution of the Study Sample by Most Liked Aspect of Heetch's Service**



**Source:** SPSS version 27.

The analysis of what users like most about Heetch's service reveals that pricing is the leading appreciated factor, with 55.7% of respondents highlighting it as the main positive aspect. Following this, safety features are valued by 22.4% of users, while professional drivers are noted by 10.3%. The remaining 11.5% mentioned other aspects. This indicates that competitive pricing plays an essential role in customer satisfaction with Heetch, but safety also remains a significant concern, reflecting the overall priorities users place on affordability and security when choosing ride-hailing services.

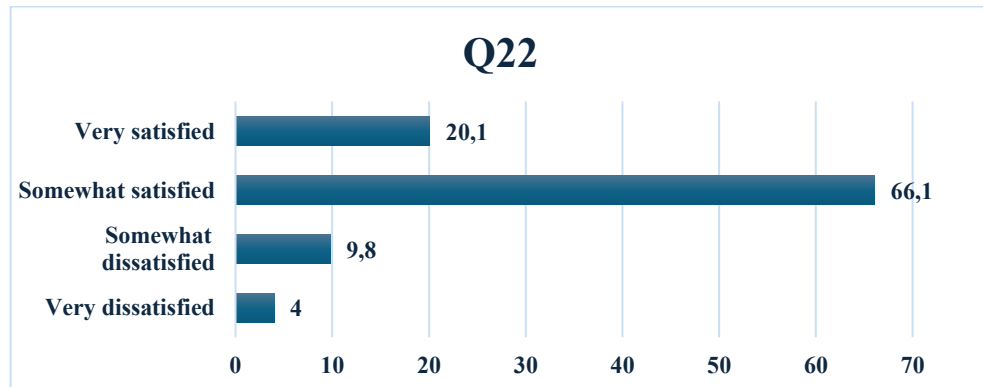
❖ **How satisfied are you with your overall experience using Heetch?**

**Table 34 : Distribution of the Study Sample by satisfaction**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Very dissatisfied	7	4,0	4,0	4,0
	Somewhat dissatisfied	17	9,8	9,8	13,8
	Somewhat satisfied	115	66,1	66,1	79,9
	Very satisfied	35	20,1	20,1	100,0
	Total	174	100,0	100,0	

**Source:** SPSS version 27.

**Figure 33 : Distribution of the Study Sample by satisfaction**



**Source:** SPSS version 27.

The overall satisfaction with Heetch among the respondents is generally positive. A majority of 86.2% of users reported being either somewhat satisfied (66.1%) or very satisfied (20.1%) with their experience. Conversely, only a small proportion expressed dissatisfaction, with 9.8% somewhat dissatisfied and 4.0% very dissatisfied. These results suggest that most users have a favorable perception of Heetch's service quality and user experience.

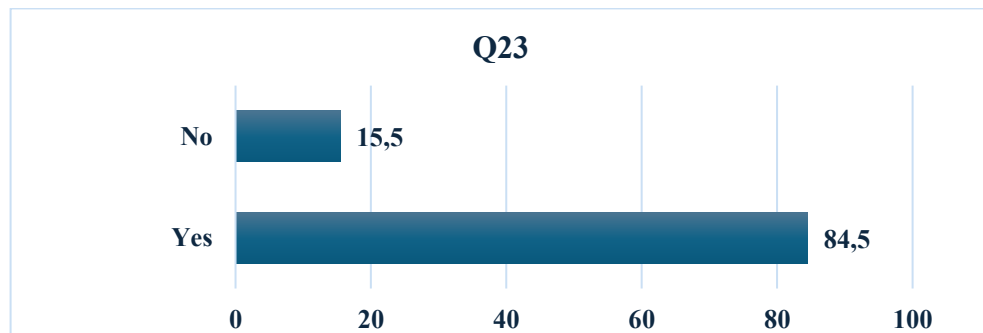
❖ **Would you recommend Heetch to others based on your experience?**

**Table 35 : Distribution of the Study Sample by recommendation**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Yes	147	84,5	84,5	84,5
	No	27	15,5	15,5	100,0
	Total	174	100,0	100,0	

**Source:** SPSS version 27.

**Figure 34 : Distribution of the Study Sample by recommendation**



**Source:** SPSS version 27.

The data shows that a strong majority of respondents, 84.5%, would recommend Heetch to others based on their experience, while only 15.5% would not. This high recommendation rate indicates a positive overall user perception and satisfaction with the Heetch service, reflecting its ability to meet or exceed customer expectations.

#### d) Hypotheses Analysis

##### i. Test of the Secondary Hypotheses

##### Secondary Hypothesis 1

- ❖ Negative reviews have a stronger influence on consumer decisions than positive reviews

**Table 36 : Descriptive Statistics**

Do positive or negative reviews have a greater influence on your decisions?		Frequency	%
Valid	Negative	117	67,2
	Positive	57	32,8
	Total	174	100,0

Source: SPSS version 27.

A clear majority of respondents (67.2%) reported that negative reviews influence their decisions more than positive ones. This supports the hypothesis at the descriptive level.

**Table 37 : One-Sample Statistics**

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error
Do positive or negative reviews have a greater influence on your decisions?	174	1,33	,471	,036

Source: SPSS version 27.

A mean of 1.33 indicates that the average response leans significantly toward "Negative".

**Table 38 : T test for one sample**

	Test value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	95% confidence interval	
					Inferior	Superior
<b>Do positive or negative reviews have a greater influence on your decisions?</b>	37,205	173	,000	1,328	1,26	1,40

Source: SPSS version 27.

**Table 39 : Effect sizes for one simple**

		Standardi zation <sup>a</sup>	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
				Inférieur	Supérieur
<b>Do positive or negative reviews have a greater influence on your decisions?</b>	<b>d of Cohen</b>	,471	2,821	2,488	3,152
	<b>Correction of Hedges</b>	,473	2,808	2,477	3,138

Source: SPSS version 27.

The results strongly support the hypothesis that negative reviews exert a greater influence on consumer decisions than positive ones. The analysis shows that a substantial majority of respondents (67.2%) indicated being more influenced by negative reviews. The average score ( $M = 1.33$ ,  $SD = 0.471$ ) reflects a clear tendency toward negative feedback, with a very large effect size (Cohen's  $d = 2.82$ ), highlighting the significant behavioral weight of such reviews. The one-sample t-test further confirms this influence is statistically significant ( $t(173) = 37.205$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). These findings underscore that negative reviews are considerably more influential in shaping consumer choices than positive feedback.

**Table 40 : Descriptive Statistics Comparative Influence of Negative vs. Positive Online Reviews on Ride-Hailing App Usage (n = 174)**

Review Influence	Yes	(%)	No	(%)
Avoided due to <b>negative reviews</b>	123	70.7%	51	29.3%
Used due to <b>positive reviews</b>	112	64.4%	62	35.6%

Source: SPSS version 27.

A greater percentage of respondents avoided using ride-hailing apps due to negative reviews (70.7%), compared to those who were encouraged to use apps because of positive reviews (64.4%). This suggests a stronger behavioral avoidance response to negative feedback.

**Table 41 : One-Sample Statistics**

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error
<b>Have you ever avoided using ride hailing apps because of negative online reviews?</b>	174	1,29	,456	,035
<b>Have you ever use ride hailing apps because of positive online reviews?</b>	174	1,36	,480	,036

Source: SPSS version 27.

Lower mean values indicate more frequent agreement with the behavior. The mean for avoiding due to negative reviews (1.29) is lower than that for using due to positive reviews (1.36), indicating negative reviews triggered stronger avoidance.

**Table 42 : T test for one sample**

	Valeur de test = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	95% confidence interval	
					Inferior	Superior
<b>Have you ever avoided using ride hailing apps because of negative online reviews?</b>	37,365	173	,000	1,293	1,22	1,36
<b>Have you ever uses ride hailing apps because of positive online reviews?</b>	37,250	173	,000	1,356	1,28	1,43

Source: SPSS version 27.

Both effects are highly significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), confirming that both negative and positive reviews significantly influence consumer behavior. However, the slightly lower mean for avoidance suggests a stronger response to negative reviews.

**Table 43 : Effect sizes for one simple**

		Standardization	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
				Inferior	Supérieur
<b>Have you ever avoided using ride hailing apps because of negative online reviews?</b>	<b>d of Cohen</b>	,456	2,833	2,498	3,165
	<b>Correction of Hedges</b>	,458	2,820	2,488	3,151
<b>Have you ever use ride hailing apps because of positive online reviews?</b>	<b>d of Cohen</b>	,480	2,824	2,491	3,155
	<b>Correction of Hedges</b>	,482	2,812	2,480	3,142

Source: SPSS version 27.

Both effect sizes are very large, showing that both negative and positive reviews strongly influence user behavior. However, the marginally higher Cohen's  $d$  (2.833) for negative reviews reinforces the hypothesis.

Negative reviews exert a slightly stronger influence on consumer decisions regarding ride-hailing apps than positive reviews.

#### **Validation of Hypothesis 1:**

The findings strongly validate Hypothesis 1, which posits that negative online reviews have a greater influence on consumer decisions than positive reviews. The descriptive results (Table 32.1) show that 67.2% of respondents acknowledged being more influenced by negative reviews, compared to only 32.8% for positive ones. The one-sample statistics ( $M = 1.33$ ,  $SD = 0.471$ ) and the highly significant t-test result ( $t(173) = 37.205$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) further confirm this tendency. Moreover, the effect size is extremely large (Cohen's  $d = 2.82$ ), indicating a strong behavioral response to negative feedback. Additional comparative data from Table 33.1 reveals that a greater proportion of respondents avoided using ride-hailing apps due to negative reviews (70.7%) than those who used them because of positive reviews (64.4%). This is reinforced by the lower mean for avoidance behavior ( $M = 1.29$ ) versus adoption due to positive reviews ( $M = 1.36$ ), and both effects are statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). Although both types of reviews influence behavior substantially (Cohen's  $d \approx 2.82$ ), the slightly higher effect size for negative reviews ( $d = 2.833$ ) confirms their stronger impact. Collectively, these results demonstrate that negative reviews have a more powerful and decisive influence on consumer behavior, confirming Hypothesis 1.

## Secondary Hypothesis 2

- ❖ Consumers prioritize text-based reviews over photo-based and video-based reviews when making decisions based on Heetch's online reviews

**Table 44 : T test for one simple**

<b>T test for one simple</b>				
	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Standard error</b>
<b>Text_based_reviews</b>	174	1,74	,893	,068
<b>Photo_based_reviews</b>	174	2,07	,672	,051
<b>Video_based_reviews</b>	174	1,90	,824	,062

Source: SPSS version 27.

<b>T test for one sample</b>						
	<b>Test value = 0</b>					
	<b>t</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	<b>Mean difference</b>	<b>95% confidence interval</b>	
					<b>Inferior</b>	<b>Superior</b>
<b>Text_based_reviews</b>	25,649	173	,000	1,736	1,60	1,87
<b>Photo_based_reviews</b>	40,750	173	,000	2,075	1,97	2,18
<b>Video_based_reviews</b>	30,469	173	,000	1,902	1,78	2,03

Source: SPSS version 27.

<b>Tailles d'effet pour échantillon unique</b>					
		<b>Standardization<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Point Estimate</b>	<b>95% Confidence Intervalle</b>	
				<b>Inferior</b>	<b>Superior</b>
<b>Text_based_reviews</b>	<b>d de Cohen</b>	,893	1,944	1,690	2,196
	<b>Correction de Hedges</b>	,897	1,936	1,683	2,187
<b>Photo_based_reviews</b>	<b>d de Cohen</b>	,672	3,089	2,731	3,446
	<b>Correction de Hedges</b>	,675	3,076	2,719	3,431
<b>Video_based_reviews</b>	<b>d de Cohen</b>	,824	2,310	2,024	2,594
	<b>Correction de Hedges</b>	,827	2,300	2,015	2,583

Source: SPSS version 27.

The findings offer partial support for the hypothesis that consumers prioritize text-based reviews over photo- and video-based reviews when evaluating Heetch's online reputation. Although all three formats are significantly considered in the decision-making process ( $p < 0.001$  for each), the mean scores show that text-based reviews ( $M = 1.74$ ) are indeed rated as slightly more influential than video-based reviews ( $M = 1.90$ ) and noticeably more than photo-based reviews ( $M = 2.07$ ). Since lower mean scores indicate higher priority, this suggests a consumer preference for text content. However, the effect sizes (Cohen's  $d = 1.94$  for text,  $2.31$  for video, and  $3.09$  for photo) indicate that photo-based reviews, despite being ranked lower in importance, had the strongest statistical deviation from the null, possibly due to more consistent perceptions. Therefore, while text reviews are prioritized on average, the variation in effect sizes suggests that consumers' preferences are nuanced and may depend on context or usage scenarios.

### Secondary Hypothesis 3

- ❖ **Safety-related aspects of online reviews have the strongest influence on consumer decisions when choosing Heetch**

**Table 45 : T test for one simple**

<b>T test for one simple</b>				
	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>standard error</b>
Rank the online reviews aspects in order of importance when choosing a ride-hailing services <b>PRICING</b>	174	2,13	,833	,063
Rank the online reviews aspects in order of importance when choosing a ride-hailing services <b>SAFETY</b>	174	1,60	,670	,051
Rank the online reviews aspects in order of importance when choosing a ride-hailing services <b>DRIVER BEHAVIOR</b>	174	1,73	,813	,062

**Source:** SPSS version 27.



T test for one sample						
	Test value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	95% confidence interval	
					Inferior	Superior
Rank the online reviews aspects in order of importance when choosing a ride-hailing services <b>PRICING</b>	33,776	173	,000	2,132	2,01	2,26
Rank the the online reviews aspects in order of importance when choosing a ride-hailing services <b>SAFETY</b>	31,573	173	,000	1,603	1,50	1,70
Rank the online reviews aspects in order of importance when choosing a ride-hailing services <b>DRIVER BEHAVIOR</b>	28,073	173	,000	1,730	1,61	1,85

Source: SPSS version 27.

T test for one sample					
		Standardization <sup>a</sup>	Point Estimate	95% Confidence Interval	
				Inferior	Superior
Rank the the online reviews aspects in order of importance when choosing a ride-hailing services <b>PRICING</b>	<b>d de Cohen</b>	,833	2,561	2,252	2,867
	<b>Correction de Hedges</b>	,836	2,549	2,242	2,855
Rank the online reviews aspects in order of importance when choosing a ride-hailing services <b>SAFETY</b>	<b>d de Cohen</b>	,670	2,394	2,100	2,685
	<b>Correction de Hedges</b>	,673	2,383	2,091	2,673
Rank the online reviews aspects in order of importance when choosing a ride-hailing services <b>DRIVER BEHAVIOR</b>	<b>d de Cohen</b>	,813	2,128	1,858	2,396
	<b>Correction de Hedges</b>	,816	2,119	1,850	2,386

Source: SPSS version 27.

The one-sample t-test results indicate that safety ( $M = 1.60$ ;  $SD = 0.670$ ) is ranked as the most important factor by respondents when choosing a ride-hailing service, ahead of driver behavior ( $M = 1.73$ ) and pricing ( $M = 2.13$ ). Since lower mean values correspond to higher priority rankings (1 = most important), this suggests a clear preference for safety. All results are statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), confirming that respondents assign meaningful importance to each factor. The effect size for safety (Cohen's  $d = 0.670$ ) is also substantial, indicating a strong influence. Therefore, these findings support the hypothesis that safety-related aspects of online reviews have the strongest influence on consumer decisions when choosing Heetch.

## **ii. Main problem**

### **❖ How do online reviews of Heetch influence the consumer decision-making process?**

The analysis of the secondary hypotheses provides comprehensive and statistically significant evidence that online reviews have a strong and multidimensional influence on consumer decision-making process regarding the use of Heetch's ride-hailing services.

#### **Negative reviews are particularly influential**

As revealed in Secondary Hypothesis 1, consumers are significantly more likely to avoid using ride-hailing apps like Heetch due to negative online reviews ( $M = 1.29$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , Cohen's  $d = 2.83$ ). negative reviews exert a greater influence on consumer decisions than positive ones. This indicates a powerful aversive reaction to negative information. This supports the negativity bias observed in digital consumer behavior, where negative content disproportionately influences decisions.

#### **Text-based reviews are preferred**

From Secondary Hypothesis 2, although all review formats (text, photo, and video) were found to be statistically significant, text-based reviews are prioritized more ( $M = 1.74$ ) than video ( $M = 1.90$ ) and photo-based reviews ( $M = 2.07$ ), suggesting consumers rely more heavily on written narratives when assessing service quality and credibility. This preference may stem from the perceived depth, clarity, and authenticity of textual content.

#### **Safety concerns dominate review content influence**

According to Secondary Hypothesis 3, safety-related aspects are rated as the most important factor ( $M = 1.60$ ) influencing consumer decisions, surpassing even pricing and driver behavior. This highlights that reviews which emphasize security, reliability, and risk reduction are most effective in driving or deterring user engagement with Heetch.

## **Conclusion**

Online reviews of Heetch exert a substantial influence on consumer decision-making process, particularly when they address negative experiences, are delivered in textual form, and highlight safety-related factors. The findings demonstrate that consumers are not only actively engaged with online feedback but are also highly sensitive to its valence (negative vs. positive), format, and content relevance.

This supports the main hypothesis and suggests that strategically managing online reputation, especially by mitigating negative feedback and emphasizing safety in user testimonials, is essential for influencing consumer decisions and sustaining market competitiveness.

## General conclusion

In today's digital age, the decision-making process of consumers has evolved significantly, particularly in service sectors like ride-hailing. Online reviews have emerged as a crucial source of information, shaping consumer perceptions, guiding choices, and ultimately influencing the success of platforms like Heetch. These reviews act as accessible and trusted references for potential users and actual consumers, often serving as a modern form of digital word-of-mouth.

Our research aimed to examine **how online reviews influence the consumer decision-making process**, with a particular focus on Heetch's ride-hailing services. Through a practical study conducted during our internship, we evaluated the influence of three key aspects of online reviews: their valence (positive or negative content), their format (text, photo, video), and their content focus (e.g., safety, price, behavior).

The findings confirmed our main hypothesis, demonstrating that online reviews significantly shape consumers' choices and decisions to use ride-hailing app such as Heetch. Three major insights emerged from the analysis:

- **Negative reviews are particularly influential**, as confirmed by strong statistical evidence. Consumers are more influenced by negative digital feedback over positive online reviews.
- **Text-based reviews are the most trusted**, with users showing a preference for written content over video or photo reviews. This indicates that consumers value the depth and clarity provided by detailed narratives.
- **Safety-related reviews hold the greatest weight** in influencing decisions, surpassing pricing and driver behavior. This suggests that users prioritize reviews that address security and risk, especially in a service where personal safety is involved.

These findings highlight the complex and multifactorial influence of online reviews on the consumer decision-making process within the ride-hailing industry. Beyond their informational function, reviews serve as persuasive tools capable of significantly shaping user perceptions and decisions. Notably, the study reveals that negative reviews exert a stronger influence than positive ones. Text-based reviews emerge as the most trusted format, with users demonstrating a clear preference for written narratives over visual content, due to the perceived depth, clarity, and credibility they provide. Among the various themes addressed in user feedback, Safety-

related concerns are the most influential factor in consumer decision-making process, surpassing even factors such as pricing and driver behavior. This underscores the critical role of safety in consumer evaluations of ride-hailing services. Consequently, platforms like Heetch must prioritize the active monitoring and management of safety-related feedback, as doing so is essential for fostering trust and ensuring user loyalty in a highly competitive market. Particular attention should be given to negative reviews, which have been shown to exert a disproportionately strong influence on consumer decision. These reviews often receive more cognitive attention and are perceived as more credible than positive ones, making their potential influence on brand image and user trust particularly significant. Moreover, text-based reviews, especially those that are detailed, are generally considered more reliable and insightful by consumers compared to visual formats such as photos or videos.

While this study does not claim to cover all dimensions of the topic, it offers meaningful insights into how online reviews influence consumer decisions in a highly competitive and trust-dependent market. The conclusions drawn here reflect both our academic development and our ability to apply theoretical frameworks to real-world business challenges. We hope that this work serves as a foundation for future research on consumer decisions and contributes to better understanding how companies can leverage online feedback to refine their strategies, attract more clients and improve service quality.

#### **a) Recommendations**

In light of the findings obtained throughout this study, we propose the following recommendations for companies operating in the ride-hailing sector in general, for the Heetch app in particular, and for any service-oriented business seeking to effectively manage and leverage online reviews:

- Encourage detailed and authentic customer feedback

Ride-hailing platforms should actively prompt users to leave comprehensive reviews after each ride. This not only enriches the volume of eWOM (electronic word-of-mouth) but also enhances transparency and builds trust with actual and potential users.

- Monitor and respond to negative reviews promptly

Companies should implement a system for real-time monitoring of online reviews to detect and respond to negative feedback quickly. Addressing consumers concerns particularly those related to safety and service quality demonstrates accountability and can prevent reputational damage.

- Prioritize safety-related communication in review responses

Given that safety concerns have the strongest influence on consumer decisions, platforms should emphasize safety measures in both their responses to online reviews and their overall communication strategy.

- Promote text-based review formats

As users show a preference for detailed textual reviews, platforms can design their interfaces to encourage written feedback over generic ratings. This provides richer information for other consumers and for internal analysis.

- Highlight and reward constructive reviewers

Platforms may consider implementing recognition systems (e.g., badges, discounts) for users who consistently provide valuable, honest, and helpful reviews. This can boost engagement and foster a community of trust.

- Use online reviews as a decision-making tool internally

Beyond marketing, online reviews should be treated as a strategic resource for improving service quality, driver training, and user experience. Trends in online feedback can help guide operational decisions and service enhancements.

- Leverage positive reviews to build consumer trust

Positive online reviews significantly enhance consumer trust. Platforms should actively showcase favourable feedback across their digital channels, particularly during user acquisition campaigns.

- Improve social media community management

Since many consumers consult reviews on social media platforms especially Instagram before engaging with a service, companies must prioritize managing their brand presence on this platform. This includes regularly responding to comments, sharing user-generated content, and addressing any concerns raised in messages or public posts.

#### **b) Limitations of the Research**

While this study provided valuable insights into the role of online reviews in shaping consumer decisions, several limitations must be acknowledged:

- Limited sample diversity

Although the sample size was adequate for the scope of this study, a more diverse respondent pool in terms of demographics, geographical location, and digital habits could yield more representative results.

- Restricted access to internal company data

Due to confidentiality policies, certain internal performance indicators and customer satisfaction metrics from Heetch were not accessible. This limited our ability to triangulate some findings with operational data.

- Time constraints

The research was conducted over a limited period during an internship, which constrained the duration of data collection and the depth of longitudinal analysis.

Despite certain limitations, this study reaffirms the increasing influence of online reviews on the consumer decision-making process within the ride-hailing industry. By adopting a strategic approach to e-reputation and community management and proactively engaging with online feedback, platforms such as Heetch can not only enhance their brand image but also cultivate stronger customer loyalty and drive continuous service improvement. These insights are intended to offer actionable guidance for businesses seeking to the complex and continuously evolving dynamics of digital consumer perception.



Based on the findings and limitations of this study, we recommend that future research delve further into the discrepancy between consumers' stated preferences and their actual behavioral choices. This gap, often influenced by situational constraints, resource limitations, or contextual pressures, represents a critical dimension of the consumer decision-making process that warrants deeper investigation. Furthermore, future studies would benefit from a more diverse and representative sample, incorporating a broader range of demographic profiles and geographic regions. Such diversity would enhance the external validity and generalizability of the results, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of consumer decisions.

Suggested thesis topic:

*“From Intentions to Actions: Investigating the Discrepancy Between Consumer Preferences and Real-World decisions in Ride-Hailing and Digital Services”*

This topic could focus on ride-hailing services or other online platforms and examine how demographic and several factors influence the divergence between what users claim to prefer and what they actually choose in practice.

# Bibliography

## I. Books:

1. Bennett, Roger (2015). *Marketing Strategy and Management* (3rd ed.). Pearson Education.
2. Bergström Sointu & Leppänen Arja. (2009). *Yrityksen asiakasmarkkinointi*, Edita Publishing.
3. Cialdini, Robert B. (2008). *Influence: Science and Practice* (5th ed.). Pearson Education.
4. Kahneman, D., & Tversky, A. (2013). Prospect theory: An analysis of decision under risk. In *Handbook of the Fundamentals of Financial Decision Making: Part I*, pp. 99–127.
5. Korkeamäki, L., et al. (2000). *Kuluttajan käyttäytyminen*, WSOY.
6. Kotler, Philip, & Armstrong, Gary (2017). *Principles of Marketing* (15th ed.). Pearson Education.
7. Loudon, D. L., & Della Bitta, A. J. (1993). *Consumer Behavior: Concepts and Applications*, 4th ed., McGraw-Hill.
8. Markkanen, M. (2008). *Kuluttajakäyttäytyminen ja markkinointiviestintä*, WSOY.
9. Puustinen, A. (2008). *Kuluttajakäyttäytyminen ja markkinointi*, WSOY.
10. Schiffman, L. G., Kanuk, L. L., & Hansen, H. (2012). *Consumer Behaviour: A European Outlook* (2nd ed.). Pearson Education.
11. Solomon, M. R., et al. (2002). *Consumer Behavior: Buying, Having, and Being*, 5th ed., Prentice Hall.
12. Ylikoski, K. (2000). *Social Factors in Consumer Behavior*.

## II. Scientific Articles:

1. Agnihotri, A., & Bhattacharya, S. (2016). Online Review Helpfulness: Role of Qualitative Factors. *Psychology & Marketing*, 33(11), 1006–1017.
2. Ba, S., & Pavlou, P. A. (2002). *MIS Quarterly*, 26(3), 243–268.

3. Bambauer-Sachse, S., & Mangold, S. (2011). *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 18(1), 38–45.
4. Baumeister, R. F., et al. (2001). *Review of General Psychology*, 5, 323–370.
5. Bhāle, S., & Tongare, S. (2018). *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 42, 53–65.
6. Chen, J. (2015). *Journal of Marketing Research*, 52, 687–704.
7. Chen, J., et al. (2022). *Journal of Consumer Behavior*, 21, 112–130.
8. Chevalier, J., & Mayzlin, D. (2006). The Effect of Word of Mouth on Sales: Online Book Reviews. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 43(3), 345–354.
9. Cho, Y., et al. (2002). *Journal of Customer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior*, 15, 26–34.
10. 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.
11. Fatima, I., & Bhadauria, A. (2024). *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*, 11(1), 73–74.
12. Filieri, R. (2016). What Makes an Online Consumer Review Trustworthy? *Annals of Tourism Research*, 58, 46–64.
13. Godes, D., & Mayzlin, D. (2004). Using Online Conversations to Study Word of Mouth Communication. *Marketing Science*, 23(4), 545–560.
14. Hajli, N., et al. (2014). *Journal of Business Research*, 67(11), 2559–2565.
15. Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K. P., Walsh, G., & Gremler, D. D. (2004). Electronic Word-of-Mouth via Consumer-Opinion Platforms: What Motivates Consumers to Articulate Themselves on the Internet? *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 18(1), 38–52.
16. Hossin, M. A., Mu, Y., Fang, J., & Frimpong, A. N. K. (2019). Influence of Picture Presence in Reviews on Online Seller Product Rating: Moderation Role Approach. *KSII Transactions on Internet and Information Systems*, 13(12), 6097–6120.

17. Ibrahim, M. M., & Mamdouh, H. A. (2025). The Impact of Online Customer Reviews (OCRs) on Consumer Purchasing Decision. *Arab Journal of Administration*, 45(2), 387–406.
18. 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.
19. Kanwal, S., Nawaz, S., Malik, M. K., & Nawaz, Z. (2021). A Review of Text-Based Recommendation Systems. *IEEE Access*, 9, 31638–31661.
20. Kim, D., et al. (2008). *Decision Support Systems*, 45, 556–557.
21. Kim, J., & Gupta, P. (2019). *Journal of Digital Marketing Strategies*, 15, 89–101.
22. Kiremitci, O., & Koroğlu, Ö. (2022). The Impact of Online Consumer Reviews on Purchasing Decisions: An Empirical Study on Electronics Products. *Atatürk University Journal of Social Sciences Institute*, 26(2), 489–516.
23. Kumar, P. (2015). *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*.
24. Lee, J., Park, D.-H., & Han, I. (2008). *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 7(3), 341–352.
25. Lin, C. H., et al. (2005). *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*, 9(4), 105–121.
26. Luo, H., Zhou, W., Song, W., & He, X. (2022). An Empirical Study on the Differences between Online Picture Reviews and Text Reviews. *Information*, 13(7), 344.
27. Luo, X. (2009). *Journal of Marketing Research*, 46(1), 39–52.
28. Mudambi, S. M., & Schuff, D. (2010). What Makes a Helpful Online Review? A Study of Customer Reviews on Amazon.com. *MIS Quarterly*, 34(1), 185–200.
29. Pee, L. G. (2016). Negative Online Consumer Reviews: Can the Impact Be Mitigated? *International Journal of Market Research*, 58(4), 545–568.
30. Pratap, A. (2017). *Journal of Business & Tourism*.

31. Smith, A. N., Fischer, E., & Yongjian, C. (2012). How Does Brand-Related User-Generated Content Differ Across YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter? *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 26, 102–113.
32. Srivastava, P., & Kalro, A. (2018). *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 17, 392–406.
33. Xiang, Z., & Gretzel, U. (2010). Role of Social Media in Online Travel Information Search. *Tourism Management*, 31(2), 179–188.
34. Yang, X., et al. (2019). *Journal of Marketing Research*, 56, 236–250.
35. Zhai, L., Yin, P., Li, C., Wang, J., & Yang, M. (2022). Investigating the Effects of Video-Based E-Word-of-Mouth on Consumers' Purchase Intention: The Moderating Role of Involvement. *Sustainability*, 14(15), 9522.
36. Zhang, N., et al. (2022). *Sustainability*, 14(24), 16510.
37. Zhang, Y., et al. (2014). *Marketing Science*, 33, 572–583.
38. Zhao, Y., Tang, B., Yang, X., & Nawijn, J. (2024). How Review Valence Shapes Visit Intention: Affective Commitment and Destination Reputation. *Sustainability*, 16(9), 3584.
39. Zhu, F., & Zhang, X. (2010). *Journal of Marketing*, 74(2), 133–148.

### **III. University Theses:**

1. Hannat, A. (2024). Electronic Word of Mouth and Its Impact on Online Decision Making (Purchase Intention) (Master's thesis). Higher School of Management and Digital Economy, Algeria.
2. Kordrostami, E. (2016). Valence or Volume? Maximizing Online Review Influence Across Consumers, Products, and Marketing Tactics [Doctoral dissertation, Old Dominion University].
3. Majamäki, S. Consumer decision-making process – Differences between Millennials and older generations when buying newspaper. [Thèse de Master], Taltech, <https://digikogu.taltech.ee>

#### **IV. Conferences and Seminars:**

1. López, M., & Sicilia, M. (2011). The Impact of e-WOM: Determinants of Influence. In *Advances in Advertising Research* (Vol. 2), Breaking New Ground in Theory and Practice (pp. 215–230).
2. Maurer, C., & Schaich, A. (2011). Online Customer Reviews Used as Complaint Management Tool. In *ENTER 2011 Conference Proceedings* (pp. 499–511).
3. Muzumdar, P. (2021). Impact of Review Valence and Perceived Uncertainty on Purchase of Time-Constrained and Discounted Search Goods. [Conference paper].
4. Yu, J., Zha, Z.-J., Wang, M., & Chua, T.-S. (2011). Aspect Ranking: Identifying Important Product Aspects from Online Consumer Reviews. In *Proceedings of the 49th Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics: Human Language Technologies* (pp. 1496–1505).

#### **V. Reports:**

1. Dilla, N., & Usman, O. (2021). The Influence of Prices, Product Reviews, and Security on Purchase Decisions at the Marketplace Shopee (pp. 1–24).
2. Yan, C., Zhu, H., Korolko, N., & Woodard, D. B. (2018). Dynamic Pricing and Matching in Ride-Hailing Platforms (pp. 1–36).

#### **VI. Websites:**

1. <https://www.yotpo.com/blog/reviews-seo/>, consulted [19/03/2025]
2. <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/display/document/obo-9780199756841/obo-9780199756841-0267.xml>, consulted [19/03/2025]
3. <https://www.business.qld.gov.au/running-business/marketing-sales/marketing/websites-social-media/online-communication-customer-reviews>, consulted [19/03/2025]
4. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/369430148\\_The\\_Impact\\_of\\_Fake\\_Reviews\\_of\\_Online\\_Goods\\_on\\_Consumers](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/369430148_The_Impact_of_Fake_Reviews_of_Online_Goods_on_Consumers), consulted [05/27/2025]
5. [https://reviewconcierge.com/lessons/online\\_review\\_survival\\_course/5/understanding-the-history-of-online-reviews](https://reviewconcierge.com/lessons/online_review_survival_course/5/understanding-the-history-of-online-reviews), consulted [23/03/2025]

6. <https://reviewinc.com/2021/09/07/a-history-of-online-reviews/>, consulted [24/03/2025]
7. <https://www.uschamber.com/co/grow/marketing/benefits-of-text-based-testimonials>, consulted [07/04/2025]
8. <https://medium.com/@joshuaskangley/its-all-about-attitude-when-it-comes-to-excellent-customer-service-f90352db8191>, consulted [13/04/2025]
9. <https://www.bsa.org.uk/media-centre/bsa-blog/may-2024/guest-blog-the-importance-of-online-reviews>, consulted [01/04/2025]
10. <https://blog.reputationx.com/how-positive-and-negative-reviews-affect-business-revenue>, Consulted [14/04/2025]
11. <https://embedsocial.com/blog/positive-reviews-examples/>, consulted [12/04/2025]
12. <https://www.yotpo.com/blog/reviews-seo/>, consulted [18/04/2025]
13. <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/consumer-decision-making-process>, consulted [13/04/2025]
14. <https://slm.mba/mmpm-001/problem-recognition-simple-vs-complex-needs/#simple-vs-complex-problem-recognition>, consulted [16/04/2025]
15. <https://www.lucidchart.com/blog/consumer-decision-making-process#:~:text=The%205%20steps%20are%20problem,decision%20and%20post%20purchase%20evaluation>, consulted [18/04/2025]

## Appendices

### Appendix 1 : Questionnaire

# The influence of Online Reviews on تأثير التقييمات - consumer Decisions عبر الإنترنت على عملية اتخاذ القرار لدى المستهلك

This questionnaire is part of our **graduation thesis**, which aims to better understand how **online reviews** influence your decision-making process when using ride-hailing services like **Heetch app**.

Your feedback will help us gain insights into how online reviews shape consumer decisions in the ride-hailing market and all responses will remain **confidential** and used solely for research purposes.

Thank you for your time and contribution to this study.

هذا الاستبيان جزء من إعدادنا لمذكرة الماستر 2، التي تهدف إلى فهم كيفية تأثير التقييمات عبر الإنترنت على عملية اتخاذ القرار عند استخدام خدمات نقل بسيارة مع سائق مثل تطبيق هيتش

اجوبتكم ستساعدنا في الحصول على رؤى حول كيفية تشكيل التقييمات عبر الإنترنت لقرارات المستهلكين في سوق خدمات التوصيل. جميع الاجوبة ستبقى سرية وسيتم استخدامها لأغراض اكااديمية فقط

نشكركم على وقتكم ومساهمتم في هذه الاستبيان !

\* Indicates required question

the questionnaire

1. 2- what is your gender ? \* ما هو جنسك ؟

Mark only one oval.

☐ male - ذكر

☐ female - أنثى



2. \* ماهي فنتك العمرية ? 1-What is your age ?

Mark only one oval.

☐ under - 18 تحت 18

☐ 18-24

☐ 25-35

☐ 36-45

☐ +45

3. \* ماهي وظيفتك ? What is your occupation?

Mark only one oval.

☐ Student - طالب

☐ Employed - موظف

☐ Entrepreneur - مقاول

☐ retired - متقاعد

☐ unemployed - عاطل عن العمل

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

4. \* ما هو دخلك الشهري ? What is your salary?

Mark only one oval.

☐ I have no salary - ليس لدي مدخول

☐ under 30000 dz - اقل

☐ between 30000 dz - 60000 dz - بين

☐ + 60000 dz

5. Do you use drive ride hailing apps like \*  
( Heetch, Yassir, ... ) ؟ هل تستخدم تطبيقات التنقل بسيارة مع سائق

Mark only one oval.

☐ نعم - yes

☐ لا - no

6. \* ما هو تطبيق " خدمة نقل بسيارة " Which ride hailing app do you use most frequently?  
مع سائق " الذي تستخدمه معظم الوقت ؟

Mark only one oval.

☐ Heetch

☐ Yassir

☐ in-drive

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Rank the following factors in order of importance when choosing a ride-hailing \*  
رتب العوامل التالية حسب الأهمية عند اختيار خدمة نقل بسيارة مع سائق - service

Mark only one oval per row.

	العامل ١	العامل ٢	العامل ٣
السعر (Pricing)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
السلامة (Safety)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
سلوك السائق (Driver Behavior)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. What is the main reason for using ride hailing app ? \* ما هو السبب الرئيسي لاستخدامك لتطبيق خدمة نقل بسيارة مع سائق

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Work - عمل
- ☐ Study - الدراسة
- ☐ visit places - زيارة أماكن
- ☐ shopping - التسوق
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Which wilaya do you use ride hailing apps in the most ? \* في اي ولاية تستخدم تطبيقات خدمة نقل بسيارة مع سائق أكثر ؟ -

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ algiers - الجزائر العاصمة
- ☐ tipaza - تيبازة
- ☐ blida - البليدة
- ☐ wahran - وهران
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

10. How long have you been using ride hailing apps ? \* منذ متى وأنت تستخدم تطبيقات خدمة نقل بسيارة مع سائق ؟

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ less then 1 year - أقل من عام
- ☐ 1 year - عام واحد
- ☐ 2 years - عامين
- ☐ + 3 years - أكثر من 3 سنوات

11. \* ماهي وتيرة استخدامك لتطبيقات خدمة نقل بسيارة مع سائق؟

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ 1 to 2 times a week \_ ١ إلى ٢ مرات في الاسبوع
- ☐ 3 to 5 times a week - ٣ إلى ٥ مرات في الاسبوع
- ☐ +5 times a week - ٥ مرات في الاسبوع +
- ☐ monthly - شهريا
- ☐ rarely - نادرا
- ☐ never - ابدا

12. \* هل تتحقق من التقييمات قبل استخدام تطبيقات خدمة نقل بسيارة مع سائق؟

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ yes - نعم
- ☐ no - لا

13. \* Rank the following apps according to how frequently you use and browse them?  
رتب التطبيقات التالية حسب الاكثر استخداما و تصفحا؟

Mark only one oval per row.

	1	2	3	4	5
ffacebook	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
iinstagram	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ttiktok	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
youttube	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
google	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. Which review platform do you prefer for reading or watching reviews to make your decision ? ما هي المنصة التي تفضل مراجعة التقييمات فيها لاتخاذ قرار الشراء ? \*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Social media ( facebook, instagram , tiktok ... )
- ☐ google
- ☐ app store
- ☐ YouTube
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

15. On a scale of 1 to 5, How much do online reviews influence your decision to use ride hailing apps? (1: Don't influence me 5: Strongly influence me) \*

على مقياس من 1 إلى 5، إلى أي درجة تؤثر الآراء عبر الإنترنت على قرارك باستخدام تطبيق "خدمة نقل بسيارة مع سائق"

( لا تؤثر علي كثيرا : 1 , تؤثر بشدة : 5 )

Mark only one oval.

- 1 ☐
- 2 ☐
- 3 ☐
- 4 ☐
- 5 ☐

16. **Do positive or negative reviews have a greater influence on your decisions? أيهما \*  
أكثر تأثيراً عليك —التقييمات الإيجابية أم السلبية؟**

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ negative - السلبية  
☐ positive - الإيجابية

17. **Have you ever avoided using ride hailing apps because of negative online reviews? هل سبق لك أن تجنبنا استخدام تطبيق "خدمة نقل بسيارة مع سائق" بسبب آراء سلبية عبر الإنترنت؟ \***

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ yes - نعم  
☐ no - لا

18. **Have you ever uses ride hailing apps because of positive online reviews? هل سبق لك \*  
أن استخدمنا تطبيق "خدمة نقل بسيارة مع سائق" فقط بسبب آراء إيجابية عبر الإنترنت؟**

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ yes - نعم  
☐ no - لا

19. **When choosing ride hailing apps, which online review format do you prioritise most ? ما شكل التقييمات عبر الإنترنت التي تعتمد عليها أكثر عند اتخاذ قرارك باستخدام تطبيقات "خدمة نقل بسيارة مع سائق"؟ \***

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ text-based reviews - التقييمات النصية المفصلة  
☐ photo-based reviews - تقييمات على شكل صور  
☐ video-based reviews - تقييمات على شكل فيديو

20. Rank the following reviews format from the most influential to the least influential when choosing a ride hailing app- رتب شكل التقييمات التالية من الأكثر تأثيرا إلى الأقل تأثيرا عند اختيار تطبيق خدمة نقل بسيارة مع سائق

Mark only one oval per row.

	1	2	3
text-based reviews التقييمات النصية المفصلة	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
photo-based reviews تقييمات - على شكل صور	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
video-based reviews تقييمات - على شكل فيديو	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

21. How often do you leave online reviews after using ride hailing apps ? ماهي الوتيرة التي تقوم بها بترك تقييمات عبر الإنترنت بعد استخدام تطبيقات "خدمة نقل بسيارة مع سائق" ؟ \*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Always - دائما
- ☐ Sometimes - احيانا
- ☐ Rarely - نادرا
- ☐ Never

## 22. Would you leave an online review after a bad experience with a ride hailing app ? \*

هل ستترك تقييماً عبر الإنترنت بعد تجربة سيئة مع تطبيقات "خدمة نقل بسيارة مع سائق" ؟

Mark only one oval.

☐ نعم - yes

☐ لا - no

☐ not sure - لست متأكداً

## 23. Would you leave an online review after a good experience with a ride hailing app \*

هل ستترك تقييماً عبر الإنترنت بعد تجربة جيدة مع تطبيقات "خدمة نقل بسيارة مع سائق" ؟؟

Mark only one oval.

☐ yes - نعم

☐ no - لا

☐ not sure - لست متأكداً



24. **On a scale of 1 to 5, how much do you agree that online reviews give a true representation of a ride hailing services ? (1 strongly disagreed, 5 strongly agreed)** \*

على مقياس من 1 إلى 5، إلى أي مدى توافق أن التقييمات عبر الإنترنت تمثل الجودة الحقيقية لخدمات نقل بسيارة مع سائق ؟  
(غير موافق بشدة، 5 موافق بشدة 1)

Mark only one oval.

1 ☐

2 ☐

3 ☐

4 ☐

5 ☐

25. **Which aspect of online reviews do you find most influential ? ما محتوى الآراء الذي تجده أكثر تأثيراً \***

Mark only one oval.

☐ آراء حول الأمان - Safety-related reviews آراء

☐ حول الأسعار - Pricing and affordability حول

☐ آراء حول سلوك السائق - Driver Behavior آراء

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

26. **Rank the online reviews aspects in order of importance when choosing a ride-hailing services** \*  
 رتب نوع الآراء حسب درجة التأثير بالنسبة لك عند اختيار خدمة نقل بسيارة مع سائق - ؟

Mark only one oval per row.

	1	2	3
آراء حول السعر (Pricing))	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
آراء حول الأمان (Safety))	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
آراء حول سلوك السائق (Driver Behavior))	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

27. **Do your previous answers also apply to the Heetch app** هل إجاباتك السابقة تنطبق أي هـ؟  
 على تطبيق هيتش

Mark only one oval.

☐ yes - نعم

☐ no - لا

28. **What do you like most about the service?** ما أكثر شيء أعجبك في الخدمة عند استخدام هيتش؟ \*

Mark only one oval.

☐ pricing - الاسعار

☐ professional drivers - سائقون محترفين

☐ Safety features - ميزات الأمان

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

29. **مدى رضاك عن Heetch? How satisfied are you with your overall experience using Heetch?** \* ما

تجربتك العامة في استخدام هييتش

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ راض جداً - Very satisfied
- ☐ راض إلى حد ما - Somewhat satisfied
- ☐ غير راض إلى حد ما - Somewhat dissatisfied
- ☐ غير راض تماماً - Very dissatisfied

30. **هل توصي Heetch للآخرين بناءً على تجربتك? Would you recommend Heetch to others based on your experience?** \*

باستخدام هييتش للآخرين بناءً على تجربتك؟

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ نعم - yes
- ☐ لا - no