

The impact of e-reputation on the electronic purchase intention

*Nazim Abdelmalek Chibani Bahi Amar, * SME Laboratory, Research and Innovation, University of Mustapha Stamboli, Mascara (Algeria), nazim.chibani@univ-mascara.dz*

Sabrina Elbachir, SME Laboratory, Research and Innovation, University of Mustapha Stamboli, Mascara (Algeria), s.elbachir@univ-mascara.dz

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Abstract:

The aim of this study is to determine the role played by e-reputation in shaping customers' intentions to buy electronically, using the Yassir Express application as a case study. The choice of this application is justified by its ranking among the most widely used delivery apps in Algeria. To achieve the objectives of the study, a qualitative descriptive approach was used, including a convenience sample of 150 people who are already Yassir customers or wish to become one, and analyzing the data using the program SPSS 22. The results of the study showed that e-reputation, with its four dimensions, have an impact on online purchase intention.

Keywords: electronic purchase intention; reputation; e-reputation; Yassir Express.

Jel Classification Codes: M310, L81

* Corresponding author

1. INTRODUCTION

With the emergence of digital exchanges over the last two decades, Internet has become so important that all sectors, and marketing, have had to adapt to this upheaval and keep pace with the development of this phenomenon, by introducing e-commerce. Michael Aldrich was the first to tackle the latter, in 1979. E-commerce is known as the power to sell a product or a service over a computer network. This has given rise to a new mode of consumption, and a whole new category of consumer, the "e-consumer". However, it is imperative to note that electronic reputation plays an essential role in purchasing decisions, since consumers tend to find out more about the company or brand before making their final decision (Aldrich, 2011).

E-reputation is the image of a company or brand in the eyes of consumers. Its importance lies in the positive influence it has on its target audience, winning their trust and loyalty and reducing costs (Caruana, Ramasashan, & Krentler, 2004). This image can be affected by comments and opinions on social networks, the quality of the services and products offered, and the degree of customer satisfaction. Electronic purchase intention is considered to be the consumer's intention to enter into a relationship with a seller in virtual space (Zwass, 1998).

Among the most relevant research topics in this area of e-commerce is the relationship between e-reputation and electronic purchase intention. According to the literature review, many authors have taken an interest in this phenomenon and have focused much more on the way in which e-reputation influences consumer intentions, as well as the study of the variables that moderate this equation.

In this paper, we will attempt to determine the nature of the relationship between electronic purchase intention and e-reputation based on a review of the literature on this subject, using the "Yassir Express" sales application as the object of study. The choice of this platform is motivated

by its ranking as one of the most visited shopping sites in Algeria, and particularly in Oran, currently.

2. Literature review

2.1 Definition of reputation and e-reputation

In the literature, there are many studies around the concept of reputation, knowing that it has great importance among companies. (Dutot & Castellano, 2015) Have described it as "a subjective and relative social construct; and it is possible to classify or order the reputation of different firms". Reputation brings together all the actions undertaken by an organization with the aim of generating sales and building consumer loyalty (Keller & Aaker, 1998), this concept is considered to be a brand's intangible asset whose function is to give the brand a certain perceived value. It is understood as the history of the brand (Belkamel, Benhamza, & Texier, 2012).

Reputation positively affects the long-term relationship with stakeholders, and also contributes effectively to the creation of competitive advantage (Boyd, Bergh, & Ketchen Jr, 2010). Researchers in this field have given great importance to this concept in marketing studies, unlike online reputation, where there is little research in this area compared to the previous one.

The Larousse dictionary defines it as: "A favorable or unfavorable public opinion of someone or something". As far as sociology is concerned, reputation, whether virtual or real, is a social construct built on the relationships that the company has with all its stakeholders (Rao, 1994).

In 2014, (Boistel, 2014) explains that reputation is "the good or bad opinion that the different publics form of the company based on the result of all their experiences, beliefs, feelings, knowledge, and impressions, which then constitute a perceived whole, constructed from a set of items conveyed by the company, giving a strong reputation if these are perceived in the same way by the different publics of the company and if they are accepted by the employees".

Reputation has two components: an emotional (affective) component and a rational (cognitive) component (Fombrun & Gardberg, 2000):

- The emotional component, also known as affective, concerns all subjective emotions, feelings and experiences associated with a brand, product or company. Variables such as customer satisfaction, trust and positive experience can shape this emotional component. Trust is one of the essential foundations of emotion. It is born out of positive experiences and quality relationships with the brand or organization. This reflects a positive perception of reputation.

Customer's satisfaction generates positive feelings towards the brand or company and contributes significantly to the emotional component of reputation. While positive user experience and positive interactions with employees can also develop positive user feelings and contribute to the composition of affect.

By taking these points into account, we can determine their impact on people's overall perception of the brand or organization concerned, and the degree of this impact on their intentions and behavior.

- The second component of reputation, rationality, or also known as the cognitive dimension, focuses on the attributes and tangible factors of the company, brand or organization. It is based on measurable, objective information, such as the company's financial performance and the quality of the products or services offered. People's perception of quality is a very important factor in formulating this rational component. This quality is reflected in the reliability of the products or services offered their durability and performance, and their

compliance with customer expectations. Social responsibility, innovation and creativity also play an important part in its design. As a result, this cognitive component can have a direct impact on customers' purchasing decisions, commercial partnerships, and stakeholder relations.

For (Castellano & Dutot, 2013), e-reputation represents the image created by stakeholders of a person or company, based on the information conveyed by websites and other electronic media, such as comments and opinions posted on social networks and throughout the internet.

2.2 Purchase intention and electronic purchase intention

There are many definitions of intention in both ancient and modern literature:

Purchase intention is a dynamic concept. According to (Belk, 1974), it represents the set of instructions that people give themselves to act in a certain way, thus considering the planning dimension of purchase intention. For (Kalwani & Silk, 1982), intention is a good estimator of future consumer behavior.

(Dussart, 1983) Considers it to be the subjective probability of buying a given product or brand. Purchase intention is a cognitive construct for (O'Shaughnessy, 1992), who defines it as the result of a desire that has been cognitively processed, insofar as we cannot desire what we do not know and which is not part of our culture.

For his part, (Darpy, 1997) has explained that intention represents the moment when the individual declares whether or not he is ready to adopt a behavior, i.e. the moment between detecting the need and taking action. He also considered that intention is a response to a desire as part of the decision-making process. Desire represents the sensation of attraction to an object and the need to achieve it. It should be emphasized that intention is formed in several stages: firstly, the existence of the desire and its

detection, then the acceptance of this desire, followed by the intention and its planning, and finally the promise of realization (Darpy, 1997).

More recently, the definition given by (Roussel & Bergeron, 2012) indicates that intentions represent the best prognosis of an individual's behavior, allowing him or her to independently incorporate all the relevant factors that may influence actual behavior.

To sum up these multiple definitions, we could say that intention is positioned in the pre-purchase phase. Intentions represent post-behavioral attitudes, not actual behavior, bearing in mind that intentions are generally expressed by individuals in surveys and polls on this subject. So, in other words, we can emphasize that intentions are information to be taken with a degree of caution since declared intentions would not necessarily lead to behavior and a purchasing decision at another time. Intentions are therefore used to predict behavior and, of course, sales, starting with marketing decisions or strategies aimed at promoting new or existing products.

As for electronic purchase intention, it doesn't differ much from the concept of intention, just that it concerns the virtual world such as shopping sites and social networks.... etc. A great deal of research has been carried out in this area, and several researchers who have taken an interest in this phenomenon have validated multiple definitions, all of which represent a single line of sight. For (Davies, Chun, Da Silva, & Roper, 2001), electronic intent is the starting point at which the consumer is ready to buy a product or service from an electronic location.

Online purchase intention is defined as "a consumer's intention to make an online purchase, which may be influenced by factors such as online trust, past satisfaction, perceived website and product quality, and social norms" (Kim, Choi, & Shin, 2019). Like its predecessor, it is influenced much more by the ease of use of sales platforms and applications, the security of payment methods, trust in the online seller, and its evaluation in the eyes of Internet users.

Therefore, the main difference between these two concepts lies in the sales channel used. In the case of traditional intent, it encompasses all sales

in consideration, particularly physical sales in shops, whereas online purchase intent focuses solely on transactions carried out via the net through multiple channels, such as websites, mobile sales applications, platforms, etc.

With the expansion of e-commerce and the explosion in the number of users of this type of commerce, it should be noted that in no case will the intention to buy electronically replace the intention to buy traditionally, since there are many people who prefer to make their purchases physically and to go to the shops.

2.3. Previous studies

Many researchers have taken an interest in this subject, and more specifically in the relationship between e-reputation and the intention to buy online. Among these studies, we can mention the most important ones:

The objective of the study by (Ryu & Feick, 2007) was to measure the impact of sponsorship program on consumers' intention to purchase electronically. The results showed that sponsorship reward program have a positive impact on e-purchase intention.

(Laroche, Habibi, & Richard, 2013), demonstrated that a company with a presence on social networks had a significant impact on brand loyalty and customer purchase intention. Another of the authors' findings concerns the quality of this presence, since it turns out that the more active the company is, responding quickly to consumer requests and interacting with them on an ongoing basis, the more likely they are to be loyal and continue to buy the product or brand in question.

(Alalwan, Rana, Dwivedi, & Algharabat, 2017), showed that online reputation remains a variable to be taken seriously for the company, for its primordial role in social networks and its weight in relation to the firm's marketing. The authors also pointed out that this online reputation can have a significant impact on the consumer's intention to buy.

Finally, a recent Chinese study looked at the impact of the customer experience on the purchase intention of cross-border online consumers (or what is known as international commerce). This study by (Chen & Yang, 2021) found a significant impact between these two variables, while noting that the structural incorporation of the network plays a partial mediating role in this relationship. So, to increase customers' intention to buy, the company must improve the customer experience, such as increasing the quality of service or personalizing and strengthening its online community (Chen & Yang, 2021).

To summarize previous studies on the relationship between e-reputation and online purchase intention, various methodological approaches have been adopted, leading to a multitude of results and perspectives. Some studies have favored quantitative methods, such as online surveys, while others have opted for qualitative methods, like in-depth interviews. Moreover, these researches have explored the relationship in different sectors, ranging from electronic products to fashion and travel. The impact of social media platforms has also been examined, highlighting the influence of reviews and ratings from other users.

For our study, we adopt a qualitative approach, using an online questionnaire targeting customers of an electronic platform. The novelty compared to previous articles lies in the investigation of the independent variable 'e-reputation' with its four dimensions (website reliability and security, brand's online image, service quality, and social media with their interactivity with users), as well as the impact of each dimension studied on online purchase intention.

3. Research methodology

Based on our literature review, which focused on the concepts of e-reputation and purchase intention, we were able to formulate a research question: how does e-reputation influence electronic purchase intention? A series of hypotheses can be derived from this question and our literature review:

- H 1: The perceived reliability of Yassir Express mobile application has a positive impact on customers' intention to buy.
- H 2: The reputation of Yassir Express mobile application has a positive impact on customers' intention to buy.
- H 3: Customers' purchase intention is positively influenced by customer service on Yassir Express mobile application.

3.1 Description of the "Yassir Express" application

Yassir express is a mobile application from the main company "SPAYassir". Its aim is to put e-consumers in touch with e-suppliers, via a web-based platform accessible to everyone, so that they can order and purchase products, services and meals remotely, presented on the application, and benefit from delivery to the destination of the customer's choice. (Yassir)

3.2. Data collection

For our sample, we opted for the convenience sampling method. The reasons for this choice are based firstly on the speed with which the information can be collected, and secondly on the fact that the respondents are chosen according to their availability and accessibility.

With regard to the data to be collected, we focused on the two variables of the study: e-reputation and electronic purchase intention. As for the collection process used to achieve our objective, an online questionnaire on Google form, prepared to measure the variables of this study, was drawn up and included 150 people, internet users from the wilaya of Oran who have made a purchase or have a desire to buy a product from the "Yassir Express" application, in 2023.

For the questionnaire and its design, it should be noted that most of the items used in this survey come from existing literature. To measure e-reputation, we followed the typology of (Dutot & Castellano, 2015). This measurement scale proposes four dimensions with 9 Items, the first integrates the reliability and security of the mobile application (2 Items), the second, the quality of the application (3 Items), the next integrates image

and online reputation of the mobile application (2 Items), and the last includes social media and transparency of the application (2 Items). All items were measured using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), which limits the risk of misunderstanding or measurement error.

To measure intention, we opted for the (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988) scale, which encompasses the three dimensions of intention: cognitive, affective and conative.

The customer's personal data measurements included gender, age, level of education and occupation.

4. Presentation and discussion of results

4.1. Description of the sample

Table 1. Gender, age, function, level of education.

Type	Men	76	50.7%
	Woman	74	49.3%
Age	(16-25)	57	38%
	(26-40)	56	37.3%
	(+40)	37	24.7%
Function	Student	83	55.3%
	Civil servant	20	13.3%
	Liberal prof	22	14.7%
	Others	25	16.7%
Level of education	Meduim	2	1.3%
	Secondary	64	42.7%
	University	84	56%

Source: SPSS data with reorganization by the authors

Our sample was made up of 50.7% men and 49.3% women. Of the 150 respondents, the most representative age categories were 16-25 and 26-40. This may be reflected in the fact that they are the ones who make most

use of online purchases via applications. Students and university students are in the majority, with 55.3% and 56% respectively.

4.2. Analysis of the responses of the sample items to the study variables

4.2.1. Analysis of responses to the independent variable of e-reputation

Table 2. Analysis of responses to the 9 e-reputation items, (Average).

Items	Average
The Yassir Express application provides clear and accurate information on products, promotions. (I9)	3.58
The Yassir Express application is familiar to most Internet users. (I8)	3.57
The Yassir Express application is easy to use. (I3)	3.54
The application is highly rated and recommended by Internet users. (I6)	3.53
The Yassir Express application is reliable in terms of order delivery. (I1)	3.49
Customer service lives up to your expectations. (I5)	3.44
The products offered by the Yassir Express application are of good quality. (I4)	3.43
The Yassir Express application guarantees the confidentiality of my personal information. (I2)	3.41
The Yassir Express application is renowned for its reliability and quality of service. (I7)	3.38

Source: SPSS data with reorganization by the authors

Table 3. Analysis of responses to the 9 e-reputation items, (Standard deviation)

Items	Standard deviation
The products offered by the Yassir Express application are of good quality. (I4)	0.736
Customer service lives up to your expectations. (I5)	0.755
The Yassir Express application is familiar to most Internet users. (I8)	0.763
The Yassir Express application provides clear and accurate information on products and promotions. (I9)	0.771
The Yassir Express application is renowned for its reliability and quality of service. (I7)	0.783
The application is highly rated and recommended by Internet	0.792

users. (I6)

The Yassir Express application is reliable in terms of order delivery. (I1) 0.825

The Yassir Express application guarantees the confidentiality of my personal information. (I2) 0.836

The Yassir Express application is easy to use. (I3) 0.880

Source: SPSS data with reorganization by the authors

From the table above, we can clearly see that most of the means and medians of the dimensions of the e-reputation variable are around 3.50, with a standard deviation of 0.793, and this represents a high degree of acceptance. Particularly for the social media and business transparency dimension, this has a mean of 3.57 with a median mean of 4.00, and a standard deviation of 0.767. This means that Yassir has managed its social media positively, and has succeeded in making itself known and offering effective content via its communication channels.

4.2.2. Analysis of responses to the dependent variable of intention to buy online

Table 4. Analysis of responses to the intention to buy electronically.

Items	Average	Median	Standard deviation
I have a positive attitude towards buying products from the Yassir Express app (I1).	3.30	3.00	0.873
I have positive feelings about buying products from Yassir Express. (I2)	3.50	4.00	0.893
I intend to buy the products via the Yassir Express application. (I3)	3.66	4.00	0.954

Source: SPSS data with reorganization by the authors

For the second variable, the third dimension (the conative dimension) represents a high degree of acceptance, with a mean of 3.66, a median value of 4.00 and a standard deviation of 0.954. This means that

there is a high intention to buy and use Yassir Express products and services. This means that there is a high intention to buy and use Yassir Express products and services.

4.3. Examination of the research hypotheses

The main objective of this study was to find out the impact of e-reputation on electronic purchase intention, and to do this we developed three research hypotheses to help us achieve this. The authors used the Chi-square test, a method widely used in marketing, as it allows us to see whether the two qualitative variables are related, such as an association, dependency, relationship, etc.

4.3.1. Test of hypothesis H1

In this hypothesis, we will investigate the relationship between the reliability of the Yassir Express application and customers' purchase intention.

Results of combining the two variables:

Table 5. Results of the Chi-square test and symmetrical measures for H1.

	Value	Approx sign (bilateral)		Value	Approx sign (bilateral)
Pearson chi-square	9.797	0.877	Phi	0.256	0.876
Likelihood ratio	10.118	0.860	V de Cramer	0.128	0.876
N of valid observation	150	11.14	N of valid observation	150	

Source: SPSS data with reorganization by the authors

After processing the results of our survey, we cross-tabulated the item reliability of the app and the purchase intentions of customers. The

result of Chi-square test shows that there is a relationship between reliability and purchase intention, with a Pearson Chi-square value of 0.877, clearly above the significance threshold of 0.05 for rejecting the null hypothesis.

The role of Cramer's V is to measure the strength of the link between the two variables, and it varies between 0 and 1. In the case of this first hypothesis, Cramer's V is 0.876, bearing in mind that this value must be greater than 0.6 to be able to interpret that there is a strong relationship. In this case, it means that there is a strong relationship between the reliability of the app and the intention to buy electronically. Based on these data, we can therefore confirm the existence of hypothesis H1.

4.3.2. Test of hypothesis H2

The second hypothesis concerns the reputation of the Yassir Express application and customers' intention to buy.

Results of combining the two variables:

Table 6. Results of the Chi-square test and symmetrical measures for H2.

	Value	Aprrox sign (bilateral)		Value	Aprrox sign (bilateral)
Pearson chi-square	14.693	0.547	Phi	0.313	0.547
Likelihood ratio	16.783	0.400	V de Cramer	0.156	0.547
N of valid observation	150		N of valid observation	150	

Source: SPSS data with reorganization.by the authors

For the second variable, the Pearson chi-square is 0.547, i.e., above the significant value of 0.05. Therefore, there is a relationship between these two variables.

For the Cramer V rating, we note that it is close to 0.5, in which case we confirm hypothesis H2, which is that the reputation of the Yassir Express application has a positive effect on the intention to purchase electronically. As a result, the better the electronic reputation of the company, the more likely customers are to want to proceed with the electronic purchasing process.

4.4.3. Test of hypothesis H3

The final hypothesis is that customer service has a positive impact on the intention of Yassir Express customers to buy online.

Table 7. Results of the Chi-square test and symmetrical measures for H3.

	Value	Aprrox sign (bilateral)		Value	Aprrox sign (bilateral)
Pearson chi-square	12.397	0.414	Phi	0.287	0.414
Likelihood ratio	13.563	0.329	V de Cramer	0.166	0.414
N of valid observation	150		N of valid observation	150	

Source: SPSS data with reorganization by the authors

Theoretically, there is a relationship between customer service and purchase intention. In our case, the Pearson value is well above the asymptotic significant value, $0.414 > 0.05$. As for the nature of this relationship, which will be determined by Cramer's V rating, it has an approximate significance of 0.414. This value is well below the average of 0.5, which distinguishes between the strength and weakness of a relationship.

Concerning the customer service of the Yassir Express application, we find that 40% of the population surveyed agrees with the assumption

that the Yassir customer service lives up to their expectations, while almost 10% disagree with this idea.

Table 8. Customer service in relation to customer expectations.

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	No agreement	14	9.3	9.3	9.3
	Neutral	66	44.0	44.0	53.3
	Agreed	60	40.0	40.0	93.3
	Strongly agree	10	6.7	6.7	100
	Total	150	100	100	

Source: SPSS data with reorganization by the authors.

This proves that the nature of customer service has a positive or negative impact on purchase intentions. Based on this analysis, we reject the third hypothesis because we found that Yassir Express' customer service has a negative impact on customers' electronic purchasing intentions.

To summarize, the first and second hypotheses have been confirmed, namely that the perception of the reliability and quality of the Yassir Express mobile application has a positive impact on customers' intention to buy and that the reputation and communication of the Yassir Express mobile application have a positive impact on customers' intention to buy. The third hypothesis, that customer service has a strong and positive impact on intention to buy, has been rejected.

5. CONCLUSION

Through this study and the results obtained, we have found that e-reputation plays a very important role in shaping customers' intentions to buy electronically through its positive impact on their attitudes and feelings towards this mobile application.

Yassir Express has been able to build up a good brand image among customers and Internet users in general, which has enabled it to create a positive intention to buy and re-buy the various products offered by this

application. To an acceptable extent, this can be explained by the electronic reputation of the company, the ease with which its application can be used, the quality of the products and services it offers, and its respect for delivery deadlines. However, Yassir must make a greater effort to improve the quality of the customer service it offers because it does not meet the expectations of the people it serves.

On the other hand, social media are proving to be one of the main levers of a good electronic reputation, since a great presence on social networks and excellent media transparency will boost your online reputation positively and to a high degree.

In order to delve deeper into this area, and to better understand the relationship between e-reputation and e-purchase intention, we recommend a few avenues to explore, such as: Integrating other mediating variables into the relationship, including consumer engagement, customer experience and perceived value.

This study was carried out in Algeria, so making comparative studies between consumers from different environments is an effective way of better understanding intentions and their relationship with the image, since it is imperative that the cultural factor remains an essential determinant of consumer behaviour.

Application of the study to different sectors of activity, since behavioural intentions vary from one product to another, for example in the high-end sector.

Finally, artificial intelligence has become a reality in our time, and technological revolutions are taking place day by day with great speed. The authors suggest integrating these tools into future research in order to better understand the consumer and make the most of current market opportunities.

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