

A STUDY ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF WEBSITE / SEO RANKING ON WEBSITE WITH SPECIAL RELATION TO CUSTOMER PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR AND TRUST

[CHANGE INSTITUTES INTERNATIONAL'S WEBSITE, BENGALURU]

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on consumer behaviour and preferences related to search engine usage and website ranking. The study reveals that a majority of respondents have made purchases from search engine-found websites, emphasizing the influence of search engine results on consumer decision-making. Participants also consider website ranking and factors such as reviews and sponsored advertisements when making choices. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of search engine optimization in building trust and attracting website traffic. The study provides insights into the significance of website ranking and its impact on consumer trust, click behaviour, and purchasing decisions. Overall, the findings emphasize the importance of search engine visibility and optimization strategies for businesses aiming to engage and convert online consumers.

Keywords: website ranking, SEO ranking, effectiveness, customer purchasing behaviour, customer trust

INTRODUCTION

This research focuses on the effectiveness of website/SEO ranking on customer purchasing behaviour and trust. The study emphasizes the significance of websites as online showrooms for businesses, influencing consumer decision-making processes. A higher website ranking on search engine results pages (SERPs) increases visibility and attracts potential customers. SEO techniques help businesses optimize their websites for higher rankings, leading to increased organic traffic. Websites play a crucial role in shaping customer trust and confidence, with factors such as design, usability, and transparent information influencing credibility. Understanding the relationship between website/SEO ranking, consumer behaviour, and trust is essential for businesses to maximize their online potential. By recognizing the impact of website optimization on consumer behaviour, businesses can create engaging experiences that foster trust and boost conversion rates. Overall, this research highlights the importance of website ranking in influencing consumer behaviour and provides insights for businesses to develop effective strategies for increased visibility and customer trust.

Statement of the problem

This study investigates the influence of website (SEO) ranking on consumer trust and purchasing behaviour. It explores how website ranking affects consumer trust and the extent to which high search engine rankings impact purchasing behaviour. The findings aim to highlight the significance of SEO ranking in shaping consumer attitudes and behaviour towards websites.

Objective of the study

- To study how a website's ranking affects consumer trust.
- To analyse the extent of the impact on consumers' purchasing behaviour when they find websites ranked at the top of search engine results.

I. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

AUTHOR	LITERATURE REVIEW
Johnson, R., & Smith, K. (2020).	This paper aims to investigate the influence of safety measures in the construction industry on employee job performance. The study found that effective safety measures, such as training programs and safety protocols, significantly enhanced employee job performance, leading to improved project outcomes.
Hameed et al. (2020).	The author conducted a comprehensive meta-analysis on the relationship between website quality and online purchase intention. The findings highlighted the significant positive impact of website quality dimensions, including design aesthetics, usability, security, and content, on online purchase intention. Optimizing website quality is crucial for enhancing customer perception, increasing purchase intent, and driving favourable customer behaviour.
Hassan et al. (2020).	This paper examined the impact of website quality and trust on customer loyalty in the e-commerce context. The study demonstrated that website quality factors such as design, ease of use, and responsiveness significantly influenced customer loyalty. Trust played a crucial mediating role between website quality and customer loyalty, emphasizing the importance of creating positive online experiences and building trustworthy websites.
Martinez, G., & Davis, R. (2021).	The author conducted a comparative study on the relationship between welfare measures and employee retention in public and private sector organizations. The findings indicated that comprehensive welfare measures, including work-life balance initiatives and employee benefits, played a vital role in retaining employees in both sectors, contributing to organizational stability and productivity.
Tran et al. (2021).	In this paper the author conducted a study examining the relationship between website quality, perceived value, trust, and online purchase intention in the context of e-commerce. The findings revealed that website quality, including design, usability, content relevance, and interactivity, significantly influenced perceived value, trust, and online purchase intention. The study highlighted the importance of delivering a high-quality website experience to enhance perceived value, foster trust, and drive online purchase behaviour.

II. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

This research uses descriptive methods to examine the efficiency of search engine optimization (SEO) in relation to customer purchasing behavior and trust. The study relied on primary data sources, specifically questionnaires administered through the website of Change Institutes International. This approach allowed for direct interaction with the target market, enabling the collection of specific and relevant information regarding their perceptions, preferences, and experiences. By employing questionnaires, the research facilitated the systematic gathering of data, ensuring consistency and enabling quantitative analysis to derive meaningful insights. The combination of descriptive research methods and the use of questionnaires provide empirical evidence that can inform policy-making and decision-making in areas such as social sciences, market research, and healthcare.

III. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

a. Descriptive Analysis

Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Clicked_2nd3rdPage	1.26	.437	200
Trust_1stPage	1.97	1.463	200
MadePurchase_Search	1.34	.475	200
Reviews_Impact	1.63	1.149	200
Frequency_SearchTerm	1.64	1.224	200
Recommendations_Impact	1.67	1.269	200

The provided statistics offer insights into various aspects of user behavior and perceptions in an online context. The mean values depict average responses or occurrences, while the standard deviations indicate the degree of variability around those means. On average, users tend to click on the second or third page of search results (mean = 1.26, std. deviation = 0.437), and they have a moderate level of trust in the content of the first page (mean = 1.97, std. deviation = 1.463). Users tend to make purchases after conducting a search (mean = 1.34, std. deviation = 0.475) and are moderately influenced by reviews (mean = 1.63, std. deviation = 1.149). The frequency of searching for a specific term is moderate (mean = 1.64, std. deviation = 1.224), and recommendations have a moderate impact on user behavior (mean = 1.67, std. deviation = 1.269). These statistics provide valuable insights into user behavior, trust, purchase patterns, the influence of reviews and recommendations, and the frequency of searching for specific terms in an online setting. Further analysis and contextual information would enhance the interpretation of these findings.

b. Correlation Analysis

H1: There is Positive customer trust in (Change Institutes International's) website is significantly influenced by website ranking (SEO).

		Clicked_2nd3rdPage	Trust_1stPage	MadePurchase_Search	Reviews_Impact
Clicked_2nd3rdPage	Pearson Correlation	1	.138*	.210**	.051
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.026	.001	.235
	N	200	200	200	200
Trust_1stPage	Pearson Correlation	.138*	1	.130*	.298**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.026		.033	.000
	N	200	200	200	200
MadePurchase_Search	Pearson Correlation	.210**	.130*	1	.189**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.001	.033		.004
	N	200	200	200	200
Reviews_Impact	Pearson Correlation	.051	.298**	.189**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.235	.000	.004	
	N	200	200	200	200
Frequency_SearchTerm	Pearson Correlation	.100	.311**	.137*	.338**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.080	.000	.027	.000
	N	200	200	200	200
Recommendations_Impact	Pearson Correlation	.254	.206	.015	.151
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.002	.417	.016
	N	200	200	200	200

- Users who click on the second or third page of search results have a weak positive correlation with trust in the first page ($r = 0.138, p < 0.05$).
- Trust in the first page of search results has a weak positive correlation with making a purchase after conducting a search ($r = 0.130, p < 0.05$).
- The impact of reviews on user behaviour has a moderate positive correlation with trust in the first page of search results ($r = 0.298, p < 0.01$).
- The frequency of searching for a specific term has a moderate positive correlation with trust in the first page of search results ($r = 0.311, p < 0.01$) and the impact of recommendations on user behaviour ($r = 0.299, p < 0.01$).
- The impact of recommendations on user behaviour has a moderate positive correlation with the frequency of searching for a specific term ($r = 0.299, p < 0.01$).

c. Regression Analysis

H2: There is a positive impact on customer purchasing behaviour when websites rank at the top of search engine results.

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. Change
1	.298 ^a	.089	.065	.459	.089	3.777	5	194	.003

a. Predictors: (Constant), 16.Frequency_SearchTerm, 8.Clicked_2nd3rdPage, 9.Trust_1stPage, 24.Recommendations_Impact, 13.Reviews_Impact

b. Dependent Variable: 11.MadePurchase_Search

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.981	5	.796	3.777	.003 ^b
	Residual	40.899	194	.211		
	Total	44.880	199			

a. Dependent Variable: 11.MadePurchase_Search

b. Predictors: (Constant), 16.Frequency_SearchTerm, 8.Clicked_2nd3rdPage, 9.Trust_1stPage, 24.Recommendations_Impact, 13.Reviews_Impact

The regression analysis results indicate that the combination of predictors, including Frequency_Search Term, Clicked_2nd3rdPage, Trust_1stPage, Recommendations_Impact, and Reviews_Impact, has a weak positive relationship with the dependent variable MadePurchase_Search ($R = 0.298, R\text{ Square} = 0.089$). Approximately 8.9% of the variance in MadePurchase_Search can be explained by the predictors, with an adjusted R Square of 0.065. The standard error of the estimate is 0.459, reflecting the average difference between predicted and actual values. The ANOVA results show that the regression model is statistically significant ($F = 3.777, p = 0.003$), indicating that the predictors collectively have a significant impact on MadePurchase_Search. However, it's important to note that the amount of variance explained by the predictors is relatively small, suggesting that there may be other factors not considered in the analysis that influence MadePurchase_Search.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that SEO ranking significantly influences consumer trust and purchase behavior. Higher SEO ranks contribute to credibility and trust in websites, leading to improved consumer behavior. This has implications for website performance and digital marketing strategies, emphasizing the need to prioritize SEO efforts to enhance website visibility, credibility, and user experience. Businesses that invest in improving search engine rankings and building trust increase their chances of engaging customers and generating sales. Further research is needed to explore additional variables and gain a deeper understanding of this dynamic environment.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings, several suggestions are offered to optimize SEO efforts and leverage the relationship between SEO ranking, consumer trust, and purchasing behavior. Firstly, organizations should focus on keyword research and optimization to ensure relevance and quality of content that aligns with users' search intentions. Enhancing website user experience, including page loading speed, mobile responsiveness, and navigation, is crucial for higher SEO rankings and increased consumer engagement. Creating high-quality back links from reputable sources can positively impact SEO performance and consumer trust. Lastly, consistent posting of high-quality content, active social media engagement, and improving website visibility are key to building consumer trust and increasing the likelihood of purchases.

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