



The influence of online social proof on consumer decision making in E-commerce

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Abstract

Title: The influence of Online social proof on consumer decision making in E-commerce.

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This thesis examines how online social proof affects people's choices, focusing on personality, purchase intention, and social proof. To see if extraversion, neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to new experiences moderated the effect of social proof on intentions, the thesis. An e-commerce simulation was used to test social proof scenarios using 102 online survey participants. The research design manipulated social proof by changing the value of reviews and rating stars on an e-commerce deal. This thesis found no substantial effect of social proof on consumer behavior when purchase intentions were evaluated, contrary to previous research which showed the existing impact of social proof. Personality did not significantly alter the relationship between purchase intentions and social proof, suggesting other elements, such as context, product type, or individual consumer characteristics (Matz et al., 2017) may be involved. This data fits easily into this complex picture of social proof's effectiveness on digital marketplaces, which contradicts many previous findings on the generalizability of social proof. This thesis shows how complicated online customer behavior is and says that we need to do more research to find out how personality traits and social proof affect online purchases.

Keywords: Social proof, Personality traits, E-commerce, Purchase intention, Decision making, Influence, Impact

Resumo

Título: A influência da prova social online na tomada de decisão do consumidor no comércio eletrônico.

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Esta tese analisa a forma como a prova social em linha afecta as escolhas das pessoas, centrando-se na personalidade, na intenção de compra e na prova social. Para verificar se a extroversão, o neuroticismo, a agradabilidade, a consciência e a abertura a novas experiências moderavam o efeito da prova social nas intenções, a tese. Foi utilizada uma simulação de comércio eletrônico para testar cenários de prova social utilizando 102 participantes de inquéritos em linha. A conceção da investigação manipulou a prova social, alterando o valor das críticas e das estrelas de classificação num negócio de comércio eletrônico. Esta tese não encontrou nenhum efeito substancial da prova social no comportamento do consumidor quando as intenções de compra foram avaliadas, ao contrário de pesquisas anteriores que mostraram o impacto existente da prova social. A personalidade não alterou significativamente a relação entre as intenções de compra e a prova social, sugerindo que outros elementos, como o contexto, o tipo de produto ou as características individuais do consumidor (Matz et al., 2017) podem estar envolvidos. Esses dados se encaixam facilmente nesse quadro complexo da eficácia da prova social em mercados digitais, o que contradiz muitas descobertas anteriores sobre a generalização da prova social. Esta tese mostra como o comportamento do cliente online é complicado e diz que precisamos de fazer mais investigação para descobrir como os traços de personalidade e a prova social afectam as compras online.

Palavras-chave: Prova social, Traços de personalidade, Comércio eletrônico, Intenção de compra, Tomada de decisão, Influência, Impacto

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Table of Contents

Abstract	2
Resumo	3
Acknowledgments	4
1. Introduction	6
1.1 <i>Academic and managerial relevance</i>	7
2. Literature Review	8
2.1 <i>E-commerce</i>	8
2.2 <i>Social proof</i>	9
2.3 <i>Social Proof in E-commerce</i>	10
2.4 <i>Big-5 model of personality and E-commerce</i>	11
2.5 <i>Hofstede Cultural Dimensions and E-commerce</i>	13
3. Methodology	15
3.1 <i>Design</i>	15
3.2 <i>Participants</i>	16
3.3 <i>Materials and Procedure</i>	17
4. Results	18
4.1 <i>Scale assessment</i>	18
4.2 <i>Descriptive statistics</i>	20
4.3 <i>Bivariate Correlation</i>	21
4.4 <i>Hypothesis Testing</i>	22
5. Discussion	24
5.1 <i>Implication and further research</i>	26
5.2 <i>Limitations</i>	27
1.1 <i>Conclusions</i>	29
2. References	30
Appendices:	37
<i>Appendix A – Thesis Survey</i>	37
<i>Appendix B – Frequency Tables for gender, country and social-proof scenarios</i>	47

1. Introduction

Business-to-consumer e-commerce or B2C e-commerce is the buying and selling of goods and services through the use of computer telecommunications including the use of the World Wide Web with the help of which the term e-commerce was coined in early 1990s (Kalakota et al., 1997). This process started by enhancing the shopping experience in physical shops but has now substituted most physical shopping experiences. The e-commerce sector in 2021 had retail sales of approximately \$4.9 trillion worldwide, proving to be a driving force of contemporary trade (Statista, 2021).

This thesis assesses the idea that social proof moderated with personality traits has a drastic effect on purchasing intention in e-commerce. Consumers are getting more critical in evaluating items through information search and social proof because the dynamics of consumer behavior have shifted from physical to online retailing (Schultz, 2022). According to Hoyer (2022), The change in this area had a significant impact on decision-making and consumers pay close attention to the details with such importance attached to these new consumers behaviors and expectations, companies that want to venture into the online market should enrich customer experiences and refine promotional strategies in this field (Hoyer, 2022). The study of e-commerce in this thesis shall help in establishing how the different patterns of consumer behavior and decision are impacted by the levels of social proof, which is moderated by personality traits, especially concerning the balance that consumers place on online communication and conventional modes of shopping (Zhou et al., 2007).

People follow the actions of others to fit in or avoid sticking out. This is called social proof, and it happens when people think that other people's actions show the right way to act in a certain situation. Cialdini (1984) says that people often do what other people do because they think that what other people do is right because of the situation (Cialdini, 1984).

Smith & Anderson (2020) stated that this concept of social proof gains a certain importance in e-commerce as the lack of touch and feel makes the decision-making regarding the purchase of a product more problematic (Smith & Anderson, 2020). It's within digital shops that other opinions such as clients' ratings, comments, and testimonials in the form of numbers are manifest, and these are all examples of social proof related to e-commerce. These are strategic for constructing the decision-making of consumers, operating as a substitution of the tactile inspection typical of the store contexts (Cialdini, 1984). In line with a focus on social proof, there is evidence from prior literature that applies to online markets. Products recommended by customers that have high ratings or numerous positive comments receive more purchases since

they are perceived as higher in reliability and quality (Cheung, 2009). Going by the social psychological principles of this phenomenon, the consumers are likely to use the perception that many people are using a particular product as a cue to make their purchase decisions particularly due to the many options within a context characterized by scarcity of physical touch (Rabjohn et al., 2009). Furthermore, the aspect of social proof is not solely limited to the options of recommendations and reviews. It combines the description of user experiences in the form of creative narratives and images, which amplify the potential buyer's sense-making of the various markets available to them (Walls.io, 2023). Some of these E-marketplace Businesses argue that, due to lack of physical examination typical of physical stores, social proof effectively becomes a key persuader of business model for e-commerce and a key decision criterion (Lee et al., 2009).

As e-commerce expands, a focus on factors of social proof and their relevance to consumers is critical. Its ability to steer the consumers' decisions points to a key process by which trust and credibility, which are foundational in digital commerce, are constructed, changing the old paradigms of customer interactions and selling in the process (McKinsey et al., 2021). It must be noted that social proof affects consumer behavior depending on several factors, the most important of which are individual personality traits and culture, acting as moderators (Schnack, 2022). In the same token, Matz (2017) found that personality differences like introversion and extroversion influence consumers' perceptions and responses to social proof. For example, introverts who focus on depth and detailed information are likely to be guided by numerous detailed user's reviews and numerous details about the specific product, while extroverts, who are guided by breadth and popularity factors are likely to be influenced by the sheer number of reviews and overall positive bias toward the specifics of a certain product (Matz et al., 2017).

RQ: How do individual personality traits influence the impact of online social proof on consumer decision-making in E-commerce?

1.1 Academic and managerial relevance

This dissertation would contribute to the advancement of theoretical paradigm shifts in the field of marketing and consumer behavior studies that contend social proof systems have detrimental effects. To better understand consumer behavior in the context of digital environments and how personality differences affect perceptions of social proof during the decision-making process this research adopts the Big-Five model of personality theory. Analyzing e-commerce in light

of customer behavior and trust in the e-business environment is necessary as it progressively expands into a global industry.

Accordingly, the results of this research would be a big help in understanding the behaviors manifested by customers with different personalities. This study attempts to contribute to an advance in knowledge of the practices of e-commerce in relation to the investigation of personality and interaction of social proof within an online shopping environment, which would assist businesses by providing useful insights to drive informed decisions. The study also acknowledges limitations concerning personality traits and how they affect consumer behavior. In contrast to the extroverted-oriented who might be swayed by the strength of social word-of-mouth introvert-oriented people who are meticulous may find great resonance with precisely targeted marketing techniques. In this sense personality factors enhance the strategic tools that managers currently have at their disposal and allow for a more sophisticated method of interacting with customers while tactical procedures add to the managerial cognitive frameworks.

2. Literature Review

2.1 E-commerce

Electronic commerce or e-commerce is defined as the process of conducting business through the use of computers on electronic systems such as the Internet (Laudon et al., 2020). This mode of commerce has revolutionized the conventional retail situation through the provision of faster, uncomplicated and internationally accessible transactions (Laudon et al., 2021). E-commerce is booming thanks to IT advancements that are reshaping global markets (Turban et al., 2018). According to Solomon (2018), several factors affect consumer choice in the context of e-commerce, first, we have properties of the website, such as perceived ease of use and perceived security have a positive effect on the probability of consumers making an online purchase, and such components are central to developing consumers' confidence and maintaining consistent interaction with e-commerce sites (Solomon, 2018). Second, it is important to consider the logistical conditions of e-commerce (Solomon, 2018).

Meeting customer expectations boosts significantly the level of satisfaction and customer loyalty (Chen, 2018). Customers are happy and loyal when they receive fast shipment services, return policies that are easy to understand, and helpful customer service representatives (Chen, 2018). One of the major underlying aspects with regard to the effect of logistics reliability on consumers' purchases is that the latter is capable of increasing consumer confidence and acting

as a response to the lack of direct product touch and feel (Chen, 2018). Third, because there are fewer possibilities for direct contact with online commerce, psychological aspects play a significant part in the industry. The lack of personal interactions means online retailers need to supply plenty of product descriptions as well as customers' reviews and ratings (Kuan et al., 2007). Customers' reviews and ratings work as social proof to give the consumers a guarantee about the quality of the products they may be inclined to buy. Effectively, the impact of social influence is high as it appeals to people's subconscious desire for following the mass in matters of uncertainty (Cheung et al., 2009). Finally, more recent work has described the flow of consumer behavior in the digital space. Researchers have looked at how the amount of time people spend online and how they feel about shopping online affects how people act. These studies showed that people who have done a lot of online shopping value user reviews and specific product information a lot more than people who have done a lot of online shopping but not as much (Liu et al., 2011). This is interesting as it points to a notion of changing dynamics of consumers and their interactions with e-commerce systems. Everyone knows all of these factors must be considered while moving towards online shopping. Together, the technological, logistical, and psychological factors determine consumers' buying behavior and must not be overlooked by organizations interested in seizing the numerous opportunities of e-commerce (Cheung et al., 2009).

2.2 Social proof

Social proof is one of the six keys of influence and refers to the degree to which people's behavior is affected by observing the actions of others (Cialdini, 1984).

Social proof is impactful when one is uncertain, as in such situations people look at what others are doing to guide them (Cialdini, 1984). From the decision-making process of consumers to the effects of compliance and assimilation, this notion has been studied in several studies.

. Studies in social psychology indicate that social proof works best where people are in doubt on how to behave or what to think. For example, experiments have it that in case of an emergency, people tend to act in line with other people around them; behavior that may improve a situation or worsen depending on the conduct of the crowd (Latane et al., 1968).

In the case of marketing and consumer psychology, social proof is seen in the phenomenon where people embrace certain goods and services mainly because more and more other people are doing so. This trend is closely connected to how viral marketing campaigns spread, as the

result of the growing importance/endorsement of the product calls for more interactions and purchases (Chevalier et al., 2006).

It is in a way expected from the social psychological theory of social proof that its impact depends on the perceiver's perceived similarity and perceived physical attractiveness of the endorsing individuals or groups. It is widely accepted that people are most likely to be influenced by the behaviors of other individuals they compare themselves with or wish to become like (i.e., emulation; W. K. Goldstein et al., 2008).

2.3 Social Proof in E-commerce

In the context of E-commerce, social proof appears in numerous influential ways, altering customers' behavior. Customer opinions and rankings, for example, give a numeric estimate of a product's value and are critical to assess prospective purchaser's decisions. Customers' satisfaction and the quality of a product have positive correlation with positive feedback ratings, these affect the potential customer's mentality and make them more inclined to trust and make purchase decisions freely (Drèze et al. 2011).

As an interesting side note, customers' photos and videos give a more realistic insight into the actual use of the product improving the overall persuasiveness and relevance (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010).

Social media also contributes towards social proof whereby fans and opinion leaders propagate products that they believe have higher value by publicizing the goods (Jin et al., 2014). This is complemented by metrics such as the numbers of likes, shares, comments, and these together contribute to the understanding that the product is popular and of good quality, encouraging new customers to engage in the process and make purchases (Jin et al., 2014).

Social proof manifests its influence solely for the benefit of e-commerce shoppers since the information transmitted is critical to shoppers' decision-making processes (Kim et al., 2015). This way, positive information search, among others that comprise the social proof mechanism, reduces the perceived risk, which is always a factor preventing some people from buying goods through the internet mainly due to lack of direct contact with the products. This reduction in perceived risk is very important in building the consumers' confidence while conducting business through an online market (Kim et al., 2015).

In addition, social proof employs the band wagon effect that makes customers feel that it is correct to purchase the same product as other consumers have, hence eliminating the risk of being wrong in their decision-making process (Cheung et al., 2014). Lovers of promotions such

as those that suggest that the stock is low, or that the sponsorship offer is for a limited time only will trigger the Fear of missing out, as customers feel they have to do the action right now before it's too late and this increases their chances of buying the product (Cialdini, 2009).

Also, positive reviews and ratings provide consumers with social proof as they are supported by other consumers who have used the product and have given good reviews and ratings, thus creating a sense of normality which is persuasive especially in environments characterized by the emergence of new trends or products (Tormala et al., 2007).

Given the above positive influence of social proof on purchase intentions, this thesis's first hypothesis is:

H1: Positive social proof (high customer ratings, positive reviews, and endorsements) significantly increases purchase intentions in e-commerce platforms compared to neutral or negative social proof.

2.4 Big-5 model of personality and E-commerce

Personality best describes a broad and complex aspect that defines the character of a person in terms of his or her thinking, feeling, and behaving style. In the field of psychology, it is widely believed that personality plays a role in almost every aspect of man's life, beginning with his interactions with other people to his decisions and actions. Therefore, personality is significant in the attempt to forecast different phenomena relating to human behavior (John et al., 2008). Personalities of consumers affect many parts of electronic commerce, from how likely they are to buy something online to how they interact with websites or what they buy (McCrae et al., 1999). Big-5 personality traits have been vital in the prediction of various outcomes in different fields proving the versatility of the model. For instance, in the working environment, they are associated with job performance and the efficiency of the organizational work teams. (Barrick et al., 1991). In academic contexts, they have been applied to the purpose of forecasting academic performance and students' flexibility (Poropat, 2009). Moreover, in health psychology, these features have been useful in designing patterns of health behavior and treatment compliance (Friedman et al., 2014). Such a wide application of the big-5 model is the best indication as to why the model is useful in generating predictions about human conduct in multiple settings.

The recognized big-5 personality model is commonly used to assess an individual's personality traits categorizing them based on five attributes known as Openness to new Experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism (McCrae et al., 1999). The

remainder of this section seeks to dwell on how these characteristics have the potential to affect the decision-making process of the consumers in e-commerce.

It gets supported by the fact that people with high levels of Openness to new experiences are led to seeking out new and diverse experiences, (Kashdan et al., 2010). A higher degree of openness increases the possibility of finding buyers online since numerous analyses have discovered a positive association between openness and online purchases (Ahn et al., 1992). They might be more likely to try out new brands and products if the online reviews emphasize new ideas or aspects they have not tried before (Huang, 2014). It is, for instance, likely that a person who is high on Openness will be attracted to a new model of a smartphone with a different kind of camera because of positive reports about the functionality of this innovation.

Conscientious personalities are detail-oriented and orderliness in their undertakings. Many studies have identified an association between conscientiousness and the use of elaborate textual information and comparison aids during the buying process targeting web-based items. They might engage in more online research before a purchase decision (Liu et al., 2015). In such cases, a conscientious consumer would be easily able to spend some hours comparing the characteristics and hence going through, in detail, various reviews from different sources before buying a new laptop.

Further, extroverts are friendly and have a special interest in social-related activities. When it comes to online purchasing, Zhang et al. (2018) found that extroverts are positively correlated with the likelihood of being influenced by social media. They might be more attracted to products recommended by some of the social media influencers they subscribe to or products trending in social media. Highly extraverted consumers would probably feel comfortable purchasing a clothing item after it has been recommended by a popular social media personality.

Agreeable persons are easily trusting and are always in a bid to ensure that there is harmony especially within a group. According to Paulhus et al. (2002), Agreeableness is an important factor governing brand preference by perceived social responsibility. In addition, the targets of agreeable consumers might be brands with positive social reviews, or brands depicted in content as having ethical standards (Paulhus et al., 2002). An agreeable consumer might buy clothing from a particular company because the company uses a fair means of sourcing its clothes.

Neuroticism is associated with worry and anxiety, hence people with high Neuroticism easily develop such anxiety. In the context of the relationship between consuming risk and Neuroticism in online consumer behavior, decision-makers exhibit less risk aversion when they

are high in Neuroticism. (Dhar et al., 2007). High Neurotic individuals may look for elaborate information about products, numerous positive reports of other customers, and guarantees as the ways to decrease the perceived risk before purchasing something on the internet (Dhar et al., 2007). A consumer with high Neuroticism, willing to buy a new mattress, will seek specific information on the type of mattress to buy, not hesitate to go through many customer reviews, and ensure that the dealers offer certain assurances. Considering the context of this study, the Big-5 model contributes to understanding how personality can impact consumers' decision-making in e-commerce. Businesses can better tailor their ads and products to the likes of the people they want to reach with this information. However, more studies are required in this area, especially concerning how the above-stated personality characteristics relate to cultural differences and other consequential demographic indicators in deeper contexts of the online shopping decision-making process. In addition, if more complex personality models would be developed, they might indeed be even more useful for e-commerce operators. These previous researches led to the second hypothesis of this thesis:

H2: People high in extraversion will be more influenced by social proof than people low in extraversion in a shopping setting

2.5 Hofstede Cultural Dimensions and E-commerce

Culture is made up of the ideas, values, and habits that make up a group of people. It has a big effect on behavior in many areas, including how people act as consumers. There are a number of models that try to classify and explain cultural differences. Hofstede's cultural factors are one of the most important. These models have been used to guess many things, from how people will communicate and manage to how people will act and what policies they will support (Hofstede, 1980). Renowned for its extensive use in both academic and business settings, Hofstede's model offers a solid foundation for comprehending how cultural foundations can greatly impact organizational and consumer dynamics (Minkov & Hofstede, 2011). As an example, Hofstede's (1980) research shows that different markets are impacted by collectivist and individualistic cultures.

People from more individualistic cultures value free will and individual expression more highly than those from more collectivist societies, which value group agreement and familial influence on purchases (Minkov & Hofstede, 2011). Hofstede's framework of cultural dimensions (1980) provides a valuable lens for understanding how cultural values influence consumer behavior in

e-commerce. This section's review explores how each of Hofstede's six dimensions can impact online shopping habits (Hofstede, 1980). Individualistic cultures (high individualism) emphasize personal achievement and independence. Consumers in these cultures might prioritize convenience, personalization, and self-expression when shopping online. For instance, studies by Hofstede (1980) suggest that consumers in individualistic cultures might be more likely to value customization options and express delivery services. In contrast, collectivistic cultures (low individualism) prioritize group harmony and in-group loyalty. People from these cultures may be more influenced by what their family and friends say and by social proof when they buy things online. Gu et al (2009) show how important social shopping experiences are in collectivistic countries. It suggests that people may be more likely to shop online with others or be swayed by good reviews from friends and family.

High power distance cultures emphasize hierarchy and respect for authority. People from these cultures may be more receptive to marketing statements from well-known brands and endorsements from famous people. In 2010, Singh et al. did a study that showed people from high power distance cultures may believe well-known brands and expert opinions more when they shop online. In contrast, low power distance cultures value equality and informal communication. Consumers in these cultures might be more receptive to user-generated content and peer recommendations. Research by Luna-Arocas & Gómez-Miranda (2011) suggests that consumers in low power distance cultures might be more likely to trust authentic reviews from other online shoppers.

Masculine cultures (high masculine) emphasize achievement, assertiveness, and material possessions. People from these groups may want to buy things and show off their positions that are connected to success. When Wang et al (2014) looked into this, they discovered that people who live in cultures that value masculinity may be more influenced by marketing messages that stress competition and success (Wang et al 2014). Feminine cultures (low masculine) value cooperation, modesty, and nurturing. Consumers in these cultures might prioritize products associated with relationships, care, and health. A study by Chen et al (2011) found that consumers in low masculine cultures might be more responsive to marketing appealing to emotional connection and social responsibility (Chen et al 2011).

High uncertainty avoidance cultures value stability, rules, and predictability. Consumers from these cultures may therefore display a higher risk avoidance and rely more on full product information and guarantees during an online purchase decision. Hofstede's (2001) study

suggests that people who live in cultures that avoid uncertainty might be more likely to do a lot of research on a product before buying it. Low uncertainty avoidance cultures (low uncertainty avoidance) are more comfortable with ambiguity and change. Individuals from these cultures may be more willing to try new things and not do as much research before buying something online. A study by Dimofte et al. (2013) found that consumers in low uncertainty avoidance cultures might be more receptive to innovative products and promotions offering variety.

Long-term oriented cultures value thrift, perseverance, and planning for the future. People from such cultures may care more about price and the product's long-term value when they shop online. Tian et al. (2009), for example, found that people who live in cultures that value long-term relationships may be more likely to compare prices and look for goods that will last. In contrast, short-term-oriented cultures (low long-term oriented) prioritize immediate gratification and social status (Tian et al., 2009). Customers in these societies may be more prone to impulse buys and strategies stressing trends and social approval (Tian et al., 2009). They might be less concerned with long-term value and durability, potentially favoring trendy or fashionable products over those built for extended use.

Even though more research needs to be done, these different patterns show that Hofstede's dimension can help us figure out how cultural values affect how people act in online shopping. E-commerce businesses can leverage this knowledge to tailor marketing strategies and product recommendation. This cultural framework will help to figure out how likely it is that the participants will be swayed by social proof in this study.

3. Methodology

3.1 Design

To systematically investigate how social proof conditions and personality traits affect purchase intentions on e-commerce platforms this study uses a quantitative research design with a between-subjects approach. The study's stated hypotheses aim to investigate the influence of personality traits and social proof on E-commerce consumers' decision-making processes, and its design is good at evaluating those assumptions. People who took part were shown one of three types of social proof: positive, neutral, or negative. These conditions were made to look like the different kinds of social proof that consumers might find on e-commerce sites. They are thought to affect people's decisions to buy in different ways. The research also includes the measurement of five personality traits, neuroticism and extraversion, openness to new experiences, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, given their expected relevance to online

consumer behavior, and to assess how they may interact with social proof. Thus, such personality traits are looked into in relation to the conditions related to social proof to explain how individual differences will influence the processes and effectiveness of the social proof cue. The dependent variable of this study is purchases intention. The design in this approach allows the investigation not only into main effects of each independent variable but also into interaction effects on purchase intention; therefore, it provides a holistic observation of how these variables interact to influence consumer decisions in an online shopping environment. Per this perspective, the design of the current study allows it to provide empirical evidence of how personality traits may impact the effect of social proof offering valuable insights into theoretical ideas as well as practical applications in e-commerce marketing tactics.

3.2 Participants

Participants were drawn from pools of university students as well as from posts on Facebook and Instagram, two major social media networks. These platforms were selected because of how frequently users engage in online shopping. Posts were disseminated within niche communities, to reach e-commerce enthusiasts, to guarantee a varied user base that is likely to display a variety of shopping habits and personality traits. Potential respondents were told in the recruitment message that their answers would be kept private and anonymous, and it was made clear that the objective of this study was academic. The survey was made available on July 28 and ran until August 22. A total of 145 responses were registered during that time. In the IBM SPSS Statistics, 102 responses were found to be valid after being checked after removing all the uncompleted answers.

Looking at the cultural dimensions of the three most frequent nationalities (together 92.20% of the sample), most participants were from medium to high power distance countries (Portugal: 63, France: 68, Tunisia: 70), had varying levels of individualism (France 74, Portugal 59, Tunisia 27), medium to low levels of masculinity (France 43, Portugal 31, Tunisia 40), high levels of uncertainty avoidance (France 86, Portugal 99, Tunisia 75), and varying levels of long-term orientation (France 60, Portugal 42, Tunisia 24).

Please see Appendix C for the frequency tables for gender, nationality and number of participants per social proof conditions.

3.3 Materials and Procedure

This study uses a structured survey to look at the effect of personality traits and social proof on the purchase intention of online shoppers. The questionnaire was ideal and carefully made to find out what factors influence people to decide to buy when they shop online, especially how reviews and ratings of products affect those choices.

On the first page of the form, people were told about the study's goal and how it would focus on how e-commerce customers make decisions. Beyond explaining that they were free to stop at any time without consequences, participants were also assured that their answers would be kept private and anonymous. To ensure the quality of data collected in this study would be credible, the first section of the survey was designed to increase the level of participants' trust in the researchers. A full version of the survey is in Appendix A.

After agreeing to participate in the survey, participants proceeded by sharing details about their gender (male, female or not specified), country of residence, and age. To thoroughly study consumer behavior across different cultural and social settings, the demographic section was designed to collect demographic differences of e-commerce users. Using the Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI; Gosling et al., 2003), survey respondent's personality traits were evaluated. According to the authors, measures of extraversion, agreeableness, openness to new experiences, neuroticism and conscientiousness are important aspects of personality that are assessed using this short test (Gosling et al., 2003). On a Likert scale that went from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree), participants rated themselves on terms like "Extroverted, Enthusiastic" or "Critical, Quarrelsome."

The next part of the survey was very important, in which people had to rate a smartphone that was shown on an online store using social proof scenarios. People who took part were randomly given one of three smartphone scenarios. One had five stars and good reviews, another had three stars and neutral reviews, and the third had one star and bad reviews. This methodological technique was used to create a shopping experience that is similar to how people use reviews and ratings to make decisions in real life. The price, design and specific phone model remained constant in all scenarios to focus on how social proof influences consumer behavior. After seeing one of those scenarios, the participants were asked, "How likely are you to purchase this Smartphone 15 128Go Black?" to find out how likely they were to buy the phone. They used a Likert scale ranging from 1 (Unlikely) to 5 (Likely), a common tool in marketing research for understanding consumer attitudes and intentions. (Dodds et al., 1991). The first goal of the study was to collect data on how people responded to different types of social proof; the second

was to look at how different personality qualities affected how convincing social proof was. With the TIPI test as well as the structured social proof scenarios, the survey provided a framework for examining how individual personality and social proof shape purchasing decision.

The IBM SPSS Statistics data analysis was careful to test the hypotheses and give a solid base for drawing useful conclusions about the factors that have a big effect on people's decisions to buy the product online. This approach made sure that all the data was gathered, and the mix of personality tests and simulated e-commerce settings helped researchers really understand how hard it is for people to make choices online. The research method used in this study shows a thorough look at how to understand the modern customer. There are big effects on both theoretical progress and how it is used in e-commerce marketing tactics in the real world.

4. Results

Following survey completion, IBM SPSS Statistics was used to gather and examine participant data.

4.1 Scale assessment

This thesis had five scales to measure different personality attributes. Each scale was measured with Cronbach's α to test for its internal consistency. According to Taber (2018), Cronbach's α is one of the most important statistics, which states that the tests and scales are acceptable with good reliability for their intended research purposes. The five scales were each composed of two items and, prior to calculating the Cronbach's α , needed transformation since negatively-worded items were included. To make the dataset easier to work with and make sure that each variable was set up correctly to match its theoretical base, it was necessary to reverse-code variables that were negatively rewarded. The study's successful examination of the correlations was made possible by the transformation of these variables and it was able to shed light on the ways in which personality traits demographic traits and responses to social proof interact to influence consumer behavior in online markets. It's clear from this careful planning how important it is to look at everything when trying to understand the complicated likes dislikes and behaviors of customers in this digital age. A careful process was used to make sure that the data correctly captured the psychological constructs that were wanted. Extraversion was assessed using items like "Extraverted, enthusiastic," and its reverse "Reserved, quiet." Agreeableness was evaluated through "Sympathetic, warm" and the reverse-coded "Critical, quarrelsome." Conscientiousness involved "Dependable, self-disciplined" and the reverse-

coded "Disorganized, careless." Neuroticism, which inversely relates to emotional stability, included "Calm, emotionally stable" and the reverse-coded "Anxious, easily upset." Lastly, Openness to Experiences was represented by "Open to new experiences, complex" and the reverse-coded "Conventional, uncreative."

The extroversion scale revealed a Cronbach's α of 0.66, which is a relatively acceptable score, but it still needs careful analysis regarding data reliability (Bland et al., 1997). Emotional stability, as assessed in the neuroticism scale, produced a Cronbach's α of 0.62. Although less than the generally recommended threshold of 0.70 for acceptable reliability, it was near to an acceptable level of internal consistency suitable for preliminary inquiry (Bland et al, 1997). Despite the apparent alignment of these items, the Openness to New Experiences scale showed a lower level of reliability with a Cronbach's α of 0.43. Lastly, the conscientiousness scale, recorded a Cronbach's α of 0.47, signaling the need for cautious data interpretation due to lower reliability, and the agreeableness scale, yielded a Cronbach's α of 0.16, highlighting significant reliability challenges that could impact the validity of conclusions.

According to Bland and collaborators (1997), Cronbach's α above 0.70 is regarded as acceptable for proving scale reliability. The Cronbach's α of the scales for Neuroticism 0.62 and Extraversion 0.66, can be considered acceptable, while the scales of Open to new experience $\alpha = 0.43$, Conscientiousness $\alpha = 0.47$, and Agreeableness $\alpha = 0.16$ are found to have lower reliability and hence the data obtained from should be interpreted in a very careful manner.

Lower reliability coefficients for some scales mean that either the scales should be revised, or the data should be used with caution, as suggested that Cronbach's α should be close to 0.7. The research accepts the fact that data analysis needs to be done with great care especially where the reliability coefficients for the scale in use are less than ideal (Vale and Ma, 1997). In determining the reliability of the personality scales in this study, Cronbach's alpha was used, although it is known to have some shortcomings with the use of shorter scales. Applicability of Cronbach's alpha can still be justified on the basis of its widespread acceptance and the practical difficulties involved in switching to another statistical procedure. This was because of its high usage and acceptance within the research domain of psychology, thereby providing a common framework where other studies that were already done could be compared as discussed by Rammstedt et al. (2014).

The extraversion and neuroticism scales were the only ones with Cronbachs α values that were close to acceptable levels 0.66 and 0.62 respectively—so after the reliability analysis was finished the average Cronbachs α for these scales was determined. Various degrees of internal consistency among the assessed personality traits were shown by the values. These reliability evaluations led me to determine that the extraversion and neuroticism scales item averages would yield the scale totals. This approach was selected because it offered a workable means of managing the information while keeping the scales with comparatively higher internal consistency front and center. Because the average method kept all items from both scales and guaranteed a complete study of their individual contributions to the assessed personality traits, all of the items from both scales were kept.

4.2 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics are numerical and graphical methods for organizing presenting and analyzing data (Fisher et al. 2009). Based on the participants survey answers Table 1 displays the *M* and *SD* of their personality traits and purchase intention.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for purchase intention and personality traits

Descriptive Statistics		
	Mean	Std. Deviation
Purchase intention	2,39	1,24
Extraversion	4,42	1,53
Neuroticisme	4,69	1,43
Agreeableness	5,03	,99
Conscientiousness	5,26	1,23
Openness	5,51	1,12

According to the descriptive statistics, the participants' psychological profiles were well-balanced, with moderate levels of extraversion ($M = 4.42$) and neuroticism ($M = 4.69$). More than half of the participants were Tunisians (52.90%), followed by French (17.50%) and Portuguese (8.80%). People of various nationalities made up the remaining 20.80%. With an average age of 28.87 and a standard deviation of 8.52, the sample is representative of the

younger demographics that make up the majority of social media users' age groups (Statista, 2023).

4.3 Bivariate Correlation

The data had to be set up and refined so that we could look at how personality traits, demographics, and social proof affect e-commerce interactions. We used the Pearson correlation coefficient method described in Field (2009) to understand the relationship between these elements shedding light on the factors that influence purchasing intention in E-commerce. Some variables were transformed into dummies for this analysis. Gender was represented with numbers assigning 1 to males and 0 to females. Nationality was simplified with Tunisians coded as 1 and all other nationalities as 0. Given that a large portion of the participants were, from Tunisia (52,90%) it is important to consider how this demographic could influence purchasing behaviors. To correctly display the different kinds of reviews that were seen, the social proof condition was turned into a number scale. Negative reviews were coded as 1, neutral reviews were coded as 2, and positive reviews were coded as 3. The association of personality traits, social proof conditions and demographic characteristics with e-commerce purchase intentions was uncovered by the bivariate correlation analysis which showed a number of noteworthy relationships between these variables as you can see on Table 2 which shows the Bivariate correlations of these variables.

Table 2. Bivariate correlations of social proof, purchase intention, personality traits, and demographics

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.Gender_Numeric	1								
2.Tunisia_Binary	.01	1							
3.Purchase_intention	.04	.03	1						
4.Neuroticism_Score	-.09	-.03	.07	1					
5.Extraversion_Score	-.24*	-.01	.14	.28**	1				

6.Agreeableness_Score	.24*	.05	.05	.37**	.04	1			
7.Conscientiousness_Score	.25*	.08	-.12	.09	-.16	.19	1		
8.OtExp_Score	-.10	.01	.11	.33**	.38**	.33**	.15	1	
9.S_ProofNum	-.22*	-.17	.03	.02	.03	-.01	-.15	.06	1

Regarding the relationship of the main variables of interest with demographics, the value of extraversion and purchase intention was a moderately positive relationship equated to $r = 0.14$ and not significant, extraversion exhibited a negative correlation with Gender ($r = -.24$, $p < .05$), suggesting that females may display higher levels of extraversion than males. The correlation between social proof and purchase intention is also weak and not significant ($r = .03$).

The relationship between personality traits, neuroticism and extraversion also showed a positive correlation ($r = .282$, $p < .01$). Agreeableness and neuroticism had a relation to a moderately positive value of ($r = 0.37$, $p < .01$) similarly. There also existed a moderate favorable value of ($r = 0.38$, $p < .01$) for openness to experience and extraversion.

In terms of correlations with the condition of social proof, Gender correlated negatively with Social Proof ($r = -.22$, $p < .05$).

Although some of these relations were significant statistically, they were not strong enough to possess an influential relationship (below 0.5 about the correlation coefficient).

4.4 Hypothesis Testing

The first hypothesis (H1) of this thesis tried to find out if the kind of social proof (positive, neutral, or negative) that is shown in an e-commerce setting has a big effect on people's decisions to buy. People often copy what other people do to see if they are acting correctly, which is known as social proof. It was thought that social proof would affect the buying habits of online shoppers. A one-way ANOVA was done with purchase intention as the dependent variable and the type of social proof as the fixed effect to test this hypothesis.

The results of the ANOVA can be seen in Table 3

Table 3: Fixed- Effect ANOVA results using Purchase intention as the criterion

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P
Between Groups	,516	2	,258	,164	,849
Within Groups	155,798	99	1,574		
Total	156,314	101			

Our main interest, the main effect of social proof was not significant, $F(2, 99) = 0.164$, $p = .849$, suggesting that the differences in purchase intentions across the three social proof conditions were not statistically significant. This insignificance demonstrates that there was not a significant effect on the participants' purchasing decisions by altering the kind of social proof—negative, neutral, or positive. The results of this ANOVA did not support H1: Positive social proof (high customer ratings, positive reviews, and endorsements) significantly increases purchase intentions in e-commerce platforms compared to neutral or negative social proof. The second hypothesis delved into how people high in extraversion will be more influenced by social proof than people low in extraversion in a shopping setting. Characteristics such as agreeableness, neuroticism, extraversion, and openness to new experiences were hypothesized as moderators of the effect of social proof on online purchase intentions. To find out, we used a multiple linear regression analysis that looked at how personality and social proof affect people's decisions to buy.

The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Summary of the Multiple Regression Analysis for Purchase intention.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error		
1 (Constant)	-.805	2,345	-.343	,732
Extraversion_Score	,262	,250	1,045	,299
Neuroticism_Score	,225	,294	,764	,447
Social_proof_num	1,378	1,134	1,216	,227
SP_Extraversion	-,100	,122	-,821	,414

SP_Neuroticism	-,102	,142	-,720	,474
SP_Openness	-,066	,175	-,376	,708
SP_Conscientiousness	,039	,150	,259	,796
SP_Agreeableness	-,059	,174	-,340	,735
Agreeableness_Score	,188	,400	,470	,639
Openness_Score	,230	,364	,632	,529
Conscientiousness_Score	-,232	,332	-,697	,487

Thus, although personality traits and social proof were thought to interact to influence purchase intentions this specific sample and operationalization did not support the hypothesis as evidenced by the lack of significant results for the interaction terms.

5. Discussion

In order to comprehend how various forms of social proof and unique personality traits impact purchase intentions this thesis examined the impact of social proof on consumer decision-making in an online shopping environment. Even though previous research has highlighted the significant role that social proof plays in influencing consumer behaviors the results of this study reveal a more complex interaction than is generally understood (Cheung et al., 2009).

The investigation focused on three types of social proof: positive social proof scenario, neutral social proof scenario and negative social proof scenario. Contrary to expectations and existing literature, which often underscores the potent influence of social proof on consumer behaviors, the analysis revealed that none of these types significantly altered purchase intentions (Cialdini, 1984).

This resulted from a thorough ANOVA procedure that revealed no discernible variations between the various scenarios. This implies that the effects of social proof might be more complex possibly impacted by a combination of other elements not thoroughly examined in earlier studies. Furthermore, with an emphasis on agreeableness extraversion, and neuroticism, the study examined the potential moderating effects of personality traits on the relationship between social proof and purchase intentions. Once more the outcomes were unexpected and no discernible moderations were discovered.

This result is especially intriguing because it defies previous research that suggested personality traits can have a major impact on e-commerce behaviors (McCrae and Costa 1999). Rather

these findings suggest that although these characteristics hold significance in wider contexts their direct influence on reactions to social proof in e-commerce environments might be restricted. The insignificance of most findings concerning the perceived impact of social proof on purchase intentions stands in dramatic contrast to prevailing studies. While research like that of Jin & Phua (2014) has stressed the effectiveness of social proof in e-commerce, recent insights suggest that its impact may vary significantly based on context, product type, and individual consumer characteristics (Matz et al., 2017). This discrepancy between findings and literature is problematic in the thought that social proof will always have an impact on the decisions made by consumers. It also points toward the need for further investigation of the conditions under which social proof works best. Also, the fact that personality traits did not have much of an effect on purchasing decisions in the context of social proof, suggests a potential reevaluation of how personality is incorporated into models of online consumer behavior.

This finding diverges from studies advocating a robust linkage between personality traits and online behaviors (Huang, 2014), suggesting a need to more critically assess the direct applicability of personality models like the Big-5 in digital commerce settings. Through the identification of social proofs possibly limited impact in specific scenarios, this research adds to a more nuanced understanding of the mechanisms underlying e-commerce. Its casts doubt on the notion that one variable will have the same impact on all e-commerce interactions and emphasizes the value of taking a wider range of factors into account such as product type customer experience and particular situational factors. More importantly personality theory has been significantly extended into the digital sphere with the incorporation of the personality model into the analysis of e-commerce behaviors.

The nonsignificant findings of this study could have been subjected to the low social influence and high-power distance that characterizes the participant sample drawn from countries such as Tunisia, Portugal, and France. Because of this cultural characteristic, people in this cultural environment may be less influenced by the actions of their peers, which reduces the power of social proof. There may be more variation, making it harder to discover clear effects, due to participants' varying levels of long-term orientation and individualism. To further understand how cultural factors and personality traits interact to influence the effectiveness of social proof, future studies should use bigger, more culturally specific samples to investigate these phenomena.

Theoretically more advanced and potentially leading to more specialized and successful consumer engagement strategies this approach also creates new research opportunities regarding the interactions between personality traits and online shopping environments. These results open up a number of research directions. Research could examine how particular facets of social proof—like the quantity or quality of reviews—interact with different product categories or customer segments. In addition, future research could look at the circumstances in which personality traits actually affect e-commerce behaviors possibly considering other traits or situational factors that were not considered in this study. In summary, this thesis questions certain deeply held assumptions while also greatly advancing our knowledge of the complex and dynamic nature of consumer behavior in digital marketplaces. It asks for a more critical application of conventional theories—like social proof and personality traits—in the dynamic realm of e-commerce.

5.1 Implication and further research

The current research findings offer understanding into how consumers behave when shopping online and shed light on the influence of personality traits and social proof, in the process. It also calls for further research in this area. Because the intentions of consumers to make purchases are not greatly affected by the types of social proof tested in this research, marketers might want to reconsider the one-size-fits-all approach to incorporating social proof into their campaigns. Conversely, e-commerce platforms might gain more from developing more customized social proof tactics that consider the distinct qualities of their clientele including purchasing patterns and demographics (Cheung et al.,2009). Researching distinct social proof types—for example expert versus peer reviews—may reveal which kinds of social proof work best for different product categories or customer demographics (Jin et al., 2014). This may also involve research on how the database and up-to-date consumer behavior trends may be combined and incorporated with such emerging technologies as intelligence and machine learning, for the improvement of social proof processes. Also, studying novel consumer behavior models that combine traditional predictors and novel purchase intentions through controlled experiments and field research could strengthen and expand the findings of this thesis.

Marketers should also customize their social proof strategies according to the kind of product or service they are offering as the influence of social proof differs depending on the context. For instance, compared to low-involvement products like clothing or accessories, high-

involvement products like electronics or cars might need different kinds of social proof (Matz et al.2017).

Furthermore, there is a chance to investigate more deeply levels of personalization because personality qualities did not substantially lessen the influence of social proof. E-commerce platforms can use data analytics to integrate broader behavioral insights, potentially incorporating real-time browsing data to adjust the presentation of social proof dynamically (Huang, 2014). According to the results of this study, existing models of consumer behavior place too much emphasis on the role of social proof and could benefit from adding other situational and psychological variables.

Integrated models that account for the complex interplay between personality traits, social proof, and other contextual factors that impact the decision-making process of online consumers may be the result of subsequent theoretical investigations. This may include examining other traits or combinations of traits that could have more pronounced effects in specific e-commerce contexts (McCrae et al., 1999). More importantly personality theory has been significantly extended into the digital sphere with the incorporation of the personality model into the analysis of e-commerce behaviors.

Other potential avenues of research are to track changes in consumer behavior over time, especially as they get used to social proof mechanisms on e-commerce platforms, future research could make use of longitudinal study designs. Understanding the long-term impacts of social proof beyond initial purchase intentions may be aided by this. Also, to confirm if the results of this thesis are applicable in different cultural contexts, more cross-cultural research is required. Research in this area could investigate how variations in trust and social influence across cultures may influence the effectiveness of social proof in various markets (Cheung et al.,2009). These findings hint at future research directions: how particular facets of social proof- for example, the quantity versus the quality of reviews interact with various product categories or customer segments.

5.2 Limitations

The findings of this study hold significance in understanding how traits and the influence of social validation impact a consumer's choices when buying products, over the internet. Nevertheless, some limitations must be noted since they might have affected the outcomes and how they were interpreted.

One notable limitation is related to the e-commerce platform used in the survey to present the smartphone in three different levels of social proof. The design of the platform might have influenced negatively participants' perceptions and behaviors independently of the social proof being tested. Participants might have been disinterested in the reviews and ratings because of the website's design, among other things, which may be influenced them to not rely on social proof to make a purchase decision or disinterested them from the product itself, but rather acted in accordance with their general impressions of the e-commerce site. Because of this ambiguity, it's possible that the impacts of social proof are actually attributable to the platform's perceived quality.

Even though the study received a respectable number of responses, Cohen (2003) asserts that a larger and more varied sample could reveal the existence of small but meaningful and significant interactions between personality traits and types of social proof (Cohen., 2003). This study did not go into great detail about cultural norms and shopping habits which may have an impact on how social proof functions. Increasing the demographic and geographic diversity of participants would have helped to determine whether the results apply to different cultural contexts and consumer markets, Also, the demographic that made up the study's participants might not accurately represent all e-commerce users. The participants who were asked to take the survey—mostly university students and people who use social media—may have had an effect on the results. It is possible that participants from a different demographic group, such as adult or older participants, or those less familiar with online shopping, may have particular characteristics or preferences that do not apply to participants in this survey.

Furthermore, external factors that could have affected that purchase intention were not adequately controlled in the experimental setup, and participant's reactions to social proof may have been influenced by a number of factors including their past experiences with the brand of smartphone, how satisfied they are with their personal devices right now, or even whether they urgently need a new smartphone (Matz et al., 2017). It is difficult to separate the impact of social proof from these potentially confusing factors without accounting for them.

Another limitation of the study, the restrictions on how the dependent variable — purchase intention — is measured. The decision-making process involved in real purchasing behavior may be too complex to be fully captured by a single item used to gauge purchase intention on a Likert scale. More items or behavioral intent measures that more closely mimic actual purchase decisions may be beneficial for future research.

Finally, the personality scale also could have been improved by using scales with more items and more proof of reliability, this would have enhanced the reliability of the results and might show the better the moderation of personality traits on social proof.

1.1 Conclusions

The current study looked at the relationship between personality traits and online social proof and consumers intentions to make purchases. The findings offer perspectives on the behavior of online shoppers and question certain traditional beliefs in marketing. First of all, the research indicates that purchase intentions are not significantly impacted by different types of social proof including positive neutral, and negative. As this study shows, the impact of social proof can be more complicated and have more than one level in online shopping. It doesn't seem to systematically influence consumers' purchase intentions as is usually thought, which makes a future re-evaluation of the role of social proof in e-commerce marketing strategies potentially worthwhile.

Also, the investigation on how personality traits moderate the influence of social proof revealed that traits such as conscientiousness, agreeableness, extraversion, neuroticism, and openness to new experiences do not significantly affect how social proof shapes purchase intentions, at least in the current experiment. The investigation emphasizes that as opposed to taking the general consumer's behavior for granted, marketing strategies ought to be customized for specific contexts and target audiences based for example on demographic variables, psychographics, or behavioral data. That is why it is necessary to examine the lack of significance of such traits and consider the role of certain contextual and situational factors that may play a considerable role in people's behavior on the Internet. The conclusion that this thesis makes is to point out that decision-making is tough in the context of e-commerce and marketers have to take into consideration several factors affecting consumer behavior. It's important to understand these nuances in a business market that changes quickly, such as e-commerce. This study shows that more research is needed to find out if social proof influences how people behave. Researchers should look into how personality characteristics and other aspects of people may affect how well social proof works in the future. For both academic research and real-world digital marketing plans, this would give us more knowledge that we could use.

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Appendices:

Appendix A – Thesis Survey

Start of Bloc 1: Introduction

Q0

Thank you for taking the time to participate in my research study. This survey aims to understand consumer decision-making in e-commerce. Your insights will help us better understand the factors that impact purchasing behavior.

In this survey, you will be asked to view images of smartphones listed on an e-commerce website and provide your opinions on these products. The survey includes a few questions about you and regarding your purchasing intentions.

Your participation is voluntary and you may quit the study now or at any stage after starting, this questionnaire will be recorded anonymously, so I ask you to answer as honestly as possible, your participation is greatly appreciated. If you do have any questions or doubts, please do not hesitate to reach out: Yassine Belhassen (s-ybelhassen@ucp.pt)

End of Bloc 1: Introduction

Star of Bloc 2: Demographic

Q1: What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

Q2: Please select your country

Q3: How old are you?

End of Bloc 2: Demographic

Next you will see a number of characteristics that may or may not apply to you. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each statement. You should rate the extent to which the pair of traits applies to you, even if one characteristic applies more strongly than the other.

Page Break

Q4: I see myself as extraverted, enthusiastic

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Page Break

Q5: I see myself as critical, quarrelsome

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Page Break

Q6: I see myself as dependable, self-disciplined

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Page Break

Q7: I see myself as anxious, easily upset

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Page Break

Q8: I see myself as open to new experiences, complex

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Page Break

Q9: I see myself as reserved, quiet

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Page Break

Q10: I see myself as sympathetic, warm

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Page Break

Q11: I see myself as disorganized, careless

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Page Break

Q12: I see myself as calm, emotionally stable

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Page Break

Q13: I see myself as conventional, uncreative

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Start of Bloc 4: Purchase Intention

You will see an image of an e-commerce shop. Please imagine you are considering buying a new smartphone.

Page Break

↳ Display this question if Condition is Equal to Positive

The screenshot shows a mobile phone product page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'About us', 'Shop', 'Categories', and 'Contact' buttons, along with a search icon and a shopping cart icon with a '1' notification. The product is 'SMARTPHONE 15 128GO BLACK' priced at '900 \$'. It features a 'Buy' button, an 'Add Card' button, and a 'Quantity' selector set to '1'. A 'Customer Rating' section shows five stars and '400 verified purchases'. A 'Complete Specs' button is located below the product image. A review box highlights a review by 'Celine' with five stars and the text: 'Amazing phone! Highly recommend!'. At the bottom right, a smiley face icon is next to the text 'Number of Reviews 758 reviews'.

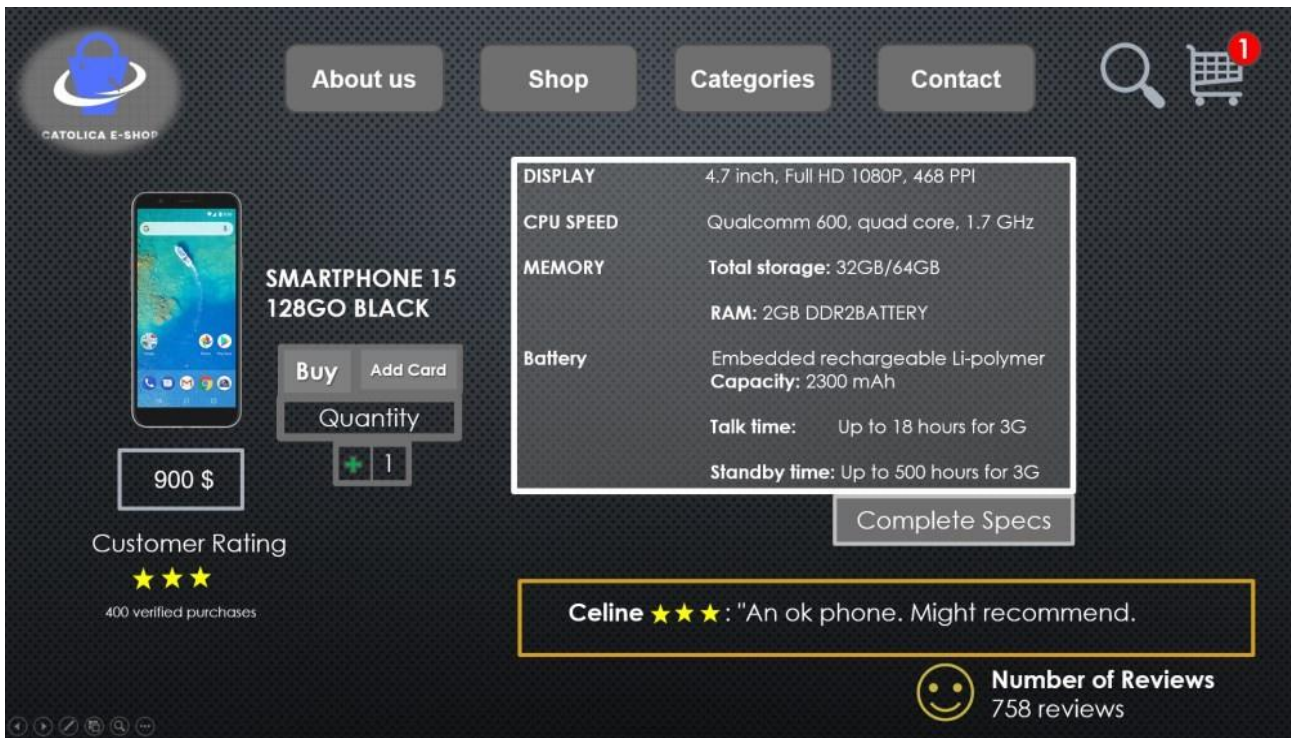
Category	Specification
DISPLAY	4.7 inch, Full HD 1080P, 468 PPI
CPU SPEED	Qualcomm 600, quad core, 1.7 GHz
MEMORY	Total storage: 32GB/64GB RAM: 2GB DDR2BATTERY
Battery	Embedded rechargeable Li-polymer Capacity: 2300 mAh Talk time: Up to 18 hours for 3G Standby time: Up to 500 hours for 3G

Q15: How likely are you to purchase this Smartphone 15 128Go Black?

- Very Unlikely
- Unlikely
- Neutral
- Likely
- Very Likely

Page Break

↳ Display this question if Condition is Equal to Neutral

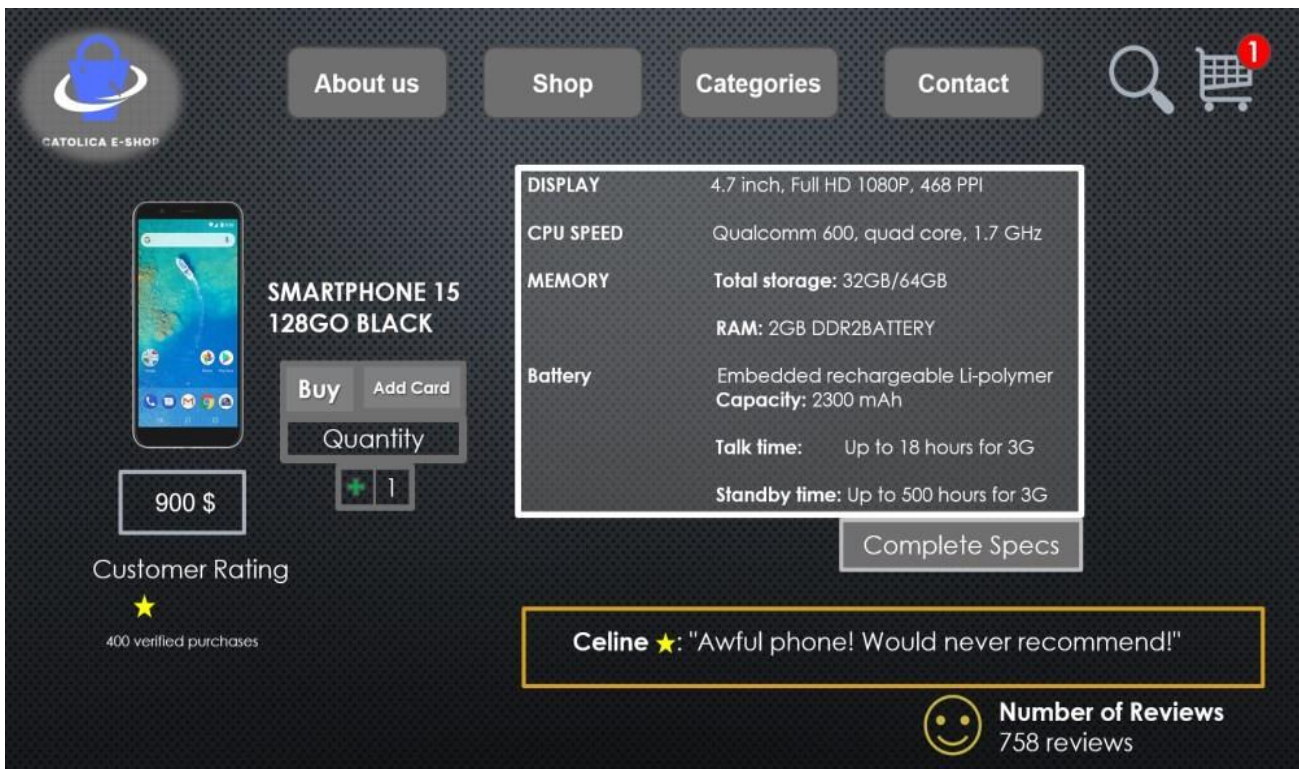


Q15: How likely are you to purchase this Smartphone 15 128Go Black?

- Very Unlikely
- Unlikely
- Neutral
- Likely
- Very Likely

Page Break

↳ Display this question if Condition is Equal to Negative



Q15: How likely are you to purchase this Smartphone 15 128Go Black?

- Very Unlikely
- Unlikely
- Neutral
- Likely
- Very Likely

End of Bloc 4: Purchase Intention

End of the survey

We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.

Your response has been recorded.

Appendix B – Frequency Tables for gender, country and social-proof scenarios

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	60	58,8	58,8	58,8
	Male	42	41,2	41,2	100,0
	Total	102	100,0	100,0	

Country

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Argentina	1	1,0	1,0	1,0
	Australia	1	1,0	1,0	2,0
	Belgium	1	1,0	1,0	2,9
	Canada	2	2,0	2,0	4,9
	China	1	1,0	1,0	5,9
	Côte d'Ivoire	1	1,0	1,0	6,9
	France	18	17,6	17,6	24,5
	Germany	4	3,9	3,9	28,4
	Lebanon	1	1,0	1,0	29,4
	Morocco	1	1,0	1,0	30,4
	Portugal	9	8,8	8,8	39,2
	Tunisia	54	52,9	52,9	92,2
	United Arab Emirates	2	2,0	2,0	94,1
	United States of America	5	4,9	4,9	100,0
	Total	102	100,0	100,0	

Condition

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Negative	33	32,4	32,4	32,4
	Neutral	38	37,3	37,3	69,6
	Positive	31	30,4	30,4	100,0
	Total	102	100,0	100,0	