

“It’s just an Opinion”

A Study of Objectivity and Perceived Helpfulness in Online Consumer Reviews of Theme Parks

Patricia Wagner, s2402033

Bachelor Thesis

Kars Otten

1 July 2022

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	3
Introduction.....	4
Theoretical Framework	5
Information Seeking Behaviour.....	5
Online Consumer Reviews	6
Experience Goods	7
Experience Goods and OCRs	7
Moderator Inclination to read OCRs	10
Methods and Analysis	11
Research Design.....	11
Stimuli.....	11
Main Study Procedure.....	14
Participants	14
Measures.....	16
Analysis.....	18
Results.....	20
Objectivity as a Function of Helpfulness.....	20
Inclination to Read OCRs as a Moderator.....	20
Qualitative Aspects of Objectivity and Helpfulness.....	21
Discussion	23
Discussion of the Results	23
Limitations and Future Research	26
Practical Implications	27
Conclusions	27
References	29
Appendixes	35

Abstract

Background: The consumer decision journey is always developing. This study takes a look at the process of information gathering. This process has evolved dramatically with the introduction of the internet which opened the way for online consumer reviews (OCRs). It is important for consumers and companies to know what constitutes a helpful review. Review helpfulness is made up of various antecedents, whose influence can differ among products. This study focuses on the aspect of objectivity, as there has previously been little research done on this antecedent and that which does exist presents dividing results. Specifically, the study chooses OCRs of theme parks as the product to focus on.

Purpose: The aim of this research is to determine whether there is an effect of the perceived objectivity level on the perceived helpfulness of online consumer reviews of theme parks and whether this effect is moderated by a person's inclination to read reviews. Furthermore, aspects of objectivity and helpfulness are to be established.

Methods: An online survey was conducted, in which participants ($N = 156$) each rated the objectivity and helpfulness of three out of six theme park reviews. A simple linear regression was used to analyse the relationship between these two variables. Next, the possible moderator of inclination to read OCRs was examined using multivariable linear regression. Finally, participants' comments on what constitutes objectivity and helpfulness of OCRs were analysed in an inductive manner.

Results: It could be determined that an increase in objectivity generally meant an increase in helpfulness, as a positive effect was found ($\beta = .84, p < .001$). However, it was also found that a person's inclination to read OCRs is not a moderator of this effect ($\beta = .05, p = .38$). Rather, it is an additional variable, also positively influencing perceived helpfulness the more inclined a person is to seek out OCRs ($\beta = .37, p < .001$). The qualitative part of the study shows that the aspects of generalisability, information type, experience type, opinion, argumentative reasoning, review sidedness, and language can be named as antecedents for both perceived objectivity and helpfulness.

Conclusions: Overall, this study shows that consumers evaluate reviews which are formulated objectively as more helpful in the case of theme park OCRs. As for the qualitative findings, the aspects of generalisability, information type, prior experience, argumentative reasoning, review sidedness, and language increase both perceived objectivity and helpfulness. The inclusion of personal opinions and experiences, while not objective, can increase helpfulness if they are presented in a way that supports the argumentative structure. Even though these aspects make a review more subjective, they can be presented in a way that makes it helpful. Still, the central conclusion is a positive effect of objectivity.

Introduction

The consumer decision journey is in a perpetual state of ongoing change. It is a topic that has been studied for a long time and over a variety of fields. One important step in this journey has always been that of information search (Schmidt & Spreng, 1996). Consumers aim to acquire as much information on the quality of the products they are interested in as possible. They might for example want to find out about technical details of the product (Ju et al., 2016), or consider advantages and disadvantages of different brands (Nelson, 1970). Even though information search has long been part of the consumer decision journey (Schmidt & Spreng, 1996), the opportunities of how consumers can attain the information they are looking for has changed over time; this is largely due to the impact of the internet (Bevan-Dye, 2020; Feldman et al., 2019). Nowadays, instead of having access only to the recommendations of family and friends, reviews of other consumers have gained great importance. The internet has brought about a much faster, more convenient way to find information through online consumer reviews (OCRs) (Feldman et al., 2019; Kim et al., 2017). As it seems, consumers happily take this opportunity. In 2021, bizrate insights reported that 91% of their survey participants “read at least one review before making a purchase decision on a product, business, or service” (Kavanagh, 2021). The big interest in online reviews has a multitude of implications for brands and sellers as well. For one, a high review rating has been shown to be the most important factor in making purchase decisions (Bevan-Dye, 2020; Kavanagh, 2021), moreover, studies have long shown positive connections to product sales (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006; Eliashberg & Shugan, 1997; Park & Lee, 2009).

There are many websites online which have the sole purpose of collecting and displaying these OCRs from and to consumers, think, for instance, of tripadvisor, trustpilot, or yelp. These review sites often display OCRs based on a helpfulness rating by other consumers. This is why, in the scientific study of OCRs, scholars pay close attention to and establish a model of what constitutes a helpful review.

Online consumers reviews have been found to be especially helpful for a category of products and services known as experience goods (Feldman et al., 2019; Ford et al., 1988; Nelson, 1970). This category includes a great range of goods, such as video games, hotels, and also theme parks (Hutter, 2011). The assessments of others is particularly helpful for this category of products, because experience goods are those, which primarily have attributes that cannot be evaluated before having purchased and/or sampled, therefore, experienced, them (Mudambi & Schuff, 2010). Research suggests, the online environment can increase a person’s perceived ability to evaluate such qualities, that are experienced rather subjectively (Huang et al., 2009; Ullah et al., 2016). So, for these products, having access to a number of prior customers’ experiences can aid a person’s own decision process immensely.

One variable found to clearly affect OCRs’ perceived helpfulness is that of the objectivity. Whether its effect is a positive or negative one, is what results are divided on. On

the one hand, it is difficult to objectively evaluate and compare experience goods (Ju, 2016; Mudambi & Schuff, 2010) and subjective, personal retellings of an experience can therefore be more helpful (Scholz & Dorner, 2013). On the other hand, the highly subjective nature of experience goods makes an objective assessment more credible and helpful (Heng et al., 2018). Consequently, study results differ on whether objectivity or subjectivity increases perceived helpfulness. Therefore, how this variable affects various experience goods is an important and current topic and testing more experience goods is necessary. This study will look at theme parks as an example of experience goods to close the research gap with the following main research question:

What effect does the perceived degree of objectivity of OCRs of theme parks have on their perceived helpfulness?

Furthermore, two qualitative sub-questions will be considered for practical results. Next to this, a new concept of a person's inclination to seek out OCRs at all is introduced as a possible moderator variable to the relation of perceived objectivity and helpfulness.

The paper is structured as follows. First, existing literature on the subjects of information search and online consumer reviews, objectivity, experience goods is presented, and findings are used to develop research questions, the possible moderator is also introduced. Next, a study design for these questions is presented and executed. Results are displayed and findings are used to draw conclusions. Lastly, theoretical, and practical implications are presented, and the study is evaluated.

Theoretical Framework

Information Seeking Behaviour

The concept of information search before purchase is widely accepted in literature. Overall, literature on marketing and consumer behaviour "depicts consumer purchase decision process as a series of steps progressing from problem recognition to information search, to evaluation of alternatives, to purchase decision, and finally to post purchase behaviour" (Schmidt & Spreng, 1996, p.246; Mudambi & Schuff, 2010). Mudambi and Schuff (2010) propose that the actual cost of a product as the sum of the product cost itself but with the added search cost. Generally, the consumers' goal is to keep search cost as low as possible (Huang et al., 2009), which has been established for a long time, as Nelson (1970) concludes, "the cost of experimenting sets an upper limit to the cost of search that a person is willing to undergo" (p.317). Therefore, consumers will have reason to carefully deliberate the information search processes they engage in for any given product/service. Schmidt & Spreng (1996) found two antecedents to determine a person's search behaviour, in addition to costs and benefits of the search, namely *ability to search* and *motivation to search*. One very prevalent aid in information search, that consumers have increasing access to nowadays, are the reviews of others who have already sampled the product or service in question.

Online Consumer Reviews

The impact of word-of-mouth (WOM) communication on product spread is well known and is made up of an exchange of information between past and potential users (Hutter, 2011). The reviews of prior consumers are one important form of WOM and has become more relevant. The impact of WOM in general has grown immensely, due to the affordances of the internet (Kim et al., 2017; Zhu & Zhang, 2010) and one of the most prevalent forms of eWOM are online consumer reviews (OCRs) (Kim et al., 2017). The internet lowers the costs of information gathering as well as information sharing (Huang et al., 2009; Klein, 1998). Consulting this fast, convenient way of finding information (Feldman et al., 2019; Kim et al., 2017) has become a part of the typical consumer decision journey (Mudambi & Schuff, 2010). This is because it noticeably increases someone's *ability to search*, as identified by Schmidt and Spreng (1996), as long as the person possesses the required digital skills. An often-investigated factor in the research on OCRs is that of perceived helpfulness, which this study will also elaborate on, more specifically on the influence of objectivity.

Perceived Helpfulness of OCRs. In the study of OCRs there is an overall focus on the concept of helpfulness. This development is not surprising, given that most websites displaying OCRs allow other users to rate the reviews they are reading based on how helpful they are (Kim et al., 2017). Consequently, scholars are interested in establishing what exactly causes a review to be perceived as helpful. There are many varying conceptualisations of perceived helpfulness, overlapping in some points and differing in others. Otterbacher (2009), for example, worked out five dimensions of helpfulness. These dimensions are (1) *the reviewers reputation in the community*, (2) *the topical relevance of the review*, (3) *ease of understanding*, (4) *believability*, and (5) *objectivity* (Otterbacher, 2009). Kim et al.'s (2017) framework similarly distinguish between the four factors of (1) *source credibility*, (2) *message objectivity*, (3) *media credibility*, and (4) *receiver-source familiarity*. Others focus on the content or linguistic structures of OCRs (Liang et al., 2014; Riasanow et al., 2015; Willemsen et al., 2011). Scholz and Dorner (2013) created an extensive review of the literature available on the topic until that time and identified three dimensions of perceived helpfulness in OCRs. These are (1) *intrinsic*, (2) *contextual*, and (3) *representational* and each contain a number of characteristics (Scholz & Dorner, 2013).

Objectivity of OCRs. All of the conceptualisations mentioned here share the notion that the degree of *objectivity* appears to have an impact on the perceived helpfulness of OCRs. Again, differing definitions of objectivity in this context exist. See Otterbacher (2009) and Mudambi and Schuff (2010) for example. Overall, Scholz and Dorner (2013) see the impact of objectivity in the fact that consumers try to infer whether their own preferences overlap with that of the reviewer. At the same time, study results are mixed on the direction in which objectivity influences perceived helpfulness. Some find that OCRs which are written more objectively display a higher level of helpfulness (Heng et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2017; Liang et al., 2014; Mudambi & Schuff, 2010). One reasoning behind this find is that objective

messages require less cognitive effort (Darley & Smith, 1993; Kim et al., 2017). On the other hand, scholars also come to results which show the opposite effect that a high degree of subjectivity is more helpful to consumers (Forman et al., 2008; Scholz & Dorner, 2013), because readers decide whether they can identify themselves with the reviewer and if the reviewer's point of view and ideals correspond with their own (Scholz & Dorner, 2013). The differing results on this matter raise the question of where these inconsistencies originate. Some scholars have raised this question and found one possible explanation, which is the differentiation of products and services into distinctive categories.

Experience Goods

Within the field of consumer research, a commonly made distinction is the classification of products and services into search, experience, and credence goods. This classification originates from the studies of Nelson (1970, 1974), who proposes a distinction into *search* and *experience goods* based on the point of the purchasing process in which a consumer can evaluate the good's quality. Darby and Karni (1973) add the concept of *credence goods* to these classifications, which cannot be evaluated by the average consumer even after purchase/use, as evaluation requires professional expertise.

Research has overall adopted these three classifications. However, the categories are viewed as extremes, and products/services can be placed along a continuous scale (Ford et al., 1988; Hsieh et al., 2005; Laband, 1991; Mudambi & Schuff, 2010). Scholars define the qualities of experience goods as difficult to evaluate before purchase and agree that they need to be sampled, experienced or used for a while to be evaluated at all (Bhatnagar & Ghose, 2004; Ford et al., 1988; Laband, 1991; Ullah et al., 2016). Furthermore, these goods are typically very subjective and hard to objectively evaluate and compare (Mudambi & Schuff, 2010; Ju et al., 1988), as well as often intangible (Hsieh et al., 2005). A second strand of literature, identified by Hutter (2011), includes goods of the "creative sector" (Hutter, 2011, p.211), which contains products and services of the branches of *creative experience areas* (e.g. literature), *experience areas* (e.g. touristic experiences) and *creative areas* (e.g. advertising) (Billie & Lorenzen, 2008 via Hutter, 2011).

This study will work with a definition of experience goods as those which possess a large number of experience attributes, which are those whose qualities are difficult or even impossible to evaluate before purchase or use and whose evaluation is often based on subjective personal taste. Furthermore, this study includes goods which have creativity of the producer and experience of the consumer at the core motive of their creation.

Experience Goods and OCRs

As mentioned above, the inconsistencies found in the effectiveness of OCRs has previously been attributed to these differing categories of goods. This assumption is prevalent because the information search behaviours for these categories greatly differ. As qualities of experience goods require sampling of the product which is often destructive and therefore requires purchase, consumers more heavily rely on the opinions of other, past

consumers to aid in their decision making. Already before the internet had reached the status and importance it has today, research had suggested that consumer reviews could blur the lines between experience and search goods (Ford et al., 1988; Klein, 1998). Nelson (1970) themselves already noted the effect of third-party reviews on information search behaviour and predicted that “the recommendations of others will be used more for purchases of experience goods than search goods” (Nelson, 1970, p.327). Nowadays, the wide availability of OCRs on the internet, significantly increases the number of customer recommendations a person has at their disposal to use for their decision making (Huang et al., 2009). This impacts the information search process for experience goods, which previously relied so highly on experience of a product, so significantly that Ullah et al. (2016) and Feldman et al. (2019) have noted that some literature has started treating all products as search goods, completely foregoing the distinction. However, scholars stress the importance of these distinctions, because while some qualities can be assessed through OCRs, others, among them theme parks, remain reliant on experience (Bhatnagar & Ghose, 2004; Ju et al., 2016; Mudambi & Schuff, 2010).

Experience Goods and Objectivity. The contradictions in the study outcomes, lead to the assumption that helpfulness of either objectivity or subjectivity varies not only between product categories but also within them. On the one hand, it has been established that the nature of evaluating the quality of an experience good is most often based on subjective taste, which is one of the reasons why they are comparatively difficult to evaluate in the first place (Bhatnagar & Ghose, 2004; Ju et al., 2016; Mudambi & Schuff, 2010; Scholz & Dorner, 2013). As illustrated above, this can lead to the assumption that a subjective stating of an opinion, is more impactful for such goods (Chen, 2016; Scholz & Dorner, 2013). On the other hand, and, as has also been found in prior studies, there are products for which a more objectively formulated message has a more significant impact on the perceived review helpfulness (Heng et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2017; Liang et al., 2014). As OCRs are one of the primary routes of easing the consumers’ information search for experience goods (Feldman et al., 2019; Ju et al., 2016; Kim et al., 2017), it is sensible to expect an objective stating of information to be perceived as more helpful. Based on research on message sidedness of OCRs, it also stands to reason that a balance of both subjective and objective statements are most helpful to consumers as they present a mixture of the positive aspects of both subjectivity and objectivity (Li et al., 2020).

Either way, the perceived degree of objectivity/subjectivity seems to have an influence on the perceived helpfulness of consumer reviews. But it seems that even within the category of experience goods there are differences among products and services regarding the way in which objectivity affects perceived helpfulness, “a one-size-fits all approach [might be] problematic” (Pelletier & Collier, 2018, p. 456). So, for a better understanding of this gap in research, more experience goods should be evaluated. Therefore, choosing theme parks as an experience good to focus on, this study will investigate the main research question of:

Q1: What effect does the perceived degree of objectivity of OCRs of theme parks have on their perceived helpfulness?

Furthermore, for more practical implications, the OCRs can be studied with the aim of establishing which components make it, so they are perceived as more or less objective or helpful. This leads to the following sub-questions to be studied:

SubQ1: What aspects of the content or form of a theme park OCR influence the perceived degree of its objectivity?

SubQ2: What aspects of the content or form of a theme park OCR influence the perceived degree of its helpfulness?

Theme Parks as an Example of Experience Goods. Within the rather broad category of experience goods, one segment is theme parks. As with all experience products, theme parks primarily sell their customers' *experience* and possess many attributes which can only be evaluated after having been to the park. Moreover, considering the second strand identified by Hutter (2011), theme parks are classified as experience goods under the branch of touristic experiences.

Online consumer reviews are important for the theme park industry. For a large part theme parks rely on word-of-mouth (WOM) diffusion of recommendations (Pelletier & Collier, 2018). The experienced emotions of visitors stimulate WOM and electronic WOM (Bigne et al., 2020; Sivakumar & Rajadurai, 2019), such as OCRs, which is not only important to attract new visitors through spread of information, but also a factor in brand loyalty (Milman et al., 2020). Therefore, it is important for theme park managements to know, what OCRs are most helpful to potential future customers, so they can, for instance, select OCRs to display on their websites or encourage visitors to formulate their reviews in a specific manner. There are a number of studies showing the relevance of OCRs for travel planning overall (Pan et al., 2018). However, what scholars have focused on mostly, so far, is what visitors have to share about their experiences. Some analyse review contents to draw conclusions on what influences consumers to choose a specific park for their visit (Pan et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2021). Others pay attention to different subgroups of theme park visitors and in which ways the experiences of these subgroups differ (Ren et al., 2019) or what makes a visit satisfactory and how visitors express their satisfaction (Haahti & Yavas, 2004; Niu et al., 2019).

Strikingly, all of this research addresses previous visitors and utilize the content of OCRs as an available source to infer about their experiences; they focus on the content from the point of view of the review writer, not how the reader responds to it. Hence, a research gap can be identified in the study of what constitutes helpful theme park OCRs and what role objectivity plays in this. Which is why theme parks have been chosen as the experience good examined in this study.

Moderator Inclination to read OCRs

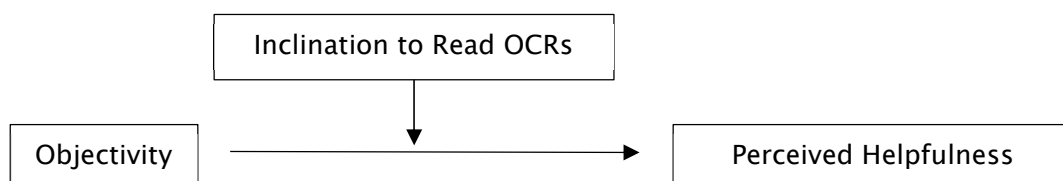
Of course, there are differences in peoples' information search behaviour based on other factors than the type of good they are searching about. While OCRs have gained substantial influence in the decision journey overall, some, for instance demographic, differences have been found already. Bevan-Dye (2020), for example, finds that a high usage of OCRs can be seen especially in Generation Y. They propose that this is because of this generation being the first to grow up with the internet, so it can be inferred that younger people, who are more attuned to internet use, are those who utilize OCRs more regularly (Bevan-Dye, 2020). Similarly, it has been found that differences in national culture have a role in moderating a person's attitude towards and usage of OCRs (Park & Lee, 2009) and that males tend to be more reliant on them than females (Mumuni et al., 2019). It is therefore reasonable to expect that differences in the frequency or habits with which a consumer seeks out OCRs may have an impact on the effect of objectivity. Therefore, for explorative purposes, the effect of someone's overall tendency to read OCRs can be examined in this third sub-question:

SubQ3: Is there an effect of a person's inclination to read OCRs on relationship between the perceived objectivity and helpfulness of the OCRs?

A model of all the tested effects is depicted in Figure 1. Concrete scale measures to determine this inclination have not been established, however, existing literature has found a number of antecedents and motivations for seeking out and using OCRs. Srivastava and Kalro (2018), for example, find that the motivations to read OCRs are primarily outcome-focused, in contrast to the goals of writing OCRs, which they summarise as largely psychological and social. Some concrete antecedents of a person's reliance on OCRs have been established as well. Some such antecedents are for example attitude formation, risk reduction, time saving, or price perception (Hussain et al., 2018; Khammash, 2008; Khammash & Griffiths, 2011; Srivastava & Kalro, 2018). Khammash and Griffiths (2011) summarize a number of antecedents in four categories of motives, namely, *decision-involvement motives*, *product-involvement motives*, *social-involvement motives*, and *economic-involvement motives*. By keeping these motivations in mind, it is possible to develop a scale to measure a consumer's inclination to seek out OCRs for this study and to exploratively test whether this has an effect on the relation between objectivity and helpfulness.

Figure 1

Proposed Model Visualisation



Methods and Analysis

Research Design

The research design of this study was set up as follows. First, a pre-test was performed to select suitable stimuli to use in the main study. Then an online questionnaire was created, using a mixture of pre-existing and specially constructed scales and measures. In this questionnaire the stimuli were evaluated by the main study participants. Finally, the collected quantitative and qualitative data was analysed with linear regression analyses and an inductive coding approach.

Stimuli

The selected OCRs were taken from the online platform Tripadvisor.com, which describes itself as “the world's largest travel guidance platform” (Tripadvisor, n.d.), uses a five-point system to rank various services within the touristic sector, and displays large numbers (Tripadvisor, n.d.) of OCRs. Six reviews were chosen from three different theme parks found in their listing of “Amusement & Theme Parks” with the location filter set to “Worldwide”. The only pre-set conditions during the review selection were that they are in English. To ensure anonymity of the review posters, all identifiable information, that is their usernames, locations, and profile pictures were blurred out. As the survey was additionally available in German, the reviews were translated as well. The final translations had before been assessed by an independent second opinion and can be found in Appendix A.

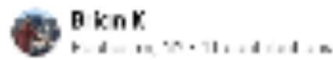
Pre-Test. To determine a prior classification of the chosen OCRs and their general degree of objectivity, a pre-test was conducted (see Appendix B). Six independent people between the ages of 18 and 50 (4 female and 2 male) were shown eight randomly chosen OCRs and asked to rank each of them on a five-point scale of objectivity (1 = *formulated entirely subjectively*, 5 = *formulated entirely objectively*). Evaluations were compared and mean scores calculated. For the main study, two OCRs were chosen for three, which were judged by the pre-test participants as either particularly objective, particularly subjective, or neither of the two (Table 1). This pre-test was conducted to ensure OCRs representing a range of objectivity are shown to the main study participants. Only if this is ensured, a possible relation between different levels of objectivity and helpfulness can be measured. The chosen OCRs are depicted in Figure 2.

Table 1

Mean Pre-Test Objectivity Scores of Chosen OCRs

Review	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1	3.9	.84
2	3.1	1.17
3	3.0	1.1
4	4.8	.41
5	1.3	.52
6	1.3	.52

Figure 2

Selection of OCRs Used in the Survey

1

**A Park With Some Good Rides But A Lot Of Con's**

Aug 2021

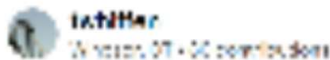
Great rides. But the park is a bit lacking. It's understaffed so all the rides aren't open. This year there was several that were closed that we didn't get to go on. The iconic ferris wheel is also being taken down. And they no longer are offering theater shows. They probably can't find enough youngsters who will accept minimum wage pay to keep everything up and running.

The park also requires a lot of walking and this year they are making you walk even further than usual because they are closing off a back portion where you could short cut to get across the park, so that was a drag and caused us to have to do a lot more walking and be able to ride less rides. Eventually my feet started to hurt.

Back in the day the roller coasters would even have 2 trains going at once, which they do not do anymore. The time spent standing in line for rides almost makes it not worth it. You stand in line for 20-30 minutes for a ride that lasts 1 minute or less. All that standing causes my feet to hurt. And I guess I should consider myself lucky I got to ride every roller coaster once this year. But for the cost of entry it is nothing compared to what it used to be, when entry costs were lower and the lines went quicker because they were running 2 trains at once, and they had more staff.

Another thing is that the food here is absolute garbage. It's all fast food joints serving the worst most unhealthy crap food. There's absolutely no options for anyone on any kind of healthy diet, or who has any kind of standards what so ever when it comes to eating. If you do you will have to bring your own food in a cooler and take a break mid-day to eat it in the car, which is a real hassle.

The park also gets really polluted with garbage, and the bathroom facilities get trashed, and they do nothing to keep it clean throughout the day. The whole park is just really trashy.

[Read less](#) ^

1

**Holiday World is like opening presents on Christmas morning!**

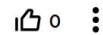
Sep 2021 • Friends

This was my third visit to Holiday World and I have never been disappointed! From the free parking to the amazing rollercoasters, delicious food and great family atmosphere it is one of my favorite small parks (and I've been to over 170 parks!)

The theming of each park area is top notch! The rollercoasters (which is the main reason we were there) are just incredible! 3 of the best wooden coasters in the same park! Thunderbird is also one of the coolest wing coasters you'll find anywhere! The night rides are amazing and a ride on The Voyage at night is absolutely epic! We ate at the Plymouth Rock Cafe and loved the Thanksgiving choices! There's also free soft drinks offered all day! The park does have some topographical challenges for anyone who has difficulty walking up and down hills. I've heard the Waterpark is awesome, but I haven't experienced it yet!

I totally recommend this park to anyone as it is First Class in everything they do!

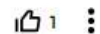
[Read less](#) ^



Express is worth it 🎢

We went here for the Halloween experience and definitely would recommend this time of the year! It was amazing! It had such detail and really good additional things. The best two days out spent here

We didn't buy the express pass additional before our day but after waiting 2+ hours for the first ride we devised to then buy them and honestly they are 100% worth the money! Made such a huge difference on the length of waiting because otherwise your day will be wasted on the ques.



Entertaining, lovely, family friendly

Jun 2019

Tivoli is an historical amusement park in the middle of Copenhagen. I boasts old style rollercoasters, modern rides, a variety of restaurants but most importantly it is entertaining for especially families with small to mid-teen kids, who do not expect the wildest, fastest and biggest rides.

It can seem expensive as Danish prices are generally higher than average but admission and Unlimited Rides Ticket is worth the money as a whole day is easily spent there.

Want to save a bit of money? - bring your own sandwiches and drinks, as this is where the majority of spend money goes, plus there are plenty of areas to enjoy your home made meals.

Take a break from the "big city" and enjoy a "hyggelig" Danish amusement park.

[Read less](#) ^

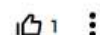


Good park really unfriendly employees

Sep 2020

It's a good theme park but the employees are really really unfriendly. Especially with the whole corona rules they tend to be so stingy... One eventually even accused my girlfriend for not wearing a mask, and had to leave the roller-coaster after waiting 50 min. Couldn't even talk with her she immediately pointed finger, when asking for her name she didn't reply and 4 security dudes where surrounding me ..I wasn't even aggressive.. when talking to one of the security that could speak English.. she mentioned we could look at the security camera it will take 1 hour time and when they where right my gf would get kicked out of the park but if not they just apologize without even giving a free new ticket... Of course nobody would choose that option, even if your right they apologize and we would lose a lot of time.. the employee is really unfriendly

[Read less](#) ^



i love it.

Nov 2021

genuinely, one of the best theme parks ive been too in a LONG time! dr dooms fearfall is one of the best tower rides ive been on. dr seuss worlds was great except from the adults who were clearly pissed singing songs infront of me like pua annoying. apart from that good.

Main Study Procedure

To collect data, a survey was created using the online tool Qualtrics. After receiving a link to the survey, participants were presented with a description of the contents and aims of the study (see Appendix C) to ensure informed consent. First, some general demographic information was collected, followed by the measures for the possible moderator of *inclination to read OCRs*. Next was the evaluation of the OCRs. Each participant was shown three of the six reviews. The choice of reviews each participant was presented with was randomized but equally distributed (see Appendix D). Participants were shown a picture of the first of the selected OCRs and asked to evaluate its *objectivity* and *perceived helpfulness*. The review remained visible to the participants while giving their answers. This was repeated for the remaining reviews. Furthermore, participants were asked to motivate their evaluations on both variables with an open-ended question. Finally, participants were also asked to further distribute the survey themselves and presented with the chance to receive the study results if they wanted them. The full survey can be found in Appendix E.

Participants

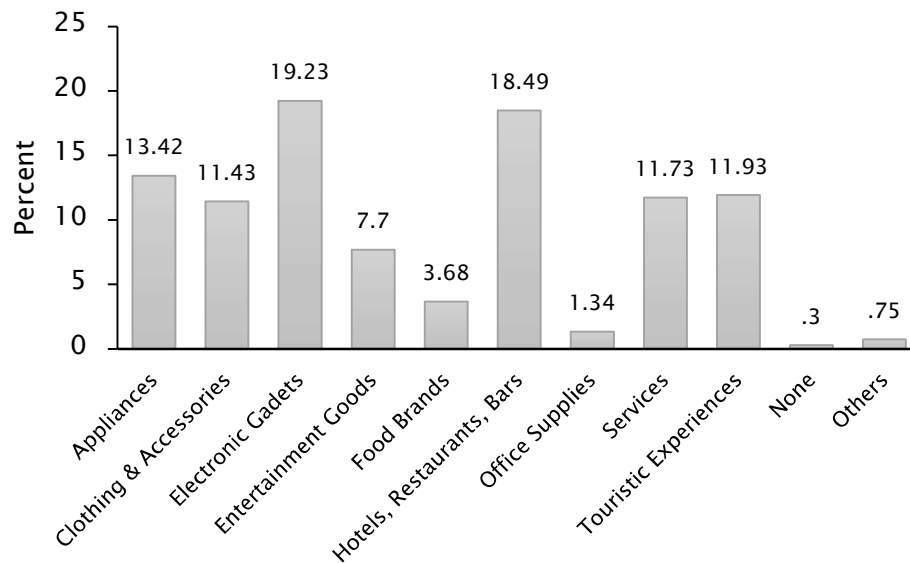
Participants for this survey were found via convenience as well as snowball sampling. The survey was distributed to the study participants via various social media platforms, such as Instagram, and Reddit, as well as the university's test subject pool via sona systems, to reach as many people as possible. To achieve a larger sample, the survey was also distributed through snowball sampling by the participants themselves. There were no restrictions or preconditions to participate, other than being at least 18 years of age. Initially 205 people responded to the invitation to participate, 49 responses were deleted from the sample as they were indexed as unfinished. So, in total 156 participants were included in the analysis. They were aged between 18 and 71 ($M = 29.05$; $SD = 12.2$) and the majority of participants were female ($n = 102$). Participants came from a variety of national backgrounds, the majority living in Germany ($n = 66$) and the Netherlands ($n = 37$). Furthermore, about half of the participants have completed at least some amount of higher education. On average, most participants self-described a tendency to consult up to ten OCRs before making purchase decisions (see Table 3) and do this for a variety of items (see Fig. 3). A depiction of the summary of demographics can be found in Table 3.

Table 3*Demographic Design of the Participant Sample*

Baseline Characteristics	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Age			29.05	12.20
Gender				
Female	102	65.4		
Male	48	30.8		
Other	5	3.2		
Prefer not to say	1	.6		
Nationality				
European	138	88.3		
North American	11	7.0		
Asian	3	1.9		
African	1	.6		
South American	1	.6		
Missing	2	1.4		
Education				
Secondary or less	25	15.9		
Vocational or some university	41	26.3		
Bachelor's degree	55	35.3		
Graduate or professional degree	31	19.9		
Prefer not to say	4	2.6		
Average Number of OCRs Participants Read				
0–3	24	15.4		
3–5	51	32.7		
5–10	54	34.6		
10–20	24	15.4		
20–25	1	.6		
more than 25	2	1.3		

Figure 3

Types of Products for which Participants Read OCRs



Measures

Demographics. Participants were asked to give information on their age, gender identity, educational level, and nationality. Furthermore, later on, participants were asked to assess how many OCRs they averagely seek out before making a purchase decision and to choose from a list of products, what items they tend to read OCRs for.

Inclination to Read OCRs. For explorative purposes, the possible moderator of participants' *inclination to read OCRs* (SubQ3) was measured. First, using a five-point scale (1 = *does not describe me*; 5 = *describes me extremely well*), they were presented with four items (one of which was reverse-coded), based on the antecedents of online review seeking (Hussain et al., 2018; Khammash, 2008; Khammash & Griffiths, 2011; Srivastava & Kalro, 2018). Items used for this were for example "I read online reviews before making purchase decisions" or "I use online reviews to compare products with each other". For the items used in this study, a factor analysis extracted one factor explaining 62.69% of variance (KMO = .76) and confirmed the use of all four items. The scale was furthermore shown to be reliable with a Cronbach's α of .79.

Objectivity. For the variable of *objectivity*, the scales of Kim et al. (2017), Hair and Ozcan (2018), and Lee (2020) were combined and adapted to fit this study, as they had previously been proven to be valid and reliable in a similar study context. *Objectivity* was measured using a seven-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*; 7 = *strongly agree*) and five items, such as: "the reviewer clearly separates facts and opinions", or "the information I read from the product review was subjectively written", two of the items were reverse coded. Again, a factor analysis proved this scale proficient, the five items used are explaining 57.81% of variance (KMO = .78) but with high significance ($p < .001$) and reliability ($\alpha = .81$).

Perceived Helpfulness. The scale to capture *perceived helpfulness*, was also adopted from the study of Kim et al. (2017). For this, a seven-point semantic scale was used (*extremely irrelevant – extremely relevant; not at all useful – of great usefulness; not helpful at all – extremely helpful*). This scale was shown to be highly significant as well ($p < .001$), factor analysis including all three items explained 92.02% of variance ($KMO = .77$) with an α of .96. Table 2 shows a summary of all items.

Table 2

Depiction of Survey Items and Results of Factor Analyses

Variable	Items	Factor loading	Cronbach's α
Inclination to Read OCRs			.79
	I read online reviews before making purchase decisions	.89	
	I use the recommendations of others to find out information on a product	.87	
	I never seek out any online reviews of a product before buying it (R)	.50	
	I use online reviews to compare products with each other	.84	
Objectivity*			.81
	The information I read from the product review was very opinion-based (R)	.69	
	The information I read from the product review was very objective	.84	
	The reviewer clearly separates facts and opinions	.84	
	The reviewer is rational	.80	
	The information I read from the product review was subjectively written (R)	.60	
Perceived Helpfulness*			.96
	extremely irrelevant – extremely relevant	.95	
	not at all useful – of great usefulness	.96	
	not helpful at all – extremely helpful	.97	

Note. Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis. Reverse coded items are denoted with an (R). *Items adapted (Hair & Ozcan, 2018; Kim et al., 2017; Lee, 2020)

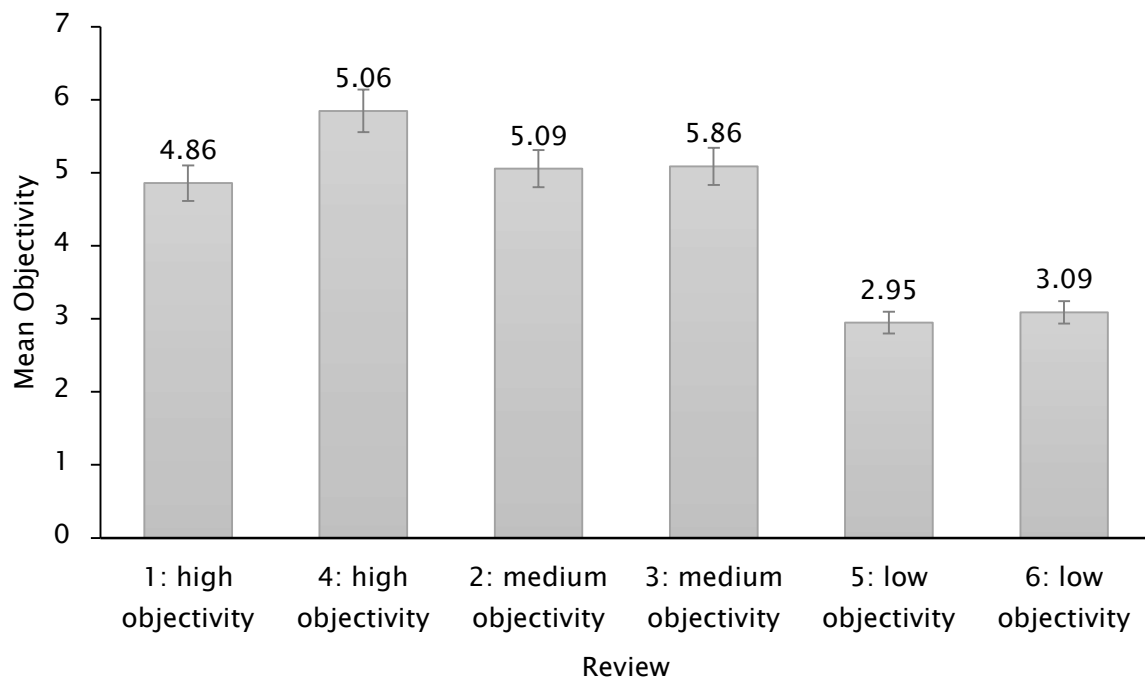
Qualitative Measures and Codes. Within the questionnaire, the items measuring each OCR's objectivity and helpfulness were followed by an open-ended question. The question asked participants to justify their evaluations and name aspects on which they judge a review's objectivity and helpfulness to answer the sub-questions **SubQ1** and **SubQ2**. These

text-based answers were analysed using an inductive qualitative analysis approach, in which categories and codes were developed as they emerged during an initial read-through of the material. With this an initial codebook was developed. Next, a second, independent researcher coded 10% of the comments using this codebook. The reliability of the codes was tested using Krippendorff's α and codes were adjusted accordingly. The final codebook is displayed in Appendix F. Not all participants made use of the text boxes, so in total there were 194 comments on objectivity and 198 comments on helpfulness. Because there was only one textbox for the objectivity measure, instead of one specifically asking for objective aspects and another for subjective aspects, many participants specified their comments. The same is the case with the textbox on helpfulness. If the comment did not specify and the participant's evaluation did not place the review firmly in the categories, the comment was not analysed to prevent researcher bias (comments used in the analysis: $n = 382$).

Analysis

Data Preparation. The statistics program SPSS (IBM SPSS Statistics 25) was used for data exploration and analysis. Due to the design of the questionnaire which had shown three of the six reviews to each participant, the cases had to first be split up to make the data workable. Therefore, each participant's response was split into three separate case-rows, each only holding data for one review. This separation process brought the data set to a number of 467 individual data points. To not skew the data, all analyses regarding the demographics of the sample were carried out before splitting the cases. Next missing values were defined, and some variables were renamed and relabelled for easier evaluation of the analyses. With this cleaned data set factor analyses for the scales could be conducted.

Checking Tested Range of Objectivity. After establishing the measures, it was tested that the chosen stimuli were indeed differing in objectivity as had been concluded from the pre-test. For this, the mean score of objectivity for each review were calculated and compared (Fig. 4). As can be seen in Figure 4, the group of reviews with low objectivity, namely R5 and R6, are starkly different. R2 and R3, which formed the group that was neither specifically high nor low in objectivity, are also still within the same range of overall objectivity and of each other. The one rather prominent deviation from the pre-test results is R1, which was included to form the group of highly objective OCRs with R4 but is judged more similarly to R2 and R3 by this larger sample. Still, this does not necessitate a change in the planned analyses. There is a significant range of perceived objectivity between the groups of stimuli and all scales are significant.

Figure 4*Mean Objectivity per Review in Experimental Study**Note.* Error bars: 95% CI

Tests of Correlation. Before starting the main regression analyses, it was checked whether there was correlation between the variables (Table 4). Table 4 shows that there is a positive correlation between the objectivity of the OCRs and their perceived helpfulness ($r = .62$, $p < .01$). Furthermore, there seems to be a positive relation between a person's inclination to read OCRs and the perceived helpfulness of the OCRs ($r = .16$, $p < .01$), which was not included in this study's hypotheses. However, there is no significant correlation found between the independent variable objectivity and the proposed moderator of inclination to read OCRs ($r = -.03$, $p = .54$).

Table 4*Pearson Correlations of the Variables*

Variables	Objectivity	Perceived Helpfulness	Inclination to Read OCRs
Objectivity	–		
Perceived Helpfulness	.62*	–	
Inclination to Read OCRs	-.03	.16*	–

Note. * Correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

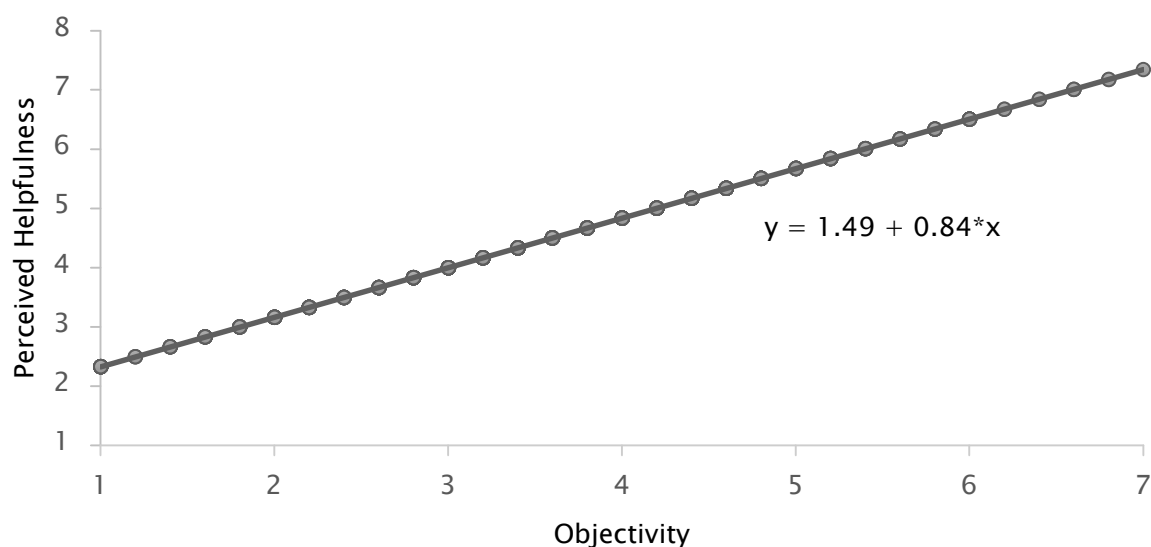
Results

Objectivity as a Function of Helpfulness

A linear regression was performed to test the main research question, with the perceived objectivity of a review as the independent variable predicting the dependent variable perceived helpfulness. The results of this regression show that the model is significant and explains 38.1% of the variance ($R^2 = .38$, $F(1, 465) = 286.09$, $p < .001$). It can be seen that *objectivity* has a significant, positive effect on *perceived helpfulness* ($\beta = .84$, $p < .001$), this effect is visualized in Figure 5.

Figure 5

Visualisation of the Effect of Objectivity on Perceived Helpfulness



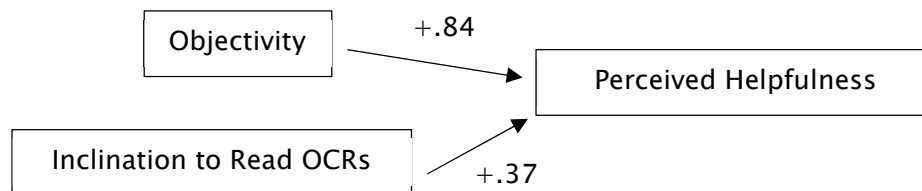
Inclination to Read OCRs as a Moderator

To test for a possible moderating effect of a person's *inclination to read OCRs* a multivariable linear regression was performed. For this the variables of objectivity and inclination were first centred and an interaction term build from those centred variables. Then the regression was run with both of the centred variables and the interaction variable. Table 5 displays the results of this regression.

The overall model for this regression is significant ($R^2 = .41$, $F(3,463) = 108.31$, $p < .001$). As seen in Table 5 the main effect of objectivity remains significant ($\beta = .84$, $p < .001$) as is the main effect of inclination to read OCRs on perceived helpfulness ($\beta = .37$, $p < .001$). However, these two significant main effects do not seem to build an interaction with each other, as the interaction effect is not significant ($\beta = .05$, $p = .38$). These results indicate that inclination to read OCRs should not be considered a moderator to the relation between objectivity and perceived helpfulness, but rather as an additional predictor variable of perceived helpfulness, increasing the explained variance of the model. Therefore, the originally constructed model needs to be adjusted (see Fig. 6).

Table 5*Moderator Analysis: Inclination to Read OCRs*

Effect	Estimate	SE	95% CI		p
			LL	UL	
Intercept	4.48	.06	4.36	4.6	<.001
Objectivity	.84	.05	.75	.94	<.001
Inclination to Read OCRs	.37	.08	.22	.51	<.001
Interaction (Objectivity*Inclination)	.05	.06	-.07	.18	.38

Figure 6*Adjusted Visualisation of the Overall Model****Qualitative Aspects of Objectivity and Helpfulness***

Though originally separated into two distinct sub-questions (**SubQ1 /SubQ2**), during analysis, it became apparent that many of the determined codes could be applied to identify aspects of both objectivity and helpfulness. This makes sense when keeping in mind the results of the previous regression analysis. The results indicate that higher levels of objectivity predict a higher level of helpfulness, so it follows that the same codes that influence objectivity, will also influence helpfulness. Therefore, the results of the qualitative analyses will be presented combined for the sub-questions. Participants commented on both the content and structure of the OCRs when justifying which aspects had them rated as objective or subjective, or more or less helpful respectively.

Generalisability. Regarding content, the types of information given in the review is most indicative of its level of objectivity. The content of objective OCRs is repeatedly described as generalizable, while subjective OCRs are said to focus on individual experiences, not applicable to every theme park visitor. One comment on the level of objectivity of R6, for example, rates the review as highly subjective because it describes a “personal experience [...] that cannot be generalized.” (P35). Even more strongly than in assessing objectivity, participants mention that if they “feel like [they can] identify” (P110, R3) with the review author, the review appears more helpful. Furthermore, generalisability of the content is important to participants as it lets them “form [their] own opinion” (P17, R4).

Facts, Details, and Tips. Next to being applicable to multiple visitors, many participants mention facts about the park in their comments. If a reviewer focuses on reporting measurable facts, it is regarded more objective in nature (“it was stating facts”, P80, R1; “[...] and there were no measurable facts”, P33, R2). Similarly, the inclusion of advice and tips for future visitors are an indicator of objectivity (“[they] give some tips” P135, R3). This is also the case for review helpfulness. If the content of the OCRs included mostly information which can be applied to and assessed by people other than the reviewer themselves, they are judged as more helpful (“certain facts invite an assessment of the park's condition” P35, R1), as they let reader know an “overview” (P135, R1) of “what to expect” (P69, R4; P25, R1; P60, R1). In connection to this, most participants appreciate a lot of detail in the information given (“it is helpful because it goes into detail” P1, R2; “The review explains everything in great details” P86, R4). Another additional point often brought up in regard to helpfulness is the inclusion of advice for future visitors, which participants appreciated (“they give good tips” P135, R3; “tips on specific activities” P101, R3).

Type of Experience. Also regarding the review content, many participants mention the reviewers' experiences, however with two differing meanings and contexts of the word. Experience is considered an aspect of objectivity if the reviewer draws “compar[isons] to prior experiences” (P25, R1). A reviewer being either overall experienced with theme parks (R2) or having prior experience with the one park in question (R1), both increase the objectivity and helpfulness of a review. On the other hand, experience was also often mentioned in comments on the subjectivity of an OCR. When this was the case, it was once again a concern of generalizability. If an “evaluation is based on a single experience” (P26, R5) especially, if it is one that is perceived as a very individual and “personal” (P101/133, R5), the review is considered highly subjective.

Personal Opinion and Reasoning. In a similar manner to the subject of experiences, the inclusion of personal opinions is mentioned in comments on both subjectivity and objectivity. Generally, personal opinions seem to indicate subjectivity (“very opinionated – subjective” P81, R2; “it's almost all [...] opinion. That makes it subjective” P67, R3). However, participants do appreciate a reviewer giving their honest opinions, as long as they are combined with reasoning, for example: “every time an opinion is given [...] the reviewer explains why [...]. You may not agree with the opinion, but you know the reasoning and what it is based on” (P117, R4) and “the reviewer does give his own opinions, but they are not unfounded” (P67, R1). Therefore, though overall more objective OCRs are seen as more helpful, many participants point to a personal opinion as signalling helpfulness (“good to hear someone's experienced opinion” P81, R2), though, for most it should be coupled with reasoning as to why the reviewer has formed this opinion to, again, determine whether the reader can identify with the reviewer (“It says the park is great but doesn't offer much explanation why” P98, R2; “unqualified statements” P117, R2). There was one outlier who expressed that they perceived a review as “more objective. [As it was] very opinionated and expressive” (P8, R5).

Argumentation. Reviewers including reasoning in OCRs connects to the first structural aspect mentioned by the participants, namely the sidedness of OCRs. Reviews are considered more subjective if its argumentative structure is very “one-sided” (P133, R2). This aspect is, however, primarily brought up when reviewers focus in only one side and less so if two-sided arguments are presented (“no criticism, everything just amazing” P66, R2). Two-sidedness was also evaluated as more helpful (“this review seems kind of one-sided as not a single negative thing is mentioned” P25, R2; “[it] describes many different aspects of the park” P58, R1).

Language. Another structural aspect indicating the level of objectivity is the language of the review. “Low eloquence” (P11, R1) and “vulgar language” (P48, R1) are considered indicators of subjectivity, as is clearly excitable language (“high usage of exclamations” P11, R2; “words like awesome” P21, R2; “personal enthusiasm diminishes objectivity” P35, R2). In general, emotionally charged OCRs are regarded as subjective (“words like epic are more emotional and subjective” P33, R2; “it’s very emotionally charged” P37, R5; “it would be more objective [...] if the statements [...] were not emotional, as in this review” P85, R5) as well as less helpful (“too much harsh language” P148, R1; “[it needs] more, neutrality, less emotion” P85, R5).

Length. An additional structural aspect found for perceived helpfulness, is the length of the review. This was not mentioned in connection to objectivity. One participant in particular repeatedly asked for the inclusion of “key points” (P103, R1,3,5) and seemed to appreciate shorter reviews, though, as mentioned, most valued more detailed OCRs (“very in-depth” P133, R1). This aspect was, however, more divisive, so no majority accordance can be seen from this sample.

Summary Antecedents of Objectivity. Based on these findings, objectivity seems to be largely connected to rationality and sound argumentative structure, while, overall, theme park OCRs are assessed as helpful if they present detailed, measurable information in a way that includes sound reasoning and tips to future visitors.

Discussion

The findings of this study lead to a number of inferences. Overall, a positive effect of objectivity on perceived helpfulness has been found. It can also be said that a person’s inclination to read OCRs does not moderate this effect. Furthermore, aspects of content and structure of theme park OCRs influencing their perceived objectivity and helpfulness have been found. These results and their implications are now discussed in more detail.

Discussion of the Results

Overall Effect of Objectivity. First of all, the main question explored asked whether there was an effect of the perceived level of objectivity on the perceived helpfulness of OCRs and if there is an effect, whether it is a positive or a negative one. The findings show that, the more objective the review was perceived to be, the more helpful readers consider it. This matches the results of Mudambi and Schuff (2010), Kim et al. (2017), Liang et al. (2014), and

Heng et al. (2018), which are discussed in the literature framework of this study. They all found that various aspects of OCRs are considered more helpful when they are presented with a higher degree of objectivity, for a number of different experience goods. Mudambi and Schuff (2010) carried out comparisons across a number of search and experience goods and found that moderate, and therefore objective, OCRs, as opposed to extreme ones, are considered more helpful for experience goods. This overlaps with the results of this study that neutral, as opposed to emotional, OCRs are perceived as helpful.

Information. Kim et al. (2017) and Heng et al. (2018) point out the, generally, highly subjective nature of experience goods and conclude that this may contribute to participants preferring objective assessments of such goods. This sentiment is supported by the assumption that experience goods are treated as search goods in an online setting (Feldman et al., 2019; Ullah et al., 2016), an assumption also somewhat affirmed by this study's results. It was found that participants perceive OCRs that provide them with measurable facts and generalisable information as more helpful. Therefore, focusing on those aspects of the product that are search aspects, though it is overall an experience good, rather than describing the experience aspects of the park visit is how consumers bridge the difficulty of objectively evaluating highly subjective experiences.

Prior Experience. Moreover, this study's results showed that consumers ascribe a higher level of helpfulness to reviewers that claim to have a lot of experience with theme parks. This finding can also be situated in literature. For instance, Willemsen et al. (2011) and Kim et al. (2017) name reviewer expertise as a variable influencing review helpfulness. They find it to be a variable independent from objectivity. However, looking at the results found here prior experience of the author was also mentioned in connection with objectivity. These results suggest that there may be some relation between these two aspects. What can be said definitively is, that reviewer expertise increases the helpfulness of a review.

Argumentation. Liang et al. (2014) focussed their research on the linguistic characteristics of OCRs and concluded that high quality arguments are preferred by most consumers, which was also found in the results of this study, as participants appreciated sound argumentative structure. Not only argumentative strength, but also structure make theme park OCRs more helpful. This inference matches the findings of other scholars, who found a positive effect for two-sided argumentation and logical reasoning (Beneke et al., 2016; Li et al., 2020; Lutz et al., 2018). Even though Li et al. (2020) find the effect of two-sidedness to be stronger for search than experience goods, they and others do find an effect. The findings gained here indicate that consumers find two-sided OCRs not only more helpful but also more believable. It can be inferred that this is because two-sidedness can be identified as an aspect of objectivity as well, which increases overall helpfulness.

Language. The results indicate an influence of the choice of words in OCRs regarding perceived objectivity and helpfulness. Liang et al. (2014) also showed that the linguistic categories found more commonly in helpful reviews are more objective, such as quantifiers and space words. This observation of linguistics also ties in with this study's findings on

measurable characteristics in objective reviews (see Information section). Furthermore, the current study found a negative influence of emotional phrases. The study participants ascribed less helpfulness to and repeatedly questioned the credibility of authors using emotional expressions, regardless of whether it was positive or negative emotions. Rocklage and Fazio (2020) and Yin et al. (2017) somewhat confirm this, as they too find that even overly positive emotions are regarded as less helpful though the relation seems to be very nuanced. Moreover, Hajek et al. (2020) similarly suggest that extremely emotional OCRs are more likely to be considered as fake.

Subjective Experiences and Opinions. However, as also discussed previously, there are conflicting results found by others as well. The correlation found in this, and other studies opposes results by Forman et al. (2008), Scholz and Dorner (2013), and Chen (2016), who found subjectivity to be more helpful in OCRs of experience goods. The explanation given for the effect of subjectivity is that experience goods themselves concern very subjective experiences. Because of this, customers describing these personal circumstances is more helpful, so that readers can decide whether they identify with this experience (Scholz & Dorner, 2013). Furthermore, it is often difficult to comment on these experiences in an objective manner (Chen, 2016). The findings of these scholars seem to be reflected in the results of the qualitative follow-up study within this project, thereby nuancing the results of the quantitative analysis. While, overall, it was established that objective OCRs are considered more helpful, reporting one's personal, subjective insights were also mentioned as being rather helpful. The qualitative study results show that aspects, like personal experiences and opinions on features such as food, which were described as aspects of subjectivity, are perceived as helpful when the reviewer clearly indicates that this is a subjective assessment.

From all of these results, it can be concluded that, for the evaluation of theme parks, consumers appreciate OCRs with an overall objective tone, that include both objective facts and subjective retellings of experiences, provided those come with sound argumentative reasons.

Effect of Inclination to Read OCRs. Lastly, it was studied whether a person's inclination to seek out OCRs in their information search can be considered a moderator to the relation of objectivity and helpfulness. This was included for the explorative purpose of adding a further concept moderating the established relation of objectivity and helpfulness, as this specific concept is not yet represented in literature. The analysis showed that this is not the case, but rather that someone's inclination to read OCRs before making purchase decisions affects how helpful they judge OCRs to be in general. If a consumer frequently seeks out the opinions of others before purchase, then it is sensible that they value OCRs more than those who do not. However, it apparently does not influence their evaluation of a review's objectivity. As this measure of inclination does not affect someone's perception of objectivity, it does not serve as a moderator to the relationship but rather as an additional variable.

Limitations and Future Research

There are some limitations to keep in mind when considering the validity of the study results. They primarily stem from the research design and stimuli. First of all, the stimuli were not perceived as drastically differing in objectivity as determined in the pre-tests, especially those high in objectivity, in which category only one remained. So, while there were significant differences in levels of objectivity in the stimuli, the categories were not portrayed evenly. Since there were only two of each category in the pre-determined groups, this further shrinks the objectivity levels represented. Therefore, more OCRs need to be included in different studies to confirm the results found here. However, for this study, which aims to give a first insight into objectivity in OCRs on theme parks, this sample was sufficient and usable with an appropriate number of study participants.

Moreover, the sentiment of the OCRs chosen is mostly positive. Five of the six OCRs seen by the participants gave the theme park they reviewed at least three of the five possible points. Only one reviewer was entirely negative in their assessment of the park and gave only one point, which might skew the results of the study. Prior studies have already found the valence intensity and sentimental direction of OCRs to have an influence on consumer behaviour (Azer & Alexander, 2020; Floh et al., 2013; Ullah et al., 2016), so the relation between these concepts of sentiment and objectivity can be studied further as well. For the results presented here, this should be kept in mind. However, it is also important to note, that there was another, overall positive, review included in the category with the extremely negative one. So, while results may not be as reliable if only the negative review was evaluated as completely subjective, this is not the case, and a positive subjective review was also tested. The results could be more representative if each of the three categories held opposing sentiments. Still, as this was not the main purpose of the study and the number of stimuli per category was rather small, this was not considered for this study.

As mentioned before, there are some contrasting results priorly found by scholars, some finding outcomes indicating subjective OCRs as preferred, others finding objectivity as more helpful. This study adds to this with the finding of a strong positive effect of objectivity. A possible explanation for the division in other results is the hypothesis that the effect of objectivity is not generalisable for experience goods as a category. To see whether this holds true, more experience goods need to be studied with this in mind. When there is an extensive body of literature concerned with this effect, it will be possible to more generally conclude, what the effect is overall, for the category of experience goods, or if no generalisation can be made and there are sub-groups to be identified. This study adds to the existing body of literature by focussing on theme parks as the subject of OCRs.

Moreover, there is always personal preference to consider, though the sample for this study is large enough to make inferences for the general public, it needs to be kept in mind that people vary in their preferred way to engage in information search. So, while it is always possible to draw conclusions about a larger number of people, there may be personal factors influencing how much a consumer values objectivity. For instance, some respondents

commented that they do not visit theme parks at all or generally do not look for OCRs on them. This is also reflected in the demographic result that only around 12% of participants reported reading reviews for any touristic experiences. This particular limitation could be accounted for by, for instance, sampling participants from visitors in theme parks directly. Otherwise, future studies may consider whether there are between-groups differences.

Practical Implications

Companies often buy OCRs from large review sites to display on their own websites and many formulate guidelines for their customers on how to write helpful reviews (Mudambi & Schuff, 2010). Therefore, managers need to know, which reviews are most helpful to their possible future customers. This study has concluded that, overall, objective reviews are regarded more helpful. Therefore, managers should focus on OCRs including measurable and generalisable information and sound reasoning. Customers evaluate these types of information as more helpful because they make it possible to relate to the rather subjective experiences someone might have at a theme park. Moreover, such information aids them in creating a picture of what to expect from the park, more than a simple expression of opinion.

Furthermore, OCRs containing highly emotional language, negative as well as positive ones, are appreciated less and even often considered fake. Displaying those should be avoided to maintain the companies' credibility. Similar findings can be seen with OCRs only highlighting positive or only negative aspects of the park. Therefore, two-sided argumentative structure, pointing out various facets of the experience, are seen as both more objective and more helpful.

The aspects of personal opinions and experiences, need to be approached with more nuance. While these aspects are, overall, indicators for subjectivity, they were often also frequently described as increasing helpfulness. However, to qualify as helpful the personal reflection on these subjective matters needs to clearly be explained as such, so that readers can choose whether they identify with them. So, while, generally, subjective aspects are considered less helpful, presenting them in an objective manner can at times increase the helpfulness of a review.

Conclusions

The findings presented in this study add to the continuously ongoing discussions on and research into the consumer information journey. Utilising a mixture of quantitative and qualitative research methods, the effect of objectivity in Online Consumer Reviews of Theme Parks was investigated. The findings demonstrate that consumers perceive OCRs with higher levels of perceived objectivity to be more helpful in their decision-making process. Furthermore, the results show that the factors of generalisability, information types, experience types, personal opinion, argumentative reasoning, review sidedness, and language influence both perceived objectivity and helpfulness. It can be concluded that it is relevant to continue the study of OCRs of the product category of experience goods,

specifically of the effect of objectivity, to potentially find general overall trends in this category.

References

- Azer, J., & Alexander, M. (2020). Negative customer engagement behaviour: the interplay of intensity and valence in online networks. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 36(3–4), 361–383. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2020.1735488>
- Beneke, J., de Sousa, S., Mbuyu, M., & Wickham, B. (2016). The effect of negative online customer reviews on brand equity and purchase intention of consumer electronics in South Africa. *The International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research*, 26(2), 171–201. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09593969.2015.1068828>
- Bevan-Dye, A. L. (2020). Antecedents of Generation Y consumers' usage frequency of online consumer reviews. *Spanish Journal of Marketing – ESIC*, 24(2), 193–212. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SJME-12-2019-0102>
- Bhatnagar, A., & Ghose, S. (2004). Online information search termination patterns across product categories and consumer demographics. *Journal of Retailing*, 80(3), 221–228. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretai.2003.10.001>
- Bigne, E., Andreu, L., Perez, C., & Ruiz, C. (2020). Brand love is all around: loyalty behaviour, active and passive social media users. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 23(13), 1613–1630. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2019.1631760>
- Chen, M.-Y. (2016). Can two-sided messages increase the helpfulness of online reviews? *Online Information Review*, 40(3), 316–332. <https://doi.org/10.1108/OIR-07-2015-0225>
- Chevalier, J. A., & Mayzlin, D. (2006). The Effect of Word of Mouth on Sales: Online Book Reviews. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 43(3), 345–354. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkr.43.3.345>
- Darby, M. R., & Karni, E. (1973). Free Competition and the Optimal Amount of Fraud. *The Journal of Law and Economics*, 16(1), 67–88. <https://doi.org/10.1086/466756>
- Darley, W. K., & Smith, R. E. (1993). Advertising Claim Objectivity: Antecedents and Effects. *Journal of Marketing*, 57(4), 100–113. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002224299305700408>
- Eliashberg, J., & Shugan, S. M. (1997). Film Critics: Influencers or Predictors? *Journal of Marketing*, 61(2), 68–78. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002224299706100205>

- Feldman, P., Papanastasiou, Y., & Segev, E. (2019). Social Learning and the Design of New Experience Goods. *Management Science*, 65(4), 1502–1519. <https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.2017.3024>
- Floh, A., Koller, M., & Zauner, A. (2013). Taking a deeper look at online reviews: The asymmetric effect of valence intensity on shopping behaviour. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 29(5–6), 646–670. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2013.776620>
- Ford, G. T., Smith, D. B., & Swasy, J. L. (1988). An empirical test of the search, experience and credence attributes framework. *ACR North American Advances*.
- Forman, C., Ghose, A., & Wiesenfeld, B. (2008). Examining the Relationship Between Reviews and Sales: The Role of Reviewer Identity Disclosure in Electronic Markets. *Information Systems Research*, 19(3), 291–313. <https://doi.org/10.1287/isre.1080.0193>
- Haahti, A., & Yavas, U. (2004). A multi-attribute approach to understanding image of a theme park. *European Business Review*, 16(4), 390–397. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09555340410547026>
- Hair, M., & Ozcan, T. (2018). How reviewers' use of profanity affects perceived usefulness of online reviews. *Marketing Letters*, 29(2), 151–163. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11002-018-9459-4>
- Hajek, P., Barushka, A., & Munk, M. (2020). Fake consumer review detection using deep neural networks integrating word embeddings and emotion mining. *Neural Computing and Applications*, 32(23), 17259–17274. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00521-020-04757-2>
- Heng, Y., Gao, Z., Jiang, Y., & Chen, X. (2018). Exploring hidden factors behind online food shopping from Amazon reviews: A topic mining approach. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 42, 161–168. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2018.02.006>
- Hsieh, Y.-C., Chiu, H.-C., & Chiang, M.-Y. (2005). Maintaining a committed online customer: A study across search–experience–credence products. *Journal of Retailing*, 81(1), 75–82. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretai.2005.01.006>
- Huang, P., Lurie, N. H., & Mitra, S. (2009). Searching for Experience on the Web: An Empirical Examination of Consumer Behavior for Search and Experience Goods. *Journal of Marketing*, 73(2), 55–69. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.73.2.55>

- Hussain, S., Guangju, W., Jafar, R. M. S., Ilyas, Z., Mustafa, G., & Jianzhou, Y. (2018). Consumers' online information adoption behavior: Motives and antecedents of electronic word of mouth communications. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 80, 22–32. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2017.09.019>
- Hutter, M. (2011). A Handbook of Cultural Economics, Second Edition. In *Experience Goods*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4337/9780857930576.00035>
- Ju, J., Kim, D., Ahn, J.-H., & Lee, D.-J. (2016). An Empirical Examination of Consumer Behavior for Search and Experience Goods in Sentiment Analysis.
- Kavanagh, M. (2021). *The impact of customer reviews on purchase decisions*. bizrate insights. Retrieved April 8 from <https://bizrateinsights.com/resources/shopper-survey-report-the-impact-reviews-have-on-consumers-purchase-decisions/>
- Khammash, M. (2008). *Electronic word-of-mouth: Antecedents of reading customer reviews in online opinion platforms: A case from the UK market* University of Manchester].
- Khammash, M., & Griffiths, G. H. (2011). 'Arrivederci CIAO.com, Buongiorno Bing.com'—Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), antecedences and consequences. *International Journal of Information Management*, 31(1), 82–87.
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2010.10.005>
- Kim, K., Cheong, Y., & Kim, H. (2017). User-generated product reviews on the internet: the drivers and outcomes of the perceived usefulness of product reviews. *International Journal of Advertising*, 36(2), 227–245.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2015.1096100>
- Klein, L. R. (1998). Evaluating the Potential of Interactive Media through a New Lens: Search versus Experience Goods. *Journal of Business Research*, 41(3), 195–203.
[https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0148-2963\(97\)00062-3](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0148-2963(97)00062-3)
- Laband, D. N. (1991). An objective measure of search versus experience goods. *Economic Inquiry*, 29(3), 497–509. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1465-7295.1991.tb00842.x>
- Lee, J. (2020). "Friending" Journalists on Social Media: Effects on Perceived Objectivity and Intention to Consume News. *Journalism Studies*, 21(15), 2096–2112.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2020.1810102>

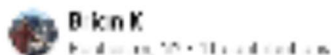
- Li, M.-Q., Lee, Y.-C., & Wu, L.-L. (2020). Sidedness Effect of Online Review.
- Liang, Y., DeAngelis, B. N., Clare, D. D., Dorros, S. M., & Levine, T. R. (2014). Message Characteristics in Online Product Reviews and Consumer Ratings of Helpfulness. *Southern Communication Journal*, 79(5), 468–483.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1041794X.2014.933870>
- Lutz, B., Pröllochs, N., & Neumann, D. (2018). Understanding the role of two-sided argumentation in online consumer reviews: A language-based perspective. *arXiv*
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.1810.10942>
- Milman, A., Tasci, A. D. A., & Wei, W. (2020). Crowded and popular: The two sides of the coin affecting theme-park experience, satisfaction, and loyalty. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 18, 100468.
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2020.100468>
- Mudambi, S. M., & Schuff, D. (2010). What Makes a Helpful Online Review? A Study of Customer Reviews on Amazon.com. *MIS Quarterly*, 34(1), 185–200.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/20721420>
- Mumuni, A. G., Lancendorfer, K. M., O'Reilly, K. A., & MacMillan, A. (2019). Antecedents of consumers' reliance on online product reviews. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 13(1), 26–46. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JRIM-11-2017-0096>
- Nelson, P. (1970). Information and Consumer Behavior. *Journal of Political Economy*, 78(2), 311–329. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1830691>
- Nelson, P. (1974). Advertising as Information. *Journal of Political Economy*, 82(4), 729–754.
<https://doi.org/10.1086/260231>
- Niu, Y., Park, H., & Kirilenko, A. (2019). Theme Park Visitor Experience and Satisfaction: A Case of TripAdvisor Reviews of Three Theme Parks in Orlando.
- Otterbacher, J. (2009). 'Helpfulness' in online communities: a measure of message quality Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, Boston, MA, USA. <https://doi.org/10.1145/1518701.1518848>
- Pan, H., Bahja, F., & Cobanoglu, C. (2018). Analysis of U.S. theme park selection and international implications. *Journal of Transnational Management*, 23(1), 22–38.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15475778.2018.1426943>

- Park, C., & Lee, T. M. (2009). Antecedents of Online Reviews' Usage and Purchase Influence: An Empirical Comparison of U.S. and Korean Consumers. *Journal of Interactive Marketing, 23*(4), 332–340. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2009.07.001>
- Pelletier, M. J., & Collier, J. E. (2018). Experiential Purchase Quality: Exploring the Dimensions and Outcomes of Highly Memorable Experiential Purchases. *Journal of Service Research, 21*(4), 456–473. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094670518770042>
- Ren, Q., Xu, F., & Ji, X. (2019). Use of the pathfinder network scaling to measure online customer reviews: A theme park study. *Strategic Change, 28*(5), 333–344. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/jsc.2288>
- Riasanow, T., Ye, H. J., & Goswami, S. (2015). Generating Trust in Online Consumer Reviews through Signaling: An Experimental Study. 2015 48th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences,
- Rocklage, M. D., & Fazio, R. H. (2020). The Enhancing Versus Backfiring Effects of Positive Emotion in Consumer Reviews. *Journal of Marketing Research, 57*(2), 332–352. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022243719892594>
- Schmidt, J. B., & Spreng, R. A. (1996). A proposed model of external consumer information search. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 24*(3), 246–256. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0092070396243005>
- Scholz, M., & Dörner, V. (2013). The Recipe for the Perfect Review? *Business & Information Systems Engineering, 5*(3), 141–151. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12599-013-0259-3>
- Sivakumar, V. J., & Rajadurai, B. I. J. (2019). What happens after consumption? Role of autobiographical memory experience, nostalgia and word of mouth behaviour. *International Journal of Management Practice, 12*(3), 343–359. <https://doi.org/10.1504/ijmp.2019.100409>
- Srivastava, V., & Kalro, A. D. (2018). Motivations and outcomes of seeking online consumer reviews: a literature synthesis. *Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior, 31*, 112–141.
- Tripadvisor. (n.d.). *About Tripadvisor*. Tripadvisor. Retrieved April 24, 2022, from <https://tripadvisor.mediaroom.com/us-about-us>

- Ullah, R., Ambler, N., Kim, W., & Lee, H. (2016). From valence to emotions: Exploring the distribution of emotions in online product reviews. *Decision Support Systems*, 81, 41–53. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dss.2015.10.007>
- Willemsen, L. M., Neijens, P. C., Bronner, F., & de Ridder, J. A. (2011). “Highly Recommended!” The Content Characteristics and Perceived Usefulness of Online Consumer Reviews. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 17(1), 19–38. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2011.01551.x>
- Yin, D., Bond, S. D., & Zhang, H. (2017). Keep Your Cool or Let it Out: Nonlinear Effects of Expressed Arousal on Perceptions of Consumer Reviews. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 54(3), 447–463. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmr.13.0379>
- Zhang, T., Li, B., & Hua, N. (2021). Chinese cultural theme parks: text mining and sentiment analysis. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14766825.2021.1876077>
- Zhu, F., & Zhang, X. (2010). Impact of Online Consumer Reviews on Sales: The Moderating Role of Product and Consumer Characteristics. *Journal of Marketing*, 74(2), 133–148. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jm.74.2.133>

Appendixes

Appendix A – German Translations of OCRs



Ein Park mit einigen guten Fahrgeschäften, aber einer Menge Nachteile

Aug 2021

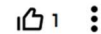
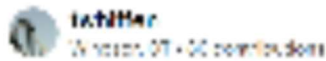
Tolle Fahrgeschäfte. Aber der Park ist ein bisschen unzureichend. Er ist unterbesetzt, so dass nicht alle Fahrgeschäfte geöffnet sind. Dieses Jahr waren mehrere geschlossen, die wir nicht nutzen konnten. Das kultige Riesenrad wird auch abgebaut. Und sie bieten keine Theatervorstellungen mehr an. Wahrscheinlich finden sie nicht genug junge Leute, die den Mindestlohn akzeptieren, um alles am Laufen zu halten.

Außerdem muss man im Park viel zu Fuß gehen, und in diesem Jahr muss man sogar noch weiter laufen als sonst, weil sie einen hinteren Teil des Parks schließen, wo man eine Abkürzung nehmen konnte, um quer durch den Park zu kommen, also war das ein Hindernis und führte dazu, dass wir viel mehr laufen mussten und weniger Fahrgeschäfte benutzen konnten. Irgendwann fingen meine Füße an zu schmerzen.

Früher fuhren die Achterbahnen sogar mit 2 Zügen gleichzeitig, was heute nicht mehr der Fall ist. Die Zeit, die man in der Schlange vor den Fahrgeschäften verbringt, ist es fast nicht wert. Man steht 20-30 Minuten in der Schlange für eine Fahrt, die 1 Minute oder weniger dauert. Vom vielen Stehen tun mir die Füße weh. Und ich sollte mich glücklich schätzen, dass ich dieses Jahr jede Achterbahn einmal fahren konnte. Aber für den Eintrittspreis ist das nichts im Vergleich zu früher, als die Eintrittspreise niedriger waren und die Schlangen schneller gingen, weil zwei Züge gleichzeitig fuhren und es mehr Personal gab.

Ein weiterer Punkt ist, dass das Essen hier absoluter Müll ist. Es gibt nur Fast-Food-Lokale, die das schlimmste und ungesündeste Scheißessen servieren. Es gibt absolut keine Möglichkeiten für Menschen, die sich irgendwie gesund ernähren oder irgendwelche Ansprüche an das Essen haben. Wenn doch, muss man sein eigenes Essen in einer Kühlbox mitbringen und in der Mitte des Tages eine Pause einlegen, um es im Auto zu essen, was echt lästig ist.

Der Park wird auch wirklich mit Müll verschmutzt, und die Sanitäreinrichtungen werden verwüstet, und sie tun nichts, um sie während des Tages sauber zu halten. Der ganze Park ist einfach sehr schäbig.



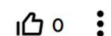
Holiday World ist wie das Öffnen von Geschenken am Weihnachtsmorgen!

Sep 2021

Dies war mein dritter Besuch in Holiday World und ich war noch nie enttäuscht! Vom kostenlosen Parken bis hin zu den tollen Achterbahnen, dem köstlichen Essen und der tollen familiären Atmosphäre ist es einer meiner liebsten kleinen Parks (und ich war schon in über 170 Parks!).

Die Thematik der einzelnen Parkbereiche ist erstklassig! Die Achterbahnen (der eigentliche Grund, warum wir dort waren) sind einfach unglaublich! 3 der besten Holzachterbahnen in ein und demselben Park! Thunderbird ist auch eine der coolsten Wing Coaster, die es gibt! Die Nachtfahrten sind fantastisch und eine Fahrt mit The Voyage bei Nacht ist absolut episch! Wir haben im Plymouth Rock Cafe gegessen und waren begeistert von der Thanksgiving-Auswahl! Außerdem gibt es den ganzen Tag über kostenlose Softdrinks! Der Park hat einige topografische Herausforderungen für alle, die Schwierigkeiten haben, Hügel hinauf und hinunter zu gehen. Ich habe gehört, dass der Wasserpark fantastisch ist, aber ich habe ihn noch nicht erlebt!

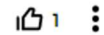
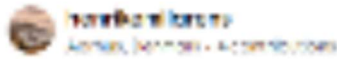
Ich empfehle diesen Park auf jeden Fall weiter, da er in allem, was er tut, Erste Klasse ist!



Express ist es wert 🎢.

Wir waren für das Halloween-Erlebnis hier und würden diese Zeit des Jahres definitiv empfehlen! Es war unglaublich! Es hatte so viele Details und wirklich gute zusätzliche Dinge. Die besten zwei Tage, die wir hier verbracht haben

Wir haben den Expresspass nicht zusätzlich vor dem Tag gekauft, aber nachdem wir 2+ Stunden auf die erste Fahrt gewartet haben, haben wir uns dazu entschlossen, sie zu kaufen und ehrlich gesagt sind sie das Geld zu 100% wert! Machte so einen großen Unterschied auf die Länge der Wartezeit, weil sonst dein Tag auf der Warteschlange verschwendet wird.



Unterhaltsam, schön, familienfreundlich

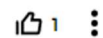
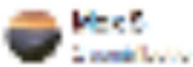
Jun 2019

Tivoli ist ein historischer Vergnügungspark mitten in Kopenhagen. Er bietet Achterbahnen im alten Stil, moderne Fahrgeschäfte, eine Vielzahl von Restaurants, aber vor allem ist er unterhaltsam, besonders für Familien mit kleinen bis mittelgroßen Kindern, die nicht die wildesten, schnellsten und größten Fahrgeschäfte erwarten.

Es kann teuer erscheinen, da die dänischen Preise im Allgemeinen über dem Durchschnitt liegen, aber der Eintritt und das Unlimited Rides Ticket sind das Geld wert, da man leicht einen ganzen Tag dort verbringen kann.

Du willst ein bisschen Geld sparen? - Bring deine eigenen Sandwiches und Getränke mit, denn hier wird der Großteil des Geldes ausgegeben, plus, es gibt viele Bereiche, in denen du deine selbstgemachten Mahlzeiten genießen kannst.

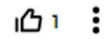
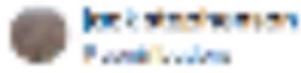
Nimm dir eine Auszeit von der "großen Stadt" und genieße einen "hyggeligen" dänischen Vergnügungspark.



Guter Park, sehr unfreundliche Mitarbeiter

Sep 2020

Es ist ein guter Freizeitpark, aber die Angestellten sind wirklich sehr unfreundlich. Vor allem mit den ganzen Corona-Regeln sind sie so kleinlich... Eine hat sogar meine Freundin beschuldigt, weil sie keine Maske trug, und musste die Achterbahn nach 50 min Wartezeit verlassen. Konnte nicht einmal mit ihr reden, sie zeigte sofort mit dem Finger, als ich sie nach ihrem Namen fragte, antwortete sie nicht und 4 Security-Leute standen um mich herum..ich war nicht einmal aggressiv.. Als ich mit einer der Securitys sprach, die Englisch sprechen konnte.. erwähnte sie, dass wir uns die Überwachungskamera ansehen könnten, dass es 1 Stunde dauern würde und wenn sie Recht hätten, würde meine Freundin aus dem Park geworfen werden, aber wenn nicht, würden sie sich einfach entschuldigen, ohne ein neues Ticket zu geben... Natürlich würde niemand diese Option wählen, auch wenn Sie Recht haben, entschuldigen sie sich und wir würden eine Menge Zeit verlieren... die Mitarbeiterin ist wirklich unfreundlich...



ich liebe es.

Nov 2021

wirklich, einer der besten freizeitparks, in denen ich seit LANGEM war! dr dooms fearfall ist eine der besten tower rides, auf denen ich gewesen bin. dr seuss worlds war toll, außer von den erwachsenen, die offensichtlich besoffen waren und Lieder vor mir sangen, boa echt nervig. abgesehen davon gut.

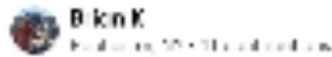
Appendix B – Pre-test

Please take a look at these 8 reviews of theme parks and give them each a score ranging from 1 to 5.

The scoring should reflect the degree of objectivity which you identify in each of the reviews:

1 = *formulated entirely subjectively*, **5** = *formulated entirely objectively*

Review 1



1 1



A Park With Some Good Rides But A Lot Of Con's

Aug 2021

Great rides. But the park is a bit lacking. It's understaffed so all the rides aren't open. This year there was several that were closed that we didn't get to go on. The iconic ferris wheel is also being taken down. And they no longer are offering theater shows. They probably can't find enough youngsters who will accept minimum wage pay to keep everything up and running.

The park also requires a lot of walking and this year they are making you walk even further than usual because they are closing off a back portion where you could short cut to get across the park, so that was a drag and caused us to have to do a lot more walking and be able to ride less rides. Eventually my feet started to hurt.

Back in the day the roller coasters would even have 2 trains going at once, which they do not do anymore. The time spent standing in line for rides almost makes it not worth it. You stand in line for 20-30 minutes for a ride that lasts 1 minute or less. All that standing causes my feet to hurt. And I guess I should consider myself lucky I got to ride every roller coaster once this year. But for the cost of entry it is nothing compared to what it used to be, when entry costs were lower and the lines went quicker because they were running 2 trains at once, and they had more staff.

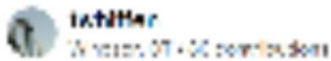
Another thing is that the food here is absolute garbage. It's all fast food joints serving the worst most unhealthy crap food. There's absolutely no options for anyone on any kind of healthy diet, or who has any kind of standards what so ever when it comes to eating. If you do you will have to bring your own food in a cooler and take a break mid-day to eat it in the car, which is a real hassle.

The park also gets really polluted with garbage, and the bathroom facilities get trashed, and they do nothing to keep it clean throughout the day. The whole park is just really trashy.

[Read less](#) ^

$M_{score} = 3.5$ ($SD = .84$)

Review 2

**Holiday World is like opening presents on Christmas morning!**

Sep 2021 • Friends

This was my third visit to Holiday World and I have never been disappointed! From the free parking to the amazing rollercoasters, delicious food and great family atmosphere it is one of my favorite small parks (and I've been to over 170 parks!)

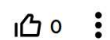
The theming of each park area is top notch! The rollercoasters (which is the main reason we were there) are just incredible! 3 of the best wooden coasters in the same park! Thunderbird is also one of the coolest wing coasters you'll find anywhere! The night rides are amazing and a ride on The Voyage at night is absolutely epic! We ate at the Plymouth Rock Cafe and loved the Thanksgiving choices! There's also free soft drinks offered all day! The park does have some topographical challenges for anyone who has difficulty walking up and down hills. I've heard the Waterpark is awesome, but I haven't experienced it yet!

I totally recommend this park to anyone as it is First Class in everything they do!

[Read less](#) ^

$M_{score} = 3.1$ (SD = 1.17)

Review 3

**Express is worth it 🎢**

We went here for the Halloween experience and definitely would recommend this time of the year! It was amazing! It had such detail and really good additional things. The best two days out spent here

We didn't buy the express pass additional before our day but after waiting 2+ hours for the first ride we devised to then buy them and honestly they are 100% worth the money! Made such a huge difference on the length of waiting because otherwise your day will be wasted on the ques.

$M_{score} = 3.0$ (SD = 1.1)

Review 4

**Fun!**

Mar 2020

I live pretty close here so anytime I can I always go there. I go there with my friends. The attractions there is soo fun. They also have good food too. Even though I go there all the time it's always fun.

$M_{score} = 1.5$ (.84)

Review 5



Entertaining, lovely, family friendly

Jun 2019

Tivoli is an historical amusement park in the middle of Copenhagen. I boasts old style rollercoasters, modern rides, a variety of restaurants but most importantly it is entertaining for especially families with small to mid-teen kids, who do not expect the wildest, fastest and biggest rides.

It can seem expensive as Danish prices are generally higher than average but admission and Unlimited Rides Ticket is worth the money as a whole day is easily spent there.

Want to save a bit of money? - bring your own sandwiches and drinks, as this is where the majority of spend money goes, plus there are plenty of areas to enjoy your home made meals.

Take a break from the "big city" and enjoy a "hyggelig" Danish amusement park.

[Read less](#) ^

$M_{score} = 4.8$ (SD = .41)

Review 6



Good park really unfriendly employees

Sep 2020

It's a good theme park but the employees are really really unfriendly. Especially with the whole corona rules they tend to be so stingy... One eventually even accused my girlfriend for not wearing a mask, and had to leave the roller-coaster after waiting 50 min. Couldn't even talk with her she immediately pointed finger, when asking for her name she didn't reply and 4 security dudes where surrounding me ..I wasn't even aggressive.. when talking to one of the security that could speak English.. she mentioned we could look at the security camera it will take 1 hour time and when they where right my gf would get kicked out of the park but if not they just apologize without even giving a free new ticket... Of course nobody would choose that option, even if your right they apologize and we would lose a lot of time.. the employee is really unfriendly

[Read less](#) ^

$M_{score} = 1.3$ (SD = .52)

Review 7



John K. Winchester
Punta Gorda, FL

1 like

●●●●●

i love it.

Nov 2021

genuinely, one of the best theme parks ive been too in a LONG time! dr dooms fearfall is one of the best tower rides ive been on. dr seuss worlds was great except from the adults who were clearly pissed singing songs infront of me like pua annoying. apart from that good.

$M_{score} = 1.3$ (SD = .52)

Review 8



John K.
Punta Gorda, FL

0 likes

●●●○○

Spring break

Apr 2022 • Family

I was unaware of the your no cash allowed and was very disappointed because I could not get my nephew who was his first time going to Legoland his drivers license because I had cash on me but very little funds on my atm which I had to use for food again because I could not use cash. He was very sad and all he could talk about. His parents had also given him cash to spend and he could not. We have been to Disneyland and Magic mountain and they all take cash. So sad that that's what he's going to remember about his visit.

$M_{score} = 2.3$ (SD = 1.4)

Appendix C – Informed Consent

Dear Participant,

Thank you for considering taking part in the study “Objectivity and Perceived Helpfulness in Online Consumer Reviews of Theme Parks”. This study is conducted by Patricia Wagner from the Faculty of Behavioural, Management, and Social Sciences at the University of Twente. The data collected in this survey will be used for a bachelor thesis in the field of Communication Science. This research project has been reviewed and approved by the BMS Ethics Committee.

The purpose of this study is to determine how consumers evaluate the reviews of others in terms of objectivity and how this impacts a review’s helpfulness. Within this survey you will be presented with three examples of online consumer reviews of theme parks. Then, you will be asked to evaluate them based in objectivity and helpfulness. You will also be asked to answer some demographic questions.

All data will be stored as safely as possible and remain confidential. The risk of security breach will be minimized by storing data on secure servers and by anonymizing all data.

By agreeing to participate, you confirm these points:

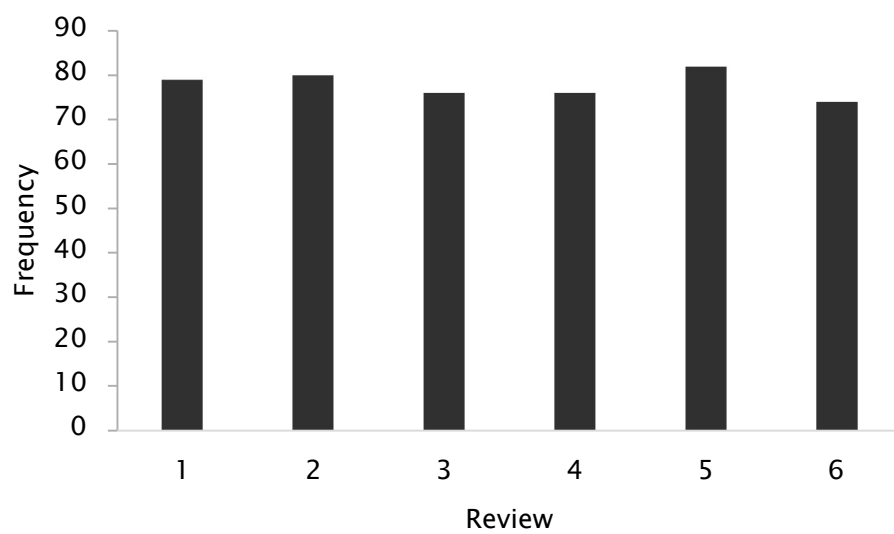
- I have read and understood the content and aim of this study
- I understand the possible risks associated with this study and that the data I provide will not be shared beyond the research team
- I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason

For further information on the study, please contact:

p.n.wagner@student.utwente.nl

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or wish to obtain information, ask questions, or discuss any concerns about this study with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact the Secretary of the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Behavioural, Management and Social Sciences at the University of Twente at **ethicscommittee-bms@utwente.nl**.

Appendix D – Distribution of OCRs among Participants



Appendix E – Full Questionnaire

Objectivity and Perceived Helpfulness in Online Consumer Reviews of Theme Parks

Start of Block: Informed Consent

informed consent

Dear Participant,

Thank you for considering taking part in the study “Objectivity and Perceived Helpfulness in Online Consumer Reviews of Theme Parks”. This study is conducted by Patricia Wagner from the Faculty of Behavioural, Management, and Social Sciences at the University of Twente. The data collected in this survey will be used for a bachelor thesis in the field of Communication Science. This research project has been reviewed and approved by the BMS Ethics Committee.

The purpose of this study is to determine how consumers evaluate the reviews of others in terms of objectivity and how this impacts a review’s helpfulness. Within this survey you will be presented with three examples of online consumer reviews of theme parks. Then, you will be asked to evaluate them based in objectivity and helpfulness. You will also be asked to answer some demographic questions.

All data will be stored as safely as possible and remain confidential. The risk of security breach will be minimized by storing data on secure servers and by anonymizing all data.

By agreeing to participate, you confirm these points:

- I have read and understood the content and aim of this study
- I understand the possible risks associated with this study and that the data I provide will not be shared beyond the research team
- I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason

For further information on the study, please contact:

p.n.wagner@student.utwente.nl

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or wish to obtain information, ask questions, or discuss any concerns about this study with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact the Secretary of the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Behavioural, Management and Social Sciences at the University of Twente at **ethicscommittee-bms@utwente.nl**.

☐ I agree to participate in this study (1)

☐ I do not want to participate (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If informed consent = I do not want to participate

sona

If you are a student in the BMS faculty, please be aware that this study is available in the sona system, so there is a chance to collect credits.

To receive credits, please enter your sona ID

End of Block: Informed Consent

Start of Block: Demographics



age What is your age in years?

gender What is your gender?

- ☐ Male (1)
- ☐ Female (2)
- ☐ Non-binary / third gender (3)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (4)

education What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ☐ Less than Primary (10)
- ☐ Primary (11)
- ☐ Some Secondary (12)
- ☐ Secondary (13)
- ☐ Vocational or Similar (14)
- ☐ Some University but no degree (15)
- ☐ University – Bachelors Degree (16)
- ☐ Graduate or professional degree (MA, MS, MBA, PhD, Law Degree, Medical Degree etc) (17)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (18)
-

country In which country do you currently reside?

▼ Afghanistan (1) ... Zimbabwe (195)

language In what language are you completing this survey?

- ☐ English (1)
- ☐ German (2)

End of Block: Demographics

Start of Block: inclination to read OCRs

text Please indicate to which level these statements describe you

inclination_1 I read online reviews before making purchase decisions

- ☐ Does not describe me (1)
- ☐ Describes me slightly well (2)
- ☐ Describes me moderately well (3)
- ☐ Describes me very well (4)
- ☐ Describes me extremely well (5)

inclination_2 I use the recommendations of others to find out information on a product

- ☐ Does not describe me (1)
- ☐ Describes me slightly well (2)
- ☐ Describes me moderately well (3)
- ☐ Describes me very well (4)
- ☐ Describes me extremely well (5)



inclination_3 I **never** seek out any online reviews of a product before buying it

- ☐ Does not describe me (5)
 - ☐ Describes me slightly well (4)
 - ☐ Describes me moderately well (3)
 - ☐ Describes me very well (2)
 - ☐ Describes me extremely well (1)
-

inclination_4 I use online reviews to compare products with each other

- ☐ Does not describe me (1)
 - ☐ Describes me slightly well (2)
 - ☐ Describes me moderately well (3)
 - ☐ Describes me very well (4)
 - ☐ Describes me extremely well (5)
-

inclination_5 On average, how many online reviews do you read before buying a product?

- ☐ 0 – 3 (1)
 - ☐ 3 – 5 (2)
 - ☐ 5 – 10 (3)
 - ☐ 10 – 20 (4)
 - ☐ 20 – 25 (5)
 - ☐ more than 25 (6)
-

inclination_6 What types of products or services do you read online reviews for?
(Multiple answers are possible)

- ☐ Electronic Gadgets (1)
- ☐ Entertainment Goods (Books, Movies, Video Games, etc.) (2)
- ☐ Clothing and Accessories (3)
- ☐ Touristic Experiences (Museums, Sport Events, Theme Parks, etc.) (4)
- ☐ Hotels, Restaurants, Bars, etc. (5)
- ☐ Office Supplies (Pencils, Markers, etc.) (6)
- ☐ Services (Hair Stylists, Mechanics, Repair Services, etc.) (7)
- ☐ Food Brands (8)
- ☐ Appliances (Microwaves, Dishwashers, etc.) (9)
- ☐ None (10)
- ☐ Others: (11) _____

End of Block: inclination to read OCRs

Start of Block: review1

Display This Question:

If language = English

r1 Please take a look at this review

.

Display This Question:

If language = German

g1 Please take a look at this review

.



O_r1.1 The information I read from the product review was very opinion-based

- ☐ Strongly disagree (7)
 - ☐ Disagree (6)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (5)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (3)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Strongly agree (1)
-

O_r1.2 The information I read from the product review was very objective

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly agree (7)
-



O_r1.3 The reviewer clearly separates facts and opinions

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly agree (7)
-

O_r1.4 The reviewer is rational

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
- ☐ Agree (6)
- ☐ Strongly agree (7)



O_r1.5 The information I read from the product review was subjectively written

- ☐ Strongly disagree (7)
- ☐ Disagree (6)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (5)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (3)
- ☐ Agree (2)
- ☐ Strongly agree (1)

O_exp_r1 Please explain what about the review makes it seem more or less objective to you

Page Break

Display This Question:

If language = English

r1 Please take a look at this review

Display This Question:

If language = German

g1 Please take a look at this review

helpfulness_r1 Please evaluate the helpfulness of this review

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
extremely irrelevant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	extremely relevant
not at all useful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	of great usefulness
not helpful at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	extremely helpful

H_exp_r1 Please explain what about the review makes it seem more or less helpful to you

End of Block: review1

Start of Block: review4

Display This Question:

If language = English

r4 Please take a look at this review

Display This Question:

If language = German

g4 Please take a look at this review



O_r4.1 The information I read from the product review was very opinion-based

- ☐ Strongly disagree (7)
 - ☐ Disagree (6)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (5)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (3)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Strongly agree (1)
-

O_r4.2 The information I read from the product review was very objective

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly agree (7)
-



O_r4.3 The reviewer clearly separates facts and opinions

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly agree (7)
-

O_r4.4 The reviewer is rational

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
- ☐ Agree (6)
- ☐ Strongly agree (7)



O_r4.5 The information I read from the product review was subjectively written

- ☐ Strongly disagree (7)
- ☐ Disagree (6)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (5)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (3)
- ☐ Agree (2)
- ☐ Strongly agree (1)

O_exp_r4 Please explain what about the review makes it seem more or less objective to you

Page Break

Display This Question:

If language = English

r4 Please take a look at this review

Display This Question:

If language = German

g4 Please take a look at this review

helpfulness_r4 Please evaluate the helpfulness of this review

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
extremely irrelevant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	extremely relevant
not at all useful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	of great usefulness
not helpful at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	extremely helpful

helpfulness_exp_r4 Please explain what about the review makes it seem more or less helpful to you

End of Block: review4

Start of Block: review3

Display This Question:

If language = English

r3 Please take a look at this review

Display This Question:

If language = German

g3 Please take a look at this review



O_r3.1 The information I read from the product review was very opinion-based

- ☐ Strongly disagree (7)
 - ☐ Disagree (6)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (5)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (3)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Strongly agree (1)
-

O_r3.2 The information I read from the product review was very objective

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly agree (7)
-



O_r3.3 The reviewer clearly separates facts and opinions

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly agree (7)
-

O_r3.4 The reviewer is rational

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
- ☐ Agree (6)
- ☐ Strongly agree (7)



O_r3.5 The information I read from the product review was subjectively written

- ☐ Strongly disagree (7)
- ☐ Disagree (6)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (5)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (3)
- ☐ Agree (2)
- ☐ Strongly agree (1)

O_exp_r3 Please explain what about the review makes it seem more or less objective to you

Page Break

Display This Question:

If language = English

r3 Please take a look at this review

Display This Question:

If language = German

g3 Please take a look at this review

helpfulness_r3 Please evaluate the helpfulness of this review

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
extremely irrelevant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	extremely relevant
not at all useful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	of great usefulness
not helpful at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	extremely helpful

helpfulness_exp_r3 Please explain what about the review makes it seem more or less helpful to you

End of Block: review3

Start of Block: review2

Display This Question:

If language = English

r2 Please take a look at this review

Display This Question:

If language = German

g2 Please take a look at this review



O_r2.1 The information I read from the product review was very opinion-based

- ☐ Strongly disagree (7)
 - ☐ Disagree (6)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (5)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (3)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Strongly agree (1)
-

O_r2.2 The information I read from the product review was very objective

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly agree (7)
-



O_r2.3 The reviewer clearly separates facts and opinions

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly agree (7)
-

O_r2.4 The reviewer is rational

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
- ☐ Agree (6)
- ☐ Strongly agree (7)



O_r2.5 The information I read from the product review was subjectively written

- ☐ Strongly disagree (7)
- ☐ Disagree (6)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (5)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (3)
- ☐ Agree (2)
- ☐ Strongly agree (1)

O_exp_r2 Please explain what about the review makes it seem more or less objective to you

Page Break

Display This Question:

If language = English

r2 Please take a look at this review

Display This Question:

If language = German

g2 Please take a look at this review

helpfulness_r2 Please evaluate the helpfulness of this review

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
extremely irrelevant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	extremely relevant
not at all useful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	of great usefulness
not helpful at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	extremely helpful

helpfulness_exp_r2 Please explain what about the review makes it seem more or less helpful to you

End of Block: review2

Start of Block: review6

Display This Question:

If language = English

r6 Please take a look at this review

Display This Question:

If language = German

g6 Please take a look at this review



O_r6.1 The information I read from the product review was very opinion-based

- ☐ Strongly disagree (7)
 - ☐ Disagree (6)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (5)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (3)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Strongly agree (1)
-

O_r6.2 The information I read from the product review was very objective

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly agree (7)
-



O_r6.3 The reviewer clearly separates facts and opinions

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly agree (7)
-

O_r6.4 The reviewer is rational

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
- ☐ Agree (6)
- ☐ Strongly agree (7)



O_r6.5 The information I read from the product review was subjectively written

- ☐ Strongly disagree (7)
- ☐ Disagree (6)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (5)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (3)
- ☐ Agree (2)
- ☐ Strongly agree (1)

O_exp_r6 Please explain what about the review makes it seem more or less objective to you

Display This Question:

If language = English

r6 Please take a look at this review

Display This Question:

If language = German

g6 Please take a look at this review

helpfulness_r6 Please evaluate the helpfulness of this review

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
extremely irrelevant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	extremely relevant
not at all useful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	of great usefulness
not helpful at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	extremely helpful

helpfulness_exp_r6 Please explain what about the review makes it seem more or less helpful to you

End of Block: review6

Start of Block: review5

Display This Question:
If language = English

r5 Please take a look at this review

.

Display This Question:
If language = German

g5 Please take a look at this review



O_r5.1 The information I read from the product review was very opinion-based

- ☐ Strongly disagree (7)
 - ☐ Disagree (6)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (5)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (3)
 - ☐ Agree (2)
 - ☐ Strongly agree (1)
-

O_r5.2 The information I read from the product review was very objective

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly agree (7)
-



O_r5.3 The reviewer clearly separates facts and opinions

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
 - ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
 - ☐ Agree (6)
 - ☐ Strongly agree (7)
-

O_r5.4 The reviewer is rational

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (3)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (5)
- ☐ Agree (6)
- ☐ Strongly agree (7)



O_r5.5 The information I read from the product review was subjectively written

- ☐ Strongly disagree (7)
- ☐ Disagree (6)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (5)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (4)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (3)
- ☐ Agree (2)
- ☐ Strongly agree (1)

O_exp_r5 Please explain what about the review makes it seem more or less objective to you

Page Break

Display This Question:

If language = English

r5 Please take a look at this review

Display This Question:

If language = German

g5 Please take a look at this review

helpfulness_r5 Please evaluate the helpfulness of this review

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
extremely irrelevant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	extremely relevant
not at all useful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	of great usefulness
not helpful at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	extremely helpful

helpfulness_exp_r5 Please explain what about the review makes it seem more or less helpful to you

Appendix F – Codebook

Category	(Sub-)Codes	Explanation	Examples	α
Content				.77
	Information	Comment on the type(s) of information (not) given in the review	“Verifiable information” (P7, R1) “Pointing out ride closures, the closure of a pathway, and lack of food options is very objective” (P137, R1)	
	Generalisability	The given information is/is not applicable to a number of people	“Mentions difficulties that are relatable” (P95, R1)	
	Facts	Mentions the inclusion/absence of (measurable) information	“It gives more fact-based information” (P86, R3) “Allegations” (P14, R5)	
	Tips*	Mentions advice given in the review	“They give good tips” (P135, R3)	
	Detail*	Mentions the depth of information given	“It is helpful because it goes into detail” (P1, R2)	
	Experience			
	Prior	Mention of the reviewer’s experience with the topic of theme parks	“Personal comparisons with other parks and experiences” (P26, R2)	
	Personal	Mention of a reviewer’s experience as individualistic	“Less objective, as it represents an experience of a single person” (P113, R3)	
	Opinion	Comment on the reviewer giving/not giving their own opinion	“Very opinionated and expressive” (P8, R5)	
	Reasoning	Comment on the argumentative <i>strength</i> of the review	“Lots of unqualified statements” (P117, R2)	

Structure			.88
Sidedness	Mention of the argumentative <i>structure</i> of the review	“Not only focused on one negative point” (P140, R4) “No criticism, everything just awesome” (P66, R2)	
Language	Comment on the language used by the reviewer	“The harsh tone makes it very subjective” (P28, R1)	
Emotions	Mention of the inclusion/absence of emotion	“Less objective because too emotional” (P114, R1)	
Length*	Comment on the length of the review	“Way too long.” (P103, R1)	

Note. *Only applied in comments on perceived helpfulness.

Appendix G – Search Log

date	database	search string	notes
22.03.	Scopus	((("experience good" OR "experience goods") AND NOT "experience better") AND definition*) sort by relevance	only 1 result; low in relevance; snowballing from this result lead to promising sources
22.03.	Scopus	("experience goods" AND (definition OR framework)) sort by relevance	#: 23; around 12 of relevance; snowballing lead to further results
22.03.	Scopus	("experience goods" AND ("consumer review*" OR "customer review*") AND helpfulness) sort by relevance	#: 4; all relevant
22.03.	Scopus	("experience goods" AND reviews)	#:89; first page includes results of high relevance
22.03.	Scopus	((scale OR measure) AND ((objectiveness OR objectivity) OR (subjectiveness OR subjectivity))) sort by relevance	search still too broad, ~2000 results; first page appears to have results high in relevance
22.03.	Scopus	((("consumer review*" OR "customer review*") AND ((objectiveness OR objectivity) OR (subjectiveness OR subjectivity)) AND (scale OR measure)) sort by relevance	#:2; both relevant
23.03.	Scopus	(classification* AND ("goods" AND NOT better) AND experience) sort by relevance	#:100; first page shows numerous relevant results, if not on their own for an opportunity to snowball
24.03.	Scopus	((review* OR rating* OR "consumer review*" OR "customer review*" OR "consumer rating*" OR "customer rating*") AND helpfulness AND objectiv*) sort by relevance	#:250; much too broad
24.03.	Scopus	((("consumer review*" OR "customer review*" OR "consumer rating*" OR "customer rating*") AND helpfulness AND objectiv*) sort by relevance	#:8; about half relevant, due to inclusion of phrase such as "the study's objective"
24.03.	Scopus	((rating* OR "consumer review*" OR "consumer rating*" OR "customer review*" OR "customer rating*") AND ("amusement park*" OR "theme park*")) sort by relevance	#:113; many less relevant, due to formulations like "this paper reviews"
24.03.	Scopus	((rating* OR "consumer review*" OR "consumer rating*" OR "customer review*" OR "customer rating*") AND ("amusement park*" OR "theme park*")) sort by relevance	#:21; excluded "review*" from the previous search string; narrower search, results seem more relevant
26.03.	Scopus	((("theme park" OR "amusement park") AND ("word-of-mouth" OR "word of mouth" OR "WOM")) sort by relevance	#:9; almost all relevant also very current

26.03.	Scopus	(read* AND ("online review*" OR "product review*" OR "consumer review*") AND antecedents)	#:19; about half relevant based on title, abstracts show less relevance for some → actual results ~5–6
		sort by relevance	

Search Log

Notes. Perceived relevance in notes column is based on a first skimming of title, abstract, and keywords. A classification as relevant here might have been rejected after more detailed reading. Google Scholar searches for specific literature found through snowballing are not denoted in the search log.