

Free Games VS Paid Games: Do Reviews tell the truth?

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Introduction & Background

Video games are one of the most popular forms of entertainment today, with player engagement often influenced by factors such as user reviews, game pricing, genre, and game mode. On platforms like Steam, reviews play a key role in shaping public perception and game popularity.

Main Research Questions:

1. How do price, genre, and game mode (singleplayer vs. multiplayer) influence user reviews of Steam games?
2. Do free games receive significantly different user review scores compared to paid games on Steam?
3. What factors, price, genre, or multiplayer functionality, are most strongly associated with positive user reviews on Steam?

Methodology

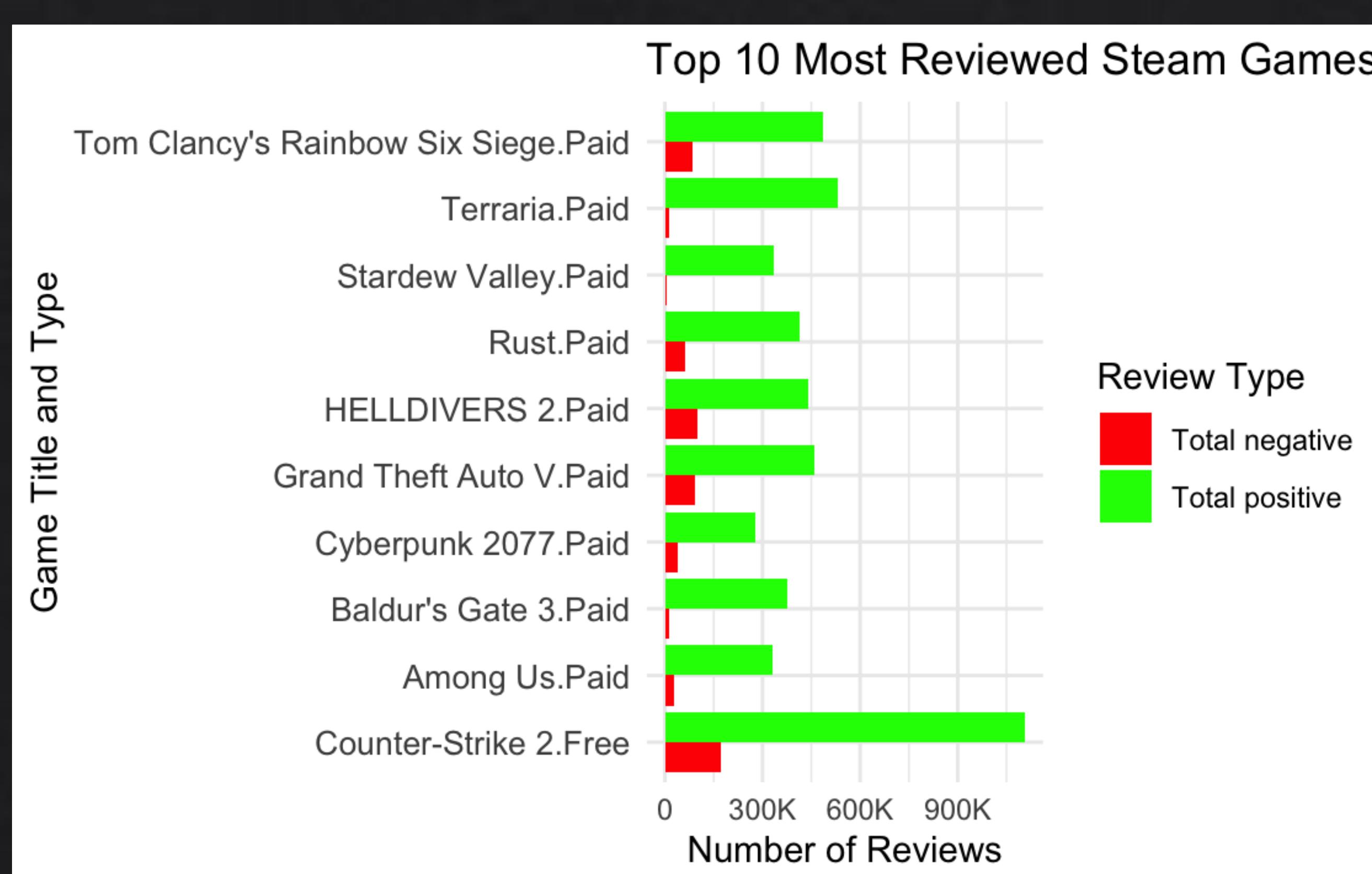
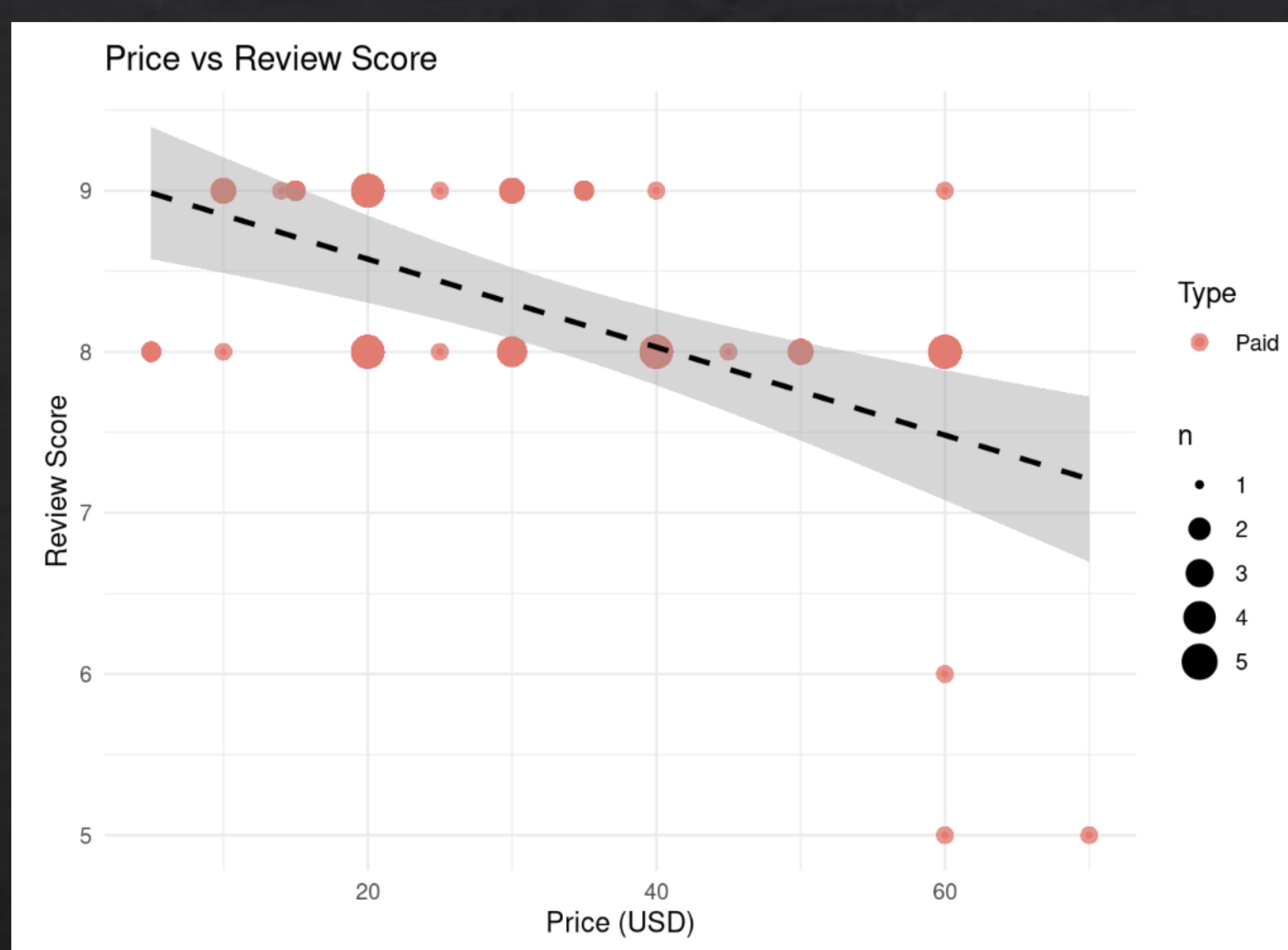
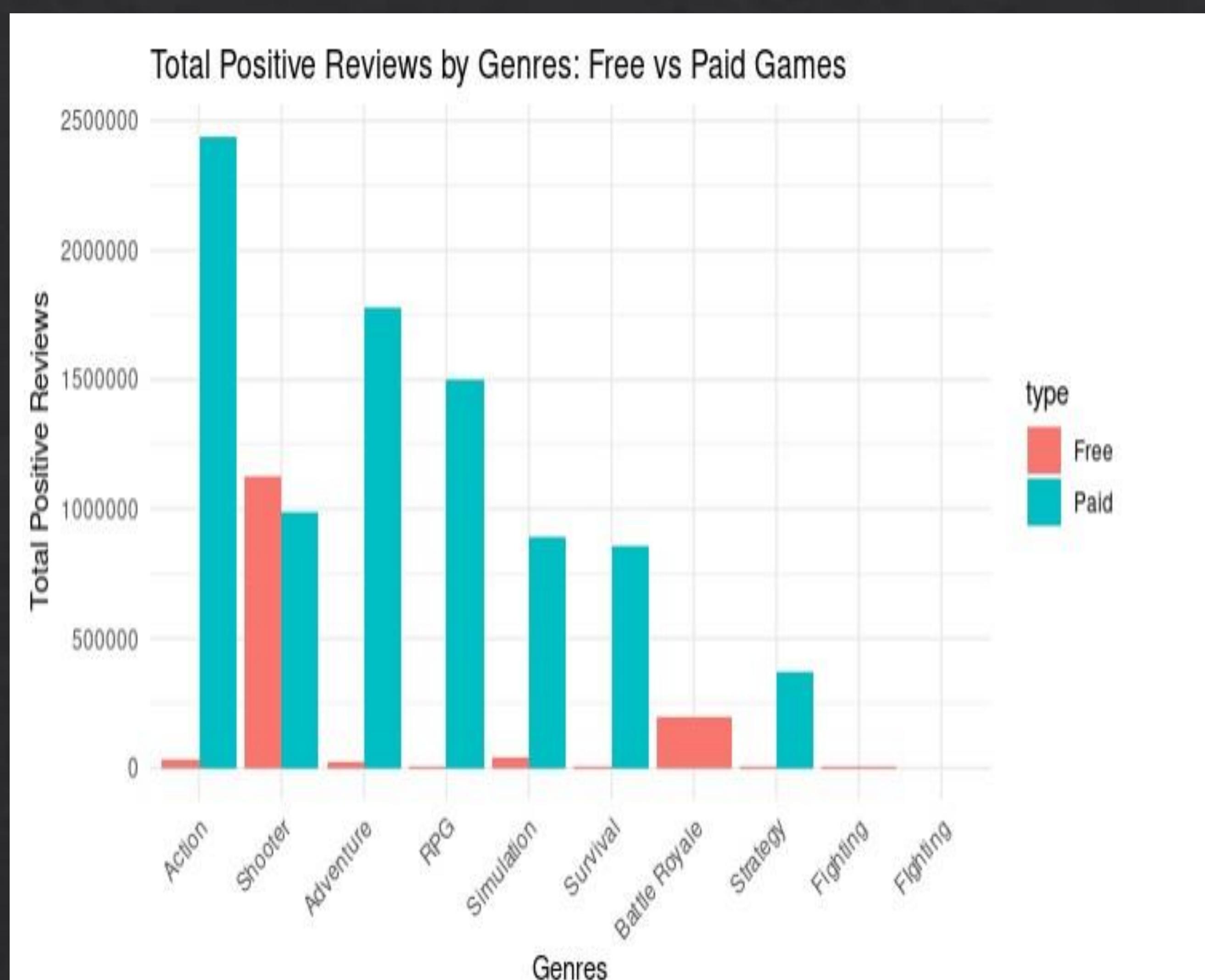
We collected data from Steam on a sample of games, focusing on:

- user review scores
- Price (free or paid),
- Genre

- Multiplayer or singleplayer features.

We analyzed average review ratings across these groups.

We used descriptive statistics and visualized the results with charts and graphs to see if we could identify patterns and correlations between game type and user reviews.



Results

Our results showed these main points

- Paid games get more reviews and more positive feedback than free games
- Most of the top-reviewed games are paid
- Paid games have much higher totals of positive reviews
- paid games, especially in the \$5–\$20 range, tend to have higher review scores. While
- some free or cheap games are highly rated, price doesn't always mean better quality.

Conclusion

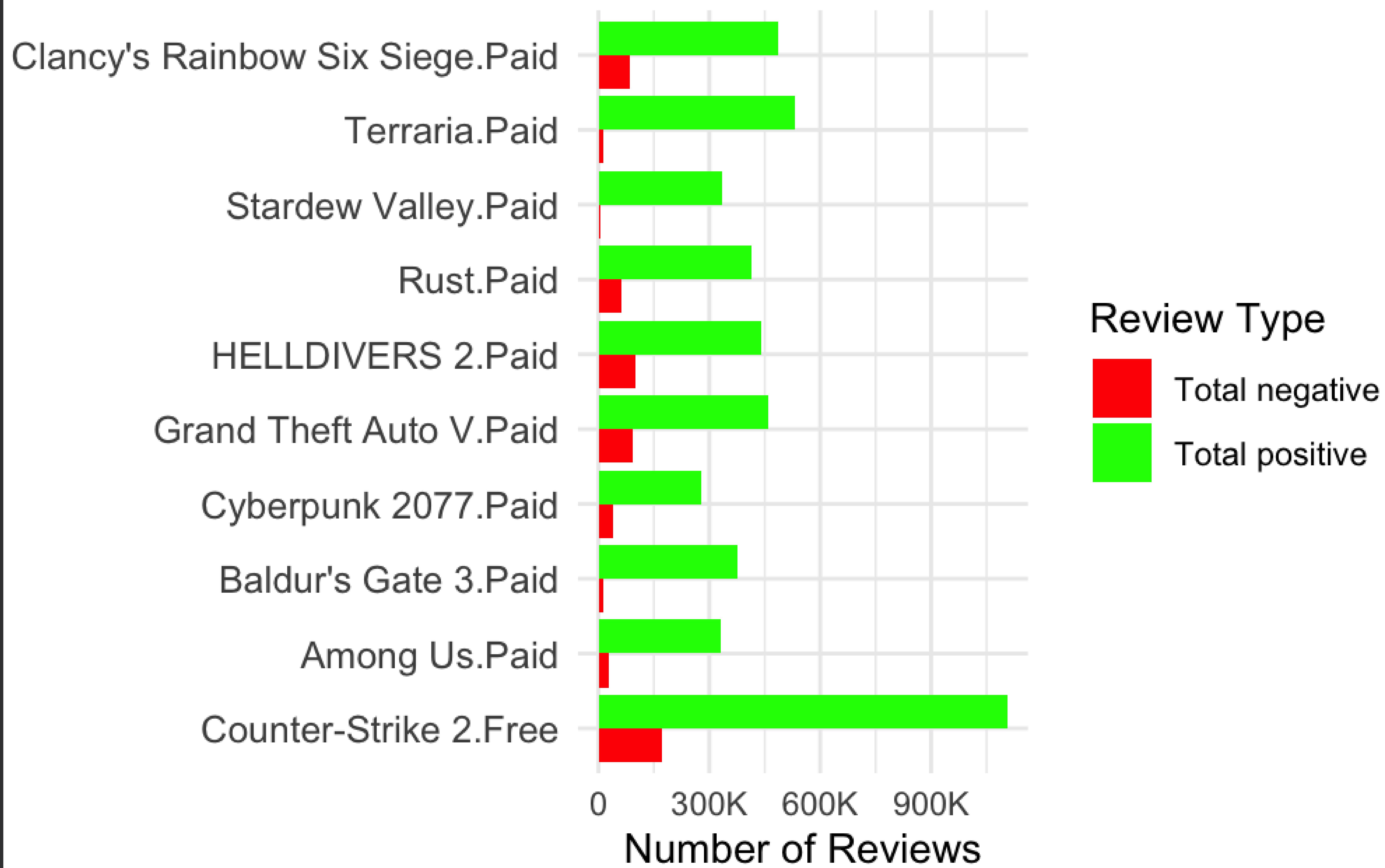
This study examined how factors like price, genre, and game mode influence user reviews on Steam and our findings show that paid games, especially those priced between \$5 and \$20, tend to receive more reviews and higher positive ratings than free games. However, price alone doesn't guarantee better reviews, as highly rated free games often succeed due to strong multiplayer features and active communities.

Overall, user satisfaction appears to be driven more by gameplay experience and social features than by cost. These insights can help developers and players better understand what makes a game well-received on platforms like Steam.

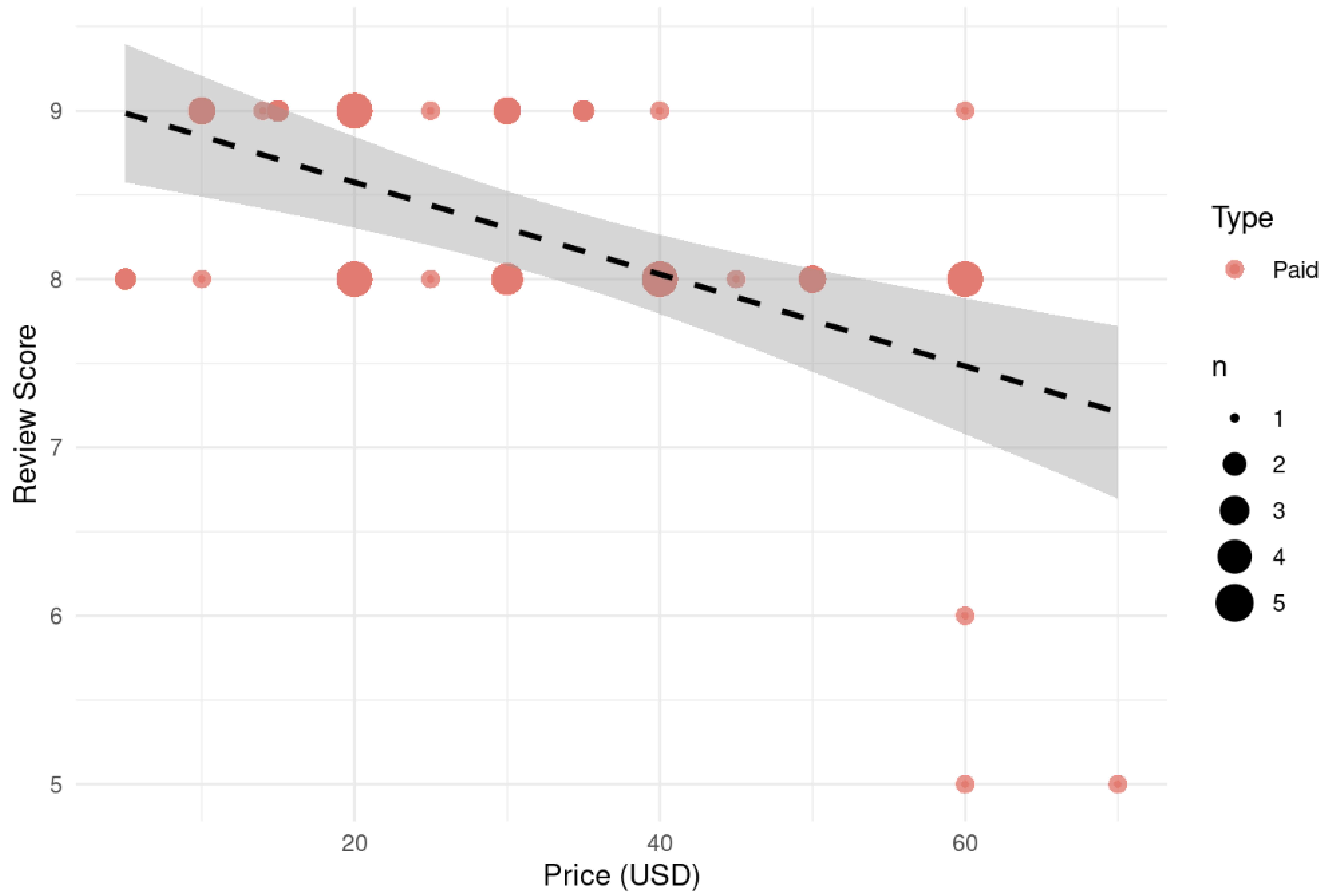
References

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- Kaggle: Steam Games Dataset. <https://www.kaggle.com/datasets/ftronkongames/steam-games-dataset>
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Top 10 Most Reviewed Steam Games



Price vs Review Score



Total Positive Reviews by Genres: Free vs Paid Games

