


Consumers' Digital Shopping Experience: A Study of the Factors Influencing Purchase Decision

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ABSTRACT

Digital shopping has been the most imperious facet of e-retailing, and it has become an essential part of consumers' lifestyles. Besides the various advantages offered to digital shoppers, there are certain difficulties faced by them while making an online purchase. Therefore, it is significant to identify the factors influencing the consumer's purchase decision in the digital shopping context. The study empirically investigates the association of various factors related to consumers digital shopping experience on the purchase decision. The results reveal that the seven factors—website aesthetics, accessibility, trust, price offerings, security, delivery, and quality—have a positive association with consumer digital purchase decision. The findings will help the online traders to understand the satisfaction experienced by the consumers in the digital shopping context and develop strategies to attract new consumers and retain existing ones.

KEYWORDS

Accessibility, Consumers, Delivery, Digital Shopping, Price Offerings, Purchase Decision, Quality, Security, Trust, Website Aesthetics

INTRODUCTION

Digitisation has transformed the integral lifestyle of people from conventional shopping to digital buying. The ease of buying from digital platforms has become an obligation for individuals, mainly people living in the cities. Digital marketing offers supreme opportunities for the retail segment as it affords a significant revolution from traditional shops to virtual stores that function at a minimum cost (NDA, 2015). The progressions in information and communication technology (ICT) have increased the usage of smartphones and the Internet has been accelerating digital trading in the Indian market (Rao & Patro, 2017). This has been driving online vendors to provide attractive options such as one-day delivery, doorstep trails, payment using mobile UPI apps, simple check-outs, ordering through WhatsApp, etc., for a much better consumer shopping experience (Chaturvedi & Gupta, 2014). Moreover, practising international marketing strategies is also attracting the Indian retail market segment (Patro, 2018).

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The growing number of digital shoppers is boosting sales through the Internet. As per the survey by ASSOCHAM (2016), consumers are shifting towards digital shopping because of the competitive prices/concessions, time-saving, shopping at ease at anytime and anywhere, accessibility to a variety of products, comparison among different models/brands, and comprehensive product/service information provided by the online traders. The other features accountable for the progress of digital trading are hostile marketing and flash sales discounts, daily deals, providing loyalty plans, and so on have been driving consumers to buy through digital stores (PWC, 2015).

In the digital era, shoppers have gained incredible experience and hence, recognising the elements influencing consumers has become imperative (Jaiswal & Singh, 2020). According to Palmer (2010), competitive advantage can be attained through efficient management of buyers' experiences. Thus, the buyer's experience arises as a significant aspect that motivates the consumer in using digital platforms for shopping purposes (Izogo & Jayawardhena, 2018). A survey conducted by Indian Brand Equity Foundation (2018), identified that increased usage of smartphones, enhanced infrastructure, availability of low-cost mobiles, digital India program, introduction to 4G network, and growing consumer choices are the factors leading the country to become the fast-growing digital marketplaces globally.

In contrast to conventional shopping, digital shopping has gained volatile progress as it signifies a more economic and appropriate means of buying. The digital marketplace offers buyers the required information for product comparisons, the opportunity to get competitive prices, a wide range of product selections and easy access to required products (Katta & Patro, 2017a). It also offers a greater shopping experience and consummation to contemporary buyers looking for expediency and speediness in procuring the products (Yu & Wu, 2007; Saha & Mathew, 2021). Therefore, online retailers need to retain digital shoppers for getting competitive benefits in the market. When the shoppers are pleased with an online trader, they may repurchase from the same retailer (Tsai & Huang, 2007). The consumer's experiences throughout the various phases of purchase behaviour will result in their satisfaction with particular products and online traders. The digital buyer's experience is primarily based on the information provided by online traders as the consumers do not have physical contact with the product (Patro, 2019). Thus, it is evident that the information provided by the e-retailers can influence the buyer's satisfaction during the information search phase as well as the purchase decision phase (Bleier *et al.*, 2019).

For delivering superior service quality to the customers, the e-vendors must design an attractive website which comprises the required information, alluring visual content, a simple payment gateway, offer competitive prices/discounts, a speedy checkout process, a faster delivery system and guarantee the consumer's security and privacy (Rita *et al.*, 2019). While evaluating the consumer's online purchase decision process over the Internet from online vendors, several dimensions are to be measured by the online traders in satisfying the consumer's demand and contending in the digital market environment. To understand the influence of these factors on digital consumers, it is imperative to identify the various factors enabling online traders to make assessments of buyers' perceived value towards digital shopping. Thus, the anticipated research question is *to know various factors influencing consumers' digital shopping experience associated with the purchase decision.*

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

An appealing consumer shopping experience has been an imperative facet that drives the success of any business organisation. Nowadays, marketing researchers are mostly focusing on consumers' digital buying behaviour and experience (Nambisan & Watt, 2011). The online web portals are being designed in such a way that they are dynamic and more interactive by offering a high-quality interface to the buyers. The consumer's digital buying attitude is extremely influenced by their shopping experience (Bridges & Florsheim, 2008). Mosteller *et al.* (2014) identified the implication of the digital shopping experience by stating that added scrutiny is essential to analyse the effect of key variables on the digital consumer's experience. Rod *et al.* (2009) stated that reliable response, attentiveness and ease of use

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