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Deciphering the digital basket: Assessing the interdependence of key factors driving online buying behavior

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Abstract

This study analyzes the interconnected psychological and structural drivers of digital consumer choices. The research comprises sample size of 120 respondents, specifically students of under graduation, post graduation and PhD through random sampling. For data collection a self structured questionnaire was given to respondents via online platform and interview schedule. The research analysis confirms a highly interdependent ecosystem of consumer perceptions. Factors like seamless access is strongly tied to user convenience while, platform friction directly compromises consumer trust, with overly complex checkout procedures exhibiting a strong positive link to heightened consumer skepticism. Ultimately, the research concludes that digital shopping choices are governed by a dynamic balance between user simplicity and perceived risk, demonstrating that e-commerce retailers cannot rely on isolated promotions but must instead curate highly integrated, frictionless digital environments to dismantle consumer hesitation.

Keywords: E-Commerce, digital basket, factors affecting online buying, online buying behavior

Introduction

Within the modern global marketplace, electronic commerce has evolved from a novel alternative shopping method into the foundational bedrock of retail. As digital transactional volumes climb into the trillions globally, the virtual shopping cart the "digital basket" now serves as the ultimate battleground for understanding consumer choice. In e-commerce, digital shoppers typically viewed as linear thinkers, suggesting that adjusting isolated elements, like lowering costs or polishing website visuals, would guarantee a successful transaction. According to Fauzi *et al.* 2018 ^[1], the discounts, free gifts, and high quality of online stores have convinced consumers to engage in online buying. Yet, alongside the evolution of the online commercial landscape, consumer cognitive processing has grown far more intricate. The attitudes towards online shopping play a crucial role in shaping the online buying behavior of consumers in India. A business might feature highly aggressive discounts, yet find those financial efforts entirely undermined if the checkout process is hosted on a clunky, outdated layout that subtly triggers safety anxieties. On the flip side, an emerging, unknown brand can effectively dissolve consumer skepticism by strategically blending pricing transparency, strong peer validation, and a frictionless checkout path. Product preferences, customer issues, a greater quantity of discounted products, risk perception, and after-sales services are among the elements that influence customer satisfaction with online

shopping [Lakshmanan (2016)] ^[2]. Online seller can also offer incentives such as free shipping or easy return policies to encourage hesitant customers to make the switch to online shopping. Ultimately, understanding and addressing consumer attitudes towards online shopping is the key to attracting and retaining loyal customers in the competitive e-commerce market.

Methodology

To achieve the objectives of the present study, the study area was purposively selected namely three districts of U.P i.e., Ayodhya, Lucknow and Kanpur. Respondents were selected randomly for the study. Total 120 respondents (under graduate, post graduate and PhD students from different stream) were selected for the present study. The self-structured questionnaire was prepared in order to collect information to obtain the objectives of the study. For collection of online data from the respondents the self structured questionnaire was disseminated via various platforms like whatsapp, gmail, etc. For the collection of offline data, structured interview schedule was prepared to get responses from the respondents. In 120 responses from the respondents, there were 90 responses received from online survey and the rest 30 responses were collected from offline/ structured interview schedule. Statistical analysis was done using SPSS.

Major Findings

Table 1: Socio- Demographic Profile of respondents N=120

Sr. No.	Distribution of Respondents According to	Frequency(n)	Per cent%
A.	Gender		
	Male	35	29.2
	Female	85	70.8
B.	Religion		
	Hindu	109	90.8
	Muslim	7	5.8
	Sikh	4	3.4
C.	Caste		
	General	72	60.0
	OBC	28	23.3
	SC/ ST	20	16.7
D.	Type of family		
	Nuclear family	75	62.5
	Joint family	45	37.5
E.	Family size		
	3 to 4 members	43	35.8
	4 to 6 members	44	36.7
	6 to 8 members	14	11.7
	8 to 10 members	19	15.8
F.	Marital status		
	Single	114	95.0
	Married	6	5.0
	Divorcee	-	-
G.	Household income monthly		
	Below Rs. 1230/-	2	1.7
	Rs. 1230 to Rs. 2464/-	17	14.2
	Rs. 2465 to Rs. 4109/-	16	13.3
	Rs. 4110 to Rs. 8219/-	12	10.0
	Rs. 8220 and above	73	60.8
H.	Degree Pursuing		
	UG	68	56.7
	PG	34	28.3
	PhD	18	15.0

Table 2: Correlation matrix between factors determining online buying behavior

	Easily accessible	Complex procedure	Skepticism	Perceived enjoyment	Convenience
Easily accessible	1				
Complex procedure	-0.0597	1			
Skepticism	0.0941	0.6126*	1		
Perceived enjoyment	0.4170*	0.3137*	0.4353*	1	
Convenience	0.4858*	0.0589	0.1702	0.5682*	1

(* significant at 5.0% level)

Table 2 reveals the correlation matrix between factors determining online buying behaviour and shows that easily accessible factor was found to be negatively correlated with the factor complex procedure (-0.0597) whereas positively significant correlated with the factor perceived enjoyment (0.4170*) and convenience (0.4858*). Hence, according to complex procedure online shopping is a frustrating and clumsy process. And on the contrary, according to perceived enjoyment and convenience, the shopping procedure is fun, saves time, mode of payment is convenient and provides satisfactory after sales services. While the factor complex procedure is positively significant correlated with the factor skepticism (0.6126*) as the consumer were having doubts about quality of the products, might not receive what they had ordered or their transaction detail may reach to the third party and the factor perceived enjoyment (0.3137*) as it complex to ask for opinion in every shopping process or in sharing experiences. The factor skepticism is positively significant

correlated at 5% level with the factor perceived enjoyment (0.4353*) as it can control the fun or impulsive buying. Perceived enjoyment is positively significant correlated at 5% level with the factor convenience (0.5682*) as online shopping is fun process and provide various convenient facilities like delivery, low price, secured payment, etc.

Table 3: Factors Determining Online Buying Behavior of College Students

Online shopping behavior	Mean	Median	S.D.
Easily accessible	58.5	59	7.9
Complex procedure	24.1	24	4.8
Skepticism	31.7	32	5.2
Perceived enjoyment	20.0	20	3.9
Convenience	40.7	41	5.1
F-test	917.72*		P<0.05%
SE (diff)	0.72		
C.D. (0.05)	1.40*		

Table 3 reveals factors of online buying behavior, online shopping preferred for easily accessible with overall mean 58.5, median 59 and standard deviation 7.9 followed by convenience was preferred by respondents with overall mean 40.7, median 41 and standard deviation 5.1. Pise *et al.* (2021)^[3] found four variables, such as simplicity of use, time and effort savings, and lack of store visits, have the biggest impact on the consumer. On the contrary, Skepticism was preferred by respondents as on third place with overall mean of 31.7, median 32 and standard deviation 5.2 whereas complex procedure with overall mean 24.1, median 24 and standard deviation 4.8 on the fourth place and at last perceived enjoyment respectively. The standard error of difference was found to be 0.72 and observed value of F cal 917.72** significant at 1% level. Hence, there was significant difference of mean was found to be in between these factors and the value of critical difference at 5% significant 1.40* concluded that easily accessible factor of online buying behavior was more determining factor as compared to other factors. Additionally, Rajayogan and Muthumani (2018)^[4] also revealed that consumers prefer easily accessibility as a major determining factor in buying process.

Conclusion

Ultimately, this study concludes that student purchasing decisions within the digital marketplace are dictated by a deeply interconnected ecosystem of consumer perceptions rather than standalone transactional variables. Although seamless accessibility and operational convenience emerge as the primary engines accelerating online buying behavior, their power is heavily conditioned by the structural design of the retail platform. The robust statistical relationship identified between complicated checkout procedures and consumer skepticism reveals that layout friction does not merely annoy shoppers, it actively deeper the anxieties regarding product reliability and data leaks. This anxiety, in turn, serves as a psychological brake that dampens impulsive, enjoyment-driven buying habits. Consequently, e-commerce firms and digital strategists must abandon disjointed platform fixes and surface level discount campaigns. To secure lasting customer retention, businesses must prioritize the cultivation of unified, highly intuitive, and transparent digital environments that systematically dismantle consumer hesitation at the critical moment of transaction.

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