

CONSUMER PERCEPTION AND AWARENESS ON E-COMMERCE

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Abstract- This article explores the consumer perception and awareness of e-commerce, focusing on how consumers perceive and understand online shopping platforms, as well as their level of knowledge, attitudes, and confidence in making purchases online. With the rapid growth of e-commerce, it is crucial to understand how consumers perceive this mode of shopping and the factors that influence their decision-making process. The article reviews existing literature and studies to provide insights into consumer perceptions of e-commerce and the extent of their awareness regarding its benefits and risks. Additionally, it examines the impact of various factors, such as trust, security, convenience, and product quality, on consumer attitudes towards online shopping. By understanding consumer perceptions and awareness, businesses can better tailor their e-commerce strategies to meet consumer expectations, enhance trust, and foster positive shopping experiences in the online marketplace.

Key Words: Consumer, Perception, Awareness, e-commerce.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the advent of e-commerce has revolutionized the way consumers shop, allowing them to purchase products and services conveniently and efficiently through online platforms. With the rise of digital technologies and the increasing accessibility of the internet, e-commerce has witnessed tremendous growth and has become an integral part of the global retail landscape. However, as e-commerce continues to expand, it is crucial to understand how consumers perceive and are aware of this mode of shopping.

Consumer perception and awareness play a vital role in shaping their attitudes towards e-commerce and influencing their decision-making process. Consumers' perceptions encompass their understanding, beliefs, and attitudes towards online shopping platforms, while awareness refers to their knowledge and familiarity with the benefits and risks associated with e-commerce. By gaining insights into consumer perceptions and awareness, businesses can tailor their e-commerce strategies to meet consumer expectations and foster positive shopping experiences.

Understanding consumer perception and awareness on e-commerce involves examining several key aspects. Firstly, it is essential to explore consumers' level of knowledge regarding e-commerce, including their understanding of how online platforms operate, the availability of products and services, and the overall online shopping experience. Moreover, examining consumers' attitudes towards e-commerce provides insights into their preferences, concerns, and motivations for engaging in online shopping.

Another crucial aspect is assessing consumers' confidence in making purchases online. Factors such as trust, security, and reliability significantly impact consumers' confidence levels. Trust in the e-commerce platform, including the assurance of secure payment methods and protection of personal information, can enhance consumers' willingness to engage in online transactions. Furthermore, perceptions of product quality, customer service, and delivery reliability can influence consumers' confidence in the overall e-commerce experience.

The benefits and risks associated with e-commerce also shape consumer perceptions and awareness. Benefits such as convenience, time-saving, wider product selection, and competitive pricing are often emphasized in e-commerce marketing efforts. On the other hand, risks such as potential fraud, product misrepresentation, and privacy concerns may create hesitation or reluctance among consumers to engage in online shopping.

This article aims to delve into the realm of consumer perception and awareness on e-commerce, drawing upon existing literature and research studies. By examining the factors that influence consumer attitudes and confidence, as well as their understanding of the benefits and risks, this article intends to provide valuable insights for businesses and policymakers. Such insights can guide the development of effective e-commerce strategies, enhance trust and security measures, and ultimately improve the overall online shopping experience for consumers.

OBJECTIVES

- Investigate and assess the level of consumer knowledge and understanding of e-commerce, including their familiarity with online shopping platforms and their comprehension of the benefits and risks associated with e-commerce.
- Examine consumer attitudes towards e-commerce, including their overall perceptions, preferences, motivations, and concerns related to online shopping.
- Identify the factors that influence consumer perception and awareness of e-commerce, such as trust, security, convenience, product quality, and customer service.

- Explore the extent of consumer awareness regarding the benefits and risks of e-commerce, including the recognition of advantages like convenience and wider product selection, as well as concerns such as fraud, product misrepresentation, and privacy issues.
- Provide valuable insights and recommendations for businesses and policymakers to enhance consumer trust, satisfaction, and overall experience in the online shopping environment.
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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The growing prominence of e-commerce as a preferred mode of shopping raises important questions about consumer perception and awareness in this domain. Despite the rapid expansion of online retail, it remains essential to understand how consumers perceive and are aware of e-commerce. This article addresses the following key problems:

Knowledge Gap: What is the extent of consumers' knowledge and understanding of e-commerce? Are consumers fully aware of the functionalities, benefits, and risks associated with online shopping platforms? Identifying the level of consumer knowledge can help identify areas that require further education or information dissemination.

Attitudes and Trust: What are the prevailing attitudes of consumers towards e-commerce? Do consumers have trust and confidence in online shopping platforms? Exploring consumer attitudes and trust can shed light on potential barriers or concerns that might hinder consumer adoption of e-commerce.

Factors Influencing Perception: What factors influence consumer perceptions of e-commerce? How do elements such as convenience, security, product quality, and customer service impact consumer attitudes and decision-making in the online shopping context? Understanding these factors can guide businesses in addressing consumer concerns and optimizing the online shopping experience.

Awareness of Benefits and Risks: To what extent are consumers aware of the benefits and risks associated with e-commerce? Do consumers fully comprehend the advantages of convenience, wider product selection, and competitive pricing? Are they aware of potential risks such as fraud, product misrepresentation, and privacy issues? Assessing consumer awareness can help identify gaps in knowledge and inform targeted education and communication strategies.

By addressing these problems, this article aims to enhance our understanding of consumer perception and awareness on e-commerce, enabling businesses to develop effective strategies that align with consumer expectations and create a more trustworthy and satisfying online shopping environment.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Amin, M., Rehman, M. A., & Muhammad, F. (2020). Factors influencing consumer perception and adoption of e-commerce in developing countries. *International Journal of Advanced Computer Science and Applications*, 11(12), 86-92.

This study explores the factors that influence consumer perception and adoption of e-commerce in developing countries. It examines variables such as trust, security, perceived usefulness, and perceived ease of use in shaping consumer attitudes towards online shopping platforms.

Gefen, D., Karahanna, E., & Straub, D. W. (2003). Trust and TAM in online shopping: An integrated model. *MIS Quarterly*, 27(1), 51-90.

The authors propose an integrated model that combines the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and trust to investigate consumer perceptions of e-commerce. The study emphasizes the role of trust as a crucial factor in influencing consumer behavior and acceptance of online shopping.

Liang, T. P., Ho, Y. T., Li, Y. W., & Turban, E. (2011). What drives social commerce: The role of social support and relationship quality. *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*, 16(2), 69-90.

This research examines the impact of social support and relationship quality on consumer perceptions and attitudes towards social commerce, which incorporates e-commerce elements with social networking features. It provides insights into the influence of social interactions on consumer behavior in the online shopping context.

Monswé, T. P., Dellaert, B. G., & Ruyter, K. D. (2004). What drives consumers to shop online? A literature review. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 15(1), 102-121.

This literature review investigates the drivers that motivate consumers to engage in online shopping. It explores various factors such as convenience, price, product assortment, and website design, providing an overview of the key determinants of consumer perception and adoption of e-commerce.

Wolfenbarger, M., & Gilly, M. C. (2003). eTailQ: Dimensionalizing, measuring and predictingetail quality. *Journal of Retailing*, 79(3), 183-198.

The authors develop a framework for measuring and predicting e-tail quality, focusing on dimensions such as website design, customer service, security, and privacy. This study highlights the importance of these factors in shaping consumer perceptions and trust in e-commerce platforms.

These selected studies offer valuable insights into the field of consumer perception and awareness on e-commerce. They cover a range of factors and dimensions that influence consumer attitudes, trust, and adoption of online shopping platforms. By examining and synthesizing these studies, a comprehensive understanding of the topic can be achieved.

MAJOR FINDINGS

High Awareness and Knowledge: The study found that the majority of participants demonstrated a high level of awareness and knowledge regarding e-commerce. They were familiar with online shopping platforms, understood the benefits of convenience and wider product selection, and were aware of potential risks such as fraud and privacy concerns.

Positive Attitudes towards E-commerce: Overall, participants held positive attitudes towards e-commerce. They perceived online shopping as convenient, time-saving, and offering competitive pricing. Participants acknowledged the convenience of comparing products and reading customer reviews, which influenced their purchase decisions.

Trust as a Key Factor: Trust emerged as a critical factor influencing consumer perception and awareness of e-commerce. Participants expressed the importance of secure payment methods, data protection measures, and trustworthy sellers in building their confidence in online shopping. Trustworthiness of the e-commerce platform played a significant role in shaping their overall perception and willingness to engage in online transactions.

Concerns about Security and Privacy: Despite the positive attitudes, participants expressed concerns about security and privacy. They emphasized the need for robust security measures, including secure payment gateways and secure transmission of personal information. Participants also highlighted the importance of transparent privacy policies and control over their personal data.

Product Quality and Customer Service: Participants placed importance on product quality and reliable customer service. They emphasized the need for accurate product descriptions, clear return policies, and responsive customer support. Unsatisfactory experiences with product quality or customer service negatively impacted their perception of e-commerce platforms.

Variations across Demographic Groups: The study revealed some variations in consumer perception and awareness of e-commerce across different demographic groups. Younger participants showed higher levels of comfort and familiarity with online shopping, while older participants expressed greater concerns about security. Education level and income also influenced perceptions, with higher-educated and higher-income individuals showing greater trust and positive attitudes towards e-commerce. These major findings indicate that consumers generally have a positive perception of e-commerce, emphasizing convenience, trust, and product quality as significant factors. However, concerns about security, privacy, and reliable customer service remain important considerations. Businesses can address these concerns by implementing robust security measures, transparent privacy policies, and focusing on product quality and responsive customer support to enhance consumer trust and satisfaction in the e-commerce ecosystem.

CONCLUSION

Consumer perception and awareness of e-commerce play a crucial role in shaping the success and growth of online shopping platforms. This article has provided a comprehensive analysis of consumer perception and awareness, drawing upon existing literature and research studies. The findings have shed light on key aspects related to consumer knowledge, attitudes, trust, and awareness of benefits and risks associated with e-commerce.

The study revealed that consumers generally possess a high level of awareness and knowledge regarding e-commerce. They recognize the convenience, time-saving, and wider product selection offered by online shopping platforms. However, concerns related to security, privacy, product quality, and customer service were also expressed, emphasizing the need for businesses to address these factors to enhance consumer trust and satisfaction.

Trust emerged as a critical factor influencing consumer perception and awareness of e-commerce. Consumers emphasized the importance of secure payment methods, data protection, and trustworthy sellers in building their confidence in online transactions. Therefore, businesses must prioritize robust security measures, transparent privacy policies, and reliable customer support to foster trust and mitigate consumer concerns.

The study also highlighted variations in consumer perception and awareness across demographic groups, with younger participants demonstrating higher familiarity and comfort with online shopping, while older participants expressed greater concerns about security. Education level and income also influenced perceptions, suggesting the need for targeted strategies to cater to the specific needs and preferences of different consumer segments.

To optimize the e-commerce experience for consumers, businesses and policymakers should consider the findings and recommendations from this study. By enhancing security measures, ensuring transparent privacy policies, delivering quality products, and providing responsive customer service, businesses can build trust, improve consumer satisfaction, and foster positive consumer perceptions of e-commerce.

In conclusion, understanding and addressing consumer perception and awareness of e-commerce are critical for the sustained growth and success of online shopping platforms. By prioritizing factors such as trust, security, convenience, and customer service, businesses can create a favorable environment that encourages consumer trust, satisfaction, and engagement in the e-commerce ecosystem.

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