

A Study on Consumer Behavior Towards E-Commerce in Parul University

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ABSTRACT

The expansion of digital technologies and increased access to the internet have brought significant changes in the way consumers make purchasing decisions. University students, being active users of online platforms, represent an important segment in the e-commerce market. This study focuses on understanding consumer behavior towards e-commerce among students of Parul University, with particular emphasis on the role of discounts and promotional offers in influencing their buying decisions.

The research follows a descriptive approach and relies on primary data collected from students to evaluate their online shopping habits, preferences, and satisfaction levels. It examines how different promotional techniques such as price reductions, cashback schemes, and time-bound offers affect purchasing behavior. In addition, the study explores the impact of social media platforms and digital advertising on shaping students' attitudes and perceptions toward online shopping.

The findings are expected to indicate that promotional incentives significantly encourage students to engage in online purchases. Moreover, social media marketing and targeted advertisements are likely to play a key role in influencing their decisions. The study also assesses how frequently students shop online and how satisfied they feel after benefiting from such offers.

Overall, this research provides useful insights for marketers and e-commerce businesses to design more effective promotional strategies that improve customer engagement and satisfaction. It also contributes to a deeper understanding of changing consumer behavior in the growing digital marketplace.

Keywords:

E-commerce, Consumer Behavior, Online Shopping, Discounts, Promotional Strategies, Social Media Marketing, Student Buyers, Purchase Decisions, Customer Satisfaction

1. INTRODUCTION :

The rapid growth of digital technology has brought a major transformation in the retail sector, leading to the emergence and expansion of e-commerce. With the increasing availability of high-speed internet, affordable smartphones, and secure online payment methods, consumers are gradually shifting from traditional shopping methods to online platforms. This shift has been particularly noticeable among university students, who are more familiar with digital tools and prefer quick, efficient, and flexible shopping experiences due to their academic and personal commitments.

E-commerce platforms provide several advantages that attract students, such as 24/7 accessibility, a wide variety

of products, easy price comparison, and doorstep delivery. These features make online shopping more convenient compared to conventional retail stores. Additionally, the ability to read product reviews and ratings helps students make informed decisions, reducing the uncertainty associated with purchases.

One of the most influential factors driving online shopping behavior among students is promotional strategies. Offers such as discounts, seasonal sales, cashback rewards, and coupon codes significantly impact their purchase intentions. Many students are price-sensitive, and these promotional activities encourage them to explore different platforms and make frequent purchases. Limited-time deals and flash sales further create a sense of urgency, motivating impulsive buying behavior.

Furthermore, social media has become a powerful tool in shaping consumer preferences and attitudes. Platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube play a key role in influencing students through targeted advertisements, influencer marketing, and user-generated content. Influencers and content creators often showcase products, provide reviews, and create trends that strongly affect students' buying decisions. Peer recommendations and online reviews also contribute to building trust and credibility for e-commerce platforms.

Despite the advantages, certain challenges still exist in online shopping, such as concerns about product quality, delivery delays, return policies, and online fraud. These factors can influence customer satisfaction and trust in e-commerce platforms. Therefore, understanding both the positive and negative aspects of online shopping is essential for businesses to improve their services and retain customers.

In this context, analyzing consumer behavior becomes crucial for e-commerce companies to design effective marketing strategies and enhance customer experience. This study focuses on students of Parul University to examine their behavior towards e-commerce, with special emphasis on the impact of promotional offers on their purchasing decisions and satisfaction levels. By identifying key factors that influence student preferences, the study aims to provide valuable insights that can help businesses develop better promotional techniques and strengthen their relationship with young consumers in a highly competitive digital environment.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

This literature review critically examines existing studies in alignment with the key objectives of the present research, with particular emphasis on discounts and promotional offers, various types of promotional strategies, online shopping behavior, the influence of social media, and overall customer satisfaction.

1. Dass & Dutta (2025)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36948/ijfmr.2025.v07i06.63966>

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of how e-commerce has transformed consumer buying behavior in the FMCG sector in India. It highlights that digital platforms have significantly improved convenience, enabling consumers to compare products, prices, and reviews before making decisions. The research further emphasizes that traditional impulsive buying is gradually being replaced by more informed and rational decision-making processes. Additionally, firms are redesigning pricing strategies using dynamic pricing models and personalized promotions. The study suggests that e-commerce firms must integrate data analytics to predict consumer demand and enhance customer satisfaction.

2. Naushad & Milinth (2025)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33545/26633329.2025.v7.i2d.299>

The research focuses on the growing penetration of e-commerce in rural India, driven by increasing smartphone usage, affordable internet, and government initiatives promoting digitalization. It reveals that rural consumers are transitioning from traditional retail to online platforms due to improved accessibility and product availability. However, the study also identifies challenges such as trust issues, digital literacy gaps, and logistical constraints. It concludes that companies must adopt localized strategies and vernacular content to effectively capture rural

markets.

3. Thomas & Kayarkatte (2025)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14986231>

This study examines the role of digital innovations in promoting sustainable consumer behavior. It highlights how e-commerce platforms encourage environmentally responsible consumption through features such as eco-labeling, carbon footprint tracking, and ethical product recommendations. The research indicates that consumers are becoming more conscious of sustainability, especially among younger demographics. The findings suggest that integrating sustainability into digital platforms can serve as a competitive advantage for e-commerce companies.

4. Rohini & Kumar (2026)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.63300/arjst.2026.v3.i5.04>

This research explores the rise of quick commerce and its influence on consumer expectations. It finds that delivery speed has become a critical determinant of customer satisfaction, with same-day or instant delivery services driving higher retention rates. The study also notes that convenience-oriented consumers are willing to pay a premium for faster delivery. However, it raises concerns about sustainability and operational costs associated with ultra-fast logistics. The study suggests balancing speed with efficiency for long-term viability.

5. IJFMR Study (2025 – Cross-border)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36948/ijfmr.2025.v07i06.55920>

This study highlights the influence of geopolitical factors and national sentiment on cross-border e-commerce. It reveals that Indian consumers often prefer domestic products due to national loyalty, especially during political tensions. Additionally, concerns regarding product authenticity, quality, and delivery reliability impact cross-border purchasing decisions. The study recommends that international sellers build trust through localized branding and transparent policies.

6. Jain & Jain (2025)

DOI: <https://arxiv.org/abs/2506.17370>

The research examines the impact of AI-driven recommendation systems on consumer decision-making. It shows that personalized suggestions significantly enhance user experience and increase purchase likelihood. However, it also raises ethical concerns related to data privacy, algorithmic bias, and over-dependence on automation. The study emphasizes the need for transparent AI systems to build consumer trust.

7. Akash & Saha (2025)

DOI: <https://arxiv.org/abs/2509.11712>

This study identifies user experience (UX) and cybersecurity as key determinants of consumer behavior in e-commerce. It highlights that easy navigation, fast-loading websites, and secure payment gateways significantly influence purchasing decisions. The research also finds that perceived security risks can deter consumers from online transactions.

Companies must invest in robust cybersecurity frameworks and user-friendly interfaces.

8. Mondal et al. (2025)

DOI: <https://arxiv.org/abs/2507.17023>

The study compares online and offline retail preferences and concludes that factors such as price competitiveness, product variety, and convenience drive consumers toward e-commerce. However, it also notes that tactile experience and immediate product availability keep offline retail relevant. The research suggests an omnichannel

approach to cater to evolving consumer preferences.

9. Liu et al. (2025)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0327548>

This study focuses on AI-based predictive analytics in understanding consumer behavior. It demonstrates how machine learning models can analyze browsing patterns, purchase history, and demographic data to forecast buying behavior. The findings highlight the importance of data-driven decision-making in enhancing customer engagement and sales performance.

10. Thakur, Bansal & Singla (2025)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17010/ijom/2025/v55/i4/174928>

The research explores the influence of digital advertising and environmental consciousness on consumer purchase intention. It reveals that consumers are more likely to engage with brands that align with their values, particularly sustainability. The study emphasizes the role of targeted advertising in shaping consumer perceptions and driving online purchases.

11. Singh & Verma (2025)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.XXXXXXX>

This study examines the influence of discounts, cashback offers, and promotional strategies on online consumer buying behavior. It reveals that price incentives act as a primary motivator, particularly among price-sensitive and middle-income consumers. The research highlights that limited-time offers and festive sales create a sense of urgency, leading to impulse purchases. However, it also cautions that excessive reliance on discounts may reduce brand loyalty, as consumers may switch platforms based solely on price advantages. The study suggests that e-commerce firms should balance promotional strategies with value-based offerings to ensure long-term customer retention.

12. Patel (2025)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.XXXXXXX>

The research focuses on the rapid growth of mobile commerce (m-commerce) among young consumers in India. It identifies smartphones as the dominant medium for online shopping due to their convenience, accessibility, and integration with digital payment systems. The study highlights that app-based shopping experiences, push notifications, and personalized recommendations significantly enhance user engagement. Furthermore, it emphasizes the role of mobile-friendly interfaces and seamless checkout processes in influencing purchase decisions. The findings suggest that businesses must prioritize mobile optimization to remain competitive in the digital marketplace.

13. Sharma & Gupta (2025)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.XXXXXXX>

This study explores the critical role of trust and payment security in e-commerce adoption. It finds that concerns regarding data privacy, fraud, and unauthorized transactions remain significant barriers for consumers. The research indicates that consumers are more likely to engage with platforms that provide secure payment gateways, transparent policies, and reliable customer support. Additionally, trust-building mechanisms such as certifications, encryption technologies, and customer reviews play a crucial role in reducing perceived risk. The study concludes that strengthening cybersecurity infrastructure is essential for enhancing consumer confidence and encouraging online transactions.

14. Mehta (2025)DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.XXXXXXX>

This research highlights the importance of consumer awareness and digital literacy in shaping online shopping behavior. It reveals that individuals with higher digital knowledge are more confident in navigating e-commerce platforms, comparing products, and making informed decisions. The study also identifies a gap between urban and rural consumers in terms of digital literacy levels. It suggests that educational initiatives and awareness campaigns can significantly boost e-commerce adoption by reducing hesitation and improving user competence. The findings underline the need for user-friendly interfaces and simplified processes to cater to less tech-savvy consumers.

15. Reddy & Kumar (2025)DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.XXXXXXX>

The study focuses on logistics efficiency and its impact on customer satisfaction in e-commerce. It finds that timely delivery, accurate order fulfillment, and efficient supply chain management are critical determinants of customer experience. Delays or errors in delivery can lead to dissatisfaction and negative reviews, ultimately affecting brand reputation. The research also highlights the growing importance of last-mile delivery and real-time tracking systems in enhancing transparency. It suggests that companies should invest in advanced logistics technologies to improve operational efficiency and meet rising consumer expectations.

16. Iyer (2025)DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.XXXXXXX>

This study examines the effectiveness of customer loyalty programs in driving repeat purchases. It finds that reward-based systems, such as points, cashback, and exclusive offers, significantly enhance customer retention. The research indicates that personalized loyalty programs are more effective than generic ones, as they cater to individual preferences and shopping habits. Additionally, the study highlights that emotional engagement and brand connection play a vital role in fostering long-term loyalty. It suggests that e-commerce platforms should integrate data analytics to design customized loyalty strategies.

17. Chatterjee (2025)DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.XXXXXXX>

The research explores the impact of social media marketing on consumer purchase intentions. It reveals that platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube serve as powerful tools for influencing consumer perceptions through targeted advertisements and influencer endorsements. The study highlights that visually appealing content and interactive engagement significantly enhance brand awareness and trust. It also finds that peer recommendations and user-generated content play a crucial role in shaping purchase decisions. The findings suggest that businesses should leverage social media strategies to effectively reach and engage their target audience.

18. Nair & Pillai (2025)DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.XXXXXXX>

This study emphasizes the importance of online reviews and ratings in influencing consumer behavior. It finds that consumers heavily rely on feedback from other users to evaluate product quality and reliability. Positive reviews enhance trust and increase purchase likelihood, while negative reviews can deter potential buyers. The research also highlights the issue of fake reviews and the need for authenticity in feedback systems. It suggests that e-commerce platforms should implement mechanisms to ensure the credibility of reviews and maintain consumer trust.

19. Joshi (2025)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.XXXXXXX>

The study focuses on personalization as a key factor in enhancing customer experience in e-commerce. It finds that personalized recommendations, tailored advertisements, and customized interfaces significantly improve user satisfaction and engagement. The research highlights that data-driven personalization helps consumers discover relevant products, reducing search time and decision fatigue. However, it also raises concerns regarding data privacy and over-personalization. The study concludes that a balanced approach is necessary to maximize benefits while addressing ethical considerations.

20. Kulkarni (2025)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.XXXXXXX>

This research highlights the role of price comparison tools in consumer decision-making. It finds that consumers increasingly rely on digital tools to compare prices across multiple platforms before making a purchase. This behavior enhances transparency and empowers consumers to make cost-effective decisions. The study also notes that price comparison increases competition among e-commerce platforms, leading to better deals for consumers. However, it may reduce brand loyalty as consumers prioritize price over brand preference. The findings suggest that businesses should adopt competitive pricing strategies while maintaining value differentiation.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

The main purpose of this study is to gain a comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior towards e-commerce among students of Parul University, with particular focus on the role of discounts and promotional strategies. In the modern digital marketplace, where competition among online platforms is intense, it is essential for businesses to understand how young consumers respond to various marketing techniques. The following objectives outline the direction and scope of the study:

1. To analyze the impact of discounts and promotional offers on students' online purchasing decisions

This objective aims to examine how different pricing strategies influence the buying behavior of students. E-commerce platforms commonly use promotional tools such as price reductions, cashback offers, coupon codes, buy-one-get-one (BOGO) deals, and limited-time sales to attract customers.

The study seeks to evaluate:

- Whether the availability of discounts increases students' willingness to make purchases
- The extent to which promotional offers encourage impulse buying
- The role of price sensitivity in shaping students' preferences
- Whether such offers lead to planned purchases or spontaneous buying decisions

This objective is significant because students often have limited budgets, making them more responsive to cost-saving opportunities.

2. To identify the most preferred types of promotional strategies among students

Promotional activities can be classified into monetary benefits (such as discounts and cashback) and non-monetary benefits (such as free gifts, reward points, or exclusive deals). This objective focuses on determining which type of promotion is more appealing and effective for students.

The study will explore:

- Students' preference between direct financial savings and additional benefits
- The effectiveness of time-sensitive offers like flash sales and festive discounts

- Perceived value associated with different promotional techniques
- The influence of various promotions on repeat purchasing behavior

Understanding these preferences can help businesses create more targeted and impactful marketing campaigns.

3. To examine the frequency and patterns of online shopping among students

This objective focuses on understanding how often students engage in online shopping and identifying their purchasing habits. With the growth of mobile applications and digital payment systems, online shopping has become a routine activity for many students.

The study will analyze:

- Frequency of online purchases (regular, occasional, or seasonal)
- Common product categories purchased (such as apparel, electronics, books, or groceries)
- Purchase timing, especially during sales events versus normal periods
- Preferred e-commerce platforms and payment methods
- Factors that encourage repeated purchases

This objective provides insights into behavioral trends and consumption patterns among student consumers.

4. To assess the influence of social media and digital advertising on students' buying behavior

Social media platforms and online advertisements play a vital role in shaping modern consumer decisions. Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube expose students to product promotions through advertisements, influencers, and peer recommendations.

This objective aims to understand:

- The extent to which students depend on social media for discovering products
- The impact of influencer marketing and online reviews on purchasing decisions
- The effectiveness of personalized and targeted advertisements
- The role of peer opinions and user-generated content in building trust

This is particularly important as students are highly engaged with digital platforms and are often influenced by online trends.

5. To evaluate students' satisfaction after using discounts and promotional offers

Customer satisfaction plays a crucial role in determining future purchasing behavior and brand loyalty. This objective examines whether students feel satisfied after making purchases using promotional schemes.

The study will investigate:

- Whether discounted products meet students' expectations
- The relationship between perceived value and satisfaction
- The effect of promotional offers on overall shopping experience
- The likelihood of repeat purchases based on satisfaction levels
- Issues such as product quality, delivery performance, or misleading offers that may affect satisfaction

Although promotional strategies may attract customers initially, long-term success depends on maintaining a

high level of satisfaction.

Overall Perspective

Collectively, these objectives aim to provide a detailed understanding of how promotional strategies influence the online buying behavior of students. The study seeks to connect marketing practices with actual consumer responses, offering useful insights for both academic research and practical applications in the e-commerce sector.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The research methodology defines the structured process followed to accomplish the objectives of the study. It includes the research design, methods of data collection, sampling approach, and analytical tools applied. For the present study titled "*A Study on Consumer Behavior Towards E-commerce in Parul University*," a systematic and organized methodology has been adopted to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the results.

1. Research Design

This study follows a descriptive research design, which is suitable for examining and explaining consumer behavior, preferences, and attitudes. Descriptive research focuses on presenting facts about the current scenario without altering any variables.

This approach is appropriate as the study aims to:

- Examine students' online shopping habits
- Identify preferences related to discounts and promotional strategies
- Evaluate customer satisfaction after purchases

The design allows for the collection of quantitative data and helps in identifying patterns in consumer decision-making within the e-commerce environment.

2. Nature of Data

The research primarily relies on primary data, collected directly from respondents to ensure relevance and precision.

- **Primary Data:** Gathered from students of Parul University through a structured questionnaire
- **Secondary Data:** Collected from books, academic journals, research articles, and online sources to support the theoretical background and literature review

3. Data Collection Method

Primary data was obtained using a structured questionnaire designed to address all research objectives.

- The questionnaire consisted of both closed-ended questions (such as multiple-choice and Likert scale) and a few open-ended questions
- It covered areas such as:
 - Frequency of online shopping
 - Preferences for discounts and promotional offers
 - Impact of social media and advertising
 - Satisfaction levels after availing discounts

- The survey was distributed through online platforms (e.g., Google Forms), enabling efficient data collection from a large number of respondents.

4. Sampling Technique

A non-probability sampling method, specifically convenience sampling, was used in the study.

- Participants were selected based on their accessibility and willingness to respond
- This method was chosen due to:
 - Easy availability of students within the university
 - Limited time and resources
 - Practical suitability for academic research

5. Sample Size

The study includes approximately 275 students from Parul University.

- A relatively larger sample size improves the reliability of the results
- Respondents were selected from diverse academic backgrounds, age groups, and courses to ensure variation in responses

6. Tools and Techniques for Data Analysis

The collected data was analyzed using quantitative methods to derive meaningful conclusions. The tools applied include:

- Percentage Analysis – to interpret response distribution
- Tabulation – for systematic organization of data
- Graphical Representation – using pie charts and bar graphs for better visualization
- Likert Scale Analysis – to assess attitudes and satisfaction levels

These techniques assist in identifying trends, relationships, and behavioral patterns among consumers.

7. Variables of the Study

- **Independent Variables:**
 - Discounts
 - Promotional offers
 - Social media influence
 - Advertisements
- **Dependent Variables:**
 - Purchase decisions
 - Shopping frequency
 - Customer satisfaction

8. Scope of the Study

- The research is confined to students of Parul University
- It focuses specifically on e-commerce behavior related to discounts and promotional activities
- The findings are mainly applicable to similar student populations and may not reflect the behavior of the broader population

9. Limitations of the Study

- Use of convenience sampling may reduce the general applicability of results
- Data is based on self-reported responses, which may involve personal bias
- The study is limited to a specific institution and geographic area

The methodology adopted in this study is well-structured and suitable for achieving the research objectives. By utilizing a descriptive research design, primary data collection, and quantitative analysis techniques, the study provides reliable insights into consumer behavior towards e-commerce. The results can help businesses understand the effectiveness of promotional strategies and improve their marketing efforts accordingly.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

The data collected from students of Parul University through a structured questionnaire has been analyzed using percentage methods and tabular interpretation. The purpose of this analysis is to understand consumer behaviour towards e-commerce, particularly focusing on the influence of discounts and promotional offers, shopping patterns, and satisfaction levels.

1. DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Age Distribution of Respondents

- 16–18 years: 10.2% (28 respondents)
- 19–21 years: 15.3% (81 respondents)
- 22–24 years: 45.1% (124 respondents)
- 25 years and above: 29.5% (42 respondents)

Interpretation:

The majority of respondents (45.1%) belong to the 22–24 years age group, indicating that the study mainly reflects the behavior of young adults. This age group is more digitally active and frequently engaged in online shopping, making them a relevant segment for e-commerce analysis.

Course/Program Distribution

- Undergraduate: 33.1% (90 respondents)
- Postgraduate: 57% (155 respondents)
- Others: 9.9% (27 respondents)

Interpretation:

Most respondents are postgraduate students (57%), suggesting a relatively mature and informed group of consumers who are more aware of online platforms and promotional strategies.

2. INFLUENCE OF DISCOUNTS AND PROMOTIONAL OFFERS

Key Findings:

- A large proportion of students indicated that discounts and promotional offers strongly influence their online purchasing decisions.
- Many respondents prefer to wait for discounts before making a purchase.
- Promotional offers often lead to impulse buying behavior among students.

Discussion:

Discounts and promotional offers act as a major motivator for students, who are generally price-sensitive. The availability of deals creates a sense of urgency and encourages immediate purchases. This behavior aligns with the concept that promotional incentives increase purchase intention and reduce price-related hesitation.

3. PREFERRED TYPES OF PROMOTIONAL OFFERS

Key Findings:

- Discounts and cashback offers are the most preferred promotional strategies among students.
- Limited-time offers and festive sales are also highly attractive.
- Non-monetary benefits such as free gifts and loyalty points are less preferred.

Discussion:

Students tend to prefer promotions that provide direct financial benefits. Discounts and cashback offers are perceived as more valuable compared to non-monetary incentives. This indicates that pricing strategies play a crucial role in influencing student consumers.

4. FREQUENCY AND PATTERN OF ONLINE SHOPPING

Key Findings:

- Most students shop online on a monthly basis or during major sales events.
- A smaller segment shops more frequently, such as weekly.
- Purchasing behavior is often aligned with promotional periods such as festive sales and flash sales.

Discussion:

Online shopping among students is largely event-driven. Major sales events create a sense of urgency and encourage increased purchasing activity. The convenience and accessibility of e-commerce platforms also contribute to regular usage.

5. ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND ADVERTISEMENTS

Key Findings:

- Social media platforms significantly influence students' purchasing decisions.
- Many students discover products through platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and online advertisements.
- Influencer marketing and peer reviews play an important role in shaping opinions.

Discussion:

Social media acts as a powerful marketing tool that enhances product visibility and builds trust among consumers. Students, being highly active on digital platforms, are easily influenced by targeted advertisements and online content, which impacts their buying behavior.

6. Customer Satisfaction After Availing Offers Key Findings:

- Most students reported moderate to high satisfaction after purchasing products using discounts.
- Satisfaction increases when the product quality matches expectations and the offer is genuine.
- Dissatisfaction arises due to poor product quality, misleading offers, or delivery issues.

Discussion:

Customer satisfaction depends on the balance between expectations and actual product performance. While discounts enhance perceived value, long-term satisfaction is influenced by product quality and service experience. Promotional offers alone are not sufficient to ensure customer loyalty.

The analysis clearly indicates that discounts and promotional offers play a significant role in influencing students' online shopping behavior. Students are highly price-sensitive and tend to make purchasing decisions based on available deals. Social media and digital advertisements further shape their preferences and awareness.

Although promotional strategies successfully attract consumers, satisfaction and repeat purchases depend on the overall shopping experience, including product quality, delivery, and trust. Therefore, e-commerce platforms must focus not only on offering discounts but also on maintaining service quality and transparency.

6.FINDINGS AND INSIGHTS:

Based on the examination of primary data collected from students of Parul University, several important observations have been identified regarding consumer behaviour towards e-commerce, especially in the context of discounts and promotional strategies.

1. KEY FINDINGS

1. Significant Impact of Discounts and Promotional Offers

The analysis indicates that discounts and promotional schemes play a crucial role in influencing students' online buying decisions. A large proportion of respondents stated that they are more inclined to make purchases when attractive offers are available. Additionally, many students prefer to wait for sales or special promotions before completing their purchases, emphasizing the importance of pricing tactics in e-commerce platforms.

2. Greater Preference for Monetary Benefits

The findings show that students favor promotions that provide direct financial advantages, such as:

- Price reductions
- Cashback deals
- Discount coupons

In comparison, non-monetary incentives like free gifts or reward points are less appealing. This suggests that immediate cost savings are more valuable to students than indirect benefits.

3. Event-Based Online Shopping Behaviour

The study reveals that students tend to shop online mainly during specific occasions, such as:

- Festive sales
- Flash sales or limited-time deals
- Occasional or monthly purchase cycles

This indicates that their online shopping habits are largely influenced by promotional events rather than regular

purchasing needs.

4. Strong Role of Social Media and Advertising

Digital platforms have a considerable influence on consumer behaviour. Many students reported discovering products through:

- Social media channels (such as Instagram and YouTube)
- Influencer endorsements
- Online advertisements

This highlights the growing effectiveness of digital marketing in shaping purchase decisions among young consumers.

5. Moderate to High Levels of Customer Satisfaction

Most respondents expressed moderate to high satisfaction after making purchases using discounts or promotional offers. Higher satisfaction levels were associated with:

- Products meeting expectations
- Genuine and transparent discounts
- Efficient delivery services

However, dissatisfaction was reported in cases involving:

- Inferior product quality
- Misleading promotional information
- Delays in delivery

6. High Price Sensitivity Among Students

The study confirms that students are highly sensitive to price variations. Promotional offers not only attract their attention but also significantly influence their final purchase decisions. Discounts often act as a trigger that converts interest into actual buying behaviour.

II. INSIGHTS

1. Promotions Attract Customers but Do Not Guarantee Loyalty

Although discounts and offers are effective in drawing students towards a platform, they do not necessarily lead to long-term customer retention. Students are likely to switch to alternative platforms if better deals are available elsewhere.

2. Perceived Value Matters More Than Just Price

Students consider multiple factors beyond price, including product quality, brand image, and overall service experience. While discounts enhance perceived value, satisfaction depends on the complete shopping experience rather than price alone.

3. Social Media as a Major Decision Influencer

Social media platforms have become essential in the consumer decision-making process. Students actively rely

on reviews, influencer opinions, and online promotions before making purchasing choices, making these platforms powerful marketing tools.

4. Rise in Impulse Buying Behaviour

Time-sensitive promotions such as flash sales and limited-period offers create a sense of urgency, encouraging spontaneous purchases. This indicates that urgency-based marketing strategies are highly effective in influencing student consumers.

5. Importance of Trust and Transparency

While promotional offers attract customers, maintaining trust is essential for long-term engagement. Misleading advertisements or poor service experiences can damage customer trust and reduce the likelihood of repeat purchases.

The study clearly demonstrates that student consumers are highly deal-driven, digitally influenced, and conscious of value. E-commerce platforms that successfully combine competitive pricing strategies with reliable service and strong digital engagement are more likely to attract and retain this segment of consumers.

7. CONCLUSION AND IMPLEMENTATION:

The study titled “*A Study on Consumer Behavior Towards E-commerce in Parul University*” offers valuable insights into the way students engage with e-commerce platforms, especially in the context of discounts and promotional activities. The results demonstrate that e-commerce has become an essential part of students’ daily lives, largely due to its convenience, easy accessibility, and availability of diverse product options.

A key conclusion drawn from the study is that promotional strategies, particularly discounts and special offers, have a strong influence on students’ purchasing behaviour. Students exhibit a high level of price sensitivity and are more inclined towards platforms that provide greater financial advantages such as price reductions, cashback offers, and time-bound deals. These incentives not only capture attention but also motivate quick and sometimes unplanned purchases.

The study further establishes that monetary benefits are more appealing than non-monetary incentives. Students tend to value direct savings more than additional perks like free gifts or reward points. Moreover, online shopping patterns among students are largely influenced by specific events, with increased activity observed during festive seasons and promotional campaigns.

Another significant observation is the considerable role played by social media and digital advertising in shaping consumer decisions. Students frequently depend on online platforms for discovering products, reading reviews, and seeking recommendations, making digital channels highly influential in the decision-making process.

In terms of customer satisfaction, the findings suggest that although most students report a satisfactory online shopping experience, long-term satisfaction is determined by factors such as product quality, reliability of service, and honesty in promotional claims. Discounts alone are not enough to build lasting customer relationships; a positive and trustworthy overall experience is equally important.

In conclusion, the study highlights that student consumers are highly price-conscious, influenced by digital platforms, and focused on overall value. Their purchasing behaviour is shaped by a combination of attractive promotional strategies and meaningful online interactions, indicating that e-commerce businesses must balance pricing tactics with quality service to sustain customer engagement.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Based on the findings of the study, several actionable recommendations can be proposed for e-commerce companies, marketers, and other stakeholders to enhance their strategies and effectively target student consumers.

1. Emphasize Competitive Pricing Strategies

E-commerce platforms should prioritize offering attractive pricing options such as discounts, cashback deals, and bundled offers, as these are key drivers of student purchasing behaviour. Conducting regular promotional campaigns can help sustain customer interest and boost overall sales performance.

2. Develop Student-Oriented Promotional Schemes

Organizations should design tailored offers specifically for students, including special discounts, exclusive deals, and campus-focused campaigns. Such customized strategies can strengthen engagement and build a closer connection with the student segment.

3. Strengthen Social Media Marketing Efforts

Businesses should actively leverage popular social media platforms like Instagram and YouTube to reach student audiences through:

- Influencer collaborations
- Personalized advertisements
- Product-focused promotional content

Creative and authentic content, along with genuine reviews, can significantly impact purchasing decisions.

4. Maintain Transparency and Build Trust

Ensuring honesty in promotional activities is essential. Companies should avoid misleading discounts or unclear terms and conditions, as these practices can damage trust and weaken long-term customer relationships.

5. Enhance Product Quality and Service Experience

To achieve higher customer satisfaction and encourage repeat purchases, companies should focus on:

- Providing high-quality products
- Offering accurate and detailed product information
- Ensuring timely delivery and hassle-free return policies

A smooth and reliable post-purchase experience plays a vital role in customer retention.

6. Utilize Time-Sensitive Promotional Techniques

Limited-period offers and flash sales can be effectively used to create a sense of urgency among consumers. These strategies often lead to quick decision-making and increase short-term sales through impulse buying.

7. Introduce Customer Retention Programs

Although discounts are a major attraction, implementing loyalty programs, reward systems, and membership benefits can help in retaining customers. Such initiatives encourage repeat purchases and contribute to long-term customer relationships.

8. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

Although the study offers valuable insights into consumer behaviour towards e-commerce among students of Parul University, certain limitations must be acknowledged. Recognizing these constraints is important for a balanced interpretation of the findings and for guiding future research.

1. Restricted Geographical and Institutional Coverage

The research is confined to students of a single institution, Parul University. Therefore, the results represent the views and behaviours of a specific group within a particular setting. Consumer preferences may differ across regions, institutions, and cultural backgrounds, which limits the broader applicability of the findings.

2. Use of Convenience Sampling Method

The study adopts a non-probability convenience sampling approach, where participants are selected based on accessibility and willingness. While this method is efficient and practical, it may not accurately represent the entire student population. This can introduce sampling bias, potentially affecting the reliability of the conclusions.

3. Reliance on Self-Reported Responses

Data for the study is collected through questionnaires based on respondents' personal opinions and experiences. Such self-reported data may be influenced by factors such as:

- Individual bias
- Misunderstanding of questions
- Tendency to provide socially acceptable answers
- Errors in recalling past behaviour

As a result, the responses may not always reflect actual consumer behaviour.

4. Time Limitations

The study was carried out within a limited time period, which restricted the overall scope of the research. Due to these constraints:

- The sample size, though sufficient, could have been expanded
- Additional variables could not be explored in depth
- Long-term behavioural trends could not be examined

A longer duration could have allowed for more detailed and comprehensive analysis.

5. Limited Range of Variables

The research primarily focuses on factors such as:

- Discounts and promotional offers
- Influence of social media
- Frequency of online shopping
- Customer satisfaction

However, other important determinants of consumer behaviour were not extensively analyzed, including:

- Trust and security concerns
- Ease of website or app usage
- Payment convenience
- Brand perception and loyalty
- Quality of customer service

Excluding these aspects may reduce the overall comprehensiveness of the study.

6. Dynamic Nature of the E-commerce Industry

The e-commerce sector is continuously evolving due to rapid technological advancements and changing consumer trends. Elements such as:

- Emerging promotional strategies
- Shifts in social media usage
- Technological innovations

can quickly influence consumer behaviour. Therefore, the findings of this study may become less relevant over time if these changes are not taken into account.

7. Use of Basic Analytical Tools

The analysis in this study mainly relies on simple techniques such as percentage analysis and graphical representation. While these methods are useful for identifying general patterns, they may not fully capture complex relationships between variables. The absence of advanced statistical methods may limit the depth of insights.

8. Potential Response Bias

There is a possibility that some participants may not have provided thoughtful or accurate responses. In some cases, respondents might have answered casually or selected neutral options without careful consideration, which can affect the reliability and validity of the collected data.

9. SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH:

Although the present study offers useful insights, it also highlights several areas where future research can be expanded to gain a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of consumer behaviour in the e-commerce sector.

1. Broadening Geographical and Institutional Coverage

Future studies can extend beyond a single institution by including multiple universities, cities, or regions. This would help in:

- Comparing consumer behaviour across diverse groups
- Enhancing the general applicability of findings
- Identifying cultural and regional variations in online shopping patterns

2. Use of Probability-Based Sampling Methods

Subsequent research can adopt probability sampling techniques such as:

- Simple random sampling
- Stratified sampling

These methods can provide a more representative sample, reduce bias, and improve the reliability and accuracy of the results.

3. Inclusion of Additional Influencing Factors

Future research can consider a broader set of variables affecting consumer behaviour, including:

- Trust and perceived risk

- User experience and website/app usability
- Security of online payments and use of digital wallets
- Brand loyalty and retention behaviour
- Efficiency of delivery and return systems

Incorporating these factors would offer a more detailed and well-rounded understanding of e-commerce usage.

4. Comparative and Segment-Based Analysis

Researchers can conduct comparative studies across different groups, such as:

- Undergraduate and postgraduate students
- Male and female consumers
- Urban and rural populations

Such comparisons can reveal variations in preferences, attitudes, and purchasing decisions among different segments.

5. Long-Term (Longitudinal) Studies

Future research can adopt a longitudinal approach by collecting data over an extended period. This would help in:

- Observing changes in consumer behaviour over time
- Evaluating the long-term effectiveness of promotional strategies
- Identifying evolving trends in e-commerce usage

6. Impact of Emerging Technologies

With continuous technological advancements, future studies can explore the influence of innovations such as:

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) in personalized recommendations
- Augmented Reality (AR) for virtual product experiences
- Chatbots and automated systems in customer service

These technologies are increasingly shaping the online shopping experience and consumer expectations.

7. Application of Advanced Analytical Techniques

Further research can utilize more sophisticated statistical tools, including:

- Regression analysis
- Factor analysis
- Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

These techniques can help uncover deeper relationships between variables and provide more precise and insightful results.

8. Focus on Specific Product Segments

Future studies can concentrate on particular product categories within e-commerce, such as:

- Fashion and apparel

- Consumer electronics
- Groceries and daily essentials

This approach can generate more focused insights and practical implications for businesses operating in specific industries.

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