ICME 2023

"Recession to recovery: role of management and economics"
Proceedings of the 12th International Conference on Management and Economics

Factors Affecting on Online Purchasing Intention: Special Reference to the Apparel Industry

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Abstract

At present with the development of e-commerce, online shopping has become one of the popular shopping methods around the world. Though the researchers have identified several factors affecting online purchasing intention, still there can be observed a gap in the existing literature relating to online purchasing intention, especially in Sri Lankan apparel industrial context. Considering the timeliness and the significance of the phenomenon, this research study aims to recognize the factors affecting online purchasing intention: With special reference to the apparel industry. The relevant data for the study were collected through a self-administered questionnaire. It was distributed among 150 consumers based on the convenience sampling method. The results of the study, found a significant impact of independent variables which are convenience and information. However, price shows a statistically insignificant relationship with the dependent variable (purchase intention). So, this study fills the gap in the prevailing literature as well as managers could gain a good understanding of their consumers and identify the most influencing factors that affect online shopping.

Keywords: Convenience, Information on product or service, Online shopping, Online purchase intention, Price

01. Introduction

With the fast-changing informational and communication technology, the business environment has become more competitive. Lots of opportunities have opened up for accompanying businesses online. Online shopping which also can be called e-tailing has become a popular means of shopping. Now it is becoming a more enduring mode of shopping. According to the statistic reports from "Statista", Sri Lanka has recorded exponential growth in e-commerce from 2021 to 2022. Even at the beginning of 2022 when Sri Lanka was facing a major economic crisis, the e-commerce sector did not take much of an effect but managed to maintain a healthy growth (Wickramaratne, 2023). The availability of online transaction systems allows consumers to purchase and make payments for products

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and services using the Internet platform (Kidane & Sharma, 2016). It is being embraced by the majority of the companies as well as consumers have also incorporated with it. As per a report published by Kayamu, e-commerce transactions in Sri Lanka are predictable to rise by more than 72% in the near future (Khan, 2017). It has also been shown that Sri Lankan online shoppers are more concerned with penetrating and buying retail products for their everyday needs.

The most apparel and fashion brands have made their existence with the fast evolution and hasty invasion of social media platforms, business pages, and online brand communities. Moreover, they spend more advertising budget and energy on the way to marketing their products on online platforms (Kaimkhani, 2018). This has led to an excessive upsurge in home-based businesses in the last few years and it's still speedily increasing. Some of the consumers see it as a convenience, even though some of the consumers take part in online shopping for the condensed prices and a few do it to avoid any human contact. However, the main cause would always be convenience, and how consumers can shop at any time of the day or night from any part of the world (Ali Baeshen, 2021). Furthermore, E-payment solutions' accessibility has accelerated the process of acceptance of online shopping (Soomro, 2019). For some consumers online shopping has become a habit that causes them to buy all and any product they like, as in their minds they perceive the material which they wish only a click away (Ali Baeshen, 2021). Thus, customers' taking part in online purchasing has become a significant trend these days.

02. Problem statement

At present, consumers are more mindful whenever they make a purchase decision. Most businesses have shifted to electronic means of transactions with the development of e-platforms. Especially, clothing and fashion brands have moved to electronic channels to reach out their consumers. Researchers (e.g., Chang & Chen, 2008; Davis, Eroglu, & Machleit, 2001) have stated that websites are valuable to retail outlets due to their features that are not restricted by distance, low cost, order taking and customer feedback conveniences at anytime and anywhere (Liat & Wuan, 2014). Many companies have transformed or expanded their businesses from out-dated physical stores to online provisions (e.g. E-Commerce websites) to emphasis on transactions of commodities or services over electronic platforms (Gondwe, 2010). When compared with other industries, clothing and fashion brands have turned out to be an imperative part of consumers' lives. According to Soomro (2019), several recent studies have discovered the fashion industry from diverse perspectives. This is one of the reasons that apparel is amongst the most sold items online (Ali Baeshen, 2021). As per Baubonienė and Gulevičiūtė (2015), without knowing the factors inspiring online shopping, it is problematic to ripen e-commerce, and also impossible to recognize what is needed to accomplish and what criteria the e-commerce should be consistent with. Many consumers prefer to do online shopping for apparel or less expensive products, but they are reluctant to do so for expensive or hi-tech products. Although many researchers have investigated online shopping behaviour among consumers, a literature gap exists in the Sri Lankan context (Withanagamage & Wattegama,2018). Thus, the objective of the present study is to identify the factors that are affecting online shopping behaviour among Sri Lankan consumers by focusing the apparel industry.

2.1. Primary Research Question

What are the factors which influence online purchase intention?

2.2. Research Questions

Q1: What is the effect of convenience on online purchasing intention?

Q2: What is the effect of Prices offered on online portals on online purchase intention?

Q3: What is the effect of Information about a product or service on online purchase intention?

03. Literature Review

3.1. Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

TAM is a theory which aids to describe the acceptance of technology by consumers. It helps in forecasting and explaining consumer behavior in using technology. It clarifies why technology is accepted or rejected by users (Ali Baeshen, 2021). Further, it explains how one's belief, attitude, and intention to use are influenced by external factors, (Park, 2009). Davis's basic TAM model included two specific beliefs namely; Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEU).

According to Davis (1989), Perceived usefulness is defined as "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance". Perceived usefulness is when a person thinks something can enhance his or her performance while doing something, like at work if it enhances a person's job performance, they would accept that technology (Ali Baeshen, 2021). Perceived ease of use refers to "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort" (Davis, 1989).

3.2. Online Shopping

Online shopping has become a popular mode of shopping. Online shopping is where a buyer directly consumes goods from the seller (Ali Baeshen, 2021). Online shopping is done using an online store, e-shop, or Internet shop. Online stores show and outline their products over computer-generated visuals, pictures, text, or even links. It provides extra information about their products. In an online setting, customers want to link with technology for conducting transactions online, where each process entails networking with a website (Athapaththu & Kulathunga, 2018). Today, online consumers have more power and control over price negotiations than consumers in physical stores; the reason for this is the internet affords more interactivity among consumers, and retailers as well as greater availability of information about products and services (Ali Baeshen, 2021). Online stores have videos on how to use the products, the safety measures needed, how to assemble them, and other numerous demonstrations. (Akbar & James, 2014). With the expansion of online shopping, retailers have various tackles on online analyze and to aid consumers assess and make

purchase decisions amongst a diverse of products and services (Javadi et al., 2012).

3.3. Online Purchase Intention and Buying Process

The buying process has five steps. The first one is that the consumer finds the requirements and then outlines the necessities to meet them. The second step is to gather data and assess the projected choices. Once the consumers have itemized their selections, they will stay to make purchases, consisting of shopping or bargaining at the best price offered. Finally, consumers will look at the numerous features that limit or impact the final decision-making. Then they evaluate whether they have made an acceptable choice. (Akbar & James, 2014). According to Pavlou (2003), the last stage of an online transaction is the intention to use a website and buy a product. Hence, online purchase intention shows a significant feature in online consumer behavior (Athapaththu & Kulathunga, 2018). According to, Raza et al. (2014), purchase intention means, a condition between the consumer and the seller when the consumer is prepared to make a transaction with the seller.

There are a lot of variables that influence online shopping such as time efficiency, convenience, security, cost, information, and characteristics of the products and their culture, demographics, and environment (Ali Baeshen, 2021). Price, convenience, security, and information about products or services impact online purchase intention (Akbar & James, 2014). Further, they pointed out that it is suited to say that the factors that inspire a consumer to shop online are lower prices or discounts. It is more convenient to order online as well as online shopping saves time. Moreover, there is more information on several products present online which is not found in retail outlets and finally the security factor indicates that the consumers are more at ease with keeping their identities safe and shopping online.

3.4. Convenience

One of the major successful factors of online shopping is the convenience and delivery of products to the consumer's doorway (Ali Baeshen, 2021). Further, he pointed out that online stores are convenient for products of sensitive nature which a consumer might not feel comfortable with purchasing in a retail outlet because online shopping is like a mall that never closes which you have access to at any time of the day or night (Lodorfos et al., 2006). Easy access to full product information can enable and support users to make an online purchase decision (Akbar & James, 2014). According to Ali Baeshen (2021), there is a significant relationship between Convenience and Consumer purchase intention.

3.5. Price

Price is the foremost factor that consumers concern earlier to purchasing online. The price comprises with examining the consumers' move toward squandering away funds when doing online shopping as the income of the people is very low (Ali Baeshen, 2021). Cost-sensitive customers are generally concerned with purchasing commodities at the lowest prices or receiving the most value out of them (Nazir et al., 2012). Akbar and James (2014) indicated that the consumers were not that price sensitive often as when the prices they compared online were not that dissimilar from each other. On the other hand, the method of this

assessment was time-consuming. According to Ali Baeshen (2021), there is a significant effect of Prices offered on online portals on consumer purchase intention.

3.6. Information about Product or Service

The internet has made it easier for retailers to supply information regarding their products obtainable for their online consumers. It is cost-efficient as it is inexpensive than distributing or advertising (Ali Baeshen, 2021). The information supplier can get a better understanding of the consumers' needs and wants as they choose the preferred information they desire from the websites. But, the seller has to form a passageway and reveal to the consumers where their site can be found as the internet is packed with competition (Jayaprakash & Pavithra, 2017). According to Ali Baeshen (2021), there is a significant effect of Information about products or services on consumer purchase intention.

Based on the literature, the following hypothesis was tested for the current study.

H1: There is a significant relationship between Convenience and Consumer purchase intention.

H2: There is a significant effect of Prices offered on online portals on Consumer purchase intention.

H3: There is a significant effect of Information about a product or service on Consumer purchase intention.

Based on the literature, the following conceptual framework was considered for the current study.

Independent variables: Convenience, Price, Information about Product or Service

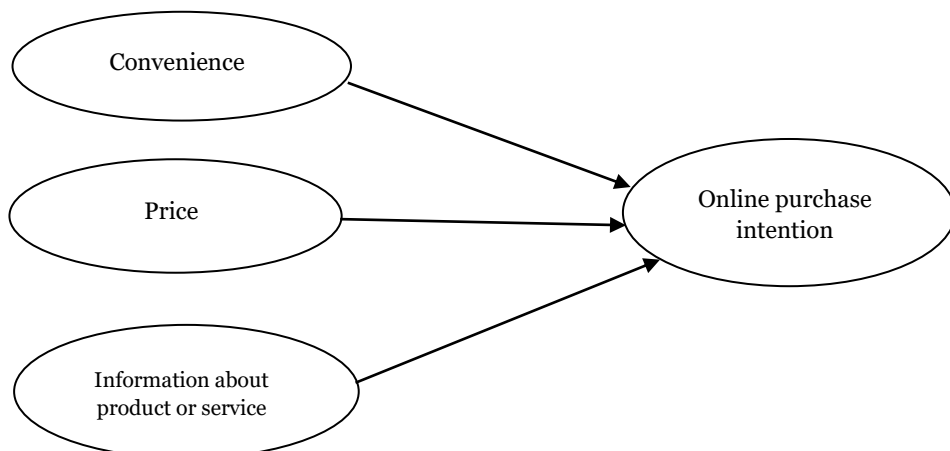*Dependent variable*: Online Purchase Intention

Figure 1: Conceptual Model

04. Methodology

4.1. Research design

A research design is a blueprint or plan for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data, created to answer the research questions (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016, p. 95). The research design evidently indicates how it will address the research question and be aligned with the theoretical framework. Among the different types of research studies: exploratory, descriptive, and causal studies, descriptive design was used for this study. The descriptive study aims to gain data that describes the topic of interest (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). The current study aims to describe the impact of independent variables on the dependent variable, thus, the descriptive design was used.

As per Sekaran and Bougie (2013), time horizons can be divided into two categories as cross-sectional and longitudinal studies. As per their views, if data is gathered just once, possibly over a period of days or weeks, or months to answer a research question, they are called one-shot or cross-sectional studies. The present study followed a single cross-sectional research design as this study was carried out in one shot.

4.2. Research Strategy

A strategy is a plan for achieving a certain goal (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). There are various types of research strategies such as experiments, case studies, interviews, surveys, action research, and observations. Among them, a survey was used as the research strategy of this study. Necessary data was collected through a self-administered questionnaire which is dispersed as a Google Form. Two parts were included in the questionnaire. The first part which was to understand the sample profile, includes socio-demographic questions while the second part assesses variables. The questionnaire is developed in English language and it includes closed-ended questions. The questionnaire used a Likert five-point scale, ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree.

As per Armstrong (2009), research can be done in quantitative or qualitative methods and it can use inductive or deductive approach. A scientific method uses deductive reasoning to test a theory (recall that, to a scientist, a theory is an organized set of assumptions that generates testable predictions) about a topic of interest goal (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). Deduction is the process of using logical reasoning to reach a conclusion that necessarily follows from general or universal premises and the conclusion is contained within the evidence (Armstrong, 2009). The current study aims to test the existing theory, thus, the deductive approach was used. The present study was based on a quantitative method as well.

4.3. Population and Sampling

The population includes consumers in Sri Lanka who purchase fashion apparel. The sample includes consumers who are purchasing fashion apparel online. The sampling unit is an individual person. Thus, a consumer was taken as sampling unit. Consequently, the sample consisted of 150 consumers who are using online shopping who were selected through the

non-probabilistic convenience sampling method.

4.4. Operationalization of Variables

A comprehensive literature survey was performed to gather thorough information about the subject of the study, and the constructs were operationalized (Nuryakin & Farida, 2016; Zhao, Yao, Liu, & Yang, 2021; Salazar-Ordóñez et al., 2018; Rishi & Al Khasawneh, 2017) and measured with a five-point Likert scale.

Table 1: Operationalization of variables

Variable	Question Items	Source
Convenience	CO01-Access convenience- I can easily accessible from anywhere CO02-Information convenience- I can easily get product facts CO03-Transaction convenience- It is easy to make the transaction via online	(Nuryakin & Farida, 2016)
Price	PR01-I am very concerned about low prices, but I am equally concerned about product quality. PR02-When purchasing a product, I always try to maximize the quality I get for the money I spend. PR03-When I buy products, I like to be sure that I am getting my money's worth.	Zhao, Yao, Liu, & Yang (2021)
Information about product or service	IP01-Actual knowledge and self-perceived knowledge IP02-It is possible to have many real information about the product IP03-It is easy to get direct and clear awareness about the product	(Salazar-Ordóñez et al., 2018)
Online Purchase Intention	PI01-I was happy with my online shopping. PI02-I was pleased with my online shopping. PI03-I was satisfied with my online shopping. I like online shopping. PI04-Online shopping websites are a fit means to buy products.	(Rishi & Al Khasawneh, 2017)

05. Analysis

The researcher used a Quantitative approach for this study, and the pre-designed hypotheses are tested through SPSS (25 version) statistics software. Frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation were used to interpret the results. The analysis methods which were employed in this study are correlation and multiple regressions. Multiple regression analysis and standardized coefficients were used to determine the most influencing factors of the dependent variable.

Table 1 represents the age distribution of the sample. The sample of this study includes respondents from ages 15 to 44 years. The highest age is 44 and it represents 0.7% of respondents while the lowest age is 15 years and it represents 2%. The highest percentage is

at age 23 and its percentage is 28%.

5.1. Demographics

Table 1: Age distribution of the sample

Age	Frequency	Percent
15	3	2.0
16	2	1.3
18	2	1.3
19	1	.7
20	1	.7
21	10	6.7
22	24	16.0
23	42	28.0
24	15	10.0
25	6	4.0
26	19	12.7
27	7	4.7
28	3	2.0
29	4	2.7
30	2	1.3
31	1	.7
34	1	.7
35	3	2.0
37	2	1.3
40	1	.7
44	1	.7
Total	150	100.0

The sample of the research included 150 respondents and the following table illustrates the composition of respondents. As per the table, it presents the gender variation of the sample. Hence, 70.7% of respondents are female and 29.3% are male. Thus, the majority of respondents are females.

Table 2: Gender composition

	Frequency	Percent
Male	44	29.3
Female	106	70.7
Total	150	100.0

When considering proficiency on the internet, 65.3% of the respondents have intermediate proficiency and 4.7% are beginners to the internet and 30% have more proficiency on the internet.

Table 3: proficiency on the internet

	Frequency	Percent
novice	7	4.7
intermediate	98	65.3
advance	45	30.0
Total	150	100.0

Among the sample, 6.7% of respondents use the internet very often for shopping while 22.7% frequently use online shopping, the highest 50% of respondents sometimes use the internet for shopping, only 13.3% rarely use the internet for shopping. However, 7.3% of respondents never use online shopping.

Table 4: Usage of internet for shopping

	Frequency	Percent
Very often	10	6.7
often	34	22.7
sometimes	75	50.0
rarely	20	13.3
never	11	7.3
Total	150	100.0

When considering the amount the respondents spend on single online purchases, 52.7% would spend Rs. 1000-3000. 22.7% spend Rs. 3000-5000, 20% spend less than Rs. 1000 and only 4.7% would spend more than Rs. 5000.

Table 5: Amount spend on single online purchase

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1000	30	20.0
1000-3000	79	52.7
3000-5000	34	22.7
More than 5000	7	4.7
Total	150	100.0

The descriptive statistics table presents the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation of the independent and dependent variables. Accordingly, the minimum value is 2 for independent variables and 2.25 for dependent variables. The maximum value is 5 for all the variables. The highest mean value has been recorded as 4.0467 for price and the lowest mean value is 3.5533 as given below.

5.2. Descriptive Statistics

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Convenience	150	2.00	5.00	3.7844	.59970
Price	150	2.00	5.00	4.0467	.60821
Information	150	2.00	5.00	3.5533	.59180
Purchase Intent	150	2.25	5.00	3.7633	.53548

Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used to assess the internal consistency of the measuring instruments. The reliability test is an indicator of a measure's internal consistency. Reliability is the degree to which measures are free from error and therefore have consistent results (Sekaran, 2003).

The questionnaire has 13 questions to measure variables, 03 question items for convenience, 03 questions for price, 03 items for information, and 04 items for purchase intention. The

results show that Cronbach's alpha is 0.748 for all the items. So, it reveals that the internal consistency of items is good. The following table shows the reliability for variables separately.

5.3. Reliability Analysis

Table 7: Reliability

Variable	No of items	Reliability
Convenience	3	.775
Price	3	.702
Information	3	.765
Purchase Intention	4	.827

Correlation analyses were carried out to test the hypothesis and check the inter-correlations between the variables and evaluate the strength of the relationship between the variables.

5.4. Correlation Analysis

Table 8: correlation analysis

		Convenience	Price	Information	Purchase Intent
Convenience	Pearson Correlation	1	.404**	.590**	.629**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	150	150	150	150
Price	Pearson Correlation	.404**	1	.203*	.247**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.013	.002
	N	150	150	150	150
Information	Pearson Correlation	.590**	.203*	1	.510**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.013		.000
	N	150	150	150	150
Purchase Intent	Pearson Correlation	.629**	.247**	.510**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.002	.000	
	N	150	150	150	150

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Pearson correlation coefficient between Convenience and Consumer purchase intention is .629. Therefore, a positive relationship exists between the two variables. Pearson correlation coefficient between Price and Consumer purchase intention is .247. Therefore, it can be stated that a positive relationship exists between the two variables. Pearson correlation coefficient between the information about a product or service on Consumer purchase intention is .510. Therefore, a positive relationship exists between the two variables. The correlation analysis shows a positive relationship between variables as well.

5.5. Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was used to identify the strength of the impact that the independent variables have on the dependent variable.

Table 9: Model Summary

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.652ᵃ	.425	.413	.41020

a. Predictors: (Constant), Information, Price, convenience

425 (42.5%) variations in the dependent variable are explained by the independent variable in the model.

Table 10: Anova test

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	18.157	3	6.052	35.968	.000ᵇ
Residual	24.567	146	.168		
Total	42.723	149			

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intent
b. Predictors: (Constant), Information, Price, convenience

According to the above ANOVA test, it shows a .000b values which means the overall efficiency in the model used by the researcher is efficient. Therefore, it specifies the significant value of the set variables as 0.000 which noticeably detects the fitness of the independent variables in this study.

As illustrated in Table 11, all the independent variables show a tolerance greater than 0.1 and a VIF value of less than 10. Therefore, the independent variables are not multicollinerar with the dependent variable.

Table 11: Regression Analysis

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.378	.282		4.894	.000		
Convenience	.450	.074	.504	6.044	.000	.567	1.763
Price	.000	.060	.001	.008	.994	.835	1.198
Information	.192	.070	.212	2.724	.007	.650	1.539

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intent

06. Discussion

In the table, the value of Standardized Coefficients Beta is positive, which shows a positive impact among the variables. In regression analysis, the significance level of independent variables which are convenience and information is less than 0.05 which is statistically significant with purchase intention (dependent variable).

A significant level of convenience is (.000) and a significant level of information is (.007). However, the significant level of price is (.994) and it is greater than 0.05 which is statistically insignificant with purchase intention. According to the results, the H1 hypothesis is a significant relationship between Convenience and Consumer purchase intention which was

accepted. The p-value is (.000) and the Pearson correlation coefficient between Convenience and Consumer purchase intention is .629. Therefore, a significant positive relationship exists between the two variables. The findings supported the previous literature findings which Ali Baeshen (2021) found that there is a significant relationship between Convenience and Consumer purchase intention.

According to the results, the H2 hypothesis which is there is a significant effect of Prices offered on online portals on Consumer purchase intention was rejected. The p-value is (.994) and the Pearson correlation coefficient between Price and Consumer purchase intention is .247. Therefore, it can be stated that a positive relationship exists between the two variables. Although it found a positive relationship, the independent variable is an insignificant effect on the dependent variable. Thus, the hypothesis is not accepted. Scale accuracy issues and the cultural context might be the possible reasons for that.

According to the results, the H3 hypothesis which is there is a significant effect of Information about a product or service on Consumer purchase intention was accepted. The p-value is (0.007) and the Pearson correlation coefficient between Information about a product or service on Consumer purchase intention is .510. Therefore, a significant positive relationship exists between the two variables. The findings supported the previous literature findings of Ali Baeshen (2021) where he found that there is a significant effect of Prices offered on online portals on Consumer purchase intention.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

This study was conducted to find out the factors affecting online purchasing intention with special reference to the apparel industry. The study was developed by considering the TAM model and the data was analyzed through correlation and regression analysis. Convenience, Prices, and information about products or services were considered independent variables, and Consumer purchase intention was taken as the dependent variable.

As per the results of the data analysis, the regression analysis shows a significant impact of independent variables which are convenience and information. However, price shows a statistically insignificant relationship with the dependent variable (purchase intention). The correlation analysis shows a positive relationship between variables. The H1 and H3 hypotheses were accepted with the results of data analysis. Therefore, it can be concluded that convenience and information have a significant positive impact on the dependent variable (Purchase Intention).

As per the results, among the three factors, convenience is the most significant influenced factor followed by information on products or services. Therefore, it can be concluded that convenience and information on products or services have a significant impact on online purchase intention. Hence, businessmen should focus on selling products and services on a platform that enables convenience and product details.

There are both theoretical as well as managerial implications of this study. They contribute to online shopping literature and it would be a better contribution to fill the gap within the existing literature as well as managers could gain a good understanding of their consumers

and identify the most persuading causes that affect online shopping. Moreover, this study will contribute to marketers as the convenience and information on products or services are more influential on purchase intention as well as support in digital marketing strategy to plan marketing online for all types of businesses.

Some limitations were recognized in the present research study, but some significant areas for future research remain to be discovered. The findings of the study are exposed to some limitations associated with survey research. In particular, the used responses do not let get in-detailed replies from the respondents, so it will be exciting to increase the size of the sample and increase the population which will have a positive effect on the generalization issue. As well as for forthcoming studies, it can be used in other research approaches such as qualitative, pre-post analysis, comparative studies, or theoretical studies. It will be beneficial to conduct a longitudinal study to gain in-depth information. The current study considered only three factors. However, there are many other factors to be explored. Therefore, future research should be conducted by considering other factors such as perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, social impact, trust, risk, and marketing factors, etc. Further, future research could also be directed to expand the research model as well as it is recommended to conduct advanced research based on other respondent groups.

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