

A Study Over Constructive Role of Delivery Services in Intensifying Customer Loyalty in E-Commerce Business: An Empirical Study in Delhi

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Abstract

The internet has evolved into a trustworthy community for the transaction of items and services. Because online purchases do not include face-to-face interaction, a variety of factors may impact on purchasers' purchasing intentions. Aside from appearance and usefulness, trust is an important factor that determines customers' decisions about an online business. Online retailers must devise tactics to keep loyal and trustworthy clients. This paper investigates the development and/or enhancement of customer loyalty in online retail. The COVID-19 epidemic has accelerated global market e-commerce growth and strengthened ties amongst online merchants. Businesses look for more sophisticated online shopping dimensions models. It can be used to customize services for customers. With the introduction of electronic commerce and online consumer buying patterns, theorists and practitioners of marketing have begun to understand the importance of developing and sustaining e-loyalty in electronic marketplaces. Managing client trust, happiness, and loyalty sentiments when using the services of e-commerce is critical for long-term business success. It becomes more crucial for online shopping as e-commerce competition heats up. sample of 320 respondents from e-commerce business has been considered in the study to know the role and impact of delivery services in intensifying customer loyalty in e-commerce business and the study concludes that there is significant impact of delivery services in intensifying customer loyalty in e-commerce business.

Keywords: Constructive role, Customer loyalty, Customize, Delivery services, E-Commerce business, Intensifying customer, Online merchants,

Introduction

In the rapidly evolving realm of e-commerce in India, where trends fluctuate swiftly and data serves as the compass for strategic decisions, the role of delivery services has assumed newfound prominence in fostering customer loyalty. Against the backdrop of the latest market trends and data, this exploration illuminates the dynamic landscape where seamless and timely deliveries not only meet rising expectations but emerge as a linchpin for customer retention. As we navigate through the contemporary nuances of India's e-commerce ecosystem, this analysis dissects the symbiotic relationship between cutting-edge delivery services and the escalating imperative to intensify customer loyalty in the ever-competitive market.

Marketing has increased its use of this instrument in recent years as because of the expansion of web-based transactions and the increasing

importance of the worldwide web in client decision-making. Although e-commerce purchasing habits may appear to be a hard subject, growing consumer expectations are putting traditional patterns of supply on company web pages to the test.

E-commerce is one of the most crucial components of the internet era. Online shopping is the third most popular internet activity, trailing only browsing the internet and email usage. A brand is often made up of a denomination and a symbol. It is an essential tool for distinguishing one's items from competitors' and creating an excellent first connection with clients.

Buyers who are dedicated to the brand will purchase again and tell others about the company. The factors causing this sector's rapid growth are changing lifestyles, robust income growth, and positive demo graphs.

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Business organizations are built on client loyalty, and businesses go to tremendous lengths to keep that loyalty (1). These efforts are made more challenging and important in a via the internet business-to-customer atmosphere because online firms, such as online retailers and e-retailers, operate not simply with competing websites, but with offline organizations that provide comparable goods and services.

Customers are compelled to use purchasing methods online as their trust in online surroundings grows. Loyal consumers increase a company's long-term earnings and sales while minimizing the costs of gaining prospective clients (2). To keep clients coming back, the organization must provide appealing solutions and offers, which can be delivered through high-quality service. Furthermore, businesses must devise strategies to compensate for poor service and correct weaknesses so that customers continue working with them despite the fact that they sometimes experience poor service.

According to research, offering outstanding service increases client satisfaction, which in turn increases consumer loyalty and repeat business. Providing higher-quality service boosts consumer happiness with a retailer's website, which leads to repeat business and client loyalty (3). The purpose of this article is to investigate the impact of the quality of e- service and e-recovery, or how a business responds to an interruption in service, on consumer confidence in online merchants. The existing research was assessed in the first phase to find appropriate models and indicators.

E-commerce has grown at an exponential rate in recent years. When a merchant makes an offer on a website, consumers express approval by examining the product's attributes, prices, and distribution choices, purchasing items of interest, and then checking out. Tailoring these items towards offers and intended customer groups increases retail website sales a great deal while decreasing expenditures for the most recent data that customers access, illustrating the critical role internet shopping plays in deciding how effective broadband vendors can use modern technology to provide shoppers with satisfying options (4). Although one of the primary benefits of online communication is its ability to simplify data searching and facilitate transactions,

advances in innovative internet technology utilization require that internet commerce not only showcase product details but also establish good relationships.

Many authors said the use of mobile phones can be seen as one amongst the new strategies to assist businesses in improving their market performance. E-commerce refers to a company's virtual business activities that use information technology. With information technology such as Mobile E-commerce, E-commerce in the culinary sector has infiltrated the application of smartphones. People may be able to get the cuisine they want more simply now that meal delivery services are available. The quality of client service becomes a critical issue to preserve an excellent standing in the eyes of clients. Satisfaction through electronic media will be determined by what is thought of e-service quality. Customer satisfaction will improve as e-service quality improves. Security, dependability, responsiveness, delivery, and communication are some of the elements of e-service quality to consider (5).

Fortes and Rita detailed that, despite the fact that one of the most important advantages of the Internet is the ability to simplify data searching and facilitate operations, advances in imaginative website technology usage necessitate e-retailers not only presenting details regarding goods but also cultivating beneficial connections among consumers through delivering an enjoyable going shopping the surroundings (i.e., ease of journey, high-quality information, website design, protection, and so on), which are essential for the continued success of the business. As a result, the goal of this research is to evaluate the moderating effects of online purchase experiences in the e-commerce sector. Online customers browse websites and hunt for relevant merchandise information as they interact with a seller's web page before creating a purchases intention or making a purchase choice (6).

Many stated that the development of these trends is contradictory, since e-commerce is associated with a large number of packaging materials required for delivery. The authors claim that small retail enterprises, opening their own online stores, transfer the obligations to carry out delivery to third-party companies-courier aggregators. The paper presents an overview of

delivery services that have an environmental component ("Gotovo" and "B12 Zero Waste"). Next, the authors study the possibility of creating a green courier aggregator that can not only deliver, but also organize the turnover of reusable containers (7).

It is also found that digital accessibility and internet access are reshaping the e-commerce market. Consumers own a wide range of devices; they keep their smartphones closed, and they check them frequently. Many enterprises and companies struggle to match their customers' expectations in the digital realm, especially in the case of e-commerce. Furthermore, many firms fail to link m-commerce and networking sites, and e-commerce and practitioners and scholars alike are eager to learn about the factors that contribute to an engaging electronic experience for customers because of significant changes regarding online purchases and customer interactions with e-vendors. Users anticipate a fascinating experience if reliability and basic help requirements are accomplished (8).

Raman discussed that within the delivery carrier industry, competition is becoming increasingly stiff. With those conditions, any employer must be able to live and share the tale, and even hold on to grow. Maintaining timeliness is one of the most crucial things that any company wants to manage and be aware of since it allows business to breathe as you tell tales and expand. Timeliness refers to the ability to appropriately and on time respond to consumer requests. These include delivery timelines, the merchant's ability to respond to orders for shipment in a timely manner, and the merchant's ability to ship merchandise and respond to refunds and exchange requests. Orders and returns can be processed quickly, and orders can be cancelled (9).

A study showed that customers are becoming more discerning as the economy improves. Busier than ever before, and there is no better way to relieve the stress of a heavy workload than to provide exceptional meal service in a safe and convenient manner. Furthermore, the evolving lifestyle of the number of people who eat out or try new foods with diverse flavors is growing by the day. This way of life has established a solid foundation for online meal delivery services, with enormous possibilities in the future provided that

the service providers ensure that all the main features examined in the study are met through effective app aesthetic. Today, online communication is the most powerful tool and the system of ordering permits integration with many web-based sites such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and other social media platforms are being used to endorse everything and anything to attract more customers (10).

Author of Factors Influencing Customer Loyalty toward Online Shopping said that social media platforms and e-commerce play important roles in the development of business businesses, as well as in their marketing and long-term success. Internet connectivity has been increasingly popular in recent years, boosting the usage of mobile phones, desktops, and laptops, resulting in a significant change in the power and volume of digital channels. Social media and the internet are becoming increasingly important in the daily routines of consumers. Consumers are presently spending greater amount of time on social networking sites and perusing the internet. As a result, the public's understanding of any product is greater from social media or the internet than through traditional marketing approaches (11).

A study detailed that the term electronic banking encompasses financial services supplied by a bank provider via a secure website, allowing for the implementation of the worldwide web as a distant shipment channel. Electronic banking enables bank customers to manage their accounts with minimal difficulty by providing a quick and comfortable option to do numerous banking operations from home via an internet-based banking website. Creating and maintaining client loyalty is a critical component of firms' long-term competitive advantage. As a result, we have to identify those who are the most valuable consumers and provide them with the finest service possible to ensure customer pleasure and economic profitability (12).

A concluded that customer happiness is critical in any business. It not only increases client loyalty and profitability, but it also assists in gaining new customers in competitive business environments. Customer satisfaction is crucial for business owners since it provides a mechanism for improving and managing their businesses. Every business strives to please and retain its customers. As a result, they make every effort to

give the greatest products and offers to their clients to raise their sales, market share, and acquire a competitive advantage over their competitors (13).

A study said that customer satisfaction has been proven to be affected by customer trust characteristics. Competence, truthfulness, and relationships are all components of customer trust. To increase consumer trust, the company should demonstrate that it is committed to maintaining its good brand so that customers will continue to believe it and not switch to another adventure provider. To keep a good name, a company should prepare for the worst and always provide excellent service, so that there are no mistakes while dealing with customers, because zero mistakes are what build and maintain a company's reputation (14).

Rashmi Sharma in her study showed that Brand loyalty is one thing that is directly associated with the delivery of products/services before time and that too, reliably and securely. With the help of a trusted delivery partner and logistics infrastructure in place, orders can be delivered at a rapid pace. Customers tend to trust brands that offer express delivery services with the promise of same-day or next-day delivery. It is where your eCommerce store can capture a larger market share and enjoy a positive response from the customers that form the basis of a strong business foundation (15).

A delivery service agency stated that one of the top priorities for any e-commerce business is to provide a seamless and satisfying experience to its customers. A reliable courier service plays a crucial role in enhancing this experience by ensuring that the products are delivered on time and in good condition. Delayed or damaged deliveries can lead to frustration among customers, ultimately resulting in negative reviews and loss of loyalty. With a reliable courier service, businesses can avoid such issues and offer a hassle-free delivery experience to their customers (16).

Preeti Tanna in her study stated that the products that a consumer is seeking for can be found on an e-commerce website. The costs are reasonable, and everything is satisfying. However, it's not until they reach the delivery page that things start to go south. They quickly and thoughtlessly leave the shopping cart and the website after learning they

must wait weeks or months for their products to arrive. Later, they locate a rival with a quicker delivery estimate and decide to do business with them. It's the last obstacle to clear, and if you do, you'll have an advantage over rivals who are also working diligently to get their goods shipped out as fast as possible. It's crucial that they pay attention to it just as much as their branding and products because it has the power to completely transform an e-commerce company (17).

Hilario Alfonso focused that by consistently providing prompt and efficient deliveries, your e-commerce business can cultivate a reputation for reliability, instilling trust in potential customers. Timely deliveries can contribute to positive customer experiences that remain etched in their memories, increasing the likelihood of future purchases and repeat business. Considering the countless options available to online shoppers, the ability to offer quick and reliable deliveries can set your e-commerce business apart from competitors, making it more appealing to consumers (18).

A study confirmed that usefulness and ease of use have a significant influence on trust in the courier services in Poland. In comparison, research shows trust in courier services has the strongest connection with smooth delivery, then convenience and joyful anticipation. The trust in courier services scale, which is based on the Ejdus and Gulc sub scale, is moderately and positively related to the ease of delivery. The connection between trust in courier services and ease of delivery tells us that there is a possibility that this connection is bidirectional, meaning that one aspect can influence the other and vice versa. For example, if customers had a positive experience in terms of easy product collection, this contributed to their increased trust in the courier services, because they provided good service (19).

A study impact on online shopping attitude on online shopping intentions by the application of the theory of reasoned action Design/methodology/approach, they conducted a self-administered and structured online survey targeting female online shoppers in four metropolitan cities of India. The authors of the paper reveals that price benefit, convenience benefit and product variety benefit have a significant positive impact on online shopping

attitude and there is a considerable positive relationship between online shopping attitude and online shopping intentions among women in India. Product variety was found to be the most important perceived benefit for Indian women.

The relationships between e-quality, e-satisfaction and e-loyalty and tested how these relationships vary across different levels of customer sociability in the UAE banking industry. The relative importance of customer sociability in the relationships between e-quality, e-satisfaction and e-loyalty was examined. This study’s findings confirm that the relationships between e-quality, e-satisfaction and e-loyalty are stronger if the online banking user is an introvert (less social) rather than an extravert (very social). This study demonstrates how bank managers could use the sociability level of their customers to manage the relationships between e-quality, e-satisfaction and e-loyalty.

The Switching costs and customer satisfaction may differently affect marketing strategy. Managers would benefit from knowing how different switching costs (financial, procedural, and relational) and satisfaction jointly affect repurchase in order to properly invest marketing resources. A meta-analysis of multiple effects from over lakh customers shows that relational switching costs have the strongest association with repurchase intentions and behavior; and procedural and relational switching costs mitigate the association between satisfaction and repurchase intentions/behavior whereas financial switching costs enhance it.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

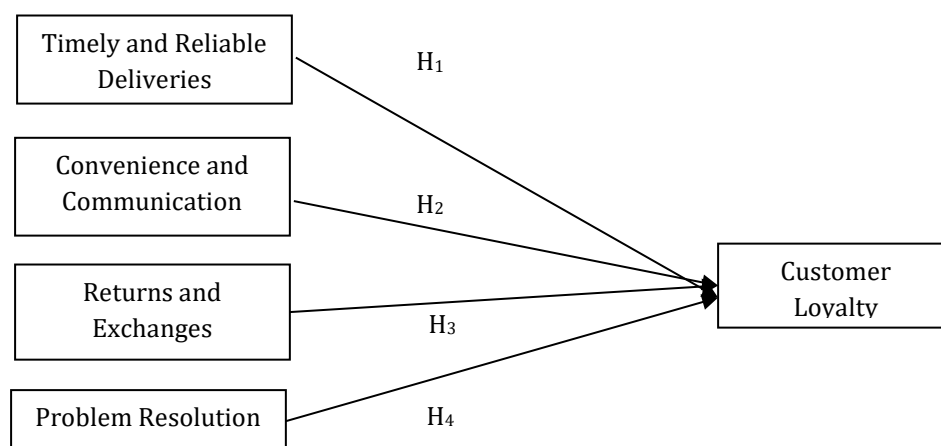


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

The internet has become a suitable platform for the trade of products and services. Online shopping transactions are carried out without face-to-face contact; thus, various factors can affect customers’ purchase intentions. In addition to aesthetics and ease of use, trust is a critical factor which allows customers to choose an online store. Online merchants need to find ways to keep trusting customers satisfied and loyal. The results indicate that information security and website performance influence e-service quality both positively and directly. Also, responsiveness, compensation, and contact positively influence e-recovery. E-recovery has positive impact on e-loyalty, which in turn significantly affects online repurchase.

Objectives

- To determine the factors of role of delivery services in intensifying customer loyalty in e-commerce business.
- To measure the impact of delivery service factors on intensifying customer loyalty in e-commerce business.

Hypothesis Of The Study

H₁ Timely and reliable services positively influence customer loyalty

H₂ Convenience and communication positively influences customer loyalty

H₃ Returns and exchanges positively influences customer loyalty

H₄ Problem resolution positively influences customer loyalty

Methodology

Research Design: This study is descriptive in nature in which an effort has been made to produce the results with the help of a quasi-experimental design in which hypothesis testing is performed under a descriptive design.

Instrument Design: A structured questionnaire was designed and used to capture the responses of the customers. The content validity of the statements was established through extant literature in the field. The instrument was pretested with a sample size of 60 and redesigned before final circulation to the respondents.

Sample Size: Minimum sample size recommended is 10 times of the number of variables. In this study there are 20 variables under the "Exploratory Factor Analysis". Hence, a sample size of 200 was sufficient, though we had to take a sample of 320 respondents.

Sampling Method and Unit: Judgement sampling was used to capture the respondents. The sampling unit were the final consumers. The judgement criteria were that, only those consumers were chosen who have taken the delivery of the products in e-commerce.

Statistical Techniques: Exploratory Factor Analysis and Multiple Regression Analysis

Results and Discussion

Table 1 shows that 61.6% of males and 38.4% of females contributed to a total of 320 respondents. Among them, 30.3% are below 42 years of age, 43.8% belong to the age category of 42-48 years and the rest 25.9% are above 48 years of age. 25.3% of respondents are from Amazon, 30.0% from Flipkart, 28.1% work with Myntra and the rest 16.6% are other e-commerce business platforms.

Table 1: Demographic Profile

Variables	Respondents	Percentage
Gender		
Male	197	61.6
Female	123	38.4
Total	320	100
Age (years)		
Below 42 Years	97	30.3
42-48 Years	140	43.8
Above 48 Years	83	25.9
Total	320	100
E-commerce business		
Amazon	81	25.3
Flipkart	96	30.0
Myntra	90	28.1
Others	53	16.6
Total	320	100

Table 2: "KMO and Bartlett's Test"

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.903
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	5506.996
	df	190
	Sig.	.000

Table 2 shows the value of KMO in table above is 0.903.

Table 3: "Total Variance Explained"

"Component"	"Initial Eigenvalues"			"Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings"		
	"Total"	"% Of Variance"	"Cumulative %"	"Total"	"% Of Variance"	"Cumulative %"
1	8.425	42.126	42.126	4.181	20.903	20.903
2	3.014	15.069	57.195	4.136	20.679	41.582
3	2.093	10.467	67.662	3.424	17.122	58.704
4	1.629	8.143	75.805	3.420	17.101	75.805
5	.749	3.744	79.549			
6	.614	3.068	82.617			
7	.483	2.415	85.032			
8	.461	2.303	87.335			
9	.433	2.163	89.498			
10	.337	1.686	91.184			
11	.303	1.514	92.698			
12	.230	1.150	93.848			
13	.212	1.060	94.908			
14	.197	.985	95.893			
15	.182	.909	96.802			
16	.160	.802	97.604			
17	.147	.733	98.337			
18	.131	.656	98.993			
19	.114	.568	99.562			
20	.088	.438	100.000			

Table 3 shows that 20 variables form 4 factors, and the factors explain the variance of 20.903%, 20.679%, 17.122% and 17.101% respectively and the total variance explained is 75.805%.

Table 4 shows that "**Timely and Reliable Deliveries**" is factor one which includes the variables like Customers expect their orders to be delivered on time, delivered items need to be in good condition, consistently meeting delivery promises builds trust and reliability, late or unpredictable deliveries can lead to frustration and dissatisfaction and Merchant must respond to orders for shipment in a timely manner. The second factor is named as "**Convenience and Communication**" and its associated variables are fast and efficient delivery options intensify customer loyalty, Same-day or next-day delivery, provide convenience to customers, Customers must be informed about their order status, tracking information, and any potential delays, Transparency reduces anxiety and uncertainty and contributes to a positive customer experience and Convenience enhances the overall shopping

experience and customer loyalty. Third factor is "**Returns and Exchanges**" which includes the variables like an efficient and hassle-free returns intensify customer loyalty, Smooth exchanges process is crucial for customer loyalty, Customers are more likely to shop with a brand that has a straightforward process for handling returns, Smooth return and exchange process reflects the brand's commitment to customer satisfaction and Orders and returns can be processed quickly, and orders can be cancelled. Fourth factor is "**Problem Resolution**", and its associated variables are: Proper handling of delivery issues makes customer loyalty, promptly addressing problems intensifies customer loyalty, Customers appreciate good offering solutions, and providing compensation, Problem resolution contributes to overall brand image and positive resolution process reinforces the brand's commitment to quality and reliability. The reliability for 4 constructs that include a total of 20 numbers of items is 0.922 (Table 5). The model explained 64% of the variance with R Square value of 0.641 (Table 6).

Table 4: “Factors, Factor Loading and Reliability”

S. No.	Statements	Factor Loading	Factor Reliability
Timely and Reliable Deliveries			.953
1	Customers expect their orders to be delivered on time	.862	
2	Delivered items need to be in good condition	.859	
3	Consistently meeting delivery promises builds trust and reliability	.845	
4	Late or unpredictable deliveries can lead to frustration and dissatisfaction	.827	
5	Merchants must respond to orders for shipment in a timely manner	.780	
Convenience and Communication			.938
6	Fast and efficient delivery options intensify customer loyalty	.907	
7	Same-day or next-day delivery, provide convenience to customers	.898	
8	Customers must be informed about their order status, tracking information, and any potential delays	.880	
9	Transparency reduces anxiety and uncertainty and contributes to a positive customer experience	.874	
10	Convenience enhances the overall shopping experience and customer loyalty	.783	
Returns and Exchanges			.880
11	Efficient and hassle-free returns intensify customer loyalty	.827	
12	A smooth exchange process is crucial for customer loyalty	.807	
13	Customers are more likely to shop with a brand that has a straightforward process for handling returns	.804	
14	The Smooth return and exchange process reflects the brand's commitment to customer satisfaction	.770	
15	Orders and returns can be processed quickly, and orders can be cancelled	.719	
Problem Resolution			.878
16	Proper handling of delivery issues makes customer loyalty	.857	
17	Promptly addressing problems intensifies customer loyalty	.829	
18	Customers appreciate good offering solutions, and providing compensation	.778	
19	Problem resolution contributes to the overall brand image	.743	
20	The positive resolution process reinforces the brand's commitment to quality and reliability	.655	

Table 5 “Reliability Statistics”

“Cronbach's Alpha”	“N of Items”
.922	20

Table 6 Model Summary

“Model”	“R”	“R Square”	“Adjusted R Square”	“Std. Error of the Estimate”
1	.803 ^a	.645	.641	.54557

a. Predictors: (Constant), Timely and Reliable Deliveries, Convenience & Communication, Returns & Exchanges and Problem Resolution

Table 7: ANOVA

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	170.430	4	42.607	143.150	.000 ^b
	Residual	93.758	315	.298		
	Total	264.188	319			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Timely and Reliable Deliveries, Convenience & Communication, Returns & Exchanges and Problem Resolution

DV: Customer Loyalty

The significance value is less than 0.05 (0.000), which reflects that one of more of the IDVs significantly influences the DV (Table 7).

Table 8: All the Factors

Model	“Coefficients”			t	Sig.
	“Unstd. Coefficients”		“Stand. Coefficients”		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.844	.030		126.032	.000
Timely and Reliable Deliveries	.118	.031	.130	3.875	.000
Convenience & Communication	.709	.031	.779	23.203	.000
Returns & Exchanges	.089	.031	.097	2.902	.004
Problem Resolution	.100	.031	.110	3.285	.001

DV: Customer Loyalty

Table 8 above shows that all the factors, namely Timely and Reliable Deliveries, Convenience & Communication, Returns & Exchanges, and Problem Resolution are showing a significant impact of delivery services in intensifying customer loyalty. The highest impact is shown by Convenience & Communication with beta value .779 followed by Timely and Reliable Deliveries (.130), Problem Resolution (.110) and Returns & Exchanges with beta value .097.

Conclusion

This study was conducted to examine the factors that determine different roles of delivery services in intensifying customer loyalty in e-commerce business and found that Timely and Reliable Deliveries, Convenience and Communication, Returns & Exchanges, and Problem Resolution are the factors that determine different roles of delivery services in intensifying customer loyalty in e-commerce business. The study concludes that there is a significant impact of delivery services in intensifying customer loyalty in e-commerce business.

The effect of e-trust and web-based fulfillment on expressive and long-term commitment was investigated. It means that e-commerce

companies should pay careful consideration to the effect of brand awareness, perceived worth, and e-loyalty on purchase intent. Buyers could recognize a merchandise name when looking into buying a new item. E-commerce and management websites should build a brand and raise customer consciousness through sales promotions, advertising, and other advertising campaigns. Brand loyalty grows when customer awareness is high. According to our results, psychological state has a positive influence on consumer fulfillment while making an online purchase. When it comes to the perceived risk of acquiring on the web page, customers take hazards seriously when making the decision to buy online. Customer attachment to the merchant site is generated by this satisfaction, as measured by state of mind and perceived risk.

Abbreviations

KMO: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Test, ANOVA: Analysis of Variance, DV: Dependent Variable.

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Author's contribution

As the principal investigator, Pervez Alam, played a pivotal role in shaping the research trajectory. Serving in a supervisory capacity, Dr. Firoz Husain and Dr. Adeel Maqbool provided invaluable guidance and oversight throughout the research process. This involved critical reviews of the methodology, ensuring its soundness, and validating the overall research design.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Ethics approval

Not applicable

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