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Online shopping Experience and Repeat Purchase: Empirical Evidence from Students of Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

Nowadays, technologies have altered change way people shop across the world, especially through the internet. Online shopping represents one of these ways, offering people now opportunities for people to make purchases online from home. However, their initial experiences of shopping online appear to affect repeat purchases which is a major concern for the online shop owners. This study investigates the online shopping experience and repeats purchase among the Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University (IMSIU) students in Saudi Arabia. The study adopted a survey questionnaire design. The population covered all the students of IMSIU, however, only those who have previous online shopping experience were finally included in the study. A snowballing sampling technique was used to select those who finally participated in the study. The sample size in all is 227 students (online shoppers) of IMSIU. It made use of primary data which is a survey questionnaire. Data collection was conducted through an email survey procedure. The collected data was analysed using both SPSS and Stata were it was found that online shopping experience is statistically significantly related to repeat purchase among the students of IMSIU. On the other hand, the correlation results revealed that online shopping experience has a low negative correlation with repeat purchase among the participants. An additional probe revealed that neither gender nor age brings about online repeat purchase among the participants. The study therefore concludes that online shopping experience significantly but negatively affects repeat purchase among the students in IMSIU. The discussion for findings, implication, limitations including suggestion for studies are provided.

Keywords: Online Shopping Experience, Repeat Purchase, Saudi Arabia.

Introduction

Generally, every business including online shops/stores are often interested in increasing their sales from time to time. Achieving this objective does not only require looking for new customers but also involve having repeat purchases from your (Bowden, 2009; Kanya, 2018). Therefore, a repeat purchase is being described as a consumer of a same-brand product as bought on a previous occasion. It shows the extent to which a customer is loyal to a brand. Repeat purchase provides the occasion for the marketers to create a long-term customer relationship. Satisfied and well-retained customers are the product of the high number of repeat purchases. This has a way of bringing down the new-customer acquisition costs and increases overall profitability. It is believed that customers would repeat purchases when they have positive and good experience. However, some customers are having problems repeating purchases particularly after their initial experience of shopping online. For example, experiences have shown that many customers find it difficult to repeat purchase online due to the growing increasingly customers frustration with the online shopping experience (Cardew, 2018; Román

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& Riquelme, 2014). A customer may likely not repeat purchase in a situation whereby the customer experienced an inconsistent product descriptions while shopping online (Lysenko-Ryba & Zimon, 2021). In other words, repeat purchase may not likely take place if customers are confused with the products or service, suggesting that customers who previous purchase the products may likely not buy the products again if the item is different to what they expected (Chintagunta, 1999; Gullo et al., 2019; Simonson, 1990).

Furthermore, dealing with repeat purchase requires that online shops need to ensure that those who shop online, particularly those first timers have positive and good experience to enable them repeat purchase return to your business next time. Therefore, online shopping experience is an important aspect of repeat purchase. There are several reasons why customers may want to shop online. For example, quick and convenience including the opportunity of wide selection of shops across the world are part of it. Also, the right price and free delivery of products which make customers avoid carrying heavy bags. In this case, online shop operators should endeavor to find the right approach in order to retain the customers. Therefore, constant customer information is up to date and is a way to create a wonderful online shopping experience that encourages customers to return to your store.

It is clear that changes in technology have changed the way people shop around the world, globe particularly through the internet. Online shopping is one such way that people have the opportunity to shop online. Online shopping has continued to grow in developed nations such as the USA, UK etc. However, this growth differs from developed to developing countries with enormous research gap between these nations of which Saudi Arabia is not excluded (Al-Khateeb et al., 2023; Celik, 2016; Çelik, 2011; Srinivasan, 2015; Taleghani & Derogar, 2015). This implies that experience among online shoppers differs considerably among the shoppers in those nations. For example, it has been observed that shoppers in Saudi Arabia have the tendency of not repeating purchase after their initial online shopping. Brynjolfsson and Smith (2000) State that one major challenges of online shopping among the operators is the difficulty in retaining customers after their initial purchase. In other words, how to make customers repeat purchases after their first experience is a major issue of concern. It is therefore crucial for online shop operators to understand the factors that affect or encourage online shoppers particularly the students who formed the majority of online shoppers to repeat purchase for effectiveness and efficiency, leading to better outcomes. Thus, the present study investigates the online shopping experience and repeat purchase among the Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University (IMSIU) students in Saudi Arabia.

Literature Review

Theoretical Background

This study adopts the theory of reasoning action by proposed in 1975 by (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1977). The theory emphasizes two major variables, namely attitudes and subjective norms. The main objective of the theory of reasoning action TRA is to know people's voluntary behaviour through the understanding of the basic motivation in performing action (Doswell et al., 2011). The theory TRA assumes that people's intention to do things is predicted by whether or not they actually perform that behavior (Sutton, 1998; Yousafzai et al., 2010).

It also assumes that the favorability of the attitude and the subjective norms, the greater the perceived control, the stronger the person's intention to perform the behavior. TRA believes that if people evaluate the proposed behavior as positive (attitude) and if they believe that others

want them to perform the behavior (subjective norm), this leads to a higher intention (motivation) and they are more likely to execute the action (Fishbein, 1979; Hale et al., 2002). A person's behaviour should be aligned with positive or negative feeling in relation to the achievement of an objective.

In the context of this study, it shows that people who purchasing something do it in relation to what they feel and desires like doing and not really because of an actual need associated to the model they belong to. The previous experience of customers is their behavior which makes them repeat purchase or not. Thus, shoppers' positive or negative feelings determine whether their action repeats action or not, and this must be in relation to the achievement of an objective. This theory is relevant to this study because it assists in understanding the reason behind the action and decision to repeat purchase by the online shoppers. It explains the shoppers' motivations and purposes of repeating purchases after their initial online shopping experience. Thus, the study establishes the correlation between online shopping experience and repeat purchase.

Maintaining the Integrity of the Specifications

A repeat purchase is being described as a consumer product of a same-brand product as purchased on a previous occasion. It shows the extent to which a customer is loyal to a brand. Repeat purchase provides the occasion for the marketers to create a long-term customer relationship. Satisfied and well-retained customers are the product of the high number of repeat purchases, which increases overall profitability. There are several factors that could promote repeat purchase rates. For this reason, several researchers are making serious attempts to uncover these factors. For example, in a survey of shoppers preference of online marketplaces for repeat purchases, (Shah, A., Zhang, Y., Tanveer, M., Ali, W., & Saleem, A. R. 2023; Kim & Yum, 2024; Masters, 2018) reported that marketplaces are better variables that affect repeat purchase. For example, the survey revealed that among other variables marketplaces won 47% of repeat purchases, retailers (34%) while direct from brands recorded 20%. The study also demonstrated that shoppers always have the tendency to discover new products and then make their first purchase from a retailer.

Further study by (Kin & Farida, 1970) the relationship between convenience associated with online shopping and satisfaction with repeat purchase intention among higher education students in Indonesia. A purposive sampling was utilized, where students from five colleges in the Surakarta, namely: Health Polytechnic of Surakarta, Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, Sebelas Maret University, Unggulan Polytechnic of Sragen, and AUB Economics College of Surakarta. In all a total of 212 students participated in the study which formed the sample size. Among other variables that were regressed with repeat-purchase intention, customer satisfaction demonstrated a positive and significant relationship with repeat-purchase intention. The study proved that customer satisfaction is a key variable that affects repeat purchase among the students in the five colleges being investigated.

Abdul-Muhmin (2010); Hsu et al. (2015) investigated the Repeat Purchase Intentions in online shopping while trying to determine the role of satisfaction, attitude, and online retailers' performance. The study's major objective was to provide a model or understanding of the factors of influence of repeat purchase intentions of consumers who have previously shopping online. For this reason, a structured self-administered survey was conducted through which data was obtained from a sample of 436 consumers in Saudi Arabia. The findings revealed that consumers who have previously bought online repeat purchase due to the impact of overall satisfaction with previous online purchases and attitude toward online purchasing on repeat purchase intentions.

The study implies that satisfaction and attitudes of consumers positively determined whether consumers who have previously purchased online shopping repeat or do not repeat purchase online. The study by Jang and Davis Burns (2004); Hye Park and Stoel (2002) proved that both internal and external variables such as brand closeness, previous shopping experience etc. enhance consumer's intention in shopping or repurchasing, and eventually affect purchasing decision making. The importance of previous experience on purchasing intention was also explained by (Shim & Drake, 1990). It is noted that past experience in the form of trust which could be high or low through the internet has huge influence on repeat purchase.

To find out why people repeat purchase, (Fang et al., 2016) demonstrated the role of gender, age and shopping motives. For this reason, the study proposed a gender-age framework to explain online consumers repurchase decision-making process. With a survey approach of 651 online shoppers, it was found that both age and gender influence online repurchase intention. However, these effects were contingent upon the shoppers' motives. Contrary, the effects are situational shoppers' motives. One major weakness of this study is that it failed to segregate the online shoppers, whether the online shoppers are students or household consumers. Hence, the study was not specific about the participants unlike the present study that focuses on students. But one good thing about this study is that it listed some of the variables that propel repurchase. For example, heterogeneous backgrounds and perceived value are believed to create online repurchase. A similar study by (Abd Aziz & Abd Wahid, 2018; Tanveer M, 2021) examined the factors that affect purchase intention among Malaysian university students. Thus, the aim of the study was to explore the factors that are likely to affect students purchase intention. For that reason, a primary data source was employed, and survey questionnaire was distributed among 400 students in higher educational institution in Malaysia selected through systematic sample technique. The data was analysed using Structural Equation Modelling (AMOS) where the finding revealed that perceived benefits and perceived ease of usage are mediators during previous online experience. purchase intention is insignificant. The study clearly showed that experience is related to perceived benefits and perceived ease of use with purchase intention being affected by perceptions. Although this study seems similar to the present study. However, its direction is far different from the present study which deals with repeat purchase.

In a related development, (Tangcharoensutichai, 2012) attempt to study the impact of satisfaction, site quality, financial security, trust, and attitude on online repurchase. Its objective is directed towards examining a conceptual framework for analyzing customers' perceptions of online repurchase intention. It highlights factors such as satisfaction, website quality, financial security, trust, and attitude as key to online repurchase. It adopted a survey questionnaire approach where online channel was used to obtained data from 437 respondents who demonstrated previous experiences on online shopping. The study found that attitude toward online purchase significantly factors influencing customers intention to repurchase online.

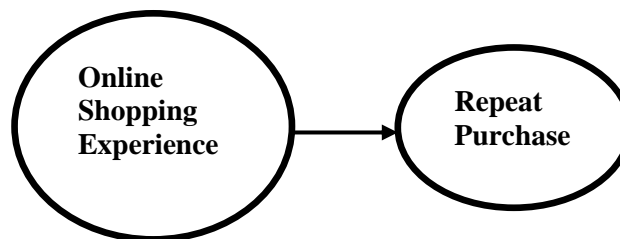


Figure 1. Online Shopping Experience- Repeat Purchase

Hypotheses Development

H1: Students will repeat purchase if they have positive online shopping experience.

Methods

This study makes use of cross-sectional survey research design whereby data was collected at one point in time (Bougie & Sekaran, 2016). The population of the study covered all the students' population of Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University (IMSIU), Saudi Arabia. The entire number of the population is 75 thousand. However, only those with online shopping experience are made to participate in the study. A primary data sources particularly, an email technique (through googles forms) was used to collect data from the respondents. We collected information through a survey distributed to the population of Saudi Arabia and targeted online shopping experience users. This was conducted from April 2024 to October 2024. We used a back-translation procedure, which helped write the survey instrument in the original English language and translate it from English to Arabic. This method ensures the accuracy and consistency of the language used, as well as ensuring the meaning of all items, through the translation stage (Brislin, R. W. 1980). As a result, three academics were recruited to write our questionnaire.

A snowballing sampling technique was employed whereby existing study subjects recruit future subjects from among their acquaintances. The application of this sampling technique only produced 227 participants and that formed the sample size of the study. All items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree. The survey data test using SPSS was subjected to both validity and reliability tests and all items proved valid (KMO) and reliable (Cronbach's Alpha coefficient), higher than the recommended level above 0.70. Details on both validity and reliability are provided in Table 2.2.

Data Analysis Results

Descriptive Analysis Result

Table 1 provides information about the demographic profile of the respondents who participated in the study based on the descriptive analysis conducted on terms of frequency and percentage. For example, the gender shows that a very large number of the respondents numbering 199 are males accounting for 71.8% while the rest 78 of them are female representing 28.2%. It also shows their age bracket which revealed that 236 of the respondents are less than 30 years old accounting for 85.2% while the remaining 41 of them fall in the age bracket of 31-35 years representing 14.8%. Following that is the marital status of the respondents which revealed that 243 of them are singles while the rest 34 are married accounting for both 87.7% and 12.3% respectively. Their program characteristics show that 233 of the respondents are undergraduate students while only 34 of them are in postgraduate program. Finally, the result shows that 94 of the respondents are from the management department, 72 of them are from the science, 36 of them are from the Art department, 31 of them are from social science while 23 and 21 of them are from both education and information technology, respectively. They all account for 33.9%, 26%, 13%, 11.2%, 8.3% and 7.6% accordingly.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender:		
Male	199	71.8
Female	78	28.2

Age:		
LESS THAN 30	236	85.2
31-35,	41	14.8
Marital status:		
Single	243	87.7
Married	34	12.3
Program of Study:		
Undergraduate	233	84.1
Postgraduate	44	15.9
Department:		
Management	94	33.9
Art	36	13.0
Social Science	31	11.2
Education	23	8.3
Information System	21	7.6
Science	72	26.0
Total	100	100

Table 1 Descriptive Analysis Result

Validity, Reliability and Correlations Analysis Results

The validity results through the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) values of 0.69 (Online Shopping Experience) and 0.90 (Repeat Purchase) show that the research instrument measuring the variables are valid, respectively. Also, the reliability result proved that the research instruments are reliable with Cronbach alpha coefficient values of .81 and .95, respectively.

Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to determine the direction and strength of the association between the independent variables (Online Shopping Experience) and dependent (Repeat Purchase) variables. The correlation results shows that the predictor- Online Shopping Experience has a positive correlation with the outcome variable-Repeat Purchase. It shows that the correlation is significant with $r = -.154^*$ at $p < 0.05$ level. Also, it revealed a weak or low correlation meaning that Online Shopping Experience is hardly related Repeat Purchase. It equally implies that online shopping experience has a negative association with repeat purchase.

Variables	KMO	Cronbach alpha	Correlation	Decisions
			Online Shopping Experience	
Online Shopping Experience	.69	.81	-.154*	Significant negative low correlation.
Repeat Purchase	.90	.95		

Table 2. Validity, Reliability and Correlation Analysis Results

Regression Analysis Result

The hypothesis was tested using a straight-line regression analysis technique. It was done to determine the relationship between online shopping experience and repeat purchase. It shows that online shopping experience is statistically and significantly related to Repeat Purchase. The

result established that online shopping experience statistically significantly predicts repeat purchase, $F(31.366)$, $p < 0.001$, and online shopping experience accounted for 2.4% of the variability in repeat purchase. The percentage of the variance explains appears to be low. Hence, the effect of the prediction of online shopping experience on repeat purchase appears to be very small.

Variables	R	R Square	Beta	T	F value	Sig. Value	Decisions
Online Shopping Experience	.154a	.024	-.154	-2.586	31.366	.01	Supported

Table 3. Validity, Reliability and Correlations Analysis Results

Dependent Variable: Repeat Purchase

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	277
Model	2.01997631	1	2.01997631	F(1, 275)	=	6.60
Residual	84.1600093	275	.306036397	Prob > F	=	0.0107
				R-squared	=	0.0234
				Adj R-squared	=	0.0199
Total	86.1799856	276	.312246324	Root MSE	=	.55321

RP	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]	
OSE	-.1788163	.0696018	-2.57	0.011	-.3158364	-.0417962
_cons	4.537145	.288033	15.75	0.000	3.970115	5.104175

Table 4. Stata Analysis Result

$$\text{Repeat Purchase} = C + \beta \text{OSE} + \mu$$

$$\text{RP} = 4.537145 + -.1788163 + \mu$$

The result in Table 2.5 below shows $F(2,274)=0.39$; $\text{Prob}>F=0.6750$ and $R\text{-squared} = 0.0029$ suggesting that neither gender nor age are significant predictors of repeat purchase in online shopping business. The variability which is 2.9 appears very small and weak to be able to predict the outcome variable-repeat purchase.

41% Online shopping Experience and Repeat Purchase

. regress REPEATPURCHASE GENDER AGE

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs = 277		
Model	.246848479	2	.123424239	F(2, 274) = 0.39		
Residual	85.9331371	274	.313624588	Prob > F = 0.6750		
				R-squared = 0.0029		
				Adj R-squared = -0.0044		
Total	86.1799856	276	.312246324	Root MSE = .56002		

REPEATPURC~E	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]	
GENDER	.0112259	.0748159	0.15	0.881	-.1360612	.158513
AGE	.0827062	.0947589	0.87	0.384	-.1038418	.2692542
_cons	3.692759	.1481398	24.93	0.000	3.401122	3.984396

Table 5. Stata Analysis Result

Repeat Purchase = $c + \beta_{\text{gender}} + \beta_{\text{age}} + \mu$

RP = $.0112259 + .0827062 + \mu$

Discussion of Findings

The objective of the research is to contribute to the literature on repeat purchase through the determinant factor such as online shopping experience among the students in Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University (IMSIU), Saudi Arabia. It is aimed at enhancing and improving online shopping activities among the students.

Practically speaking, the finding of the result revealed that online shopping experience statistically significantly affects repeat purchase at $p < 0.01$. It shows that online shopping experience is a significant predictor of repeat purchase. The result revealed that initial shopping experience assists in getting your customers to buy again and again. It shows that Consumers who buy something do so in relation to what they feel like doing and not because of an actual need related to the paradigm to which they belong. The previous experience of customers is their behavior which makes them repeat purchase or not. Thus, shoppers' positive or negative feelings determine whether their action repeats action or not, and this must be in relation to the achievement of an objective. This theory is relevant to this study because it assists in understanding the reason behind the action and decision to repeat purchase by the online shoppers. It explains the shoppers' motivations and purposes of repeating purchases after their initial online shopping experience. Thus, the study establishes the correlation between online shopping experience and repeat purchase.

The present finding affirmed other studies that reported online shopping activities to their intention on repeat purchase. For example, (Abdul-Muhmin, 2010) reported that overall satisfaction could actually cause customers to repeat purchase and then change their attitudes towards intention to purchase. A similar report from (Hye Park & Stoel, 2002) shows that internal and external factors such as previous shopping experience among others improve the customer's online shopping intention which transformed into purchasing decision making,

suggesting that a huge influence is achieved through previous online experience.

The finding suggests that customers in this case students with previous online shopping experience leading to his/her satisfaction have a very high tendency to repeat purchase next time. It also implies that such a customer's expectation about his/her online shopping has been met. Thus, customers may believe that they're knowledgeable about online shopping. Meanwhile, (Taylor & Todd, 1995) user experience was also found to play a role in the relative predictive power of the central TAM concepts of ease of use and usefulness.

Additional insight as demonstrated by the finding of this study revealed that neither gender nor age contributes to repeat purchase among the respondents. Although, the finding was not particular about the gender category in terms of male or female; or age category in terms of age bracket such as less than 30 years, 31-35 years, 36-40 years and 41 years and above as used in the study, however, the finding did generally reveal that gender and age variables were not able to encourage repeat purchase among the participants in this study. It implies that repeat purchase has nothing to do with gender, whether male or female, or age categories. People just repeat purchases online as a result of their previous online shopping experience. On the contrary, Gefen and Straub (1997) found gender differences among the participants in the way they use technologies. Also, documented evidence by Venkatesh et al. (2000) demonstrated the gender differences in the way they accept technologies. In other words, gender differences with regard to technologies acceptance and usage was identified.

Conclusion and Implications

Strictly speaking, the study concluded that online shopping experience has a significant positive contribution to driving repeat purchase among students at Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islamic University (IMSIU), Saudi Arabia. This means that students will repeat purchases when they have had a positive experience in previous online shopping activities.

The findings of this study will be of great value to policy makers and organizations that conduct online business in Saudi Arabia. For example, the organization should be able to develop specific strategies and plans that directly target students who constitute the majority of online customers. Organizations can also use the presented research model as a planning tool and prioritize resources towards improving purchases among students. Additionally, the result obtained in this study will create new and exciting knowledge regarding online shopping in general among university-level youth in Saudi Arabia. Additionally, gender and age were not related to frequent online shopping purchases among the participants.

Descriptive Analysis Research Limitations and Suggestion for Future Research

This study seeks to contribute to the relevant literature by investigating how online shopping experience contributes to repeat purchases with the adoption of TAM. The study previously identified online shopping experience as a factor driving repeat purchases among students of Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islamic University (IMSIU), Saudi Arabia. Just like other previous studies, this study highlights some limitations. First, the generalizability of the result is due to the scope of the study being limited to one Saudi university. This situation provides the opportunity to initiate similar studies in other Saudi universities in order to generalize the study findings.

Additionally, this study only focused on the online shopping experience as a factor influencing repeat purchase, and other factors such as web promotions, social media, digital loyalty

programs, and exceptional customer service should be investigated as they also have a way of influencing repeat purchase among students who shop online. In this case, online store owners should not celebrate too early after a customer makes their first purchase.

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Author Contributions

All authors made an equal contribution to the development and planning of the study.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/ or publication of this article.

Data Availability Statement

Anonymised data can be made available on request to the corresponding author.

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