

Online Buying: Choice or Compulsion in Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu

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Abstract

Online shopping has revolutionised the purchasing behaviours of customers in India, particularly in small urban and semi-urban areas. This study examines whether internet purchasing by customers in the Union Territory of Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu is motivated by deliberate decision-making or behavioural compulsion. This study examines whether internet purchasing among customers in the Union Territory of Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu is influenced by logical decision-making or behavioural compulsion. In addition to technology variables like website design and commercial triggers, the study looks at psychological aspects including impulsivity, consumerism, and self-control. The subject matter of the study indicated that emotional satisfaction, ease, and compelling marketing indicators often overshadow logical decision-making.

Utilising simple descriptive and correlational analysis, the results indicated that impulsive and consumerism positively influence compulsive purchasing, whereas self-control negatively affects it. The findings suggest that for many young consumers in the UT, online shopping is motivated more by impulse than by deliberate choice.

Keywords: online shopping, compulsive buying, impulsivity, self-control, h, consumer behaviour, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu

1. Introduction

The swift expansion of e-commerce platforms like Amazon, Flipkart, and Meesho has transformed customer behaviour throughout India. In smaller territories such as Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, enhanced internet connectivity and smartphone accessibility have prompted citizens to adopt online shopping. But the fact that digital buying is so easy and accessible makes us wonder: are online purchases a rational choice, or are they impulsive and compulsive actions caused by attractive online environments?

Compulsive and impulsive purchasing represent deviations from reasonable decision-making. Impulsive buying is a spontaneous, unplanned action, whereas compulsive buying entails recurrent and uncontrolled cravings to purchase, frequently accompanied by feelings of regret or shame. This study investigates the fundamental motivations driving online buying activity in the UT and analyses the impact of psychological and digital elements on customer decision-making.

The idea of rational choice says that people think about their options rationally, but behavioural economics shows that feelings, habits, and outside influences can change people's minds (Kahneman, 2011).

Impulsivity: Impulsive consumers react swiftly to stimuli, such as discounts or visual aesthetics, without prior deliberation (Rook & Fisher, 1995).

Materialism: A desire for possessions to express identity or gain happiness fuels repetitive consumption (Richins & Dawson, 1992).

Self-Control: A consumer's capacity to withstand purchasing impulses serves as an obstacle to repetitive expenditure (Tangney et al., 2004).

Online platforms featuring compelling designs, tailored recommendations, and one-click payment options could cover up the distinction between choice and compulsion (Bongard-Blanchy et al., 2021).

2. Theoretical Background

Conventional consumer theories suggest that purchasers make rational decisions to optimise satisfaction. Behavioural economics claims that judgements are frequently influenced by emotions, cognitive biases, and situational stimuli (Schwartz, 2004).

Impulsive buying refers to an unplanned acquisition prompted by stimuli, like flash sales, ads, or website features (Zhu et al., 2016).

Compulsive buying, in contrast, indicates an ongoing pattern of purchase driven by internal stress or diminished self-control (Faber & O'Guinn, 1992).

Digital retail platforms enhance these trends. Website design, one-click payment alternatives, and personalised recommendations establish an environment in which the distinction between choice and compulsion becomes indistinct (Bongard-Blanchy et al., 2021).

3. Literature Review

Research has identified multiple psychological and technological antecedents of compulsive online buying:

Singh, P., Sharma, B. K., Arora, L., & Bhatt, V. (2023) looked at the impact of age and gender on impulse buying intentions. It was also discovered that age and gender have no substantial effect on impulse purchase intentions. When shopping on social sites, respondents' impulse buying intention reduces as they get older. However, there is no evidence to support the claim that gender influences impulse buying intention. As a result, gender cannot be used to differentiate responders. Finally, the study revealed that Saudi Arabian consumers are not impulsive purchasers, and social media has little or no influence on their impulse behaviour. Saudi consumers meticulously plan their purchases ahead of time and only buy the products and services they believe they need and will benefit from.

Nyrhinen, J., Sirola, A., Koskelainen, T., Munnukka, J., & Wilska, T. A. (2024) findings imply that inadequate self-control not only directly promotes impulsive purchasing, but also fosters a positive attitude towards targeted marketing and impulsive behaviour in social networks. Furthermore, a favourable attitude towards targeted marketing makes customers more vulnerable to the impulsiveness of social networks, which includes the influence of recommendations and product displays on social media. Finally have given suggestions on how training self-control and online media literacy can improve resistance to persuasion in online environments and reduce the likelihood to engage in impulse purchasing behaviour. Bidyut Jyoti Gogoi (2020) says that impulsive buying is an important factor that enhances the customer purchase volume. Though sociodemographic factors do not have an influence on impulsive buying, yet we see that dispositional factors and situational factors do have an influence on impulsive buying. Impulsive buying is based on the consumer's inherent traits and the available atmosphere. Here impulsive buying is having an influence on compulsive buying. Though compulsive buying is a serious human

disorder and is not influenced by dispositional and situational factors yet sociodemographic factors and impulsive buying may trigger compulsive buying.

A Kumar, DS Chaudhuri, DA Bhardwaj, P Mishra(2021) tested hypothesis which shows that there is a positive relationship between post-purchase regret and impulse purchase. It also shows that post-purchase regret changes with the change in income. As per theory, it is expected that those individuals who are more impulsive will experience greater post-purchase regret after impulse purchase than the individuals who are less impulsive.

Shefali Chauhan, Richa Banerjee and Mohit Mittal (2020) the study concluded that both buyers and consumers undergo cognitive dissonance to some degree. Marketing managers must search at ways to reduce the cognitive dissonance generated, since cognitive dissonance is a precedent for consumer loyalty. Moreover, online marketing and social media can be used effectively to influence cognitive dissonance of consumers. Consumers too, on their own, try to minimize dissonance, even by defending a decision. Marketing administrators should then pursue those inherent efforts and reduce cognitive dissonance after the purchase. In this way the marketers can take guidance to aligning their efforts and policies towards consumer dissonance reduction and providing more value to the consumers.

Suraj Debbarma and Sutapa Debbarma (2018) carried out a study in which they examined the key variables that influence perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use and perceived convenience on intention to use online shopping. The study revealed that the customers use online shopping due to price promotion and availability of products, and are mainly technology-friendly, but only if it is easy to use and convenient.

T. Jukariya and R. Singhvi (2018) carried out a study in which they found that consumers' buying decisions are basically dependent on many factors. Personal privacy and security, followed by transaction security, various payment options, convenience, and time-saving features. These are the major factors that affect the online purchasing behaviour of the student. The outcome of the study was that general knowledge and awareness about e-commerce would help in overcoming this barrier.

V. Kumbar, S. Hiremath and D. Gopinath (2017) stated that there is a huge difference in the quantity and the range of products that are available in stores and those available online. Customers believe that there is a difference in sales due to heavy discounts, price deductions and discounts and offers given online and in physical stores. They concluded that there is a direct relationship between the time of purchasing and volume of sales, as customers prefer purchasing day and evening.

Seema Rani and Anju Sigroha (2017): A comparative study of Online and Offline Commerce Market: A Case Study of Sonipat, in their study, revealed that females are more into web-based shopping since they appreciate doing shopping, whether it is customary shopping or e-shopping. It also states that male is less doing the web web-based shopping than females. There has been an increase in interest in web-based shopping in light of the fact that the assortment of alternatives for the purchasers to choose from, and that too at a sensible cost and at some point even less cost than the market. The finding and investigation demonstrates that the shoppers who are between the ages assembling 18-25 are more agreeable to web-based shopping than the rest of the group. The gathering which is under the age of 40 or more is very little mindful of the such a large number of shopping destinations, and in addition, they are not actually progressed to do online shopping, they fear whether the item they are requesting will come true or not all They prefer the traditional internet shopping rather the incline toward customary market. So it is clear from the findings that the young are more into e-shopping.

Lakshmi S (2016) in her study focused on the purchasing behaviour of consumers, which influences the buyer decision-making process. The top factors that affect consumers while shopping online are convenience and trust, price and quality of product. The variables are of utmost importance when deciding to shop online. The study found that online shopping is gaining popularity among the young generation, such as students and professionals.

Bhumika Pahwa (2016) states that the study of consumer behaviour is important for the market as it helps retailers and sellers to decide the marketing strategies of the products that are being launched. The key products of the study were fashion and personal care items through e-commerce and m-commerce.

A. Baskaran and Dr K. Krishnamurthy (2016) conducted a study in Kanchanapuram District and concluded that Brand loyalty is not sufficiently found among consumers of durable goods. They expect good satisfaction from the brand they purchase. They are inclined to change brands to acquire more benefits from the product. In the present study, due importance has been attached to factors like aggressiveness, level of expectation and level of satisfaction.

Kanupriya, Dr Rita and Anupreet Kaur (2016) concluded that the main motivating factor seen during the research was the convenience and customer service, which drives people to online shopping. They are buying airline and railway tickets, books, home appliances, electronic gadgets, movie tickets, etc, by logging on to a website, rather than going up to a store. A huge buyers and sellers across demographics are shopping online because of the changing lifestyles and shopping habits. Despite the immense possibilities available on the internet, it is mainly used for mailing, chatting and surfing. E-mail applications still constitute the bulk of net traffic in the country.

UmmulWaraAdrita and Tanzina Shahjahan (2016): Preference of Shopping on Online Vs Offline in Bangladesh. In their study, they found that because of confusion in pricing, lack of trust, dissatisfaction regarding the delivery process, and uncomfortable payment methods, offline shopping is more preferable than the online method. This paper has identified the most influential factors that create barriers for customers to migrate to online shopping rather than offline in the context of Bangladesh. The study revealed that although they were living in a digital world but still in Bangladesh the people are more comfortable shopping from stores rather than online stores. It is observed that factors like fair price, trust, and delivery methods are causing hindrance to shoppers from buying from online. The survey for this study was conducted on 77 respondents.

A. Bhatt (2014) conducted a study in the Gujarat region and focused on consumers' attitude towards online shopping and found that information, perceived usefulness, perceived enjoyment, and security/privacy are the five dominant factors which influence consumer perceptions of Online purchasing. The attitude of consumers is changing over time. In a country like India, online experiences are still looked up as complex and uncomfortable. People are tradition-bound & have doubts in mindset as far as the issue of online shopping/purchase of product is concerned, but we found that Indian consumers are finding online shopping very comfortable because of many variables like cash on delivery, customisation or personalisation of the websites, home delivery, etc.

Iyer and Eastmen (2014) found that the population of seniors who are more literate, more knowledgeable, more aware of technology and those who have a positive behaviour and internet are more into online shopping. But the population of seniors who are less aware of the internet and the shopping sites are less involved in the shopping sites because they do not have a positive attitude towards online shopping; rather they are much more interested in offline shopping. The seniors who have more knowledge about the internet and the shopping sites they compare both the shopping, i.e. online and offline shopping, for their

purchasing of goods. However, their knowledge and the use of the internet by them have no connection with their age and their satisfaction level while purchasing online.

Isabel P. Riquelme and Sergio Román (2014) examined the role of several consumers' cognitive and psychographic traits in their perceptions of retailers' deceptive practices (perceived deception) and the different effects on perceived deception associated with online vis-à-vis in-store shopping.

Karim (2013) showed in his research that the dark sides of online shopping are faulty delivery system, difficulty in online payment systems, lack of trust for personal privacy and poor personal customer services. On the other hand, the motivators for online shopping were round the year availability, easy accessibility, less stress and saving of time.

Koen Pauwels et.al. (2011) found that the offline revenue impact of the informational website critically depends on the product category and customer segment. The lower online search costs were especially beneficial for sensory products and for customers distant from the store. In contrast, customers in a particular segment reduce their shopping trips, suggesting their online actions partially substitute for experiential shopping in the physical store.

Yaobin Lu (2011) focused on factors that influence users' intention to transfer their usage from the offline to the online channel that offers similar services. The study revealed that innovativeness in new technology and relative benefit had positive effects on users' intention to transfer usage. Moreover, the findings of the study also indicated that internet experience moderates the relationship between relative benefit and consumers' intention to transfer usage from offline to online services.

C. Katawetawaraks and C. L. Wang (2011) stated that there are many factors due to which the shoppers purchase online, like convenience, available products and services, cost efficiency, time efficiency. But there are also many reasons which restrict them from shopping online, like secure payment, intangibility of products, and past experiences.

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design

A quantitative, descriptive research design was used to assess whether online buying in the UT is choice-driven or compulsive.

4.2 Objectives

1. To find out how many people in UT buy things without thinking about it or feel like they have to.
2. To look into how impulsivity, materialism, self-control, and buying things over and over again are connected.
3. To find out if these links are affected by demographic factors.

4.3 Hypotheses

- H₁: Impulsivity positively influences compulsive online buying.
H₂: Materialism positively influences compulsive online buying.
H₃: Self-control negatively influences compulsive online buying.

4.4 Population and Sampling

The study surveyed 300 online shoppers aged 18–45 from UT of Dadra Nagar haveli, Daman & Diu using convenience random sampling.

4.5 Tools and Scales

A structured questionnaire used standardised five-point Likert scales for:

- Impulsivity (Rook & Fisher, 1995)

- Materialism (Richins & Dawson, 1992)
- Self-Control (Tangney et al., 2004)
- Compulsive Buying (Faber & O'Guinn, 1992)

4.6 Data Analysis

Simple descriptive and inferential statistics were employed:

Mean Formula:

$$[\bar{X}] = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Correlation Formula:

$$[r] = \frac{N(\sum XY) - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[N\sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][N\sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$

All analyses were computed using SPSS 26.

5. Results

5.1 Demographic Overview

- **56% female, 44% male** respondents.
The respondent pool has a marginal predominance of female respondents, suggesting that women constitute a little greater segment of the online consumer base in this study. This study is significant as it indicates the growing involvement of women in digital commerce and purchasing decisions.
- **68% aged 18–30 years**, indicating dominance of youth consumers.
The majority of the 18–30 age demographic signifies that millennials and Gen Z are the principal drivers of online buying and digital research activities. This demographic generally encompasses college students, young professionals, and early career earners.
- **84% shop online twice or more each month**.
This indicates a significant frequency of online involvement, suggesting that most respondents are regular online buyers rather than occasional users. It emphasises the significant adoption of online buying into the daily lives of young consumers.

5.2 Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	SD
Impulsivity	3.84	0.66
Materialism	3.71	0.58
Self-Control	2.94	0.74
Compulsive Buying	3.79	0.61

- Respondents show a considerably higher degree of impulsivity in their purchasing behaviour. This indicates that several respondents have a tendency to make impulsive or spontaneous purchases driven by emotions, advertisements, or social influence rather than via rational thought.
The low standard deviation (0.66) signifies similarity among responders, with the majority showing comparable impulsive tendencies.
Higher impulsivity frequently connects with habitual web surfing and spontaneous purchases, particularly among youthful customers.
- Respondents show an intense materialistic attitude, indicating that they prioritise belongings, brands, and consumer products as avenues for social recognition or satisfying their own needs.

A mean above 3.5 indicates that the youth demographic in selected cities perceives consumption and lifestyle as indicators of success.

The low standard deviation (0.58) indicates that this viewpoint is quite consistent among responders.

- A mean value under 3 signifies moderate to low self-control among respondents. This indicates that consumers frequently find it challenging to resist temptations or impulsive purchasing impulses, especially when met with internet advertising, flash deals, or appealing product imagery. The higher standard deviation (0.74) indicates greater variability—certain respondents demonstrate strong self-control, whereas others reveal weaker restraint.
- The higher mean score indicates respondents show tendencies towards compulsive purchasing, showing that might experience impulses to shop excessively as a means of emotional regulation or satisfaction.

The low standard deviation (0.61) indicates uniform trends among respondents.

This behaviour corresponds with the widespread use of online shopping, indicated by the previous statistic that 84% of individuals purchase twice or more each month.

5.3 Correlation Results

$$[r_{\text{imp_comp}} = 0.68, \quad r_{\text{mat_comp}} = 0.59, \quad r_{\text{self_comp}} = -0.52]$$

All correlations were significant at $p < 0.01$.

Correlation	r-value	Significance
Impulsivity ↔ Compulsive Buying	0.68	$p < 0.01$
Materialism ↔ Compulsive Buying	0.59	$p < 0.01$
Self-Control ↔ Compulsive Buying	-0.52	$p < 0.01$

Values close to +1 show a strong positive relationship, Values close to -1 show a strong negative relationship, Value near 0 indicates no relationship.

- **Relationship between Impulsivity and Compulsive Buying ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.01$)**

There is a strong positive correlation between impulsivity and compulsive buying. This indicates that an increase in impulsivity correlates with a higher tendency for compulsive purchasing.

Impulsive respondents are more likely to engage in spontaneous or emotionally motivated purchases, frequently without careful consideration of the consequences.

This supports psychological theories that connect lower impulse control with problematic or excessive purchasing behaviour.

- **Relationship between Materialism and Compulsive Buying ($r = 0.59$, $p < 0.01$)**

This correlation is also strong and positive, though slightly weaker than impulsivity. It shows that more materialistic consumers—individuals who prioritise goods and link them to happiness or status—are likely to show higher degrees of compulsive purchasing behaviour.

These customers frequently engage in shopping to satisfy emotional or social requirements, utilising purchases as a means of expressing identity or achievement.

A moderate to strong connection ($r = 0.59$) suggests that materialistic values significantly influence compulsive purchase behaviour.

- **Relationship between Self-Control and Compulsive Buying ($r = -0.52$, $p < 0.01$)**

There is a strong negative correlation, indicating that as self-control increases, compulsive buying decre-

ases Individuals possessing greater self-discipline and emotional regulation are less likely to engage in excessive or unnecessary purchasing.

The negative value (−0.52) indicates that low self-control is a significant indicator of compulsive purchasing behaviour.

This association is also in line with the lower average self-control score (2.94) you found in prior data.

5. Discussion

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that psychological elements hold a significant amount of effect over online shopping in Dadra and Nagar Haveli as well as in Daman and Diu. The practice of self-control serves as a form of restraint, in contrast to impulsivity and materialism which encourage unplanned and impulsive purchases. Consumers who were younger displayed a higher tendency for impulsive behaviour and were more sensitive to the effects of marketing stimuli.

Previous studies have shown that the digital environment, when combined with convenient payment choices, can lead to obsessive consumption behaviour (Li et al., 2022; Duroy et al., 2019).

7. Conclusion

According to the findings of the study, the behaviour of online shoppers in the UT can be categorised along a spectrum that ranges from choice to compulsion. Impulsive and emotional impulses have a higher influence than rational judgment when it comes to consumer behaviour, despite the fact that customers enjoy variety and ease.

In order to avoid taking advantage of people's impulsive impulses, marketers should create promotion tactics that adhere to ethical standards. It is essential that policymakers put into action policies aimed at promoting digital literacy and protecting consumers. It is important for consumers to become aware of the emotional triggers that influence their purchasing decisions.

Future Research

It is possible that future research will investigate the influence of social media, conduct long-term behavioural trends, and make comparisons with other locations in India.

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