

DETERMINING THE CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TOWARDS CONSUMER ONLINE PURCHASE INTENTION AMONGST UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Abstract: Online shopping has emerged over the years from conventional one-to-one to electronic market (e-market space) as an integral part of users' lives as a prominent alternative for conventional purchase. However, there is still limited research addressing online purchase intention from the perception of university students. Thus, this study aims to examine the factors that influence consumer online purchase intention among university students. Using convenient sampling techniques, 130 university students from University Teknologi MARA in Kelantan, Malaysia participated in this quantitative study. Consent was obtained from respondents before participating in the survey. The finding revealed that brand orientation, habitual behaviour, and quality orientation significantly influence consumer online purchase intention. However, this study imposed several limitations, such as a small number of respondents and a lack of other potential constructs.

Keywords: Brand Orientation, e-commerce, Habitual Behaviour, Online Purchase Intention, Quality Orientation

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the study

In the 21st century, technology has become more advanced now and then, whereby global transactions are possible without boundaries. We are now seeing market shifts: the conventional one-to-one to the electronic market (e-market space) has shifted into a shifting market. Moreover, this knowledge market is a modern (many-to-many) workspace that is transforming into a world focused on services, social networks, and strong information infrastructures. The Internet provides better value for users by offering relevant information and efficient service. According to a survey, the majority of the population, or approximately 4 billion individuals, are Internet users. Furthermore, 39% of web users (1.6 billion people) make purchases on e-commerce platforms (Haq & Abbasi, 2016).

Many businesses have recently added a new approach to their business model whereby they will connect with consumers via social media. To ease consumers, they will provide online shopping services, which can increase their intention to change consumers' behaviour as it is easier to click on the website, add to the cart and proceed to check out. Thus, shopping online has rapidly become an integral part of customers' lives today, and in a shared environment, customers and companies will

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come together (Sosyal & Dergisi, 2019). Online shopping is convenient and responsive, and companies have implemented numerous communications through various marketing communication such as television channels like Go Shop and CJ Wow shop. Consequently, this will assist and ease the senior generation to make purchases, and the companies know who and how they want to influence their potential target market.

Previous studies or research have focused more on the general, such as consumer behaviour or consumers in a specific area or culture. Therefore, research involving university students in Malaysia is scarce. Earlier studies on "An integrated model of the younger generation's online shopping behaviour" (TRAN, 2020) and determinants of online purchase intention (Rishi & Khasawneh, 2019).

However, cyber protection, or specifically, the lack of it, is a big concern on the Internet. Sensitive customer information such as name, phone number, address, and bank details are captured through e-commerce sites. Consumers' data is at risk of falling into the wrong hands if these pages do not enforce rigorous cybersecurity controls that would then wreak havoc on the bank account. Many big online shopping sellers have the best-in-class security mechanisms to secure the information of their customers, but the same cannot be said about the numerous smaller platforms that do not have the resources to do so. In addition, the sellers and shoppers may have many problems regarding the quality of their products and services. Given the number of products that e-commerce firms manage these days, it can be very difficult for them to carry out quality tests for each commodity they deliver.

This study is conducted to see the pattern and behaviour of university students towards online purchasing. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to investigate the contributing factors of online shopping among students. Their intention towards online shopping is influenced by many factors, will be examined to see whether there are any differences or relationships that influence consumers' online purchase intentions.

2. Literature review

Consumer behaviour is defined as the study of how people make decisions about what they want to purchase, their needs, or wants for a product, service, or company. It is crucial for manufacturers such as online sellers to understand Consumer behaviour and how potential customers will respond to the products sold by e-commerce companies globally through online shopping platforms such as Shopee, Lazada, Amazon, and social media such as Facebook and Instagram. Online purchase or shopping is a type of electronic commerce that allows customers to purchase products or services directly from a vendor over the Internet via a web browser, also known as Business-to-Consumer (B2C) online shopping. According to previous studies, online shopping is an automated trading mechanism used by consumers in the sense of Business-to-Business (B2B) or Business-to-Consumer (B2C) exchange of knowledge (Shim & A, 2001).

Three factors influencing consumer behaviour are psychological, personal, and social. Psychological considerations include the understanding of needs or circumstances, the capacity of a person to absorb or interpret knowledge, as well as the person's mood. This is when a consumer reacts to the marketing adversity available around him or her based on his or her impressions of specific goods or services (Malhotra, Nunan, & Birks, 2017).

Meanwhile, personal factors are the specific characteristics that distinguish a person from another in the same group. The specific characteristics owned by a person, such as unique habits, interests, and opinions, will influence the decision made by the person. Personal factors will also be influenced by other factors such as age, gender, background, culture, and personal issues during the decision-making process towards online purchases (Cao, Ajjan, & Hong, 2018). The third factor that significantly impacts consumer behaviour is the social factor. Social factors include family background, social class, social interactions, and other factors such as income and living conditions which highly influence and affect consumer behaviour in making any online purchase decision.

According to Bulut (2017), customers' online purchasing intentions for goods are heavily affected by variables that impact customer behaviour, such as psychological, personal, and social factors. Therefore, the dependent and independent variables can be identified based on the following factors. The dependent variable in this research is the consumer online purchase behaviour towards products sold on e-commerce online shopping platforms. The independent variables are brand orientation, quality orientation, and habitual behaviour. The independent variables are formed based on the factors that affect consumer behaviour.

2.1. Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is referred to behaviour towards the purchase or buying of products or services (Malhotra, Nunan, & Birks, 2017). It is to adopt a brand of the consumers that have the intention to purchase to make them feel satisfied. The behaviour is related to customers' preferences and attitudes when they want to purchase something and fulfil their desire to shop. Consumer decision-making processes may take a little time for them to be listed before they choose to shop through online platforms such as Zalora, Lazada, Amazon, and others, most of which have been searched by university students. They have to figure out and compose problem recognition, search and evaluate the products or services, and post-purchase decisions before making a purchase in the online cart. The theoretical framework involves dependent and independent variables. The dependent variable in this research is consumer online purchase behaviour towards products sold in e-commerce.

2.2. Brand Orientation

“A brand is a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's goods or service as distinct from those of other sellers” (American Marketing Association, ; Marion, n.d.). Brand loyalty plays an important role in influencing the consumer online purchase intention as a previous study by Rishi (2017) found that choosing a brand for e-commerce platforms such as Amazon, Shopee, eBay, and others is influenced by personal factors of consumer behaviour. It is about a hub for an organisation and its strategy using an inside-out and brand identity-driven approach. As universities around the world are increasing their marketing strategy, prospective students are undergoing a nuanced customer decision-making process when choosing a university, and branding is becoming a way of simplifying their selection process (Nayeem & Casidy, 2013).

A weak brand would not last forever in the market, while a strong and good brand can guarantee its customers, including university students, the best reputation to choose a brand for their online purchase or online services. This is because personal factors such as income, social class, and personal interest are closely related to the choices of specific brands when shopping online. The shopping process through the Internet begins with stimuli related to the brand and quality of the website and also the brand of the e-commerce companies, where the consumers' beliefs are determined and influence consumers' decision of online shopping (Rishi, 2017). As the brand orientation enhances the consumers' intention when shopping online, the following hypothesis is developed:

H1: Brand intention has a significant influence on online purchase intention.

2.3. Habitual Behaviour

Habits are described in a previous study by Ling, Chai, and Piew (2010) as "routine behaviours that are repeated regularly and tend to occur subconsciously." In this form of buying, the customer has very little interest or loyalty to the product or brand segment. For example, when shopping at a grocery store, most consumers would demonstrate their usual habits and not strong brand loyalty. As buyers, mainly students, purchase items that are used in their everyday lives, they do not put a lot of thought into them. They either buy their preferred brand, the one they frequently use, the one available in the shop, or the one that costs the least.

H2: Habitual behaviour has a significant influence on consumers' online purchase intention.

2.4. Quality Orientation

Quality is very commonly referred to as the capacity to meet and exceed customers' needs and expectations which add value to organisation products, managerial processes, or the combinations of any of them. Quality orientation is a cultural phenomenon to gain and sustain a competitive advantage. Besides that, organisational quality orientation reflects its outcomes in the degree of organisations' innovative capability. Regardless of the culture, a study by Bulut (2017) tried to reveal the effects of the dimensions of quality orientation on organisations' innovative performance. This quality should also be formed by the customer to the online shop, such as:

1. Website
2. Display or list of goods
3. Preferable platform to order and purchase like WhatsApp, Facebook, or directly through the website.
4. Provided services

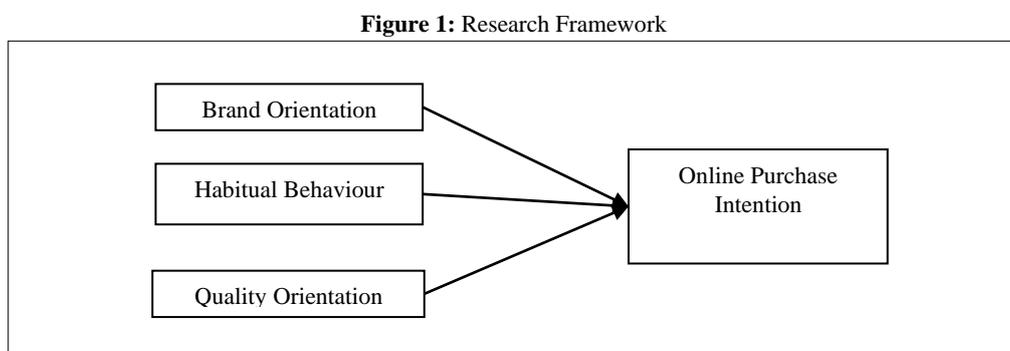
According to a study by Rishi and Khasawneh (2017), regular online shoppers consider both usability and product quality to be more important than infrequent online shoppers, and buying systems are significantly more important than infrequent online shoppers. Quality orientation is defined as "perceived quality that derived from the beginning to the end of the online transaction including information searching, navigating the website, online ordering, customer services interactions, satisfaction with the products ordered and the process of the products being delivered from the online transaction" (Wolfenbarger, 2003).

A study by Rishi (2017) discovered that quality orientation has a significant effect on online purchase intention based on several factors of quality orientation, such as the quality of online viewers, the number of reviews, low involvement, and high involvement of consumers. However, marketers need to ensure their online shopping websites are attractive and user-friendly to attract consumers to shop from their e-commerce platform. For example, Shopee distinguishes its website from Lazada in terms of the colour, the design of the application, and the process to make online purchasing. This is because the quality of online purchases is measured based on several criteria on how it can influence the intention of consumers to make purchases, such as the seller's homepage, catalogues, order form, and the past purchase service.

H3: Quality orientation has a significant influence on consumers' online purchase intention.

3. Research Framework

Figure 1 illustrates the research framework of this study.



Source: Adapted from Hadi & Khasawneh (2017); Dang, Wang, & Vu (2020)

4. Research Methodology

The first process of analysing results from the study started with a questionnaire design, aiming to test the contributing factors that determine the online purchase intention among university students based on three independent variables: brand orientation, habitual behaviour, and quality orientation. A total of 130 respondents who were university students in Kelantan, Malaysia participated in this study. This quantitative study collected the data through a random sampling technique using a single cross-sectional design. A questionnaire comprising five sections, namely socio-demographic background, online purchase intention, brand orientation, habitual behaviour, and quality orientation, was distributed online via WhatsApp. This study used the convenience sampling method because it is a convenient and less expensive method to interact with the sample of the study. The respondents were also provided information about the study being conducted before being asked to respond to the questions.

Four variables were measured in this research: online purchase intention (dependent variable), brand orientation, habitual behaviour, and quality orientation (independent variables). The measurement items were adopted from several previous relevant studies to meet the purpose of this study. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Lastly, the data were analysed using statistical software package (SPSS) version 2.0, and the analysis was conducted using descriptive analysis, Cronbach's Alpha statistics, and multiple regression analysis.

5. Result

The demographic analysis of the respondents was composed of 103 (79.2%) females and 27 (20.8%) males. 6.9% of the respondents were aged from 18 to 21 years old, 86.9% were at age 22 years old to 25 years old, and 6.2% of the respondents were at age 26 years old to 29 years old. The majority of the respondents were Part 5 students (49.2%), while the rest (10.5%) were Parts 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7 students. The frequency of online purchases revealed that 74.6% of the respondents purchase once a month or above, followed by 13.8% purchase twice a week, 10.8% purchase once a week, and 0.8% do not purchase online. This finding is consistent with the online shopping experience, which found that 99.2% have experience in online shopping and 0.8% have no online shopping experience. The products purchased are clothes and cosmetics, which accounted for 44.5%, while other products, such as groceries and others, made up 55.5% of the respondents. Monthly expenses for online purchases revealed that 49.2% of the respondents spend RM51 to RM100, 27.7% spend a maximum of RM50 for monthly online purchases, and 23.1% spend RM101 and more for monthly online purchase expenses.

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha Statistics

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No of items
Online Purchase Intention	0.628	2
Brand Orientation	0.869	6
Habitual Behaviour	0.764	6
Quality Orientation	0.489	2

Notes: *Cronbach's Alpha

Table 1 above shows the reliability of all variables, including the dependents variable, which is the customer's perception of online purchase intention, brand orientation, habitual behaviour, and quality orientation. Based on the dependent variable, the customer's perception of online purchase intention is 0.628 on Cronbach's Alpha, which can be interpreted as 62.8%. This indicates moderate reliability. Overall, the variable in the questionnaire for dependent variables could produce accurate and precise results.

Based on Cronbach's Alpha, the value for brand orientation is 0.869, which is 86.9, indicating very good reliability. This means that customers choose what they want to purchase based on brands,

showing that customers have their own brand preferences. Next is habitual behaviour, defined as behaviour that the customers automatically show when they want to do something and their action once they decide to do it. For customer habitual behaviour, it is 0.764, which is 76.4% reliably good. This indicates that the questionnaire for this variable is generally reliable and can be used to find the result in this study. Lastly, Cronbach's Alpha value for quality orientation is 0.489, which gives a percentage of 48.9%, which indicates poor reliability.

Table 2: Summary Results of Multiple Regression Analysis

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.489	.296		5.036	.000
Brand orientation	.158	.055	.228	2.879	.005
Habitual behaviour	.259	.060	.345	4.311	.000
Quality orientation	.218	.068	.243	3.211	.002

Table 2 summarises the result of the multiple regression analysis. The result shows that all independent variables of brand orientation, habitual behaviour, and quality orientation are significant, with a significant value below 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) of 0.005, 0.000, and 0.002, respectively. Habitual behaviour highly influences online purchase intention with a *beta* value of 0.345, followed by quality orientation (*beta* value = 0.243) and brand orientation (*beta* value = 0.228). The regression analysis also reveals that the study's research model can explain 40.3% of online purchase intention.

Table 3: Regression Analysis Summary of the Research Model

Model	Model Summary			
	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.635 ^a	.403	.389	.43201

a. Predictors: (Constant), quality orientation, brand orientation, habitual behaviour

Table 3 above shows the coefficients correlations were determined by the degree of relationship between variables. The value of R^2 is R 0.635, which means there is a strong positive linear correlation between the variables as the value of R is more than 0.5 and less than 1.

Table 4 below shows the hypothesis results of this study. All three hypotheses for this study are supported.

Table 4: Hypothesis Results

Hypothesis - Statement	Significance	Results
H1 – Brand orientation positively influences online purchase intention	0.005	Supported
H2 – Habitual behaviour positively influences online purchase intention	0.000	Supported
H3 – Quality orientation positively influences online purchase intention	0.002	Supported

6. Discussion

The finding postulated that there are 40.3% of respondents' acceptance of online purchase intention among university students can be explained by the changes in independent variable brand orientation, quality orientation, and habitual behaviour. While another 60.1% is explained by other variables. Thus, the finding in this study is consistent with a study by Ling, Chai, and Piew (2010), which found that brand orientation and quality orientation positively influence online purchase intention. Moreover, respondents in this study were university students who were more technology savvy and had a vast knowledge of purchase intention on online platforms, so they perceived habitual behaviour and quality orientation on online purchasing. Rishi and Khasawneh (2017) posit that regular online shoppers consider both usability and product quality more important than infrequent online shoppers and that buying systems are substantially more important than infrequent online shoppers. It is hard to dismiss that as universities around the world are increasing their marketing strategy, prospective students are undergoing a nuanced customer decision-making process when

choosing a university, and branding is becoming a way of simplifying their selection process (Nayeem & Casidy, 2013).

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study suggests that university students are influenced to purchase online when they realise that the most influential factor of habitual behaviour is the behaviour of the consumers searching for the product's usefulness, and actual production habits highly influence their intention towards online purchase. Second, they rate their brand loyalty, affordability, and brand stock quantity as important in the product branding decision-making process. Next, quality orientation is found as the second most contributing factor towards students' online purchase intention as they are students with limited budgets, the quality of a product may be the most important factor due to durability and usage factors, and they also compare and survey products from several online shopping platforms or e-commerce websites to get the best price offers.

However, future studies are recommended to expand the number of respondents as more respondents are needed to represent the total population of target respondents and to ensure the data findings are more accurate and reliable. Besides, future research needs to explore other influencing factors that might affect the consumer online purchase intention, such as trust, prior experience, etc., because the variable used in this research only explains 40.3% of the dependent variable while another 59.7% is explained by another variable. Therefore, another variable might affect the online purchase intention that needs to be explored and identified by the researcher to examine the factor that influences the habitual behaviour of consumers with the use of theoretical constructs to explain the behavioural intention.

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