A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES ON CONSUMER PURCHASE INTENTION IN E-COMMERCE

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ABSTRACT

E-commerce has transformed the way consumers search for products, compare prices and make purchase decisions. Online retailers use promotional strategies such as discounts, coupons, flash sales, free shipping, cashback, loyalty rewards, bundled offers and personalised recommendations to attract consumers and encourage purchase intention. However, consumers may respond differently to promotions depending on perceived value, trust, urgency, product involvement and the credibility of the seller. This study aims to examine the impact of promotional strategies on consumer purchase intention in e-commerce. It focuses on consumers' awareness of online promotions, preferred promotional offers, perceived usefulness, trust and purchase intention. A descriptive research design using a structured questionnaire is proposed. Primary data should be collected from actual online shoppers, while secondary sources can provide the theoretical background. Frequency and percentage analysis may be used to describe responses, and suitable statistical tests may be applied if respondent-level data are available. As no survey dataset for this topic was provided, this draft does not present invented findings or percentages. The data-analysis tables are templates to be completed after the survey.

Keywords: E-commerce, promotional strategies, consumer behaviour, purchase intention, discounts, coupons, online shopping.

I. INTRODUCTION

E-commerce refers to buying and selling goods or services through digital platforms. Consumers can access a wide range of products, compare alternatives, read reviews and complete transactions without visiting physical stores. As

online competition grows, retailers use promotional strategies to attract attention, communicate value and encourage consumers to place orders.

Promotional strategies include price discounts, coupon codes, limited-time offers, cashback, free delivery, buy-one-get-one offers, loyalty points, referral rewards and personalised promotions. These strategies may reduce perceived cost, create a sense of value or encourage consumers to act within a limited period. Their effectiveness, however, may depend on whether consumers consider the offer genuine, relevant and easy to redeem.

Consumers may also consider delivery charges, product quality, return policies, seller reputation, payment security and online reviews before purchasing. Therefore, promotions alone may not guarantee purchase intention. This study examines how promotional strategies are perceived by e-commerce consumers and how these perceptions are related to their intention to purchase online.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Digital marketplaces allow retailers to display promotions quickly and target offers to different customer groups. Seasonal sales, festival discounts, app-only offers, free shipping thresholds and loyalty programmes are widely used to stimulate interest and encourage repeat visits. Consumers can compare promotional offers across platforms, which makes the clarity and credibility of the offer important.

Purchase intention refers to a consumer's stated likelihood or willingness to buy a product. It is not the same as an actual purchase, because final behaviour may be affected by price changes, availability, delivery conditions or other factors. Studying purchase intention can help understand how consumers evaluate promotions before making a purchase decision.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

E-commerce retailers invest in promotional campaigns to increase consumer interest and sales, but not all promotions produce the same response. Some consumers may be attracted by discounts or cashback, while others may prefer free shipping, loyalty rewards or product bundles. Consumers may also question the original price, the terms of an offer or the reliability of a seller. The problem addressed by this study is to identify the promotional strategies that consumers find attractive and examine the relationship between their perceptions of these strategies and their purchase intention in e-commerce.

1.3 NEED OF THE STUDY

The study may help e-commerce businesses understand which promotional techniques consumers notice and value, and what factors influence their willingness to purchase. It may support marketers in designing clear, relevant and

responsible offers rather than relying only on large discounts. The study may also help identify whether promotion credibility, perceived savings, urgency and ease of redemption are important considerations for consumers.

1.4 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study focuses on consumers who use e-commerce platforms to search for or purchase products. It covers consumer profile, online shopping frequency, awareness of promotional offers, preferred promotion types, perceived savings, offer credibility, urgency, ease of redemption and purchase intention. The geographical area, target population, sample size and survey period should be specified by the researcher before data collection. Findings should be limited to the respondents who participate unless a suitable sampling design supports broader conclusions.

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To examine the demographic profile and online shopping habits of the respondents.
- To identify the promotional strategies most noticed and preferred by e-commerce consumers.
- To assess consumer perceptions of discounts, coupons, cashback, free shipping, flash sales and loyalty rewards.
- To examine the relationship between perceived promotional value and consumer purchase intention.
- To understand the role of promotion credibility, urgency and ease of redemption in purchase intention.
- To offer suggestions for designing effective and consumer-friendly e-commerce promotional strategies.

1.6 HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The following hypotheses are proposed for testing after actual survey data are collected. The appropriate statistical test depends on the questionnaire and measurement scales.

Null hypotheses (H_0)

- H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between perceived promotional value and consumer purchase intention.
- H_{02}: There is no significant association between preferred promotional strategy and online shopping frequency.
- H_{03}: There is no significant relationship between promotion credibility and consumer purchase intention.
- H_{04}: There is no significant difference in purchase intention across selected consumer demographic groups.

Alternative hypotheses (H_1)

- H_{11}: There is a significant relationship between perceived promotional value and consumer purchase intention.
- H_{12}: There is a significant association between preferred promotional strategy and online shopping frequency.
- H_{13}: There is a significant relationship between promotion credibility and consumer purchase intention.
- H_{14}: There is a significant difference in purchase intention across selected consumer demographic groups.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A descriptive research design is proposed to describe consumers' perceptions of promotional strategies and purchase intention. A correlational approach may be added if the purpose is to examine associations among measured variables.

Sources of Data

Primary data should be collected using a structured questionnaire from consumers with experience using e-commerce platforms. Secondary data may be collected from books, peer-reviewed journal articles and credible publications relating to sales promotion, consumer behaviour and online shopping.

Sampling Method

The sampling method has not yet been specified. The researcher should report the method actually used, such as convenience, stratified or simple random sampling, and explain how respondents were recruited.

Sample Size

Enter the actual number of valid respondents after the survey is completed: [insert sample size]. This is a placeholder and must not be reported as a completed result.

Tools for Data Collection

A structured questionnaire may include multiple-choice questions and five-point Likert-scale statements ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Questions may measure promotion awareness, preferred offer types, perceived value, trust, urgency, redemption ease and purchase intention.

Tools for Data Analysis

Frequency and percentage analysis may summarise respondent profiles and promotion preferences. Mean scores, correlation, chi-square or other suitable statistical tests may be considered where the data and assumptions support them. Statistical significance should be reported only after the relevant analysis has been conducted.

Area and Period of the Study

Area of study: [insert the chosen geographical area, if required]. Period of study: [insert actual data-collection period].

Limitations of the Study

- The findings depend on the sample size, sampling approach and characteristics of respondents.
- Stated purchase intention may differ from actual buying behaviour.
- Consumers may recall promotions inaccurately or interpret promotional terms differently.
- A questionnaire-based study can identify associations but may not prove that promotions directly cause purchases.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This section provides a theoretical foundation for examining promotional strategies and purchase intention. The following selected studies are relevant starting points; verify publication details and consult the original articles before final submission.

2.1 REVIEW OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

Jamnani and Jamnani (2024)

Jamnani and Jamnani examined the sales promotion tools used by Flipkart, including discounts, cashback, loyalty programmes, contests, electronic word of mouth, customer recommendations, reviews and flash sales. The study used questionnaire-based data and a quantitative approach to understand how these promotional tools influence customers' shopping experience. The study is relevant to the present research because it focuses on promotional strategies used by an Indian e-commerce platform.

Hua et al. (2024)

Hua and the co-authors investigated how changes in sales-promotion depth affect consumers' purchase intentions in an e-commerce environment. Using data from 587 online consumers, the study found that recognisable and unrecognisable changes in promotional discounts can have different effects on perceived product attractiveness and purchase intention. This study is directly relevant to discount-based promotional strategies on e-commerce platforms.

Yao, Wang and Martin (2024)

Yao, Wang and Martin examined consumer preferences for price discounts and bonus-pack promotions. The research explained that consumers' preferences can differ according to their regulatory orientation: prevention-oriented consumers may prefer price reductions, while promotion-oriented consumers may prefer the additional value offered by bonus packs. The study highlights that promotional methods should be selected according to consumer motivation and perceived value.

Sharma, Singh and Jaiswal (2023)

Sharma, Singh and Jaiswal studied the influence of mobile in-app price promotions on customer engagement and advocacy in food-delivery applications. Based on questionnaire responses from 293 users, the study found a positive association between in-app price promotions and customer advocacy. The findings suggest that digital price offers can encourage customer engagement and positive recommendations, which are also important in e-commerce.

Tan and Chen (2023)

Tan and Chen investigated how negative online word of mouth affects consumers' purchase intentions during flash sales. Their study showed that rational negative reviews perceived as useful information could reduce purchase intention, while the effect of emotional negative reviews differed. The study indicates that promotional urgency alone may not be sufficient; consumer reviews and trust also influence online buying decisions.

Mustikasari, Anwar and Hasbi (2023)

Mustikasari, Anwar and Hasbi examined the effects of viral marketing, promotions and flash sales on the online purchase intentions of Generation Z consumers using TikTok Shop. The study found that promotions and flash sales had significant positive effects on purchase intention, while viral marketing did not have a significant individual effect in their analysis. The findings support the importance of promotional offers in influencing young online consumers.

Obiso et al. (2025)

Obiso and the co-authors studied the influence of online sales promotions on impulse-buying behaviour among Generation Z consumers. The study considered promotional methods such as online coupons, price discounts, buy-one-get-one offers and free shipping. It is relevant to the present study because it examines how different online promotional incentives can influence consumers' buying behaviour.

Existing literature discusses sales promotion, perceived consumer benefits and online purchase-related behaviour. The present study focuses on how consumers evaluate multiple e-commerce promotional strategies—including discounts, coupons, cashback, free shipping, flash sales and loyalty rewards—and how perceived value and credibility relate to purchase intention. The specific contribution of the study will depend on the selected sample, geographical scope and analysis of the collected responses.

III. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Illustrative analysis based on 50 sample responses

Important note: The following 50-response figures are simulated examples prepared to demonstrate the format. They are not actual collected survey responses and must be replaced with verified responses before submission as empirical research.

Table 1. Profile of Respondents

Variable	Response Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Age group	Below 18	1	2.0%
	18–25	28	56.0%
	26–35	12	24.0%
	36–45	6	12.0%
	Above 45	3	6.0%
Occupation	Student	18	36.0%
	Employed	22	44.0%
	Self-employed	6	12.0%
	Other	4	8.0%

Interpretation: The illustrative profile shows that the largest age group is 18–25 years (56%). Employed respondents form the largest occupation group (44%), followed by students (36%).

Table 2. Online Shopping Habits

Variable	Response Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Online shopping frequency	Weekly	12	24.0%
	Monthly	18	36.0%
	Occasionally	15	30.0%
	Rarely	5	10.0%
Most-used e-commerce platform type	Marketplace	32	64.0%
	Brand website	8	16.0%
	Social commerce	7	14.0%
	Other	3	6.0%

Interpretation: Monthly online shopping is the most common pattern (36%). Marketplaces are the most-used platform type, selected by 64% of respondents.

Table 3. Awareness and Preference of Promotional Strategies

Variable	Response Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Promotion that attracts most	Discount	15	30.0%
	Coupon	8	16.0%
	Cashback	9	18.0%

	Free shipping	10	20.0%
	Flash sale	5	10.0%
	Loyalty rewards	3	6.0%
Usual source of promotion information	App	18	36.0%
	Email	6	12.0%
	Social media	14	28.0%
	Website	7	14.0%
	SMS	3	6.0%
	Other	2	4.0%

Interpretation: Discounts are the most attractive promotional strategy (30%), followed by free shipping (20%). Apps are the leading source of information about online promotions (36%), followed by social media (28%).

Table 4. Consumer Perception and Trust Towards Promotions

Variable	Response Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Promotions are useful for saving money	Strongly Agree	18	36.0%
	Agree	22	44.0%
	Neutral	7	14.0%
	Disagree	2	4.0%
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0%
Trust in promotional claims when terms are clear	Strongly Agree	16	32.0%
	Agree	23	46.0%
	Neutral	8	16.0%
	Disagree	2	4.0%
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0%

Interpretation: A combined 80% agree or strongly agree that online promotions are useful for saving money. Similarly, 78% express trust in promotional claims when the terms and conditions are clear.

Table 5. Promotional Factors Influencing Purchase Intention

Variable	Response Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Influence of free shipping	Strongly Agree	14	28.0%
	Agree	20	40.0%
	Neutral	10	20.0%
	Disagree	4	8.0%
	Strongly Disagree	2	4.0%
Influence of coupons or cashback	Strongly Agree	17	34.0%
	Agree	21	42.0%
	Neutral	8	16.0%
	Disagree	3	6.0%
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0%
Influence of limited-time offers	Strongly Agree	12	24.0%
	Agree	20	40.0%
	Neutral	11	22.0%
	Disagree	5	10.0%
	Strongly Disagree	2	4.0%
Preference for clear final price and charges	Strongly Agree	21	42.0%
	Agree	22	44.0%

	Neutral	5	10.0%
	Disagree	1	2.0%
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0%
Purchase intention when promotions offer good value	Strongly Agree	18	36.0%
	Agree	22	44.0%
	Neutral	7	14.0%
	Disagree	2	4.0%
	Strongly Disagree	1	2.0%

Interpretation: Free shipping influences purchase intention for 68% of respondents. Coupons or cashback influence 76%, while limited-time offers encourage earlier consideration for 64%. Clear display of the final price receives the highest agreement (86%). A total of 80% indicate purchase intention when promotions offer good value.

Table 6. Promotional Barriers and Suggested Improvements

Variable	Response Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Purchase abandoned due to unclear promotion conditions	Yes	21	42.0%
	No	23	46.0%
	Not sure	6	12.0%
Improvement preferred by respondents	Clearer terms	15	30.0%
	Better discounts	11	22.0%
	Free shipping	9	18.0%
	Easier coupon redemption	8	16.0%
	More relevant offers	5	10.0%
	Other	2	4.0%

Interpretation: 42% report that they have abandoned a purchase because promotional conditions were unclear. Clearer terms are the most requested improvement (30%), followed by better discounts (22%).

OVERALL INTERPRETATION

The illustrative analysis indicates that discounts are the most preferred promotional strategy and marketplaces are the most commonly used e-commerce platform type. Most respondents consider promotions useful for saving money and show purchase intention when offers provide good value. Clear promotional terms and transparent final pricing are important to consumer trust. Unclear conditions may cause consumers to abandon purchases. These observations describe only the simulated dataset and should not be treated as actual survey findings.

Note: Each variable in the tables represents 50 illustrative responses. Frequency and percentage values should be recalculated using the actual questionnaire data.

III. MAJOR FINDINGS

• The largest group of respondents belongs to the 18–25 age category, accounting for 56% of the sample. Employed respondents form the largest occupational group at 44%, followed by students at 36%.

• Monthly online shopping is the most common shopping frequency, reported by 36% of respondents. Marketplaces are the most-used e-commerce platform type, selected by 64%.

• Discounts are the most attractive promotional strategy, preferred by 30% of respondents, followed by free shipping at 20% and cashback at 18%.

• Apps are the leading source of information about online promotions (36%), followed by social media (28%).

• A total of 80% of respondents agree or strongly agree that promotions are useful for saving money. Similarly, 78% express trust in promotional claims when terms and conditions are clear.

• Coupons or cashback influence purchase intention for 76% of respondents, while free shipping influences 68% and limited-time offers encourage earlier consideration for 64%. A total of 80% indicate purchase intention when promotions offer good value.

• Clear final pricing is important to respondents: 86% agree or strongly agree that the final price and charges should be displayed clearly. In addition, 42% report abandoning a purchase because promotional conditions were unclear.

• Clearer promotional terms are the most requested improvement (30%), followed by better discounts (22%), free shipping (18%) and easier coupon redemption (16%).

IV. SUGGESTIONS

• Offer clear and genuine discounts: Display the applicable price, conditions and offer period transparently.

• Choose promotions suited to the product and audience: Discounts, cashback, free delivery and loyalty rewards may appeal to different consumers.

• Simplify redemption: Make coupon rules, minimum order values and exclusions easy to understand.

• Build trust: Avoid misleading reference prices, hidden charges and unclear promotional claims.

• Use limited-time offers responsibly: Communicate real deadlines without creating deceptive urgency.

• Personalise promotions carefully: Use relevant customer preferences while respecting privacy and consent.

• Communicate through appropriate channels: Use app notifications, email, social media or website banners according to consumer preferences.

• Measure results: Compare campaign performance using appropriate metrics such as conversion rate, order value, repeat purchases and promotion redemption.

• Consider the full shopping experience: Reliable delivery, product information, secure payment and convenient returns can complement promotional offers.

• Collect customer feedback: Review consumer responses to understand which offers are useful and where terms or redemption processes cause confusion.

V. CONCLUSION

Promotional strategies are an important part of e-commerce marketing because they can communicate value and encourage consumers to consider a purchase. Discounts, coupons, cashback, free shipping, flash sales and loyalty rewards may influence consumers differently depending on perceived savings, credibility, convenience and shopping needs. Clear promotional terms and a trustworthy shopping experience are therefore important alongside the offer

itself. This study is designed to examine the relationship between promotional strategies and consumer purchase intention. Since actual questionnaire data have not been supplied, no empirical conclusion about the most effective strategy or the strength of any relationship can be made yet. The final conclusion should be based on the survey findings and appropriate analysis.

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APPENDIX: SUGGESTED QUESTIONNAIRE

Instruction: This draft questionnaire should be reviewed and pilot-tested before distribution. Collect only information needed for the study and explain the purpose of the survey to participants.

- 1. Age group: Below a.18 b. 18–25 c.26–35 d. 36–45 e. Above 45
- 2. Occupation: Student a. Employed b. Self-employed c.Other
- 3. How often do you shop online a. Weekly b.Monthly c. Occasionally e. Rarely
- 4. Which e-commerce platform type do you use most? a. Marketplace b. Brand website c.Social commerce d.Other
- 5. Which promotion attracts you most? a.Discount b.Coupon c.Cashback d. Free shipping e.Flash sale f. Loyalty rewards
- 6. Where do you usually learn about online promotions? a.App b. Email c.Social media d. Website e. SMS f. Other

• 7. I consider online promotional offers useful for saving money. (5-point agreement scale)

• 8. I trust promotional claims when the terms and conditions are clear. (5-point agreement scale)

• 9. Free shipping influences my online purchase intention. (5-point agreement scale)

• 10. Coupons or cashback offers increase my intention to purchase online. (5-point agreement scale)

• 11. Limited-time offers encourage me to consider a purchase sooner. (5-point agreement scale)

• 12. I am more likely to buy when the final price and all charges are shown clearly. (5-point agreement scale)

• 13. I intend to purchase from e-commerce platforms when promotions offer good value. (5-point agreement scale)

• 14. Have you ever abandoned a purchase because the promotion conditions were unclear? a. Yes b.No c.Not sure

• 15. What change would improve online promotions for you? a. Clearer terms b. Better discounts c. Free shipping d.Easier coupon redemption e.More relevant offers d.Other