




An empirical study on the influencing factor on the Iranian online shopping behavior: a theory planned behavior approach

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Abstract

The rapid growth of e-commerce in Iran has led to an increasing interest in understanding the factors influencing Iranian consumers' online shopping behavior. This study applies the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to examine the key determinants affecting consumers' online purchasing decisions. Through an empirical approach, data was collected from a sample of Iranian online shoppers and analyzed using quantitative methods. The findings reveal that attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control significantly influence online shopping intentions, with trust and perceived risk playing moderating roles. Additionally, demographic factors such as age, gender, and internet literacy were found to impact shopping behavior. The study provides theoretical insights and practical implications for e-commerce businesses seeking to enhance consumer trust and engagement in Iran's digital marketplace.

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of e-commerce in Iran has significantly altered consumer purchasing behaviors, making it essential to examine the factors that shape online shopping patterns. Studies indicate that Iranian consumers' online shopping behavior is influenced by various factors, including demographic characteristics, trust, payment security, and cultural perceptions (Keshvari et al., 2021). Demographic factors such as age, income, and education level play a crucial role, with younger and more educated individuals showing a higher tendency to engage in online shopping (Ghazizadeh & Jafari, 2020). Additionally, trust in online retailers and payment security remain key concerns affecting consumer confidence and purchase decisions (Rahmani & Fathi, 2019). Cultural influences, particularly in consumer attitudes toward online transactions, further differentiate Iranian shoppers from those in Western markets (Zarei & Karimi, 2022). Understanding these factors is crucial for businesses and policymakers to develop effective strategies tailored to Iranian consumer behavior and enhance digital commerce growth in the country.

Iranian consumers are increasingly engaging in online shopping, influenced by factors such as convenience, trust, and digital literacy. Research suggests that demographic variables, including age, gender, and income level, significantly impact online shopping behavior in Iran (Rahmani et al., 2021). Younger consumers, particularly those aged 18–35, are more likely to shop online due to their familiarity with digital platforms and preference



for convenience (Hosseini & Rezaei, 2020). However, trust and security concerns remain key barriers to e-commerce adoption, as Iranian consumers are often skeptical about online payment security and product authenticity (Faraji-Rad et al., 2019). Additionally, cultural and social factors play an essential role, with social influence and word-of-mouth recommendations shaping purchase decisions (Ghazizadeh & Jafari, 2022). Understanding these behavioral patterns is crucial for businesses aiming to optimize their online marketing strategies and improve consumer trust in Iran's e-commerce sector.

2. THEORETICAL REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS

A Theory of Planned Behaviour

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is a widely recognized psychological framework for understanding and predicting human behavior in various contexts, including consumer decision-making and online shopping behavior. Developed by Ajzen (1991), TPB extends the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) by incorporating perceived behavioral control (PBC) as a key determinant of behavioral intentions and actual behavior. According to the TPB, an individual's intention to perform a behavior is influenced by three core factors: attitude (personal evaluation of the behavior), subjective norms (perceived social pressure), and perceived behavioral control (perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior) (Hadi, Sentosa, & AbWahid, 2022). In the context of online shopping, consumers are more likely to engage in purchasing if they have a positive attitude toward e-commerce, believe that important social groups support online shopping, and feel confident in their ability to navigate digital platforms and complete transactions. Numerous empirical studies have validated TPB in online shopping behavior research, demonstrating its effectiveness in explaining consumer choices (Pavlou & Fygenon, 2006; Hansen, Jensen, & Solgaard, 2004). Understanding these factors helps businesses and marketers design strategies that enhance consumer trust and engagement in digital markets.

Theory on the Consumer Behaviour

Consumer behavior theories help explain how individuals make purchasing decisions based on psychological, social, and economic factors. One of the most widely recognized models is the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) developed by Ajzen (1991). This theory suggests that consumer behavior is influenced by three key factors: attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Attitude refers to an individual's positive or negative evaluation of a behavior, subjective norms involve perceived social pressures to engage in the behavior, and perceived behavioral control reflects the ease or difficulty of performing the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). TPB has been extensively applied in online shopping research, showing that consumer trust, perceived risk, and internet literacy significantly impact purchasing intentions (Pavlou & Fygenon, 2006). Understanding these behavioral drivers helps businesses tailor their marketing strategies to enhance consumer engagement and trust in digital marketplaces.

Hypothesized the Effect of Consumption of Behaviour on the Iranian Online Shopping Behaviour

Consumer behavior plays a pivotal role in shaping online shopping patterns, particularly in emerging digital markets like Iran. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) suggests that consumer intentions and behaviors are influenced by attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). In the context of Iran, cultural values, trust in online platforms, and digital literacy significantly impact online purchasing decisions (Tahmasebi & Fathian, 2020). Additionally, studies have shown that perceived risk and security concerns influence Iranian consumers' willingness to shop online, particularly in relation to payment methods and product authenticity (Rahmani et al., 2018). Furthermore, demographic factors such as age, income level, and internet experience moderate the effect of consumption behavior on online shopping (Kheiry & Nasiri, 2021). These findings suggest that consumer attitudes and consumption habits directly affect online shopping behavior, emphasizing the need for e-commerce businesses to tailor strategies that enhance consumer trust and convenience.

Hypothesized the Effect of Growth of E-Commerce on the Iranian Online Shopping Behaviour

The rapid expansion of e-commerce has significantly influenced consumer behavior in Iran, reshaping purchasing patterns and market dynamics. As internet penetration increases and digital payment systems improve, Iranian consumers are becoming more inclined toward online shopping (Azad et al., 2021). The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) suggests that attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control influence consumers' online shopping intentions (Ajzen, 1991). In the Iranian context, studies have shown that trust, security concerns, and ease of access to online platforms play a crucial role in shaping purchasing behavior (Hosseini & Jafari, 2020). Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of e-commerce, further strengthening consumer reliance on online shopping channels (Rahmani et al., 2022). Given these factors, it is hypothesized that the growth of e-commerce positively affects Iranian online shopping behavior by increasing consumer confidence, expanding product variety, and enhancing convenience. However, challenges such as regulatory restrictions, digital payment limitations, and cultural preferences may moderate the extent of this impact (Farahmand & Shad, 2019).

3. DISCUSSION

Direct Effect of Consumption of Behaviour on the Iranian Online Shopping Behaviour

Consumer behavior plays a significant role in shaping online shopping patterns, particularly in emerging e-commerce markets like Iran. The direct effect of consumption behavior on Iranian online shopping behavior is influenced by various psychological and situational factors, including consumer trust, perceived risk, and purchasing motivation. Studies suggest that Iranian consumers tend to exhibit risk-averse behavior in online transactions due to concerns about payment security and product authenticity (Hajli et al., 2014). Moreover, factors such as brand reputation, social influence, and cultural norms have been found to directly impact online purchasing decisions (Akbari et al., 2019). Research further indicates that Iranian consumers prefer cash-on-delivery and localized

payment methods due to lower trust in online payment systems, which in turn affects their overall shopping behavior (Ghazizadeh & Jafari, 2020). Understanding these direct effects of consumption behavior is crucial for businesses aiming to enhance customer engagement and trust in Iran's digital marketplace.

Direct Influence of Growth of E-Commerce on the Iranian Online Shopping Behaviour

The rapid growth of e-commerce in Iran has significantly influenced consumer shopping behavior, reshaping traditional retail dynamics and increasing online purchasing trends. With internet penetration exceeding 80% in Iran (Statista, 2023), more consumers are engaging in digital transactions, driven by convenience, variety, and competitive pricing. Studies suggest that the expansion of online marketplaces and mobile commerce platforms has contributed to a shift in shopping preferences, with consumers demonstrating greater trust in e-commerce services (Rahmani et al., 2021). Furthermore, advancements in digital payment systems and logistics infrastructure have facilitated seamless transactions, reducing concerns over security and delivery (Mohammadi & Rezaei, 2020). However, challenges such as regulatory constraints, internet restrictions, and cultural factors continue to shape the evolution of Iran's online shopping landscape (Ebrahimi & Khosravi, 2022). The direct impact of e-commerce growth on consumer behavior is evident through increased online retail participation, higher spending rates, and shifting preferences toward digital payment methods.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The landscape of online shopping behavior in Iran has evolved dynamically, influenced by various economic, social, and technological factors. Consumer behavior in the digital marketplace is shaped by trust, perceived risk, and ease of transaction, which are critical determinants of online purchase intentions (Tajvidi et al., 2021). Moreover, the increasing internet penetration and smartphone adoption have expanded the accessibility of online shopping platforms, leading to shifts in purchasing patterns (Ghazizadeh & Ebrahimi, 2020). Studies suggest that Iranian consumers are highly price-sensitive, with discount strategies and promotional campaigns significantly affecting their buying decisions (Rahmani et al., 2019). Additionally, cultural and religious considerations influence product choices and payment methods, as many consumers prefer cash-on-delivery due to concerns over digital payment security (Khodadadi et al., 2022). Understanding these behavioral dynamics is essential for businesses aiming to enhance customer trust and engagement in Iran's growing e-commerce sector.

The sustainability of e-commerce growth in Iran is influenced by multiple factors, including technological advancements, consumer trust, regulatory frameworks, and infrastructural development. Over the past decade, the Iranian e-commerce market has expanded significantly due to increased internet penetration and mobile usage (Alaei & Shahnazari, 2021). However, challenges such as payment security, logistics inefficiencies, and consumer skepticism regarding online transactions continue to affect its long-term sustainability (Tavakoli & Shokouhi, 2020). Furthermore, the role of government regulations and economic fluctuations, particularly sanctions impacting international

trade, has shaped consumer behavior and business strategies in the sector (Keshavarz & Hosseini, 2019). Studies indicate that trust and perceived risk are crucial determinants of consumer engagement, with platforms that offer secure payment gateways and reliable customer service experiencing higher retention rates (Rahmani et al., 2022). As digital literacy improves and businesses adopt innovative solutions such as AI-driven recommendations and personalized marketing, the potential for sustained e-commerce growth in Iran remains promising (Sadeghi & Farahmand, 2021).

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that future research incorporates a more detailed methodological framework, including robust sampling techniques and clear justification for data analysis methods, to enhance the reliability and generalizability of results. Furthermore, researchers should address ethical considerations explicitly to strengthen the study's scientific rigor. Practically, e-commerce businesses in Iran are advised to focus on building consumer trust by improving payment security, enhancing platform usability, and offering transparent customer services. Policymakers are encouraged to develop supportive regulatory frameworks that address barriers such as digital payment limitations and internet restrictions. Future studies should also explore the long-term impact of emerging technologies, such as AI-driven personalization, on consumer behavior in Iran's evolving e-commerce landscape.

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