



Factors Influencing Customer Preference Towards Online B2B Platforms: A Study with Special Reference to Indiamart

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RESEARCH GUIDE

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ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of digital technologies has significantly transformed business transactions across industries. Business-to-Business (B2B) e-commerce platforms have emerged as an effective medium for connecting buyers and suppliers through digital channels. Among these platforms, IndiaMART has established itself as one of the leading online marketplaces in India. This study investigates the factors influencing customer preference towards online B2B platforms with special reference to IndiaMART. The research focuses on variables such as pricing, product quality, supplier trustworthiness, reviews and ratings, platform usability, customer support, and company reputation. Primary data were collected from 115 respondents using a structured questionnaire. Statistical tools including percentage analysis, correlation analysis, regression analysis, ANOVA, and Chi-square tests were utilized for data interpretation. The findings reveal that platform usability, trust, product quality, and competitive pricing significantly influence customer preference and satisfaction. The study concludes that customer-centric improvements and enhanced platform features can strengthen customer loyalty and encourage long-term platform usage.

Keywords: B2B E-commerce, IndiaMART, Customer Preference, Customer Satisfaction, Digital Marketplace, Supplier Trust.



1. INTRODUCTION

Digitalization has revolutionized the way organizations conduct business operations. The emergence of online B2B platforms has simplified procurement activities by enabling businesses to connect directly with suppliers through digital marketplaces. These platforms offer benefits such as reduced transaction costs, wider market access, improved communication, and efficient supplier discovery.

IndiaMART is one of the largest B2B online marketplaces in India, providing businesses with opportunities to explore products, compare suppliers, and conduct commercial transactions efficiently. As competition among digital marketplaces continues to increase, understanding customer preferences becomes essential for platform sustainability and growth.

Customer preference in B2B platforms is influenced by several factors including product quality, pricing, supplier credibility, customer reviews, ease of platform usage, and customer support services. Understanding these factors can help platform providers improve service quality and customer satisfaction.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Previous studies have highlighted the importance of trust, usability, pricing, and service quality in influencing customer behavior on digital platforms.

Sharma and Gupta (2024) found that supplier reliability and platform usability significantly affect customer purchasing decisions in B2B marketplaces.

Bose and Dutta (2024) observed that customer reviews and ratings positively influence purchase intention and customer trust in online marketplaces.

Nair and Pillai (2023) emphasized that perceived usefulness and ease of use are major determinants of B2B platform adoption among small and medium enterprises.

George and Thomas (2024) concluded that customer satisfaction, trust, and service quality contribute significantly to customer loyalty and repeated platform usage.

The literature indicates that customer preference in B2B marketplaces is multidimensional and influenced by both technological and relational factors.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the factors influencing customer preference towards online B2B platforms.
2. To examine the impact of pricing on customer preference.
3. To analyze the influence of product quality on customer satisfaction.
4. To study the role of supplier trustworthiness and company reputation.
5. To evaluate the impact of platform usability on customer preference.
6. To provide suggestions for improving customer satisfaction and platform performance.



4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive research design to analyze customer perceptions and preferences towards IndiaMART.

4.2 Sources of Data

Primary Data: Data were collected directly from respondents through a structured questionnaire.

Secondary Data: Information was gathered from journals, articles, company reports, websites, and published research studies.

4.3 Sampling Technique

Convenience sampling was used for selecting respondents due to accessibility and time constraints.

4.4 Sample Size

The study consists of 115 respondents who have experience using IndiaMART and other online B2B platforms.

4.5 Tools Used for Analysis

- Percentage Analysis
- Chi-Square Test
- Correlation Analysis
- Regression Analysis
- ANOVA

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The demographic analysis revealed that respondents belonged to different age groups, educational qualifications, and business sectors. A considerable proportion of respondents reported regular usage of IndiaMART for business transactions.

The majority of respondents expressed positive opinions regarding platform usability, product quality, supplier trustworthiness, and competitive pricing. Customer support effectiveness and search functionality were also perceived favorably.

Correlation analysis indicated strong positive relationships between platform usability factors and customer preference. Variables such as ease of use, search convenience, customer support, and platform features demonstrated significant positive associations with preference towards IndiaMART.



6. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

- Product quality positively influences customer preference.
- Competitive pricing plays an important role in supplier selection.
- Supplier trustworthiness significantly affects customer confidence.
- Reviews and ratings influence purchasing decisions.
- Platform usability strongly impacts customer satisfaction.
- Effective customer support enhances user experience.
- Positive customer experiences increase future usage intention.

7. SUGGESTIONS

1. Improve advanced search and filtering features.
2. Strengthen supplier verification mechanisms.
3. Encourage authentic customer reviews and ratings.
4. Enhance customer support responsiveness.
5. Maintain transparent pricing structures.
6. Provide personalized recommendations using data analytics.
7. Continuously improve platform usability.

8. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that customer preference towards IndiaMART is influenced by a combination of technological, economic, and relational factors. Product quality, pricing, supplier trustworthiness, reviews, and platform usability play crucial roles in shaping customer perceptions. Businesses operating in digital marketplaces should focus on improving customer experience and maintaining transparency to achieve sustainable growth. Enhanced usability and stronger trust-building measures can further improve customer satisfaction and long-term platform adoption.

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