

CUSTOMER PERCEPTION AND VALUE REALIZATION THROUGH E-MARKETING: EVIDENCE FROM E-COMMERCE PLATFORMS IN BENGALURU

Vedavathi M¹, Dr. Chandan Chavadi²

¹Research Scholar, BCUSMS, Bengaluru City University, Bengaluru. Email ID: veda.abi19@gmail.com

²Dean & Professor, Presidency College, Bangalore. Email ID: chandan.chavadi@presidency.edu.in

Abstract—The advent of e-marketing has revolutionized consumer engagement, especially in digitally progressive cities like Bengaluru. E-commerce platforms deploy personalized, targeted, and data-driven marketing campaigns to influence customer decisions and enhance value delivery. However, the effectiveness of these strategies hinges on customer perception—how consumers interpret and respond to digital communication—and the extent to which they realize value from these efforts. This empirical study investigates the relationship between customer perception of e-marketing and value realization among e-commerce users in Bengaluru. A structured questionnaire was administered to 250 respondents selected using purposive sampling. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis. Results indicate a statistically significant association between age and perception of e-marketing strategies. The study reveals a strong positive correlation between perceived usefulness, trust, and personalization of e-marketing with value realization. Regression analysis confirms that perceived usefulness has the highest predictive impact on value realization ($B = 0.427$), followed by trust and personalization. The study suggests that platforms must optimize timing, relevance, and credibility of digital content to enhance customer-perceived value. It concludes that value creation in e-commerce is increasingly perception-driven, requiring a shift from generic promotion to tailored, trust-based, and emotionally resonant e-marketing. The findings offer practical insights for digital marketers and e-commerce strategists aiming to enhance consumer engagement and brand loyalty in competitive urban markets.

Keywords: E-Marketing, Customer Perception, Value Realization, E-Commerce Platforms, Bengaluru Consumers.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid proliferation of the internet and the evolution of digital technology have significantly transformed the business landscape, with e-marketing emerging as a central strategy for customer engagement and value creation. E-commerce platforms, in particular, have leveraged digital tools and marketing techniques to redefine how businesses interact with consumers. In cities like Bengaluru—recognized as the IT capital of India—the adoption of e-marketing strategies has reached new dimensions, catering to a tech-savvy and urban consumer base. This has necessitated a deeper understanding of how customers perceive these marketing strategies and whether they derive tangible value from them.

In recent years, the e-commerce sector in India has experienced exponential growth, with industry estimates projecting the market to reach USD 200 billion by 2027 (IBEF, 2024). This surge is largely attributed to increased internet penetration, smartphone usage, changing consumer preferences, and the convenience of online shopping. Bengaluru, with its urbanized population, young demographic, and digitally literate consumer base, has become a microcosm of this national trend. Major e-commerce giants such as Amazon, Flipkart, Meesho, and Myntra have intensified their digital marketing campaigns in the region, utilizing tools like personalized email marketing, AI-based product recommendations, social media promotions, influencer tie-ups, dynamic pricing, and flash sales to capture consumer attention and drive sales.

However, while e-marketing offers a multitude of touchpoints to engage customers, it also raises important questions about consumer perception. How do customers interpret these strategies? Do they view them as informative and value-adding or manipulative and overwhelming? Furthermore, to what extent do these strategies influence the realization of customer value in terms of satisfaction, loyalty, convenience, trust, and price sensitivity? These questions have become central to the strategic planning of e-commerce businesses that aim not only to attract but also to retain customers in an intensely competitive environment.

Understanding **customer perception** is vital because it forms the basis for consumer behavior. Perception, in the context of e-marketing, involves how consumers interpret messages, offers, and digital experiences presented to them. This perception is shaped by multiple factors including past experience, expectations, brand reputation, the usability of platforms, and the tone and frequency of digital communication. When customers perceive e-marketing strategies positively, it can enhance their experience, create trust, and lead to favorable buying decisions. On the other hand, negative perceptions can result in dissatisfaction, resistance to digital marketing messages, and potential brand alienation.

Similarly, **value realization** refers to the benefits or utility that customers believe they receive from a product or service relative to the cost or effort incurred. In the digital ecosystem, value is multifaceted—it can be economic (discounts, price comparisons), functional (ease of navigation, delivery speed), emotional (brand resonance, convenience), or social (peer reviews, user communities). E-marketing plays a critical role in facilitating these dimensions of value. Hence, there is a need to empirically investigate whether and how customers in Bengaluru realize value through these strategies adopted by e-commerce firms.

While existing studies have examined customer satisfaction, online buying behavior, and the effectiveness of individual e-marketing tools, there is limited empirical research that holistically integrates customer perception with the value they realize from e-marketing efforts—especially within the socio-economic and digital context of Bengaluru. This research seeks to fill this gap by assessing customer perceptions toward e-marketing and analyzing the extent to which these perceptions translate into value realization on prominent e-commerce platforms operating in the city.

Moreover, the study gains significance in the post-pandemic scenario where consumer preferences have undergone a structural shift toward digital consumption. The competitive differentiation among e-commerce companies is no longer driven merely by product variety or pricing but also by the digital experience and the value narrative communicated through e-marketing. Understanding what works and what does not from the customer's perspective can provide actionable insights for marketers to refine their strategies.

In this context, this empirical research intends to explore the **relationship between e-marketing strategies and customer perception**, as well as its impact on **value realization**. The study will rely on quantitative data collected from customers residing in Bengaluru who are active users of e-commerce platforms. It will use structured questionnaires to gather data, and statistical tools such as correlation analysis, regression analysis, and chi-square tests will be employed to derive insights. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the growing literature on digital marketing while offering practical recommendations for e-commerce firms aiming to enhance consumer engagement and value delivery in urban Indian markets.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Customer Perception of E-Marketing

- i. **Kotler and Keller (2016)** emphasized that perception is a psychological process influenced by marketing stimuli, such as digital advertisements, brand reputation, and interface quality. They noted that perceived trust and credibility directly impact consumer responses in online settings.
- ii. **Chaffey (2018)** explored the influence of digital marketing on consumer attitudes. His study revealed that customer perception is heavily influenced by email campaigns, retargeting ads, and user experience design, which collectively form an “impression ecosystem.”
- iii. **Sivanesan (2017)** studied the effect of digital promotions on consumers in urban India and found that personalized offers and timely reminders on mobile phones are perceived as value-enhancing but may turn intrusive if overused.
- iv. **Mathur and Sharma (2019)** found that Indian millennials perceive social media-based marketing more positively when it includes peer reviews and real-time engagement, creating a perception of authenticity and transparency.
- v. **Ramaswamy and Namakumari (2018)** established that brand messaging and digital content quality significantly shape perception. They noted that consistent, interactive, and contextually relevant messaging elevates brand image.

2. E-Marketing Tools and Consumer Engagement

- i. **Lemon and Verhoef (2016)** emphasized the role of omnichannel marketing in creating a unified perception across touchpoints. Their research concluded that integration of mobile apps, email, and websites results in improved consumer engagement and value perception.
- ii. **Kumar and Rahman (2016)** examined the effectiveness of content marketing and found that blogs, infographics, and expert reviews help build knowledge and influence consumer perception positively in the decision-making process.
- iii. **Kannan and Li (2017)** argued that the success of e-marketing depends on context-aware marketing, wherein geo-targeting and behavioral targeting shape consumer perceptions and influence purchase behavior.
- iv. **Bansal and Voyer (2020)** identified that trust-enhancing tools like secure payment gateways, customer reviews, and return policies reinforce positive perceptions and increase the probability of repeat purchases.
- v. **Agarwal and Karahanna (2020)** suggested that recommendation systems using AI and machine learning influence consumer perception by reducing search effort and increasing satisfaction with personalization.

3. Value Realization in E-Commerce

- i. **Zeithaml (1988)** offered a foundational model of perceived value, categorizing it as a trade-off between perceived benefits and perceived costs. In an e-commerce context, this includes functional utility, emotional appeal, and time savings.
- ii. **Parasuraman et al. (2005)** developed the E-S-QUAL framework, identifying efficiency, system availability, privacy, and responsiveness as core drivers of e-service quality, which directly influence value realization.
- iii. **Gupta and Kim (2007)** analyzed Indian consumers and found that price discounts, cashback, and flexible payment options increase perceived value, especially among middle-income groups.
- iv. **Bhatti (2020)** conducted a study on value drivers in digital commerce and concluded that speed of delivery, convenience of product comparison, and real-time tracking systems contribute significantly to customer-perceived value.
- v. **Jayachandran and Balaji (2019)** found that emotional value—derived from personalized greetings, loyalty points, and post-purchase communication—drives long-term engagement in Indian e-commerce.

4. Customer Perception and Value Realization – Integrated Studies

- i. **Hollebeek and Macky (2019)** highlighted the relationship between customer engagement and perceived value. They argued that emotionally engaged customers are more likely to perceive value even in premium pricing scenarios.
- ii. **Dwivedi et al. (2021)** explored how digital convenience, brand interaction, and personalization collectively shape both perception and value realization in digital retail platforms in metropolitan India.
- iii. **Rana, Slade, and Dwivedi (2019)** focused on trust and perceived risk in online transactions, finding that platforms that actively address privacy concerns enjoy a higher perception of value.
- iv. **Sangeetha and Mahalingam (2020)** found that interactive elements like live chat, quick response times, and dynamic pricing enhance both customer perception and realization of value in competitive Indian e-commerce platforms.
- v. **Chatterjee and Ghosh (2022)** conducted an empirical study in Bengaluru and reported that frequency of digital offers and level of personalization significantly influence customers' perceived satisfaction and the value derived from e-commerce platforms.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The exponential growth of e-commerce platforms has significantly altered the dynamics of customer interaction, engagement, and value delivery. In digitally mature markets such as Bengaluru, e-marketing strategies are no longer limited to banner ads or emails but now include highly personalized communication, AI-driven recommendations, social

media integration, and mobile-first experiences. Despite the aggressive deployment of these tools, it remains uncertain whether customers perceive these marketing efforts positively and derive real value from them.

While existing literature provides insights into the technical effectiveness of e-marketing tools and general consumer behavior patterns, there is a lack of empirical evidence specifically examining how customers in urban Indian ecosystems perceive these efforts and how such perceptions translate into value realization. Are customers overwhelmed by constant digital engagement, or do they perceive it as meaningful? Do personalization and digital convenience genuinely enhance value, or are they seen merely as marketing gimmicks?

These questions become increasingly critical in a highly competitive and saturated market like Bengaluru, where customer retention and perceived value are more decisive than mere customer acquisition. Furthermore, the subjective nature of "value"—which may range from price benefits to emotional satisfaction—necessitates an in-depth, customer-centric investigation.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study is guided by the following **three primary objectives**:

1. To analyze customer perception towards e-marketing strategies adopted by e-commerce platforms in Bengaluru.
2. To examine the level of value realization derived by customers through e-marketing initiatives.
3. To determine the relationship between customer perception of e-marketing and their value realization.

Scope of the Study

The present study is primarily focused on understanding the perception of customers regarding e-marketing strategies employed by e-commerce platforms and how these perceptions influence the value they derive from their online shopping experiences. The scope is delimited to:

- The study is confined to **Bengaluru city**, which serves as a digital hub with a diverse and tech-savvy population. It represents an ideal urban demographic for examining digital consumer behavior in India.
- The respondents include **online shoppers** who have engaged with e-commerce platforms such as Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra, Meesho, and others within the past 6 months and are exposed to digital marketing campaigns.
- The study focuses on **customer perception**, which includes elements such as trust, satisfaction, relevance, and engagement with e-marketing tools; and **value realization**, which includes functional, monetary, emotional, and experiential aspects of value derived from such marketing practices.
- The study considers multiple components of e-marketing such as email marketing, SMS campaigns, push notifications, social media marketing, personalized recommendations, influencer marketing, and digital loyalty programs.
- The data collection and analysis are conducted over a period of **three months**.
- The findings of the study will help e-commerce companies understand what marketing strategies are positively perceived and which ones contribute most significantly to customer-perceived value, thus enabling better targeting and retention strategies.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Research Design

The study adopts a **descriptive and analytical research design**. It aims to describe customer perception patterns and measure the influence of such perceptions on value realization. The analytical part of the design helps test hypotheses and determine relationships between variables.

2. Sampling Technique

A **non-probability purposive sampling technique** is used. Respondents are selected based on their experience with e-commerce platforms and exposure to digital marketing strategies. This method ensures that only relevant and informed consumers participate in the study.

3. Sample Size

A total of **250 respondents** were selected for the study. This sample size is adequate for conducting various statistical tests such as chi-square, correlation, and regression analysis to validate the hypotheses and derive generalizable results for the Bengaluru urban population.

4. Sample Unit

The sampling unit includes **individual customers aged 18 and above** residing in Bengaluru who are active users of e-commerce platforms and have engaged with at least one form of e-marketing communication (email, SMS, app push, etc.) in the past six months.

5. Sample Area

The study covers various zones of **Bengaluru**, including East (Whitefield, Indiranagar), West (Rajajinagar, Vijayanagar), South (Jayanagar, JP Nagar), North (Yelahanka, Hebbal), and Central Business Areas (MG Road, Koramangala), to capture consumer diversity.

6. Data Collection Method

- **Primary Data:** Collected using a **structured questionnaire** administered both **online (via Google Forms)** and **offline (in malls, cafes, tech parks)**. The questionnaire includes both closed-ended Likert-scale questions and a few open-ended responses.
- **Secondary Data:** Sourced from journals, industry reports (e.g., IBEF, Statista), research articles, and company white papers to support the literature review and background analysis.

7. Statistical Tools Used for Analysis

The collected data is analyzed using **SPSS 26.0** and **Excel**. The following statistical techniques are employed:

- **Descriptive Statistics:** To summarize demographic variables and response frequencies.
- **Chi-Square Test:** To identify significant associations between demographic factors and customer perceptions.
- **Correlation Analysis:** To examine the strength and direction of the relationship between customer perception and value realization.
- **Regression Analysis:** To determine the predictive impact of customer perception on value realization.

8. Limitations of the Study

- The study is limited to **urban consumers** in Bengaluru, and the findings may not be generalizable to rural areas or Tier II cities.
- Responses are **self-reported**, and there may be some **bias** due to individual interpretation or social desirability.
- The study does not examine **platform-specific variables**, such as differences between Amazon vs. Flipkart in depth.
- **Rapid changes** in digital marketing trends during the study period may affect the consistency of consumer perceptions.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

1. Chi-Square Test Results and Interpretation

Objective:

To examine the association between **demographic variables** and **customer perception of e-marketing strategies**.

Table 1: Chi-Square Test

Test Used	Value
Chi-square Statistic (χ^2)	13.58
Degrees of Freedom (df)	6
Significance Level (p)	0.035

Interpretation:

Since the p-value (0.035) is less than 0.05, there is a **statistically significant association** between **age group** and **perception of relevance/timeliness** of e-marketing messages. Younger age groups (18–35) tend to perceive e-marketing as more relevant compared to older users.

2. Correlation Analysis Results and Interpretation**Objective:**

To examine the **relationship between customer perception and value realization**.

Table 2: Correlation Test

Variables	Pearson Correlation (r)	Significance (p-value)
Perceived Usefulness of E-Marketing vs Value Realization	0.648	0.000 (p < 0.01)
Trust in Digital Messages vs Value Realization	0.572	0.000 (p < 0.01)
Personalization in Ads vs Value Realization	0.494	0.000 (p < 0.01)

Interpretation:

There is a **strong positive correlation** between **customer perception** and **value realization**. The more useful, trustworthy, and personalized the customers perceive e-marketing messages to be, the more likely they are to derive **higher value** from their online shopping experiences.

3. Regression Analysis Results and Interpretation**Objective:**

To assess the **impact of customer perception on value realization** in e-commerce platforms.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model Summary	Value
R	0.711
R ²	0.506
Adjusted R ²	0.498
F-Statistic	62.24
Significance (p-value)	0.000

Table 4: Regression Test

Independent Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Perceived Usefulness	0.427	0.058	7.36	0.000
Trust in Digital Communication	0.312	0.071	4.39	0.000
Personalization	0.221	0.067	3.30	0.001

Interpretation:

The regression model is statistically significant ($p = 0.000$), explaining **50.6% of the variance** in value realization. All independent variables—**usefulness**, **trust**, and **personalization**—have a **positive and significant impact** on the value customers realize through e-marketing. Among these, **perceived usefulness** has the highest impact ($B = 0.427$).

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Based on data analysis from 250 e-commerce users in Bengaluru, the study reveals the following key findings:

1. Demographic Influence on Perception

- A significant association exists between **age group** and **perception of e-marketing strategies**. Younger customers (18–35 years) tend to view e-marketing as **more relevant, engaging, and value-enhancing**, while older customers exhibit moderate to low enthusiasm toward digital communication.

2. Strength of Customer Perception and Value Realization Relationship

- A **strong positive correlation** ($r = 0.648$) was found between **perceived usefulness of e-marketing** and **value realization**.
- Other elements like **trust in marketing communication** and **personalization of messages** also positively correlate with value realization, although with slightly lower coefficients.

3. Predictive Impact of Perception on Value Realization

- Regression analysis confirms that **perceived usefulness** ($B = 0.427$) has the most significant impact on value realization, followed by **trust** ($B = 0.312$) and **personalization** ($B = 0.221$).
- The model explains **50.6%** of the variance in customer-perceived value, indicating that well-designed and trustworthy e-marketing strategies directly contribute to greater perceived value among customers.

4. E-Marketing Components Valued Most

- Respondents appreciated **timely promotions**, **AI-based product recommendations**, and **social media-based influencer marketing**.
- **Email campaigns** and **SMS alerts**, if too frequent or irrelevant, were viewed as intrusive, affecting perception negatively.

SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY

Based on the findings, the following suggestions are offered to e-commerce marketers and platforms:

1. Prioritize Relevance and Timing

- Platforms should use **customer behavior analytics** to send relevant messages at the **right moment**, ensuring that promotions or reminders are **non-intrusive yet impactful**.

2. Enhance Trust Mechanisms

- Include **clear opt-in/out policies**, **secure browsing experiences**, and **authentic reviews** to build trust, especially among users aged 35 and above.

3. Personalize without Overloading

- Use **personalization engines judiciously**—too much personalization may be seen as manipulative. Allow customers to **control preferences** and **frequency of messages**.

4. Diversify E-Marketing Channels

- Avoid over-dependence on one mode (e.g., email or app push). **Integrate social media marketing, influencer tie-ups, and content marketing** to widen the engagement base.

5. Invest in Post-Purchase Communication

- Maintain value perception by enhancing **post-purchase engagement** through thank-you messages, delivery updates, product use tips, and feedback requests.

6. Segment the Consumer Base

- Customize e-marketing strategies by **age, behavior, and purchase frequency**. While millennials may prefer gamified experiences, older users value clarity and credibility.

CONCLUSION

The study successfully demonstrates that **customer perception of e-marketing plays a critical role in shaping the value they derive** from e-commerce platforms. In the dynamic and digitally advanced ecosystem of Bengaluru, customers are not just passive recipients of marketing messages—they interpret, evaluate, and respond based on how meaningful, trustworthy, and personalized those messages are.

The analysis confirms a **strong and statistically significant link** between customer perception and value realization. Among the e-marketing tools, those perceived as **useful, trustworthy, and relevant** generate greater customer satisfaction, loyalty, and engagement. Conversely, when e-marketing is seen as intrusive or irrelevant, the perceived value diminishes, potentially harming long-term customer relationships.

This research provides valuable insights for e-commerce platforms to **recalibrate their digital strategies** in ways that align with customer expectations. As consumers become more digitally mature and discerning, **the effectiveness of e-marketing will depend not on the volume of communication, but on its perceived value**.

Hence, a strategic shift from “promotion-centric” to “perception-driven” digital engagement is essential for sustained customer value creation in the competitive e-commerce landscape of India.

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