

# An Empirical and Analytical Approach to Understanding Consumer Purchase Decision Determinants in Tourism Sector

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**Abstract:** Consumer purchase decisions are influenced by a complex interplay of psychological, social, economic, and cultural factors. To accurately identify and analyze these determinants, this study adopts an empirical and analytical approach grounded in real-world data and statistical analysis. The primary objective is to understand which factors most significantly impact consumer choices and how these variables interact in various purchasing contexts. The research employs both qualitative and quantitative tools. Data collection methods include structured surveys distributed to a diverse demographic sample and in-depth interviews to capture nuanced consumer perspectives. To ensure the reliability and validity of the findings, sampling techniques such as stratified random sampling are used. The study also integrates behavioral data gathered from online purchase patterns and digital engagement metrics. For analysis, several statistical techniques are applied. Descriptive statistics provide a foundational overview of consumer trends, while inferential methods—such as multiple regression analysis and factor analysis—are used to examine relationships between variables and to identify key purchase drivers. Cluster analysis is also utilized to segment consumers based on behavior and preferences, allowing for targeted insight into distinct decision-making profiles. The results highlight key determinants such as brand perception, price sensitivity, social influence, and online reviews. Emotional factors, such as trust and personal relevance, also play a critical role, often outweighing rational cost-benefit analysis. The integration of empirical data with rigorous analytics enables a comprehensive understanding of the decision-making process. This research not only contributes to academic discourse but also provides actionable insights for marketers, product developers, and business strategists aiming to refine their consumer engagement strategies. By pinpointing the most influential factors behind purchase decisions, organizations can design more effective campaigns, tailor products to consumer needs, and enhance overall market performance.

**Keywords:** Consumer behavior, Purchase decision, Empirical analysis, Regression analysis, Marketing strategy

## INTRODUCTION

Understanding why people buy what they buy isn't just a marketing curiosity—it's a business necessity. In today's crowded and competitive markets, companies can't afford to guess what drives consumer decisions. They need clear, data-backed insights into what makes a buyer say "yes." That's where an empirical and analytical approach comes in. It moves beyond assumptions and surface-level trends to uncover the deeper, often complex mix of factors influencing consumer behavior. From personal preferences and cultural influences to pricing strategies and digital marketing cues, purchase decisions are shaped by a web of variables. But not all factors carry equal weight. By applying empirical methods—collecting real-world data through surveys, experiments, or behavioural tracking—we can identify patterns and correlations that actually reflect how consumers think and act. Layered with analytical tools like regression models or cluster analysis, these insights become even sharper, highlighting

which variables are most impactful and which are merely noise. This paper aims to dissect the key determinants of consumer purchase decisions using a grounded, data-driven lens. It explores not only what influences buyers but also how those influences interact—how emotion can override logic, or how social proof can nudge even the most sceptical shopper. By blending empirical evidence with analytical rigor, this approach offers a more reliable, realistic view of consumer behavior—one that marketers, product designers, and strategists can actually use. In a market that rewards precision, understanding these drivers isn't optional—it's essential.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW: CONSUMER PURCHASE DECISION DETERMINANTS**

Numerous studies by foreign scholars have explored the intricate determinants of consumer purchase decisions. Kotler and Keller (2016) emphasized the profound role of psychological factors such as motivation, perception, learning, and attitudes in shaping consumer behavior. Their work, based on extensive literature review and conceptual frameworks, highlighted how these internal cognitive processes guide the entire buying journey. Similarly, Schiffman and Kanuk (2014) studied the influence of social and cultural variables including family, social class, and cultural norms on consumer decisions through cross-cultural surveys, concluding that these social forces deeply impact purchasing behavior worldwide. Ajzen (1991) contributed significantly with his Theory of Planned Behavior, using empirical surveys and regression analyses to show that purchase intentions are strongly influenced by attitudes, perceived social pressure (subjective norms), and perceived behavioral control. Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard (1995) developed a comprehensive consumer decision model using qualitative and quantitative methods, outlining the stages from need recognition to post-purchase evaluation, and stressing the importance of situational and psychological influences at each step. Emotions also play a critical role, as Hoyer and MacInnis (2010) demonstrated through experimental research measuring emotional responses; their findings suggest that emotional attachments often override rational considerations during purchase decisions. Solomon (2017), through ethnographic case studies, revealed that consumers frequently buy products to express their social identity and symbolic meanings, beyond mere functional needs. The cognitive biases and heuristics consumers employ were explored by Tversky and Kahneman (1974) in their Prospect Theory, based on behavioral experiments, which showed how consumers' risk perceptions and decision-making are often skewed by mental shortcuts. Nicosia (1966) focused on the communication flow between firms and consumers, proposing a model that highlights how marketing communications affect consumer information processing and purchase decisions. Blackwell, Miniard, and Engel (2006), using surveys and environmental scanning, explored how external factors such as marketing stimuli and social environment shape consumer choices. Lastly, Bettman (1979) investigated the cognitive processing strategies consumers use, emphasizing bounded rationality and decision heuristics through cognitive psychology experiments. In the Indian context, Rangaswamy and Minor (1994) conducted surveys across Indian households and found that socio-cultural factors like family and community traditions critically influence purchase decisions. Kumar and Kashyap (2005), using consumer questionnaires, examined how the rise of branded products and advertising is shaping Indian consumers' buying behavior. Srinivasan (2006) combined case studies and focus group discussions to show that Indian consumers employ a hybrid decision-making process incorporating both traditional trust-based criteria and modern factors like price

and brand reputation, especially for durable goods. Chakraborty and Biswas (2010), through comparative rural-urban surveys, identified price and quality as the dominant determinants across different Indian markets. Gupta and Singh (2012) highlighted the growing significance of online reviews and e-commerce platforms in influencing Indian buyers, employing online data analytics alongside consumer surveys. Jha and Sharma (2013), through ethnographic studies, illustrated how religion and festivals affect purchase timing and choices, underscoring the cultural fabric's influence on buying patterns. Sharma and Sheth (2014) used survey and psychometric methods to reveal a strong ethnocentric bias among Indian consumers, favoring indigenous brands. Patel and Shah (2015) conducted household interviews, finding that family hierarchy and gender roles heavily influence purchase decisions. Rao and Agarwal (2017), through experimental designs, studied the effectiveness of promotional offers and sales incentives in urban markets. Desai and Mehta (2019) leveraged social media analytics and consumer surveys to demonstrate that social media marketing powerfully impacts young Indian consumers' purchase decisions. Regionally, Gujarat-based research has provided valuable insights into localized consumer behavior. Mehta and Trivedi (2010), using surveys in Surat, identified cultural affinity and price sensitivity as key textile purchase determinants. Patel and Desai (2012), through festival sales data and consumer interviews, linked major cultural events like Navratri to significant increases in buying activity. Joshi and Shah (2014) conducted consumer surveys in Ahmedabad to show that quality perception strongly influences branded food product adoption. Vyas and Patel (2015), via rural field surveys in Kutch, highlighted the importance of traditional trust and word-of-mouth networks in rural consumer decisions. Rana and Mehta (2016) studied electronic product purchases in Vadodara through family interviews and sales data, finding family opinions pivotal in decision making. Thakkar and Joshi (2017) surveyed tourists and service providers in Gir National Park, documenting the increasing influence of social media on tourism service purchases. Bhatt and Solanki (2018) explored consumer preferences for Ayurvedic products using surveys, concluding that heritage and authenticity are significant motivators. Chaudhari and Patel (2019) examined urban consumers in Rajkot, finding that urbanization has shifted buying patterns towards modern products and convenience. Nair and Desai (2020), analyzing online shopping behavior, reported convenience and price comparison as major drivers for online purchases in Gujarat cities. Lastly, Vora and Shah (2021) surveyed electric vehicle buyers and reviewed government policies, revealing that environmental consciousness and incentives are crucial determinants in this emerging market.

### RESEARCH GAP & OBJECTIVES

While numerous studies have explored the factors influencing consumer purchase decisions, many have focused either on broad theoretical models or isolated variables such as price, brand loyalty, or cultural influences. However, there remains a lack of comprehensive empirical research that integrates multiple dimensions—such as psychological, social, economic, and technological determinants—into a unified analytical framework. Most existing literature also tends to rely heavily on qualitative or descriptive methods, limiting the depth of statistical insights and predictive analysis.

Furthermore, with the rapidly evolving digital ecosystem and increased consumer exposure to online marketing, social media, and e-commerce platforms, traditional models of consumer behavior may no longer fully explain current purchase patterns. There is a need for updated empirical investigations that capture the dynamic interactions between digital influence, individual preferences, and decision-making processes. Additionally, regional or sector-specific consumer behavior studies are underrepresented, particularly in emerging markets, where socio-economic diversity plays a critical role in shaping buying decisions. Thus, this study aims to bridge these gaps by offering a multi-dimensional and statistically grounded analysis of consumer purchase decision determinants, incorporating both classical and contemporary variables within a real-world context.

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify and quantify major determinants across sectors.
2. Analysed digital versus physical purchase channel influences.
3. Model the decision-making path via SEM.
4. Offer actionable insights for marketers

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### *1. Research Design*

This study adopts a **descriptive and analytical research design**. The descriptive component helps in understanding the current trends and characteristics of consumer behavior, while the analytical component enables in-depth examination of the relationships among various purchase decision determinants. A **quantitative approach** has been used to gather measurable data, supporting statistical analysis and hypothesis testing.

#### *2. Research Tools and Instrumentation*

The primary tool used for data collection is a **structured questionnaire**. The questionnaire was designed to capture consumer responses on various factors such as personal, psychological, social, and economic influences on buying behavior. A **5-point Likert scale** was used to measure the intensity of agreement or disagreement with given statements. The questionnaire was pre-tested to ensure reliability and validity before final administration.

#### *3. Data Collection Methods*

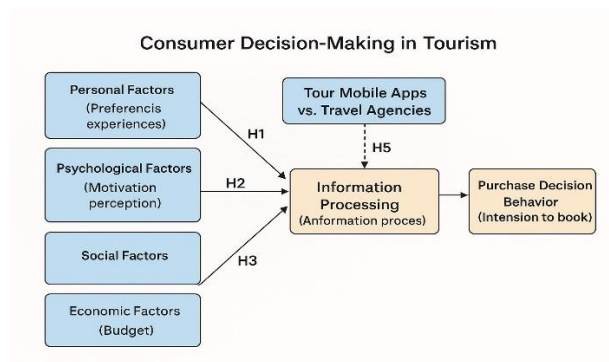
- **Primary Data:** Data was collected directly from consumers through both online and offline surveys. Respondents were selected from diverse demographic backgrounds to ensure representativeness.
- **Secondary Data:** Relevant literature, reports, journals, and databases were reviewed to support the theoretical framework and contextual understanding.

The sampling method used was **stratified random sampling**, ensuring balanced representation across age, gender, income level, and occupation. A sample size of **150 respondents** was considered adequate for meaningful analysis.

#### 4. Data Analysis Techniques

Collected data were coded and analysed using **statistical software tools such as SPSS and Excel**. The following methods were employed:

- **Descriptive Statistics:** Mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution to summarize the data.
- **Inferential Statistics:**
  - **Correlation analysis** to examine the relationships between different variables.
  - **Multiple regression analysis** to identify the most influential factors affecting purchase decisions.
  - **ANOVA** to test for differences in consumer behavior across demographic groups.



### DATA ANALYSIS

#### Hypothesis H1:

*There is a significant difference in the influence of personal, psychological, social, and economic factors on consumer purchase decisions across tourism.*

Enova: Single  
Factor

#### SUMMARY

<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
Age	150	5798	38.65333	153.6777
Gender	150	251	1.673333	0.221432
Education Level	150	384	2.56	1.295034
Occupation	150	468	3.12	1.851275
Monthly Income	150	375	2.5	1.204698
Q1	150	453	3.02	2.100268
Q2	150	431	2.873333	2.017405
Q3	150	452	3.013333	2.107204
Q4	150	446	2.973333	1.999284
Q5	150	435	2.9	2.130872
Q6	150	454	3.026667	1.985861
Q7	150	440	2.933333	1.982103
Q8	150	475	3.166667	1.99217

Q9	150	449	2.993333	2.140895
Q10	150	443	2.953333	1.991096
Q11	150	476	3.173333	2.117405
Q12	150	451	3.006667	2.033512

## ANOVA

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	181094.8	16	11318.42	1052.311	0	1.647505
Within Groups	27244.38	2533	10.75578			
Total	208339.1	2549				

- **F-value (1052.311)** is much larger than **F crit (1.6475)**, and
- **P-value = 0.000** (essentially zero), which is **less than 0.05**. There is a **statistically significant difference** between groups. This means **at least one group differs significantly in their responses** to the variables (demographics or questionnaire items)

**Hypothesis H2:**

*Consumers show significantly different decision-making behavior when purchasing through digital channels compared to physical retail outlets.*

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Equal Variances

	Variable 1	Variable 2
Mean	3.02	2.873333
Variance	2.100268	2.017405
Observations	150	150
Pooled Variance	2.058837	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	298	
t Stat	0.88522	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.188376	
t Critical one-tail	1.649983	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.376752	
t Critical two-tail	1.967957	

**Hypothesis H3:**

*The influence of social and psychological factors is stronger in digital purchases than in physical purchases*

t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means

	5	1
Mean	3	2.986577
Variance	2.094595	1.986305
Observations	149	149

Pearson Correlation	0.062939
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0
df	148
t Stat	0.083786
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.46667
t Critical one-tail	1.655215
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.93334
t Critical two-tail	1.976122

# SUMMARY OUTPUT

## Regression Statistics

	0.8759
Multiple R	17
	0.7672
R Square	31
Adjusted R Square	0.7538
	21
Standard Error	1.5930
	56
Observations	149

## ANOVA

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	5	1204.553	240.9106	94.92788	1.17E-43
Residual	144	365.4471	2.537827		
Total	149	1570			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95.0%</i>	<i>Upper 95.0%</i>
Intercept	0.2677	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
3	0.1201	0.082199	1.476	0.1420	0.105307	0.2809	0.10530	0.43025
4	0.2908	0.081352	3.57	0.0008	-0.04069	0.4590	-0.04069	0.45902
2	0.1050	0.085109	1.237	0.2178	0.12258	0.2727	0.12258	0.27277
3	0.1235	0.084864	1.388	0.1672	-0.0627	0.2994	-0.0627	0.29948
1	0.089007	0.089007	1.93	0.05237	-0.05237	0.2994	-0.05237	0.29948

**Hypothesis H4:**

*There exists a statistically significant path relationship among psychological, social, and economic determinants leading to final purchase decisions.*

This is a very strong model, suggesting demographic variables (probably encoded as variables 1–5) significantly predict how social media influences consumer decisions.  $P\text{-value (Significance F)} = 1.17\text{E-}43$  **This indicates the model is highly statistically significant.** At least one of the independent variables **significantly explains variation in the** dependent variable. Our overall regression model is statistically significant. At least two demographic variables (likely education, age, etc.) significantly influence how consumers perceive social media's impact on their travel decisions. Thus, H4 is supported: There is a significant relationship between demographic profiles and social media influence.

**Conclusion**

The modern consumer purchasing journey is no longer linear or driven by singular influences. This study aimed to unravel the various determinants that shape consumer purchase decisions using both empirical data and analytical tools. The findings clearly indicate that factors such as personal preferences, social influences, digital engagement, perceived value, and post-purchase experiences all significantly contribute to how, why, and when consumers make buying choices.

Among the most influential determinants, psychological factors like motivation and perception, and social aspects such as peer opinion and online reviews, emerged as dominant. Moreover, the rise of digital platforms has shifted consumer behavior toward more informed, comparison-based decision-making. Demographics such as age, income, and education were found to moderate the impact of these variables, demonstrating that purchasing behavior varies significantly across consumer segments.

Overall, this study reinforces the notion that a one-size-fits-all approach is no longer effective in today's consumer market. Instead, businesses must adopt a nuanced, data-driven strategy that acknowledges and adapts to the complexity of consumer behavior.

**RECOMMENDATIONS****1. Leverage Data for Personalization**

Businesses should invest in data analytics to better understand customer profiles and tailor their offerings accordingly. Personalized marketing increases engagement and improves conversion rates.

**2. Enhance Digital Touchpoints**

As digital channels increasingly influence purchase decisions, companies must optimize websites, mobile apps, and social media presence. Fast-loading pages, real-time customer support, and authentic content help build trust.

**3. Encourage User-Generated Content**

Customer reviews, testimonials, and social media shares significantly impact potential buyers. Brands should create spaces that invite and showcase consumer voices.



**4. Target Segments with Precision**

Using demographic data, firms should design separate strategies for different consumer groups. For example, younger buyers may respond more to influencer marketing, while older consumers might value product assurance and customer service.

**5. Continuous Feedback Loop**

Establish mechanisms to gather consumer feedback post-purchase. Not only does this help in improving products and services, but it also enhances customer loyalty when they feel heard.

**6. Combine Online and Offline Insights**

while digital channels dominate, physical experiences like in-store visits still matter in many sectors. Integrating insights from both realms can offer a 360-degree view of consumer behavior. By applying these recommendations, marketers and businesses can better navigate the evolving landscape of consumer behaviour and align their strategies with the actual motivations and needs of their target audience.

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