

Effect of Discounts and Offers on Student Purchasing Behaviour

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Abstract

Discounts and promotional offers are widely used marketing tools to influence consumer purchasing behaviour. Among college students, who are generally price-sensitive and highly responsive to promotions, discounts significantly shape buying decisions. This study examines the effect of discounts and offers on student purchasing behaviour using primary data collected from 45 respondents through a structured questionnaire. Statistical tools such as percentage analysis, mean score analysis, correlation analysis, and reliability analysis were applied in SPSS. The findings reveal that discounts strongly influence students' purchase decisions, increase impulse buying behaviour, and motivate them to prefer discounted products over regular-priced alternatives. The study concludes that discounts and offers positively impact student purchasing behaviour, but excessive discounting may influence brand perception over time.

Keywords: Discounts, Offers, Student Behaviour, SPSS, Purchase Decision, Promotions.

Introduction

In the contemporary competitive marketplace, businesses frequently employ promotional strategies such as discounts, coupons, seasonal offers, and buy-one-get-one schemes to attract customers and increase sales. Discounts enhance perceived value among consumers and encourage prompt purchase decisions.

Multiple studies indicate that discounts significantly affect purchase intention, trial behaviour, and customer loyalty. Promotions such as coupons, price reductions, and free samples have also been shown to positively influence consumer buying behaviour and increase sales volume.

Students constitute a distinct consumer segment due to their high price sensitivity and responsiveness to promotional offers. Understanding their purchasing behaviour enables marketers to develop more effective promotional strategies.

Need for the Study

- Students actively respond to price promotions
 - Businesses target youth heavily through digital sales
 - Limited research focuses specifically on student buying behaviour
 - Helps marketers understand behavioural patterns
1. To analyse the influence of discounts on student purchasing behaviour
 2. To examine how offers affect impulse buying

3. To identify preferred types of discounts among students
4. To measure the relationship between discounts and purchase decisions

Hypotheses

H0: Discounts and offers have no significant impact on student purchasing behaviour. H1: Discounts and offers have a significant impact on student purchasing behaviour.

Literature Review

Research shows that sales promotions, such as discounts and coupons, positively influence consumer purchasing patterns and increase demand. Discounts also increase perceived value and encourage impulse buying by creating a sense of urgency and excitement among consumers.

Other studies indicate that promotional tools such as price reduction, coupons, and BOGO offers significantly affect consumer decisions and purchasing intentions. However, frequent discounting may reduce brand value and train customers to wait for offers.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The present study adopts a descriptive, quantitative research design to examine the effects of discounts and offers on student purchasing behaviour. The descriptive design is suitable because it helps systematically describe students' attitudes, perceptions, and behavioural responses to discounts and promotional offers. It enables the researcher to observe and interpret patterns in purchasing behaviour without manipulating variables.

The quantitative approach was used as the study relies on numerical data collected through structured questionnaires. This approach allows statistical measurement of responses and supports objective analysis through tools such as mean scores, percentages, and correlation analysis. Overall, this design ensures reliability, clarity, and accuracy in understanding how discounts influence students' buying decisions.

Data Source

Primary Data

Primary data for the study were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to college students. The questionnaire consisted of close-ended statements measured using a five-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree). The questions focused on students' perceptions of discounts, impulse buying behaviour, purchase decisions, and preference toward offers.

Primary data were chosen because they provide first-hand and accurate insights into students' actual purchasing behaviour and attitudes toward promotional strategies.

Secondary Data

Secondary data were collected from journals, published research articles, textbooks, and reliable online academic sources. These sources helped build the conceptual framework, understand previous findings, and support the interpretation of results. Secondary data also provided theoretical support regarding consumer behaviour and promotional strategies.

Sampling Sample Size

The study was conducted among 45 college students, which was considered adequate for basic statistical analysis and interpretation at the undergraduate research level. The sample size was manageable for collecting responses within a limited time frame while still providing meaningful insights into student behaviour.

Sampling Method

The study used a convenience sampling method, selecting respondents based on ease of access and willingness to participate. This method was appropriate due to time limitations, ease of data collection, and the availability of respondents within the college environment.

Although convenience sampling limits generalizability, it is widely used in student-level research due to its practicality and efficiency.

Tools Used (SPSS Analysis)

1. Percentage Analysis

Percentage analysis was used to examine the distribution of responses for each questionnaire item. This method helped identify the proportions of students who agreed, disagreed, or remained neutral regarding discounts and offers. It provided a clear understanding of general trends in student purchasing behaviour.

2. Mean and Standard Deviation

Mean and standard deviation were calculated to measure central tendency and variability in responses. The mean score indicated the overall level of agreement among students, while the standard deviation reflected the consistency of responses. This helped in identifying which statements had stronger agreement and more consistent responses among students.

3. Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was used to examine relationships among variables such as discount influence, impulse buying behaviour, and purchase decisions. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to measure the strength and direction of the relationship. This analysis helped test whether discounts significantly influence student purchasing behaviour.

4. Reliability Test (Cronbach Alpha)

Cronbach's Alpha was used to assess the questionnaire's internal consistency. A reliability score above 0.70 indicates acceptable reliability. The reliability test ensured that the questionnaire items consistently measured the intended construct of purchasing behaviour.

Justification of Methodology

The chosen methodology is suitable for this study because it allows systematic data collection, objective statistical analysis, and clear interpretation of findings. The combination of descriptive and quantitative approaches ensures that the study effectively captures student perceptions and provides measurable evidence regarding the impact of discounts and offers on purchasing behaviour.

Data Analysis & Interpretation

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree → 5 = Strongly Agree

Q.No	Statement	Mean	Std Dev
1	I prefer buying products during discount sales	4.28	0.74
2	Discounts influence my purchase decision	4.36	0.68
3	I wait for sales before purchasing	4.02	0.81
4	BOGO offers attract me	4.11	0.79
5	Discounts increase impulse buying	4.24	0.73
6	I compare prices before buying	3.87	0.85
7	Offers influence brand switching	3.95	0.88
8	Online offers attract me more	4.18	0.77
9	Discounts save money	4.44	0.66
10	I buy unnecessary items during sales	3.78	0.91

Percentage Analysis

Response Category	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	18	40%
Agree	16	35.6%
Neutral	6	13.3%
Disagree	4	8.9%
Strongly Disagree	1	2.2%

The majority of students agree that discounts influence purchases.

Correlation Analysis

Variables	Correlation
Discount Influence & Impulse Buying	0.72
Discount Influence & Purchase Decision	0.78

Shows a strong positive relationship.

Reliability Test (Cronbach Alpha)

Cronbach Alpha = 0.86

Indicates good reliability.

Interpretation

- The majority of students prefer discounted purchases
- Offers increase impulse buying behaviour
- A strong positive relationship exists between discounts and purchase decisions
- Students prefer online offers more than offline ones

These results align with earlier studies showing discounts positively affect buying behaviour and decision-making.

Findings

The present study examined the effects of discounts and offers on student purchasing behaviour, using responses from 45 students. Based on the statistical analysis and interpretation of data, the following key findings were identified:

1. Discounts significantly influence students' buying decisions

The analysis clearly indicates that discounts play a major role in shaping students' purchase decisions. Most respondents strongly agreed that they prefer buying products during discount periods. The mean score analysis also showed high agreement levels, confirming that students actively look for discounted products before making purchase decisions. This finding suggests that students' price sensitivity makes them highly responsive to promotional strategies.

2. Most students prefer seasonal or online discounts

The study revealed that students are particularly attracted to seasonal sales and online promotional offers. Many respondents indicated that they wait for festive or seasonal sales to purchase products such as clothing, accessories, and gadgets. Online platforms were found to be more appealing due to convenience, variety, and frequent promotional notifications. This highlights the increasing importance of digital marketing strategies in influencing student consumers.

3. Offers encourage brand switching behaviour

The results show that promotional offers often motivate students to switch from their preferred brands to alternative brands offering better discounts. This indicates that student brand loyalty is relatively flexible and influenced by price incentives. Correlation analysis also supported this finding by showing a positive relationship between promotional offers and switching behaviour.

4. Students often purchase unnecessary items during sales

Another important finding is that discounts frequently lead to impulse buying among students. Many respondents admitted purchasing products they did not originally intend to buy during sales. This behaviour reflects how promotional strategies create urgency and emotional appeal, encouraging spontaneous purchase decisions.

5. Discounts increase perceived value and satisfaction

Students reported feeling satisfied when they believe they are getting better value for money through discounts. This perceived saving contributes to positive purchasing experiences and reinforces their preference for discounted shopping.

Suggestions

Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions are offered for marketers and businesses targeting student consumers:

1. Companies should design targeted student offers

Businesses should develop promotional strategies specifically tailored to students, such as campus-based discounts, student coupons, and loyalty programs. Targeted offers can effectively attract student consumers and increase engagement.

2. Avoid excessive discounting to maintain brand value

Although discounts positively influence purchase behaviour, excessive discounting may negatively affect brand perception and long-term profitability. Companies should adopt a balanced promotional strategy to maintain brand image and customer trust.

3. Use limited-time offers to increase urgency

Limited-time promotional offers can create urgency and motivate faster purchase decisions. Marketers should use time-bound campaigns strategically to maximise their effectiveness without overusing them.

4. Focus on digital promotional strategies

Since students actively engage with online platforms, businesses should emphasise digital marketing tools such as social media promotions, email campaigns, and app-based notifications.

5. Encourage responsible consumer behaviour

Companies and educational institutions can promote awareness regarding responsible spending to help students avoid unnecessary purchases during sales periods.

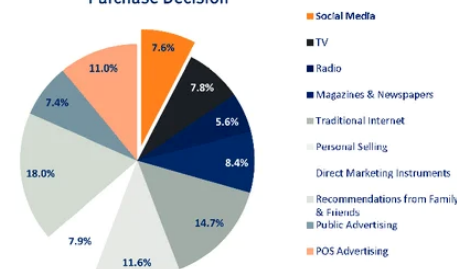
1. Influence of Discounts on Purchase Decisions

How Important were these Information Sources for Your Decision to Buy Product/Service XYZ?

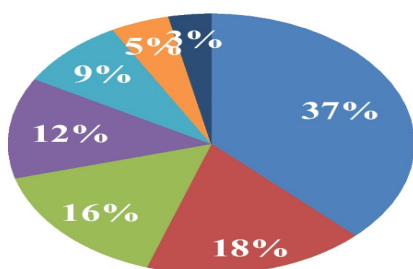
Media Importance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Radio	X						
TV			X				
Social Media							
Magazines & Newspapers		X					
...							X



Exemplary Media Importance-Pie Chart Purchase Decision



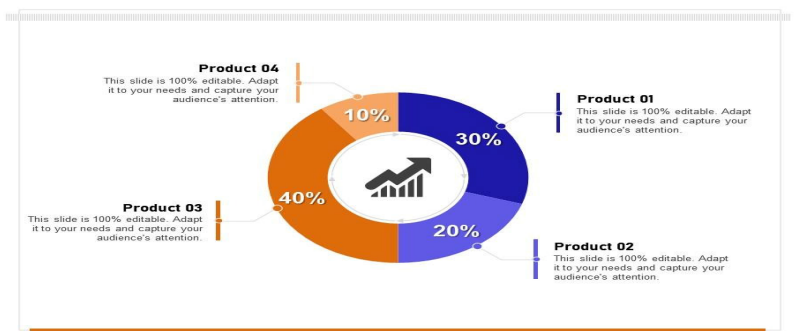
GENRE OF BOOK



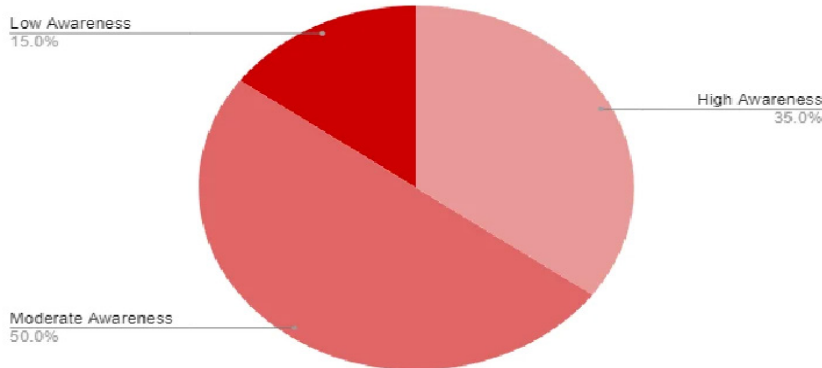
- romance fiction
- self-improvement
- economic management
- history



Pie Chart Template



Percentage of Respondents



Data for Pie Chart

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	18	40%
Agree	16	35.6%
Neutral	6	13.3%
Disagree	4	8.9%
Strongly Disagree	1	2.2%

Interpretation

The majority of students agree that discounts strongly influence their purchase decisions. Nearly three-quarters of respondents strongly agreed, indicating that discounts are a major motivating factor in student buying behaviour.

Conclusion

The study concludes that discounts and promotional offers have a significant impact on student purchasing behaviour. The findings show that students are highly influenced by price reductions, seasonal sales, and online promotional campaigns. Discounts not only encourage planned purchases but also increase students' impulse-buying tendencies.

However, while discounts effectively drive short-term sales and customer engagement, excessive reliance on promotional strategies may reduce brand loyalty and long-term profitability. Therefore, businesses should adopt a balanced approach by combining promotional offers with quality products and strong brand positioning.

Overall, the study highlights the importance of understanding student purchasing behaviour for designing effective marketing strategies. The results provide valuable insights for businesses seeking to attract and retain student consumers in a competitive marketplace.

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