



Unraveling E-Cart Abandonment: Website Features That Matter Across Online Shopping Platforms

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Abstract: The present study seeks to identify the website features that contribute to e-cart abandonment across different online shopping environments. Data were collected from 1,074 millennial and generation Z shoppers in India and analyzed using descriptive statistics. The findings reveal that restrictive return policies, intrusive visual elements, and lengthy checkout processes are the most influential factors affecting e-cart abandonment, while inadequate product information and poor visual design exert minimal impact on e-cart abandonment. The findings underscore that modern online shoppers prioritize transactional ease, transparent policies, and minimal cognitive load over visual aesthetics or product information adequacy. The study provides actionable insights for e-retailers to enhance user experience by simplifying checkout processes, ensuring clear refund and return policies, and minimizing intrusive design elements.

Keywords: E-cart abandonment; generation Z; millennial; online shopping platforms; website features

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly accelerated the adoption of e-commerce in the retail sector (Akhtar et al., 2024; Chopra et al., 2024). During the pandemic, customers and retailers increasingly relied on digital platforms for purchasing and selling of goods and services. This temporary shift has evolved into a lasting change in consumer behaviour and retail strategies. According to the International Trade Administration Report (2024), revenue generated from this sector is expected to grow to USD\$ 5.5 trillion by 2027 from USD\$ 3.3 trillion in 2023 at a steady 14.4% compound annual growth rate (Bledsoe, 2024). These growth estimates are not only a testament to the sector's resilience and adaptability but present a vast array of opportunities for businesses to reform and streamline their strategies.

In tandem with the global boom in e-commerce industry, the Asia-Pacific region has become one of the fastest-growing e-commerce markets. According to Data Bridge Market Research Analyses Report (2024), e-commerce market in Asia-Pacific region is projected to grow from USD 4.20 trillion in 2024 to USD 6.76 trillion by 2029, at an annual growth rate of 10 %. India has emerged as a leading destination for e-commerce expansion. India ranks first among 20 nations in retail e-commerce development from 2023 to 2027, with a compound annual growth rate of 14.1% (Bledsoe, 2024). This impressive growth trajectory underscores the

immense potential of India's B2C e-commerce sector and highlights its increasing significance in shaping the future of digital retail.

Despite the tremendous growth of e-commerce sector in India, online retail spending still accounts for only 5–6% of total retail expenditure, much lower than nations such as the United States (16%) and China (25%). Further, insights from e-commerce websites reveal that according to the "3/47/50" rule, only 3 per cent of customers who visit the online stores make immediate purchases, another 47 per cent have the intention to make purchases later, and the remaining 50 per cent never make a purchase (Daryakenari et al., 2024). This trend underscores the critical challenge of e-cart abandonment faced by e-retailers, which has significantly hampered the growth of several e-business. E-cart abandonment is the phenomenon when a customer leaves the shopping website or abandons the purchase process either after browsing the pages of online shopping websites, or after adding the product to the e-cart or after initiating the checkout process. This underscores that e-cart abandonment can happen at any stage of the buying process.

While prior research has investigated e-cart abandonment from diverse perspectives, the existing body of work remains fragmented, with most studies emphasizing isolated dimensions such as cognitive factors (stress), psychological influences (perceived risk), or economic considerations (price sensitivity) (Wang et al., 2023; Rodrigues et al., 2022). Furthermore, much of the existing literature tends to examine e-cart abandonment across all websites collectively, rather than focusing on specific platform-level characteristics. Consequently, limited attention has been paid to how combinations of website design elements, usability attributes, and technological features jointly influence customers' cart abandonment behaviour on individual e-commerce platforms. Addressing this gap, the present study seeks to identify the website features that contribute to e-cart abandonment across different online shopping environments. The findings aim to provide e-retailers with an evidence-based framework to optimize website interfaces, enhance user experience, and reduce cart abandonment ultimately facilitating the conversion of browsing intent into completed purchases.

2. Review of Literature

The decision to abandon an online shopping cart is a complex consumer behaviour influenced by an interplay of website design, transactional processes, and user perceptions (Chopra et al., 2024). The literature points to several key areas that consistently impact this decision. The decision to abandon a shopping cart is rarely based on a single factor but is often the result of cumulative friction and eroding trust. The existing literature on e-cart abandonment was meticulously reviewed and twelve key website features contributing to e-cart abandonment were extracted. These features include inadequate information (Kukar-Kinney & Close, 2009), browsing difficulties (Kapoor & Vij, 2021), poor visual designs (Kapoor & Vij, 2021), review ratings (Kapoor & Vij, 2021), return policies (Kapoor & Vij, 2021), length of refund process (Kapoor & Vij, 2021), shipping charges (Kapoor & Vij, 2021), insufficient payment options (Kukar-Kinney & Close, 2009), request to link social media accounts (Khan, 2022), excessive pop-ups or advertisements (Khan, 2022), and filling lengthy desired information (Kukar-Kinney & Close, 2009).

2.1 Inadequate information

This refers to the lack of comprehensive and clear details about a product (Kapoor & Vij, 2021). In a physical store, customers can touch, feel, and inspect an item (Cho et al., 2006). Online, they rely entirely on the information provided. When this information is insufficient such as missing technical specifications, ambiguous descriptions, a lack of multiple high-resolution images from different angles, or the absence of crucial details like size charts for apparel it creates significant uncertainty (Roy & Shaikh, 2024). This information gap leading them to hesitate and ultimately abandon the cart rather than risk a bad purchase.

2.2 Browsing difficulties

This feature encompasses all aspects of site navigation and product discovery. It includes a confusing structure, an ineffective search function that returns irrelevant results, and poorly designed category pages (Chopra et al., 2024). When users find it difficult to navigate a website, their shopping experience becomes a frustrating chore rather than an enjoyable activity (Ryu & Ryu, 2021). If they cannot easily find the product they are looking for or compare different options, their motivation to continue decreases sharply (Kapoor & Vij, 2021). This leads to "task failure," where the user gives up on their goal and leaves the site.

2.3 Poor visual designs

The visual design of an e-commerce site is its virtual storefront and has a powerful psychological impact. A poor design characterized by clutter, low-quality images, hard-to-read fonts, or an outdated layout, can immediately signal untrustworthiness and a lack of professionalism (Garaus, 2018). This increases the user's "cognitive load," making the site feel overwhelming and difficult to process (Mishra et al., 2022). Thus, the poor visual designs i.e., perceived visual ambiguities diminish the website's credibility and arouse hesitation among customers in completing the purchase process which in turn leads to OSCA (Kapoor & Vij, 2021; Tang & Lin, 2018).

2.4 Review ratings

Customer reviews function as powerful social proof, validating a product's quality and a customer's decision to buy it (Kapoor & Vij, 2021). E-cart abandonment is often triggered when review ratings are either absent, overwhelmingly negative, or appear inauthentic (e.g., overly generic or all posted on the same day). A lack of reviews makes a purchase feel like a gamble (Wang et al., 2023; Kapoor & Vij, 2021). Customers look to the experiences of others to reduce their uncertainty, and without this validation, the perceived risk is often too high to proceed.

2.5 Return policies

A clear, fair, and easily accessible return policy acts as a critical safety net for online shoppers. When a return policy is ambiguous, restrictive (e.g., short return windows, "final sale" items), or difficult to find, it significantly increases the perceived risk of the purchase (Kapoor & Vij, 2021). Customers worry about being stuck with a product that doesn't fit, is defective, or simply isn't what they expected. An unclear policy suggests the company may not stand behind its products, eroding trust and causing users to abandon their carts rather than risk a potentially difficult and costly return process (Rodrigues et al., 2023).

2.6. Length of refund process

This feature is closely tied to the return policy and addresses the financial risk perceived by the customer (Kapoor & Vij, 2021). A lengthy or uncertain refund process means the customer's money will be tied up for an extended period after they have returned an item (Rodrigues et al., 2023). This creates financial anxiety and a sense of powerlessness. Customers prefer platforms that offer a transparent and efficient refund process, as it signals reliability and respect for the customer. A long, opaque process does the opposite, damaging trust and leading to cart abandonment.

2.7. Shipping charges

This is one of the most cited reasons for cart abandonment globally. Customers often form a mental budget based on the product's list price. When high shipping charges, taxes, or other handling fees are revealed only at the final checkout stage, it creates a "price shock" (Wang et al., 2023). This violation of price transparency can make customers feel deceived or misled, leading to immediate frustration and a high likelihood of abandoning the purchase (Jain & Chopra, 2025).

2.8. Insufficient payment options

This is a direct, logistical barrier to purchase. The consumer has a wide array of preferred payment methods, from credit/debit cards to digital wallets (like Paytm or Google Pay), UPI, and, especially in India, Cash on Delivery (COD). If a website does not offer a customer's preferred or trusted payment method, they simply cannot complete the transaction (Chopra et al., 2024; Sharma & Shrivastava, 2025). It is a hard stop in the checkout flow that forces abandonment, regardless of how much the customer wants the product.

2.9. Request to link social media accounts

Requiring users to link personal social media accounts to create an account or complete a purchase introduces unnecessary friction and significant privacy concerns. Many users are wary of sharing their social media data with retailers and view this requirement as intrusive (Cho et al., 2006). It adds an extra, often unwelcome, step to the process and can be a strong enough deterrent to cause them to abandon their cart in favor of a competitor with a simpler, more private checkout process.

2.10. Filling lengthy desired information

Long and complicated checkout forms significantly increase the effort required to make a purchase. Each additional field a user has to fill out is another opportunity for them to lose patience and abandon the process (Wang et al., 2022; Xu & Huang, 2015). This is especially true for mobile users, where typing on a small screen is more cumbersome. A streamlined process that asks only for essential information (and offers features like guest checkout and auto-fill) respects the customer's time and is far more likely to result in a completed sale (Kapoor & Vij, 2021).

2.11. Excessive pop-ups

Pop-up windows—for newsletters, special offers, or exit-intent surveys—are often perceived as aggressive and disruptive. They interrupt the user's focus, can be difficult to close (especially on mobile devices), and clutter the interface. When a user is in the process of making a considered purchase, these interruptions can break their concentration and create enough annoyance to make them leave the site altogether (Khan, 2022).

2.12. Excessive advertisements

Similar to pop-ups, an overabundance of on-site advertisements creates a distracting and visually cluttered environment. It can make a website feel less like a professional retail store and more like a low-quality, ad-driven content farm (Khan, 2022). This not only distracts the user from their shopping goal but also erodes the site's credibility, which can trigger the same security and trust concerns associated with poor visual design.

3. Research Methodology

The present study focused on the millennial and generation Z online shoppers in the National Capital Region (NCR) of India. India is one of the fastest growing e-commerce markets globally, and it's projected to become the world's third-largest e-commerce market by 2030 (Kumar, 2024). With the second-largest online shopper base globally, the Indian market continues to attract significant international interest and investment (Sheth et al., 2025). Among Indian online shoppers, millennials (1981–1996) and generation Z (1996-2012) are the most digitally active cohorts, contributing significantly to online shopping behaviour. Generation Z alone contributes to 46% of India's customer spending and is expected to contribute to every second rupee spent in the coming decade (Jain et al., 2024). These two generation groups possess distinct digital behaviours and customer values, making them compelling and impactful subjects for investigation (Jain & Chopra, 2025; De Battista et al., 2020; Thangavel et al., 2019). The NCR offers a unique microcosm of Indian millennials and generation Z online shoppers, because of its cosmopolitan culture and high population density (Jain & Chopra, 2025; Mookherjee, 2020). Consequently, the NCR provides an ideal target population for this study. Therefore, we collected data from millennials and generation Z in the NCR of India who are considered as digital natives. The respondents were asked to evaluate these reasons across top six most preferred online shopping websites in India i.e., Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra, Snapdeal, Ajio, and Nykaa (Manzer, 2025). Respondents were asked to choose the website features that prompted them to abandon their e-carts on the platforms they use. Responses were measured on a six-point Likert type scale (0- "Never" to 5- "Most Likely"). The data were analysed using descriptive statistics by calculating percentage of responses for each abandonment reason across all platforms individually. Based on these frequencies, abandonment triggers were categorised into top, moderate, and least impactful levels. A total of 1074 responses were collected.

4. Findings

The summary of responses (in %) is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of responses for reasons of e-cart abandonment

Website	Reason for Abandonment	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Frequently	Most Likely	Total
Amazon	Inadequate information	32.6	20.9	18.7	9.5	8.0	10.1	870
	Browsing difficulties	19.7	30.3	19.4	12.6	10.9	7.1	862
	Poor visual designs	21.4	22.2	23.8	13.4	11.9	7.2	863
	Review ratings	11.7	21.5	22.1	15.4	16.3	13	861
	Return policy	12.3	21.6	21.9	14.8	13.1	16.3	867
	Length of refund process	14.7	20.8	22.1	16.2	14.7	11.6	857
	Shipping charges	13.8	20.9	21.7	17.4	13.5	12.7	857
	Insufficient payment options	19.2	20.6	20.7	15.9	12.4	11.2	855
	Request to link social media accounts	17	22.8	20.4	15.3	13.5	11	857
	Excessive pop-ups	16	22.7	19.6	14.9	13.1	13.7	846
	Excessive advertisements	14.7	23.2	19.2	15.3	13.4	14.2	852
	Filling lengthy desired information	14.7	21.5	22.2	14.1	15.1	12.5	857
Flipkart	Inadequate information	33.0	23.2	15.0	7.8	9.1	11.9	806
	Browsing difficulties	17.5	27.5	21.8	13	14.4	5.8	793
	Poor visual designs	19.5	22.1	24.9	14.5	10.4	8.6	800
	Review ratings	13.7	20	21.5	16.9	15.3	12.6	795
	Return policy	12.4	21.1	20.5	13.8	18.4	13.8	790
	Length of refund process	12.8	22.1	20.4	14.7	17.8	12.3	783
	Shipping charges	13.6	20.8	21.9	15.7	15.7	12.4	785
	Insufficient payment options	13.9	23.6	20.9	15.5	16.7	9.4	789
	Request to link social media accounts	17.3	19.6	20.9	16.1	14.2	11.9	796
	Excessive pop-ups	13.2	23.5	19.5	14.5	16.7	12.6	786
	Excessive advertisements	14	22.8	19.3	16.6	14.7	12.6	784
	Filling lengthy desired information	14.3	20.4	23.1	14.8	15	12.5	785
Myntra	Inadequate information	33.7	22.0	14.8	10.4	9.0	10.1	635
	Browsing difficulties	17.9	28.1	23	12.8	9.9	8.5	627
	Poor visual designs	19.2	22	25	14.3	12.1	7.5	637
	Review ratings	12.8	22.2	21.9	16	14.9	12.2	631
	Return policy	15.9	20.7	22.1	15.4	13.3	12.7	624
	Length of refund process	14.5	21.5	21.3	15.3	16.4	11	634
	Shipping charges	14.3	21.1	21.9	16.4	15.1	11.3	636
	Insufficient payment options	16.6	23.3	20.6	13.2	13.5	12.8	631
	Request to link social media accounts	15.9	19.2	25.3	15.9	13.5	10.2	629
	Excessive pop-ups	15.7	22.4	20.1	14.1	16.3	11.5	626
	Excessive advertisements	12.9	26	20.4	14.6	13.7	12.4	622
	Filling lengthy desired information	17	21	21.1	14.1	12.9	13.8	629
Snapdeal	Inadequate information	34.4	21.9	15.9	9.0	7.7	11.1	521
	Browsing difficulties	13.8	36.6	19.6	8.6	13	8.4	514
	Poor visual designs	15.5	22.7	26.9	12	13.1	9.8	510
	Review ratings	12.1	24.9	20.4	15.5	14.9	12.3	511

Website	Reason for Abandonment	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Frequently	Most Likely	Total
	Return policy	13.3	25	22.5	13.5	13.5	12.3	512
	Length of refund process	14.2	27	17.3	15.4	13.8	12.3	514
	Shipping charges	16.8	24.9	21.5	11	12.8	13	507
	Insufficient payment options	14.2	26.1	19.5	14	13.5	12.7	513
	Request to link social media accounts	14.8	22.2	24.7	15.2	11.1	12.1	514
	Excessive pop-ups	12.7	23.8	21.2	14.3	16.8	11.3	505
	Excessive advertisements	14.9	21.6	22.4	14.1	14.1	13.1	505
	Filling lengthy desired information	14.3	26.1	19	12.5	15.7	12.4	510
Nykaa	Inadequate information	35.1	20.5	15.2	9.9	10.3	9.0	533
	Browsing difficulties	19.8	26.4	20.5	12.4	12.4	8.5	531
	Poor visual designs	21.2	20.3	24.4	14.2	11.4	8.5	528
	Review ratings	13.6	23.9	18.4	14.5	16.6	13	523
	Return policy	15	20.3	22.1	15.4	14.8	12.4	526
	Length of refund process	12.7	25.4	21.2	14.8	16.5	9.4	520
	Shipping charges	15.6	19.7	24.4	16	12.2	12	524
	Insufficient payment options	17.4	23.7	19.9	14.3	13.5	11.2	518
	Request to link social media accounts	16	22.5	22.9	14.4	13.3	11	520
	Excessive pop-ups	14.6	24.8	21.2	13.8	14.4	11.2	520
	Excessive advertisements	15.8	21.9	21.3	12.9	14.6	13.5	520
	Filling lengthy desired information	16.5	23.5	17.9	16.5	11.7	13.8	520
Ajio	Inadequate information	31.7	23.0	17.6	9.8	8.0	9.9	574
	Browsing difficulties	15.7	28.3	25.7	7.7	15.6	7	572
	Poor visual designs	17	19.6	30.7	13.8	9.2	9.7	566
	Review ratings	13.5	21.9	21.5	15.6	16.5	11	571
	Return policy	12.9	21.9	21.8	16.1	14.5	12.7	565
	Length of refund process	13.1	25.4	20.8	14.4	15.4	10.9	571
	Shipping charges	12.4	20.8	24.5	16.2	14	12.1	563
	Insufficient payment options	15.2	23.7	21.9	12.2	15.5	11.5	566
	Request to link social media accounts	15.3	20.9	23	15.2	13.2	12.5	561
	Excessive pop-ups	12.3	21.8	22	15.3	15.8	12.8	563
	Excessive advertisements	13.9	22.2	20.6	14.2	17.6	11.5	563
	Filling lengthy desired information	12.1	22.7	20.4	15.7	15.3	13.7	568

Based on frequencies in Table 1, we categorized abandonment triggers into top, moderate, and least impactful levels. This will guide the website managers of online shopping platforms to focus on key areas to reduce e-cart abandonment.

4.1 Amazon

- a) **Top abandonment triggers:** Table 1 reveals that among the options marked as “Most Likely,” return policy emerged as the most significant reason of e-cart abandonment on Amazon, as cited by 16.3% of the respondents. Further, excessive advertisements (14.2%) and excessive pop-ups (13.7%) were cited as most likely reasons for e-cart abandonment.
- b) **Moderate abandonment triggers:** Among “Frequently” mentioned reason for e-cart abandonment, 16.3% of the respondents cited review ratings as the most frequent reason for abandonment followed by filling lengthy desired information (15.1%) and length of refund process (14.7%). Additionally, under the “Usually” category, shipping charges (17.4%) emerged as a prominent reason for e-cart abandonment.
- c) **Least abandonment triggers:** Inadequate information emerged as the least concerning feature, with 32.6% of respondents selecting it under the category “Never”. The other reasons marked as “Never” by the respondents are poor visual design (21.4%) and browsing difficulties (19.7%). This implies that Amazon is generally effective in providing adequate product details and is therefore, perceived as user-friendly and visually appealing online shopping platform.

Percentage of respondents represents the proportion of respondents calculated as:

$$\frac{\text{Respondents who indicated 'usually,' 'frequently,' or 'most likely' when citing a particular reason}}{\text{No. of respondents who marked a particular reason for e-cart abandonment}} \times 100$$

4.2 Flipkart

- a) **Top abandonment triggers:** Table 1 reveals that return policy emerged as the prominent website feature contributing to e-cart abandonment on Flipkart with 13.8% of respondents marking it as “Most Likely” reason to abandon their e-cart. Review ratings, excessive advertisements, and pop-ups were identified as key website aspects contributing to e-cart abandonment, with 12.6% of respondents citing each as the primary deterrent to finalising their e-purchase.
- b) **Moderate abandonment triggers:** Among the “Frequently” given reasons for e-cart abandonment, the return policy emerged as the predominant reason, chosen by 18.4% of respondents. Additionally, 18.4% of respondents mentioned the duration of the refund process, while 16.8% listed excessive pop-ups and inadequate payment alternatives as frequent causes for their e-cart abandonment. Furthermore, under the “Usually” mentioned causes of e-cart abandonment, 16.9% of respondents chose review rating as a common cause of their abandonment.
- c) **Least abandonment triggers:** The least concerning features on Flipkart for e-cart abandonment that emerged on the analysis of reasons chosen as “Never” by the respondents include inadequate information (33% of respondents), poor visual design (19.5% of respondents), and browsing difficulties (17.5% of respondents). This indicates that Flipkart website is providing ample information which is attractive and easily accessible.

4.3 Myntra

- a) **Top abandonment triggers:** Among responses for “Most likely” reason for e-cart abandonment, filling lengthy desired information emerged as the most prominent reason with 13.8% of respondents citing it as a most likely deterrent. This is followed by insufficient payment option (12.8%) and return policy (12.7%) as the most likely reasons for e-cart abandonment (Table 1).
- b) **Moderate abandonment triggers:** Among “Frequently” cited reasons of e-cart abandonment, length of refund process and excessive pop-ups emerged as frequent reasons as 16.4% and 16.3% of respondents indicated these as frequent reasons for their abandonment. Additionally, among the responses for “usually” marked reasons for e-cart abandonment, shipping charges (16.4%) and review ratings (16%) emerged as most usual reasons.
- c) **Least abandonment triggers:** Inadequate information, poor visual design, and browsing difficulties emerged as the least concerning feature on Myntra with 33.7%, 19.2%, and 17.9% of respondents marking these as not (“Never”) a reason for e-cart abandonment.

4.4 Snapdeal

- a) **Top abandonment triggers:** Among the given responses for “Most likely” reason for e-cart abandonment, excessive advertisements emerged as the most prominent trigger, as cited by 13.1% of respondents. This is closely followed by shipping charges (13%), and insufficient payment options (12.7%) as the most likely deterrents for e-cart abandonment.
- b) **Moderate abandonment triggers:** Among the “Frequently” given reasons for e-cart abandonment, 16.8% of respondents mentioned excessive popups as a frequent cause for their e-cart abandonment. This is followed by filling lengthy desired information (15.7%) as a frequent cause for e-cart abandonment. Further, under the "Usually" mentioned reasons, review ratings (15.5%) and request to link social media accounts (15.2%) emerged as the prominent deterrents for e-cart abandonment.
- c) **Least abandonment triggers:** Inadequate information emerged as the least concerning feature on Snapdeal for e-cart abandonment with 34.4% of respondents selecting it under the category "Never". This is followed by poor visual design, with 15.5% of respondents marking it as “Never” a reason for e-cart abandonment.

4.5 Nykaa

- a) **Top abandonment triggers:** Filling lengthy information during online purchase process emerged as the most significant reason of e-cart abandonment on Nykaa with 13.8% of respondents marking it as "Most Likely" reason to abandon their e-cart. This is closely followed by excessive advertisements (13.5%), and review ratings (13%) as the most likely deterrents for e-cart abandonment.
- b) **Moderate abandonment triggers:** Among “Frequently” given reasons for e-cart abandonment, review ratings emerged as the predominant reason, chosen by 16.6% of respondents. This is closely followed by length of refund process (16.5%) as a frequent cause for e-cart abandonment.

Additionally, under “usually” category filling lengthy information during online purchase (16.5%) emerged as a prominent reason for e-cart abandonment. It corroborates the perception of respondents who stated that filling lengthy information during online purchase process is the most likely reason of their e-cart abandonment.

- c) **Least abandonment triggers:** Inadequate information and poor visual design, emerged as the least concerning features that lead to e-cart abandonment on Nykaa, with 35.1%, and 21.2% of respondents respectively selecting them as a “Never” reason for e-cart abandonment.

4.6 Ajio

- a) **Top abandonment triggers:** Among the “Most likely” given responses for e-cart abandonment, filling lengthy information during online purchase process, excessive pop-ups, and return policy emerged as the top three most likely reasons for e-cart abandonment as cited by the 13.7%, 12.8% and 12.7% of respondents respectively.
- b) **Moderate abandonment triggers:** Among given responses for “Frequently” as a reason for e-cart abandonment, excessive advertisements was the most cited reason by 17.6% of respondents. Further, 16.5 % of respondents marked review ratings as a frequent cause of e-cart abandonment. Further, under the “usually” category, shipping charges (16.2%) emerged as the significant reason for e-cart abandonment.
- c) **Least abandonment triggers:** Among responses given for “Never” a reason for e-cart abandonment, inadequate information and browsing difficulties, emerged as the least concerning feature on Ajio with 31.7%, and 15.7% of respondents, respectively.

5. Discussion and implications

The findings reveal that e-cart abandonment among online shoppers is a multifaceted behavioural response shaped primarily by website-specific features rather than by general online shopping tendencies. Across platforms, factors such as return policy, excessive advertisements, pop-ups, and lengthy information requirements emerged as the most influential triggers of cart abandonment. These findings reaffirm that convenience, transparency, and perceived fairness are critical determinants of online purchase completion. For instance, Amazon and Flipkart two leading platforms recorded higher abandonment rates linked to restrictive return policies and intrusive visual elements such as excessive advertisements and pop-ups. Conversely, inadequate product information and poor visual design, traditionally seen as major deterrents, were found to be least impactful, indicating that leading e-commerce platforms have matured in information quality and visual appeal. This shift underscores the growing importance of post-purchase assurance and seamless interface experience over basic content quality in shaping online purchase decisions.

From a managerial perspective, these insights carry substantial implications for e-retailers. The results highlight that user-centric interface design, transparent transactional policies, and minimal friction during checkout are vital in reducing e-cart abandonment. E-retailers should simplify checkout processes by

minimizing data entry requirements and incorporating features such as auto-fill and guest checkout to prevent fatigue-driven abandonment. Similarly, optimizing refund timelines and clearly communicating return conditions can strengthen consumer trust and reduce perceived risk. Website managers should also exercise caution in using pop-ups and advertisements, balancing promotional visibility with customer experience. Overall, by prioritizing customer autonomy, data privacy, and usability, e-retailers can enhance purchase conversion rates and cultivate long-term consumer loyalty.

6. Limitations and future research directions

Although this study provides valuable insights, it is not without limitations. The analysis focused solely on millennial and Generation Z shoppers within India's National Capital Region, which may not fully capture behavioural variations across other demographic cohorts. Future research can extend this work by employing advanced quantitative models such as structural equation modelling to assess the causal influence of website attributes on e-cart abandonment. Experimental studies simulating real-time online shopping environments could further validate the behavioural responses to different website design features and transactional policies. Additionally, longitudinal studies examining changes in abandonment behaviour over time would offer deeper insights into evolving consumer expectations. Exploring the moderating role of technologies such as augmented reality, AI-driven personalization, or voice-enabled shopping interfaces in mitigating e-cart abandonment could also yield promising avenues for academic and managerial advancement.

7. Conclusion

This study contributes to the understanding of e-cart abandonment by identifying and categorizing the most, moderately, and least impactful website-related features influencing shoppers' purchase decisions. The findings reveal that contemporary online shoppers prioritize transactional ease, transparent policies, and minimal cognitive load over visual aesthetics or product information adequacy. By emphasizing the interplay of website usability, policy design, and psychological assurance, this study provides actionable insights for e-retailers seeking to enhance conversion rates. Ultimately, a customer-centric approach that integrates technological efficiency with empathetic design can transform browsing intentions into actual purchases, ensuring sustainable competitiveness in the evolving e-commerce landscape.

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