# FACTORS INFLUENCING THE DECISION-MAKING OF USERS OF LITHUANIAN E-COMMERCE PLATFORMS

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**Abstract**
The introduction of new technologies, digitalisation and restrictions on physical activity during the COVID-19 pandemic have encouraged the development of e-commerce. Due to constantly changing consumer needs and growing competition, organisations working in the field of e-commerce face enormous challenges. The aim of the article, analysing factors that influence the users of e-commerce platforms, is to determine what factors influence the decisions made by the users of Lithuanian e-commerce platforms. The analysis of the scientific literature helped to identify the main factors influencing the decisions made by the users of e-commerce platforms, and the results of the quantitative survey allowed to determine that the decisions made by the users of Lithuanian e-commerce platforms depend on demographic factors, i.e. age, gender, place of residence, and monthly income.

## Introduction

The dynamic development of digitisation and new technologies have created many opportunities for organisations to expand internationally. World-famous companies such as Amazon, eBay, Alibaba, Gearbest, etc., have successfully taken advantage of this opportunity. In the 21st century, due to the development of these companies, buying and selling goods online has become commonplace. The development of technology and the importance of digitisation have particularly increased during the COVID-19 pandemic when many countries applied various restrictions on activities. According to Cheba et al. (2021), new technologies and Internet access helped people to continue to perform social and professional functions,

influenced consumer behaviour and the way of shopping. On the basis of Eurostat data (2021), in the last 12 months, 73% of the European Union population using the Internet have purchased goods or services online. Meanwhile in Lithuania, the share of such persons has amounted to 64% of the entire population that uses the Internet.

During this period, the number of e-commerce platforms has also increased because of the benefits of developing such projects: round-the-clock availability, no geographical restrictions, and easier contact with the end user, especially when using indirect distribution channels (Belvedere et al., 2021). Moreover, e-commerce also brings many benefits to

consumers. According to Hasiloglu and Kaya (2021), consumers can have more and better information about goods online, it is easier to compare the prices of goods, to express opinions about goods, to choose goods and services that are more suitable for their needs.

Due to constantly changing consumer needs and growing competition, organisations working in the field of e-commerce face enormous challenges. Eid (2011) has examined the determinants of e-commerce customer satisfaction and loyalty, while Hossain and Rahman (2019) have conducted a study of Chinese online group buying platforms and found out that such aspects as quality, security, and ease of use of a system, clarity of information presentation are very important to the users of these platforms. The accomplished studies (Tandon et al., 2020; Zhou et al., 2021; Friedrich et al., 2021) have enabled to identify different elements that are important to the users of e-commerce platforms: from platform design and reliability to time of effort made and interactivity. Lin et al. (2019) have found that the developers of e-commerce platforms need to present information and product offerings on the website differently depending on the gender of the user. The authors emphasise that understanding gender differences in the e-commerce environment can help in developing an appropriate marketing strategy. In addition, a cross-cultural analysis of consumer purchase behaviour by Pratesi et al. (2021) has showed that European consumers, unlike other cultures, are highly affected by the design of an e-commerce website, including its attractiveness, the ease of finding information, and the graphic aspect. The colours, the product images and the type of font used are important. It must be noted that no research on consumer behaviour on e-commerce platforms has been conducted in Lithuania recently. Therefore, *the scientific problem* can be formulated as follows: what factors are important to the users of e-commerce platforms in making decisions in Lithuania?

The *purpose* of the article is, after conducting a survey of e-commerce platform users, to determine the factors influencing the decisions made by Lithuanian e-commerce platform users.

The *object* of the research is the decision-making of the users of e-commerce platforms. The subject of the research is factors influencing the decision-making of the users of e-commerce platforms.

Research *methods*: a quantitative survey was conducted on 16-26 February 2021. The questionnaire, consisting of 19 questions, was posted on the website www.apklausa.lt; it was public. The participants of the quantitative survey were persons over 16 years of age who use the Internet and purchase goods / services on e-commerce platforms. Respondents were asked questions in order to determine what factors are important to them in making a purchasing decision on e-commerce platforms. The first question of the questionnaire (asking whether a respondent has purchased goods / services on e-commerce platforms) was designed to refine the survey respondents to those who are actually using the opportunities of e-commerce. The research sample was calculated on the basis of the Paniotto formula and it was found that in order to maintain 5 percent error, 394 respondents need to be interviewed. 454 respondents participated in the survey. Data were analysed by using SPSS (*Statistical Package for Social Sciences*) software and MS Excel programme. The obtained results are presented in the form of a summary. Means and standard deviations have been calculated for interval scale data, while frequencies (expressed as percentages) have been calculated for ranked data and nominal scale data. To determine the differences in responses according to socio-demographic characteristics, $\chi2$ tests (*chi-square*) have been calculated together with their number of degrees of freedom (df) and p-values of statistical significance; the proportions have been additionally compared with the help of a z-

test. To determine the relationship between the questions, Spearman's correlation coefficients have been calculated. The chosen significance level is 95%, i.e. a difference is considered statistically significant if $p<0.05$.

Research *results*: the results of a quantitative survey have revealed that the decisions made by Lithuanian e-commerce platform users depend on demographic factors, i.e. age, gender, place of residence and monthly income. Younger people (under 35 years of age) tend to follow the reviews of other buyers more often, their decisions are influenced by the design of e-commerce platforms, rewards and discounts. Women have started to shop more frequently through such type of platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic and their decisions are influenced by the clarity of information provided, the assurance of quality of goods and services, the ease of acquisition of goods, the size of the range of products or services, the security of payment and delivery, and other factors. The results of the research have also revealed that after a bad experience on e-commerce platforms men are more likely to write negative reviews than women.

The results of the research reflecting what factors influence the decision-making of users of Lithuanian e-commerce platforms have both theoretical and practical significance. The results of the research can be used in making strategic decisions on which elements to integrate into e-commerce platforms in order to attract more user flow, to increase repeat purchase volumes, and to better meet the needs of users of these platforms.

## Theoretical Considerations of Factors Influencing E-Commerce Users

In e-commerce, it is crucial to create a positive customer attitude towards the organisation which in turn leads to increased consumer trust and loyalty (Leonard, 2012; Hsu et al., 2015). The higher level of satisfaction increases the possibilities of repurchase (Tandon et al., 2020). Kumar and Ogunmola (2021) note the importance for companies to find the shortest path to achieving consumer loyalty. Companies are putting a lot of effort into improving website design, investing in improving customer visit and shopping experience, and striving to ensure the best possible quality of services (Al-Qeisi et al., 2014; Barrera et al., 2014). Tandon et al. (2020) point out that e-commerce developers should pay particular attention to creating a good quality website (accessible, stable, user-friendly, reliable, functional, and flexible) as it leaves the first impression on potential customers. Customers also consider such elements as: the reliability of payment methods, the convenience of obtaining information, the guarantee of return of money and goods (Carnero, 2005; Lee and Kozar, 2006); trust and net benefit (Kumar, Ogunmola, 2021); the diversity of payment methods (Zhang et al., 2020); short time of effort (Zhou et al., 2021); the use of social commerce functions (Friedrich et al., 2021). Zhang et al. (2020) emphasise that a consumer, when buying on e-commerce platforms, prefers simplicity, convenience, and security of payments, and appropriate price. Lin et al. (2019) have found that gender influences consumer perceptions of interactivity, vividness, and risk, and the impact these factors will have on purchase intention. Interactivity and perceived risk have a greater influences on attitude for men than women. Men-oriented websites should provide more interactive, engaging content. Meanwhile, female-oriented e-commerce platforms should present information in a more vivid and visual way. A cross-cultural analysis of consumer purchase behaviour by Pratesi et al. (2021) has revealed that European consumers are highly affected by the design of an e-commerce website, including its attractiveness, the ease of finding information, and the graphic element. The colours, the product images and the type of font used are important.

Lin et al. (2011) pay attention to the fact that in e-commerce, consumer satisfaction with

services is determined by reliable delivery of orders. Tandon et al. (2020) note that the availability of various delivery options (e.g., free delivery, same-day delivery, 2-day delivery, free in-store pickup) has a positive impact on users of e-commerce platforms. Organisations seeking to increase customer satisfaction must pay more attention to the efficiency of the delivery system. E-commerce organisations must choose the right logistics partners to ensure high-quality delivery of goods to consumers and thus improve trust and satisfaction with the services of the organisation (Thorleucher, Poel, 2012; Lin et al., 2011). Pratesi et al. (2021) agree that delivery time is a decisive factor, as possible delivery delays or loss of the ordered product can lead to user distrust of the platform. It must be noted that insecurity and the likelihood of economic losses are more important than the intention to buy on a particular e-commerce platform. Traceability of all orders, regardless of price and delivery method, can increase consumer confidence in an e-commerce platform. Agag (2019) indicates that e-commerce businesses must deliver the right goods and services to customers within the promised timeframe. Businesses engaged in e-commerce must publish a clear refund policy and information on compensation if goods or services are not delivered on time and related complaints

or inquiries need to be dealt with promptly. When regular customers are satisfied with the recovery conditions offered by the e-commerce developers, their trust and loyalty to the company can increase.

Due to the lack of human contact between the e-commerce seller and buyer, it is necessary to personalise communication as much as possible by emails and live-chat support. Ingaldi and Ulewicz (2019) emphasise that e-commerce businesses need to be aware of such things as: personalisation, customer experience, artificial intelligence, fully-fledged advertising channels. Organisations that are able to use these things in business effectively can more easily attract and retain consumers. To sum up, it can be stated that consumers need faster and higher quality services, which is why they require more attention from organisations and this attention should be directed towards managing relationship with customers. It is necessary to note that investing in customer interfaces on the website and improving the quality of services, taking into account the needs of users, increases customer satisfaction which contributes to the growth of loyalty. Table 1 identifies the factors that increase consumer satisfaction in e-commerce.

**Table 1. Factors determining consumer satisfaction in e-commerce**

| Factors | Authors |
|---|---|
| Navigation design (menu); visual design; information design. | Cyr (2008) |
| Commitment; engagement; assortment; interactivity; transaction ease. | Anderson, Swaminathan (2011) |
| Convenience; information seeking; variety seeking; social interaction. | Christodoulides, Michaelidou (2010) |
| User interface quality; information quality; perceived security; perceived privacy. | Eid (2011) |
| Navigation functionality; perceived security; transaction cost. | Kim et al. (2011) |
| Information quality; system quality; service quality; product quality; delivery quality; perceived price. | Lin et al. (2011) |
| Site quality; perceived usefulness; perceived ease of use; customer segmentation; fast response to customer inquiries; variety of goods and services; rewards and discounts; system quality; language options; search and comparing facilities; product and service information; fast and easy payment. | Safa, Ismail (2013) |
| The quality of electronic services is one of the key factors that determines the effectively fulfilled and satisfied customer needs. | Fassnacht, Koese (2006) |

*Source: compiled by the authors.*

As can be seen from Table 1, the most important factors determining consumer satisfaction in e-commerce are the following: design, ease and convenience of the e-commerce system, reliability of information, variety of goods and services, secure and fast payment, quality of delivery.

It should be noted that the use of new technologies, such as direct sales and virtual reality, also has an impact on consumer satisfaction. A study by Zhou et al. (2021) has revealed that in previous models of shopping via e-commerce platforms, products were displayed statically, the relationship between buyers and sellers was indirect, and there was a lack of interactivity. Meanwhile, selling through live broadcast enables companies to demonstrate products in real time and to build relationship between buyers and sellers directly. Zhou et al. (2021) consider that these measures have addressed the shortcomings of sales on traditional e-commerce platforms and improved the quality of consumer experience and facilitated building relationship with consumers. Meanwhile, Elboudali et al. (2020) have explored the potential of application of virtual reality on e-commerce platforms. According to the authors, virtual reality is a powerful and engaging tool enabling to personalise and effectively improve user experience, reducing the shopping cart abandonment rate. In addition, the installation of virtual reality technologies on e-commerce platforms can bridge the gap between virtual and the real world.

Purchasing decisions of e-commerce platform users are also influenced by consumer satisfaction, which is determined by both direct and indirect factors (Satar et al., 2019). Value for customers is created by: a wide range of goods and services, fast delivery, the ability to pay during delivery, blogger reviews, gifts and extras when ordering goods or services, free delivery over a certain amount, discount coupons and loyalty programs, customer feedback, possibility

of real-time communication with a consultant, product video reviews, partnerships with other projects, add-ons or discounts. Gutt et al. (2019) argue that feedbacks on goods and services play a crucial role in consumers' decision-making on e-commerce platforms. For this reason, most e-commerce sites encourage users to leave reviews in order to obtain a competitive advantage. Meanwhile, Zhang and Zhong (2019) note that consumers' reviews are one of the key factors in helping a consumer decide to purchase a product or service. This is due to the customer's habit of trusting another person's review.

To sum up, it is important for the users of e-commerce platforms to provide secure, fast and high-quality goods / services. Key factors include the design of the e-commerce platform, the simplicity and convenience of the e-commerce system, the reliability of information, the variety of goods and services, secure and fast payment, the speed and quality of delivery, properly chosen means of advertising, customer care, maintaining relationship with customers, and value creation. Organisations developing projects on e-commerce platforms need to focus on providing added value to the consumer and building trust.

**The analysis of quantitative survey results**

In order to determine what factors influence the users of Lithuanian e-commerce platforms in making a purchasing decision, a quantitative survey was conducted on 16–26 February 2021. The participants of quantitative survey were persons over 16 years of age who use the Internet and purchase goods / services on e-commerce platforms. Random sampling technique has been used for the quantitative study. This method has been chosen because all units in the general population have equal chances to belong to a sample of a particular survey. The sample has been calculated on the

basis of the Paniotto formula. It has been found out that in order to extend the results to the general population and to maintain 5 percent sample error, 384 respondents need to be interviewed. The collected data have been analysed by using MS Excel programme and SPSS (*Statistical Package for Social Sciences*) software which is convenient for processing the collected information, adapted to work with the data and their analysis, and helps to establish connections. Means and standard deviations have been calculated for interval scale data, while frequencies (expressed as percentages) have been calculated for ranked data and nominal scale data. To determine the differences in responses according to socio-demographic characteristics, $\chi2$ tests (*chi-square*) have been calculated together with their number of degrees of freedom (df) and p-values of statistical significance; the proportions have been additionally compared with the help of a z-test. To determine the relationship between the questions, Spearman's correlation coefficients have been calculated. The chosen significance level is 95%, i.e. a difference is considered statistically significant if $p<0.05$.

The questionnaire consisted of 19 questions and the survey was published on the website www.apklausa.lt. Respondents were asked questions to identify the factors that influence their purchasing decisions on e-commerce platforms. The research involved 454 respondents, most of whom were aged 26-35 (26%), 36-45 (24.4%), 46-55 (20.5%), and the smallest share being respondents 56 years old and older (13.2%). By gender, more than half (76%) of the research participants were women; men accounted for 22.9% of the respondents. By income, the largest number of survey participants

(28%) receive monthly income of 601-900 EUR, those who receive income of more than 1501 EUR comprised 9.5% of respondents, and 17.6% of respondents did not want to disclose their income. In terms of place of residence, most survey participants were from cities (50.4%) and the least from single farms (1.5%). In the course of the research, it has been found out that one of three respondents shops once a month (34.3%), while one of four (23.7%) shops every two weeks, and almost one of six respondents shops once a week (15.5%). A much smaller share of respondents shops every three months (14.3%) and less than every three months (11.7%). No significant differences have been found between the frequency of purchases and socio-demographic characteristics.

Respondents were asked to indicate what factors influence their decisions to shop on e-commerce stores. almost all of the named factors have been rated by respondents as having a strong influence on shopping. The main factors having the strongest influence are the following: the quality of goods and services, high-quality service and customer care, guarantee of return of goods and money, reliability of payment methods, clarity of information provided. The average but also important influence is by: the reliability of the company and its transparency, easy-to-understand structure of the e-commerce platform, the variety of goods and services, the reliability of delivery methods and fast and secure operation of the system. Factors such as free delivery and customised content have less impact on customers. Relationships between factors that influence consumers decisions' to shop on e-commerce stores and socio-demographic characteristics are showed in Table 2.

**Table 2. Spearman's correlation coefficients between factors that influence buying decisions on e-shop and socio-demographic characteristics**

| | | Age | Gender | Income, per month | Residence |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fast and secure operation of the system | r | **-0,117** | 0,091 | **0,134** | 0,025 |
| | p | **0,016** | 0,061 | **0,011** | 0,608 |
| Personalised content | r | **-0,144** | 0,075 | 0,102 | 0,022 |
| | p | **0,003** | 0,122 | 0,056 | 0,653 |
| Free delivery | r | -0,091 | **0,115** | 0,034 | -0,030 |
| | p | 0,061 | **0,018** | 0,521 | 0,540 |
| Reliability of delivery methods | r | 0,048 | 0,058 | 0,073 | -0,051 |
| | p | 0,321 | 0,233 | 0,172 | 0,306 |
| Reliability of payment methods | r | 0,023 | 0,068 | **0,110** | 0,035 |
| | p | 0,640 | 0,162 | **0,039** | 0,484 |
| Easy to understand structure of the e-commerce platforms | r | **-0,099** | 0,059 | 0,050 | 0,042 |
| | p | **0,040** | 0,229 | 0,343 | 0,400 |
| Variety of goods and services | r | -0,058 | 0,087 | 0,040 | 0,026 |
| | p | 0,236 | 0,073 | 0,449 | 0,605 |
| Reliability and transparency of the company | r | -0,041 | 0,012 | **0,106** | -0,041 |
| | p | 0,401 | 0,811 | **0,046** | 0,412 |
| The company's approach to ecology and sustainability | r | 0,082 | 0,081 | 0,069 | **-0,101** |
| | p | 0,092 | 0,097 | 0,197 | **0,041** |
| Clarity of information provided | r | 0,006 | 0,047 | 0,037 | -0,037 |
| | p | 0,903 | 0,332 | 0,488 | 0,456 |
| Quality of goods or provided services | r | -0,023 | 0,067 | 0,062 | 0,041 |
| | p | 0,630 | 0,170 | 0,247 | 0,401 |
| High-quality service and customer care | r | 0,005 | 0,070 | 0,056 | -0,040 |
| | p | 0,926 | 0,152 | 0,291 | 0,418 |
| Guarantee of return of goods and money | r | 0,017 | 0,056 | **0,176** | 0,048 |
| | p | 0,722 | 0,252 | **0,001** | 0,332 |

In Table 2, statistically significant relationships (when p <0.05) between factors that influence buying decisions on e-shop and socio-demographic characteristics were highlighted. In the course of the analysis, it was found out, that fast and secure operation of the system, customised content and the easy-to-understand structure of the e-commerce platform have a more statistically significant impact on the purchasing decision of younger people; women's purchases are significantly more encouraged by free delivery; the purchases of higher income representatives are significantly more encouraged by fast and secure operation of the system, the reliability of payment methods, the reliability and transparency of the company, and the guarantee of return of goods and money.

Respondents were asked to rate on a Likert scale from 1 to 5 what factors motivate them to visit e-commerce platforms. It has been found that the following factors have the greatest impact: friends' recommendations (mean value 3.91), information seen on social networks (3.49), browsing on Google (3.49), online directories (2.87), banners seen on the Internet (2.80), newsletters (2.74) and outdoor advertising (2.42). When analysing the data, it has been observed that young people are

statistically significantly more often encouraged to visit e-commerce platforms through advertising on social networks, but less often through information provided in newsletters and online directories. Women's visit are significantly more encouraged by social networks, but less by newsletters, online directories, and browsing on Google. Meanwhile, the visits of higher income representatives are significantly less encouraged by social networks. Visits of the population from smaller settlements are significantly more encouraged by banners, newsletters, online directories, browsing on Google, and outdoor advertising.

To almost half (45.8%) of survey participants provision of personal offers influences the purchasing decision on e-commerce platforms, only 23.7% of respondents are encouraged to purchase the advertised goods by the provision of personal offers. The results of the survey have revealed that almost one of three respondents (34.3%) has shopped impulsively, and almost one of four (24.4%) is encouraged to buy on e-commerce platforms by advertisements. When analysing the data, there has been found a statistically significant relationship (r=0.192, p=0.000<0.01) indicating that respondents who were exposed to the aforementioned e-shop advertisements have significantly more often shopped impulsively. However, it should be noted that this relationship is not strong (because r <0.2). The results of impulsive shopping on the e-shop have been also compared according to socio-demographic characteristics, and it has been determined that impulsive shopping is statistically significantly more frequent to persons aged 16-25, while respondents aged 46-55 are significantly less often shopping impulsively.

In order to find out what factors would motivate respondents to shop on an e-commerce platform, survey participants were asked to rate the factors by using a five-point Likert scale. five most encouraging factors for purchase are security of payment and delivery, quality

assurance, quality and speed of delivery, trust, and a guarantee of return of goods and money. The mean values of the evaluations of the aforementioned factors exceed 4.2 points. Other very important factors are: fast operation of the system, quality of service before and after the sale, clarity of the information provided, good reputation of the seller, and free delivery. Meanwhile, less important but also effective factors are: free delivery, customer review, low price, bonuses and discounts, a positive attitude towards the brand of an e-commerce platform, the size of the range of goods and services, and the social responsibility demonstrated by the organisation. Relationships between the factors that could motivate respondents to shop on e-commerce platform in a future and socio-demographic characteristics were calculated (see Table 3).

In Table 3, statistically significant relationships (when p <0.05) between the factors t that could motivate respondents to shop on e-commerce platform in a future and socio-demographic characteristics were highlighted. the In the course of the analysis, it has been found that 16-25 year olds are significantly more motivated to purchase goods or services on e-commerce platforms by factors such as customer review, bonuses and discounts, and the design of the e-commerce platform. Meanwhile, women are significantly more motivated to purchase goods or services on e-commerce platforms by clarity of information provided, assurance of quality of goods and services, trust in an e-commerce platform, ease of purchase of a product, the size of the range of goods or services, security of payment and delivery, free delivery, delivery quality and speed, gifts and accessories to order, guarantee of return of goods and money, design of the e-commerce platform and fast operation of the system. Residents of smaller areas are significantly more encouraged to buy goods or services on e-commerceplatforms by bloggers' reviews and social responsibility demonstrated by the organisation.

**Table 3. Spearman's correlation coefficients between the factors that could motivate respondents to shop on e-commerce platform in a future and socio-demographic characteristics**

| | | Age | Gender | Income, per month | Residence |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Clarity of information provided | r | -0,057 | **0,108** | 0,030 | -0,093 |
| | p | 0,239 | **0,027** | 0,570 | 0,060 |
| Demonstrated social responsibility | r | -0,029 | 0,062 | 0,095 | **-0,154** |
| | p | 0,544 | 0,203 | 0,075 | **0,002** |
| Assurance of quality of goods and services | r | -0,042 | **0,115** | 0,018 | -0,035 |
| | p | 0,391 | **0,018** | 0,730 | 0,474 |
| Positive attitude towards the brand of the platform | r | -0,076 | 0,083 | 0,046 | -0,020 |
| | p | 0,118 | 0,088 | 0,391 | 0,688 |
| Trust in e-commerce platform | r | -0,020 | **0,099** | 0,054 | 0,031 |
| | p | 0,676 | **0,042** | 0,307 | 0,525 |
| Ease of acquisition of goods | r | -0,005 | **0,104** | 0,002 | 0,021 |
| | p | 0,915 | **0,032** | 0,968 | 0,668 |
| Customer reviews | r | **-0,115** | 0,044 | -0,077 | 0,039 |
| | p | **0,018** | 0,368 | 0,150 | 0,432 |
| Size of the range of goods and services | r | -0,070 | **0,112** | -0,033 | -0,050 |
| | p | 0,149 | **0,021** | 0,538 | 0,313 |
| Security of payment and delivery | r | -0,014 | **0,128** | 0,075 | 0,035 |
| | p | 0,778 | **0,008** | 0,161 | 0,484 |
| Free delivery | r | -0,027 | **0,096** | 0,090 | -0,012 |
| | p | 0,584 | **0,049** | 0,090 | 0,807 |
| Delivery quality and speed | r | -0,046 | **0,103** | 0,014 | -0,017 |
| | p | 0,348 | **0,035** | 0,797 | 0,737 |
| Quality of service before and after the sale | r | 0,006 | 0,089 | 0,027 | -0,053 |
| | p | 0,908 | 0,067 | 0,609 | 0,286 |
| Personal offer | r | -0,040 | 0,063 | 0,046 | -0,034 |
| | p | 0,406 | 0,197 | 0,386 | 0,492 |
| Bonuses and discounts | r | **-0,108** | 0,092 | 0,010 | -0,008 |
| | p | **0,025** | 0,059 | 0,845 | 0,864 |
| Possibility to pay during delivery | r | -0,012 | -0,047 | 0,045 | -0,023 |
| | p | 0,806 | 0,338 | 0,402 | 0,642 |
| Bloggers' reviews | r | -0,056 | 0,027 | 0,009 | **-0,136** |
| | p | 0,245 | 0,583 | 0,868 | **0,006** |
| Gifts and accessories to order | r | -0,093 | **0,098** | 0,049 | -0,022 |
| | p | 0,055 | **0,044** | 0,360 | 0,658 |
| Low price | r | -0,090 | -0,004 | -0,095 | -0,007 |
| | p | 0,065 | 0,928 | 0,073 | 0,886 |
| Good reputation of the seller | r | 0,021 | 0,026 | 0,101 | -0,070 |
| | p | 0,668 | 0,601 | 0,059 | 0,155 |
| Guarantee of return of goods and money | r | -0,060 | **0,158** | 0,077 | 0,002 |
| | p | 0,219 | **0,001** | 0,146 | 0,962 |
| Design of the e-commerce platform | r | **-0,134** | **0,097** | 0,056 | 0,025 |
| | p | **0,006** | **0,047** | 0,296 | 0,616 |
| Fast operation of the system of e-commerce platform | r | -0,055 | **0,129** | 0,045 | 0,028 |
| | p | 0,257 | **0,008** | 0,400 | 0,576 |

Almost half (45.5%) of respondents have not had a bad experience, while 44.6% are not sure or do not know if they have had a negative experience. When faced with a bad experience on e-commerce platforms, 40.1% of respondents stop buying on a particular e-commerce platform, and a fifth write a bad review. 5.4% of respondents, in the event of a bad experience, take more serious action and contact the consumer rights protection authority, return the product and get their money back, and are more careful next time they shop online. It has been determined that people with higher incomes statistically significantly more often stop shopping on a particular e-commerce platform, and bad reviews are significantly more often written by men.

The COVID-19 pandemic has encouraged 67.4% of respondents to shop on e-commerce platforms more often, while 27.7% of respondents disagreed with this statement, stating that their shopping was not affected by the pandemic. The remaining 4.9% of respondents are unsure or did not know of whether the pandemic has affected their shopping on the Internet. Moreover, it has been identified that the pandemic had a statistically greater impact on the frequency of shopping for women. Due to the pandemic, 39.9% of respondents were shopping on e-commerce platforms up to 2 times more often, and 17.4% of respondents were shopping up to 3 times more often. When analysing the data, it has been found that the number of shopping did not change significantly more often for men, while women started shopping twice as often as men.

To sum up, it can be stated that the following factors have the greatest influence on the decision-making of Lithuanian e-commerce customers: the quality of goods and services, high-quality service and customer care, the guarantee of return of goods and money, the reliability of payment methods and the clarity of the information provided have. Slightly less but also important factors for the respondents are the reliability and transparency of the company, the easy-to-understand structure of the store and the variety of goods and services.

## Conclusions

E-commerce is a powerful and effective tool to sell round-the-clock, not be limited by geographic location and to reach a larger circle of consumers, to carry out effective marketing, and to increase the sales volumes. The analysis of the scientific literature has revealed that the following factors are important for consumers: reliability of payment and delivery methods, assurance of quality of goods and services, guarantees of return of goods and services, ease of acquisition of goods and services, effective operation of the system of e-commerce platform, convenient user interface helping to create a great user experience, personalised offers, easy and clear presentation of information, possibility to purchase a product or service in as few steps as possible, product photos and visualizations, video reviews.

The results of the quantitative survey have displayed that the decisions made by younger Lithuanians (under 35) on e-commerce platforms are more strongly influenced by such factors as: customer review, bonuses and discounts, and the design of the e-commerce platform. Meanwhile, women's shopping on e-commerce platforms is significantly more encouraged by the clarity of information provided, assurance of quality of goods and services, trust in e-commerce platform, ease of acquisition of good, size of range of goods or services, security of payment and delivery, free delivery, quality and speed of delivery, gifts and accessories to order, guarantee of return of goods and money, design of the e-commerce platform and fast operation of the system. Residents of smaller areas are significantly more encouraged to shop by bloggers' reviews and social responsibility demonstrated by the organisation. The results of the study have also revealed that after a bad experience on e-commerce platforms, men are more likely to write negative reviews than

women. People with higher incomes are more likely to stop buying on a particular e-commerce platform after a negative experience. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to increased shopping on e-commerce platforms, especially among women.

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