

**THE INFLUENCE OF B2C E-COMMERCE WEBSITE QUALITY ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION WITH MEDIATING EFFECT ON PERCEIVED PLAYFULNESS
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE MILLENNIALS GENERATION IN COLOMBO DISTRICT, SRI LANKA.**

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ABSTRACT

Understanding the factors driving customer satisfaction in the rapidly evolving e-commerce field is crucial for the success and competitiveness of online platforms. This study investigates the influence of key website quality elements—design, information quality, security and privacy, transaction and payment capabilities, and service quality—on customer satisfaction, focusing on the mediating role of perceived playfulness, which enhances user experience and satisfaction. It identifies the website elements that most significantly impact customer satisfaction and explores how perceived playfulness mediates this relationship. The relevance of this study lies in its potential contributions to the academic literature and practical applications in e-commerce, providing insights to help businesses optimize platforms for enhanced user engagement. Using quantitative methodology, data were collected from 100 active online shoppers via a structured survey. Measurement reliability and validity were confirmed by the high Cronbach's alpha values. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analyses were used to examine the relationships between variables; however, certain limitations exist. A sample size of 100 may affect generalizability, and self-reported data may introduce a response bias. Despite these limitations, the results indicate that all examined factors—website design, information quality, security and privacy, transaction/payment capability, and service quality—positively impact customer satisfaction, with perceived playfulness enhancing overall satisfaction, suggesting that e-commerce platforms should focus on design improvements, quality information, robust security, and optimized transaction processes. Integrating playful and interactive features can further increase satisfaction and make shopping more enjoyable. These findings can guide businesses in refining their online offerings to better meet customer expectations. Future research could explore personalized marketing, gamification in user engagement, diverse payment methods, and cultural factors in customer preference. This study contributes significantly to the e-commerce literature by providing practical recommendations for enhancing online customer satisfaction and advancing the understanding of e-commerce dynamics. The findings reveal that all the examined factors—website design, information quality, security and privacy, transaction and payment capability, and service quality—significantly and positively impact customer satisfaction. Notably, perceived playfulness was identified as a mediating variable, suggesting that engaging in and enjoyable online experiences enhance overall satisfaction. This highlights the importance of not only the functional aspects of e-commerce platforms but also experiential elements that contribute to a pleasurable shopping journey.

Keywords: B2C e-commerce, customer satisfaction, information quality, perceived playfulness, website quality