

**Rash-Remorse-Revert: Antecedents and Outcomes of Buyer's Remorse Among Generation Z Apparel Customers in the E-Commerce Setting**

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**Abstract**

For every retail store to survive and succeed, customers are crucial. After buying a product customer's experience can be positive or negative (buyer's remorse). Buyer remorse can be a hurdle to the success of retailers. It is imperative to understand buyer's remorse by identifying its antecedents and outcomes. The purpose of this study is to provide a critical examination of buyer's remorse and its impact on Generation Z apparel shoppers in the e-commerce setting. Semi-structured individual interviews were conducted in an exploratory qualitative study to collect data from 40 participants. According to the results, shoppers from Generation Z identify product-related factors that increase their remorse moreover, they also suggest some strategies for how retailers can manage it. Fashion retailers, salespeople, and marketers were advised to work on minimizing buyer's remorse so that retailers can retain Generation Z customers. The paper concludes with limitations, future directions, and tips for managing online retail businesses.

**Keywords:** Buyer's remorse, Generation Z, Apparel sector, E-commerce

**Introduction**

Customers are continuously changing their preferences and interests in today's customer-oriented world in addition, the retail industry is growing and becoming extremely competitive over time (Maziriri & Madinga, 2015). As well as, the markets are also distinct and distinguished by intensified rivalry, continuous innovation in the range of products and services offered, and a higher number of firms operating within the same industry (Agrawal & Singh, 2024). Similarly, Musasa (2014) identified that customers' needs and expectations have increased, they have grown more sophisticated, and their expectations and demands are also

escalating. As a result, to get a competitive edge and to keep consumers, retailers should strive to deliver exceptional customer service (Levy & Weitz, 2012).

In addition, fashion consumers play a crucial role in the apparel purchasing process. However, retailers and marketers face challenges in understanding and meeting consumer needs effectively (North et al., 2003). So, to overcome these problems, it will be beneficial for retailers to identify customer's online buying experiences, particularly those related to buyer's remorse. Moreover, by managing their remorse, retailers can increase their repeat purchase intention. According to Ravishankar and Christopher (2024), customer repurchase intention is crucial for defensive marketing strategies and overall corporate performance, preventing customers from switching to competitors. Therefore, retaining customers is essential, as repeat buyers are more profitable than one-time buyers (Suyoto & Tannady, 2022).

Previous studies show that a 5% development in customer retention can raise profitability by 25% to 85% (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990). However, engaging new customers costs around five times more than maintaining an existing one (Gupta & Kim, 2007). Customer satisfaction and retention are influenced by buyers' emotions (either positive or negative) developed after the purchase of products. To retain customers, retailers must understand shoppers' emotions towards products through thorough research. According to Huff (2008), customers often conduct extensive studies before going shopping for deals; if buyer's remorse (a negative emotion or feeling of regret) exists, the worth of the bargain drops substantially, and in certain situations, it is no longer a bargain. Thus, buyer's remorse can decrease a customer's repurchase intention, which can be harmful to any retailer.

According to earlier research, regret or remorse is one of the strongest human emotions and reality of life (Gelberg, 2002; Loomes & Sugden, 1982). As stated by Landman (1993), remorse is defined as "bad emotional and cognitive reactions resulting from disasters, losses, restraints, violations, mistakes or faults". Similarly, according to another study, it is the unpleasant and cognitive feeling one gets when acknowledging that the outcome of a present circumstance may have been better if other options had been made (Zeelenberg & Pieters, 2007) or an uncomfortable emotion when the person blames themselves for the decision and seeks to rectify the specific situation (Tata et al., 2020). Similarly, the regret theory proposes that people make expectations about the value of brands. Customers compare their experience to their

initial expectations of a brand, evaluating "what is" compared to "what might have been." This comparison may cause sentiments of happiness or sorrow (Lee & Cotte, 2009). While customers may not always regret their purchases, they may nevertheless doubt the wisdom of their choices despite their best efforts to justify them (Leti & Oan, 2022).

Moreover, every transaction carries a certain amount of buyer's remorse for each person and it frequently leads to returns or cancellations of purchases (Friedman, 2012). Furthermore, the person who feels remorse will experience dissatisfaction, frustration, financial issues, return of goods, guilt, the behaviour of switching brands, and objections of other individuals to such purchases. Moreover, the primary source of negative word of mouth is that consumers avoid repurchasing that brand and discourage others from doing the same by sharing their unfavourable experiences (Zeelenberg & Pieters, 2007).

Conversely, to build long-term customer relationships, it is important to identify as well as control customers' remorse so that they will stay longer which will be beneficial for the retailers. Customers' post-purchase conduct will have an impact on long-term business activity. Therefore, it is crucial to find ways to manage buyer's remorse. However, irrespective of the criticality of this topic, the management of a retail store needs to identify buyer's remorse, particularly how to cope with it successfully, as it has not gotten much systematic attention (Rehman B. et al., 2024). As a result, firms need to have a thorough grasp of buyer's remorse as it influences customer repurchase intention, which is crucial for retailers.

According to Agarwal et al. (2021), future researchers may conduct detailed research on buyer's remorse, which is industry or product-specific, which will be important to gain insight into the influence of remorse on customers in a certain sector or product category. Thus, the purpose of this study is to explore customers' points of view when they experience buyer's remorse and then how it impacts their post-buy behaviour for the same product. To bridge this gap, this study aims to identify the antecedents and outcomes of buyer's remorse in apparel products among online shoppers to provide a coping mechanism for managing buyer's remorse. The focus of this study is on the apparel sector; as stated by Zahari et al. (2021), researchers must give a great deal of consideration to additional studies in light of clothing goods in the e-commerce context. Consequently, apparel retailers may increase their earnings and minimize expenses by successfully retaining consumers and encouraging repeat purchases.

The apparel industry contributes 8.5 per cent of Pakistan's GDP and employs 45 per cent of the labour force in the country (Bashir et al., 2021). However, customers face more problems in the e-commerce environment as it is stated that 30%-50% of e-commerce transactions are returned, which is far greater than the 8% to 10% of physical stores (Borges, 2023). As a result, e-commerce has a higher return rate, making it critical to research buyer remorse and repurchase intention in e-commerce. Thus, this study particularly answers the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the reasons for buyer's remorse among Generation Z online shoppers in the apparel industry?

RQ2: How do Generation Z online shoppers in the apparel industry react to buyer's remorse?

RQ3: How can the apparel industry manage buyer's remorse among Generation Z online shoppers (Customer perspective)?

This research will provide knowledge and make a substantial addition to the inadequate body of accessible knowledge on the antecedents and outcomes of buyer's remorse among Generation Z in the E-commerce setting of Pakistan. As a result, this study can provide managers with critical information on where their marketing focus should be and the necessary conditions for retaining young customers. The current study aims to identify the experiences of Gen Z clothing customers in the e-commerce setting so that businesses may take necessary measures to relieve remorse and make suggestions to fashion retailers, salespeople, and marketers. The findings can also help retail managers operate more successfully and efficiently (Agrawal & Singh, 2024).

## Literature Review

### Buyer's Remorse

Customers express "regret" through a phenomenon known as buyer's remorse (Maziriri & Madinga, 2015). Buyer's remorse, defined as "post-purchase dissonance," is the unfavourable emotional state a customer may experience following a purchase (Korvenranta, L. 2023). This might involve regret, guilt, or anxiety about the choice (Korvenranta, L. 2023). Hoff (2008) states that if a customer feels unhappy with the purchase, the customer will experience buyer's remorse. A sense of guilt arises when we believe we have done something wrong. According to Irfan (2014), regret, often known as "buyer remorse" in the literature, can be characterized as a

comparison to "what might have been right". According to Friedman (2012), buyer's remorse is the painful regret or guilt associated with a purchasing decision. Buyer's remorse can also show in customers when they purchase a product and later regret it (Kros & Brown, 2012).

According to Jayagopal (2007), buyer's remorse is an intense sensation of anxiety, guilt, or doubt that develops after making an imprudent purchase. People frequently experience buyer's remorse, even when they have done extensive research and the purchase is a planned event (Jayagopal, 2007). According to the author's explanation of the concept of buyer's remorse, it is the feeling of regret after making a purchase. For example, a Generation Z customer purchases an apparel product and later feels dissatisfied with the purchase or begins to wonder whether they would have waited for a better price, bought something else, or gathered more information first. According to (Rehman et al., 2024), more research is needed on remorse and how to control it, as buyer's remorse is still a relatively new concept that is only being explored by limited academics.

#### **Antecedents of Buyer's Remorse:**

**Impulse Buying Behavior:** Impulse purchasing occurs when a customer is strongly urged to purchase something immediately (Siahaan et al., 2021). Previous research has discovered dissatisfaction or regret following an impulsive purchase (Park et al., 2006).

**Cognitive Dissonance:** A key concept in comprehending buyer's remorse is Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance. When there is a discrepancy between what customers believe and how they experience, customers may feel remorse. Similarly, according to Amutha et al. (2024), cognitive dissonance may play a significant role in buyer's remorse, leading consumers to reconsider their choices and experience a sense of dissatisfaction regarding their acquisitions.

**Expensive Purchases:** Expensive purchases can lead to regret because they entail all three cognitive dissonance elements: effort, commitment, and responsibility (Agarwal et al., 2021).

**External Stimuli:** Marketers employ external stimuli such as personal selling, sales promotion, advertising, and different marketing strategies as marketing signals to generate demand for their products to attract and retain consumers (Agarwal et al., 2021). Marketing strategies such as scarcity, discounts, targeted advertising, etc., can serve as external stimuli. Furthermore, marketers employ Internet marketing to entice clients with social media ads, discount pop-ups,

follow-up emails, and other tactics. If the marketer's product does not fulfil the promise made by external stimuli, a sense of regret develops, resulting in buyer's remorse (Agarwal et al., 2021).

### **Decision-Making Under Uncertainty**

Tversky and Kahneman's (1982) work on heuristics and biases focuses on how consumers make decisions and face uncertainty, which can lead to regret if the outcome falls short of expectations.

**Outcomes of Buyer's Remorse:** The outcomes of buyer's remorse are as follows:

**Re-Purchase Intention:** According to Lin and Liang (2011), the re-purchase intention is "the degree to which customers are willing to purchase the same product or service, and it is a simple, observable objective and predictor of future buying behaviour". Consumer repeat purchase intent is critical to a company's success (Jones & Sasser, 1995). Repeat customers are a business's primary source of profit (Gupta & Kim, 2007). As stated by Ravishankar and Christopher (2024), customer repurchase intention, or retention, is critical for defensive marketing tactics and overall corporate performance since it keeps consumers from transferring to rivals. As they are more profitable than new ones, it is important to examine their repurchase intention (Suyoto & Tannady, 2022). Tactics for attracting re-purchase have become critical for every firm (Qureshi et al., 2009).

According to Lien et al. (2011), behavioural intentions have an indicative value. They aid management in determining whether or not its consumers intend to switch to competitors. According to Lam et al. (2004), repeat purchase intention can be considered a measure of loyalty. Customers satisfied with purchased products remain loyal to that particular product or brand. According to Bansal et al. (2008), customers' intentions to repurchase a product or brand are heavily influenced by their previous purchasing experience. However, when customers analyze their previous purchasing experiences, they often examine product performance, service quality, and pricing (Olaru et al., 2008). Those customers who feel happy with past purchases are more inclined to return for future purchases (Hamadi, 2010). However, if they feel remorse, then it will negatively impact their re-purchase intention (Zeelenberg & Pieters, 2007).

**Product Return:** Product return behaviour is a type of post-purchase activity in which buyers return the product to the vendor for a variety of reasons (Das & Kunja, 2024). Product returns are an unavoidable yet costly procedure in business, particularly in the Internet marketplace

(Duong et al., 2022). Buyer's remorse is directly associated with higher return rates and unhappiness with the purchase (Zhao & Li, 2024). Furthermore, product returns can decrease by 3.8% of the revenue of a retailer (Blanchard, 2007).

**Product dissatisfaction:** Buyer's remorse can cause customer dissatisfaction which can lead to fewer future purchases (Rosenzweig & Gilovich, 2011).

**Psychological Well-Being:** Kumar and Shah's (2004) study on the psychological impacts of consumer behaviour found that buyer's remorse might have a detrimental influence on mental health, raising stress and decreasing overall well-being.

**Negative word-of-mouth:** According to Anderson (1994), research on customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction demonstrates how unfavourable experiences, such as buyer's remorse, may lead to poor word-of-mouth and negative reviews, thus harming a company's reputation.

<b>Antecedents and Outcomes of Buyer's Remorse</b>	
<b>Antecedents</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impulse Buying Behavior</li> <li>• Cognitive Dissonance</li> <li>• Expensive Purchases</li> <li>• External Stimuli</li> <li>• Decision-Making Under Uncertainty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Re-Purchase Intention</li> <li>Product Return</li> <li>Psychological Well-Being</li> <li>Negative Word-of-Mouth</li> </ul>

### Generation Z

Generation Z, between 1995 and 2012, has been referred to as iGen to reflect the Internet generation (Gabriela & Buchko, 2021). Young customers, with their tech-savvy mentality, have become a vital element of the consumer base in the realm of online commerce (Das & Kunja, 2024). They prefer to use the internet in their daily lives. Their cell phones were constantly "smart." (Gabriela & Buchko, 2021). This generation was born during the Internet age and cannot envision living without it. As stated by Dolot (2018), this Generation is also known as the "C Generation", which means "computerized", "changing", "connected to the Internet",



"content-centric", "communicating", and also R Generation, which means "responsible generation". Generation Z has been less concerned with face-to-face communication. They mostly interact via text, emoji, and video (Gabriellova & Buchko, 2021).

Furthermore, these individuals prefer to buy things online; however, they may come across issues after doing so. According to a study, Gen Z has the greatest percentage of buyer's remorse, with 70.8% acknowledging buying something to gain attention on social media (Agarwal et al., 2021). Therefore, it is the most important segment to identify and manage their remorse as this is the younger generation. According to Zeelenberg & Pieter, (2007), psychological effects of regret vary with age since it gets more difficult to overcome regret when we are old. As a result, it is evident that Generation Z customers play an important role in the marketplace, and knowing the consumer behaviour of this cohort's online shoppers may be particularly useful in developing future marketing strategies for this segment.

### Methodology

**Research Approach:** The research questions necessitate a detailed exploration of a social phenomenon. Therefore, a case study was chosen as the most suitable strategy as it goes beyond just examining events and explores the underlying causes, mechanisms, and structures of the individuals or groups involved, as demonstrated in this study (Easton, 2010). A case study enables the researcher to get insights into the current phenomenon within its real-world setting without the need to control behavioural events (Yin, 2009). It involves a thorough investigation that includes research design, data collection, and data analysis methods, distinguishing it from other qualitative techniques like grounded theory, ethnography, and phenomenology (Liaqat et al., 2024; Meyer, 2001).

**Sampling:** Considering the research questions, the population of this study was Generation Z online shoppers aged 12-27 in higher educational institutions in Punjab, Pakistan, specifically in Lahore. Lahore was selected for its high concentration of colleges and universities, with a significant population of Generation Z individuals using online platforms. This choice was made through purposive sampling to ensure a representative sample for the study (Creswell & Poth, 2016). In the second stage, the University of Lahore (UOL) and the University of the Punjab were selected using purposive sampling to gather data from a diverse population. These universities were chosen for their diverse student populations from all provinces of Pakistan,



representing a variety of cultural backgrounds. The selection of these institutions aimed at the online shopping behaviour of Generation Z individuals in Punjab, Pakistan, effectively.

**Interviews:** The study collected primary data through semi-structured interviews. Researchers conducted initial investigations by reviewing the literature to gain a deeper understanding of buyer's remorse and its antecedents and outcomes. This phase allowed them to compare previous literature findings with real-life situations. According to Pathak and Intrata (2012), semi-structured interviews involve asking open-ended questions by probing for more detailed information. Respondents' answers provided rich insights into individual experiences and the meanings they attribute to them. Hove and Anda (2005) noted that such interviews combine specific and open-ended questions, allowing for flexibility in the conversation. To ensure response reliability, all interviews were recorded digitally, except for three participants who declined. However, detailed notes were taken for those interviews. These notes were valuable during transcription, which the researchers carried out to ensure accuracy. The interviews, lasting approximately 10 minutes each, were conducted one-on-one. Forty semi-structured interviews were conducted, with twenty at the University of Lahore and the University of the Punjab. Data saturation was observed after 40 interviews, confirming a sufficient sample size (Guest et al., 2006).

**Data Analysis:** Although voice-recorded interviews were conducted to ensure data accuracy (Silverman, 2011), the quality of data analysis significantly impacts the project's overall quality (Layder, 2012). Thematic analysis, a systematic method for organizing qualitative data, was utilized. This involved tagging observations and quotations with codes to identify key themes. The analytical process included data preparation, familiarization, code generation, theme collation, review, refinement, and analysis write-up, engaging creatively with the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Rapley, 2010). Furthermore, we use an inductive research process for data analysis in this study, as outlined by Kumar and Ujire (2024). The process involves three key steps: observation, pattern recognition, and theory development. Initially, detailed observations of the phenomenon under study, buyer's remorse, are made through interviews. Subsequently, data is analyzed to identify patterns, themes, and relationships, leading to the identification of antecedents, outcomes, and remorse recovery techniques. Finally, initial categories or concepts

are developed based on the data analysis, forming a framework for understanding the phenomenon.

### Findings and Discussion

During fieldwork, data analysis should be an ongoing process to allow room for reflection and adjustments in the subsequent data collection (Kvale, 2008; Layder, 2012). Since the researcher is in the field, the immediate analysis can help to pursue emerging avenues of inquiry in further depth and look for deviant or negative cases (Pope et al., 2000). For example, after the first few interviews, it occurred to the researcher that all our participants were from a private university. Following this thought process, they deliberately sought to interview students from public sector University. Conducting in-depth interviews of such deviant cases uncovered additional insights into the structures and processes of why students feel remorse after shopping online.

**Reasons for Buyer's Remorse (RQ1):** The first research question we asked our respondents was "What is the most common cause of buyer's remorse in online shopping for apparel products?". The study reveals that the main cause of remorse among Generation Z is when product attributes do not meet their expectations, as illustrated in Figure 1. Most respondents (48%) explained receiving low-quality products in their parcels as a significant trigger for remorse. They expressed feeling self-guilt due to cognitive dissonance when they receive a product that fails to meet their needs, wants, and expectations, leading to a sense of being deceived by the company. This is aligned with the interpretation of Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance.

The second most influential factor is when the product colour does not match the colour shown on online platforms. Respondents expressed that they formed a negative impression after receiving products with a visibly different colour (24%) and size (9%) from what they saw online. This discrepancy induces cognitive dissonance that may be due to the poor quality of the apparel brand's website, even though high image resolution and real-time simulation experience are essential for the apparel industry. Irrespective of the fact that the responsibility for poor service quality lies with the company, buyers still feel remorse for not being vigilant enough to perceive the company's credibility. This relationship is also supported by the findings of Amutha et al. (2024).

Another significant cause of buyer's remorse is the receipt of counterfeit products. According to the respondents (9%), they experience regret when they purchase from fraudulent online platforms that claim to sell authentic products. These buyers are often influenced by deceptive marketing tactics such as external stimuli and make impulsive decisions to buy products, only to later regret being deceived and controlled by fake websites (Park et al., 2006). These findings are supported by Agarwal et al. (2021), claiming that if the marketer's product does not fulfil the promise made by external stimuli, a sense of regret develops, resulting in buyer's remorse.

Similarly, buyers with impulsive tendencies (5%) may purchase product bundles due to discounts without considering the actual utility and necessity of the products. This may lead to buying more products than necessary, resulting in buyer's remorse (Siahaan et al., 2021) even if the products meet their expectations, needs, and wants. Respondents (5%) also mentioned that when they place orders in a hurry without confirming, they often select the wrong options, such as size, colour, and number of products. This leads to regret among online buyers who end up confirming a wrong order without checking due to decision-making in uncertainty, as supported by the work of Tversky and Kahnemans (1982) explaining how consumers make decisions in the face of uncertainty that leads to regret if the outcome falls short of expectations.

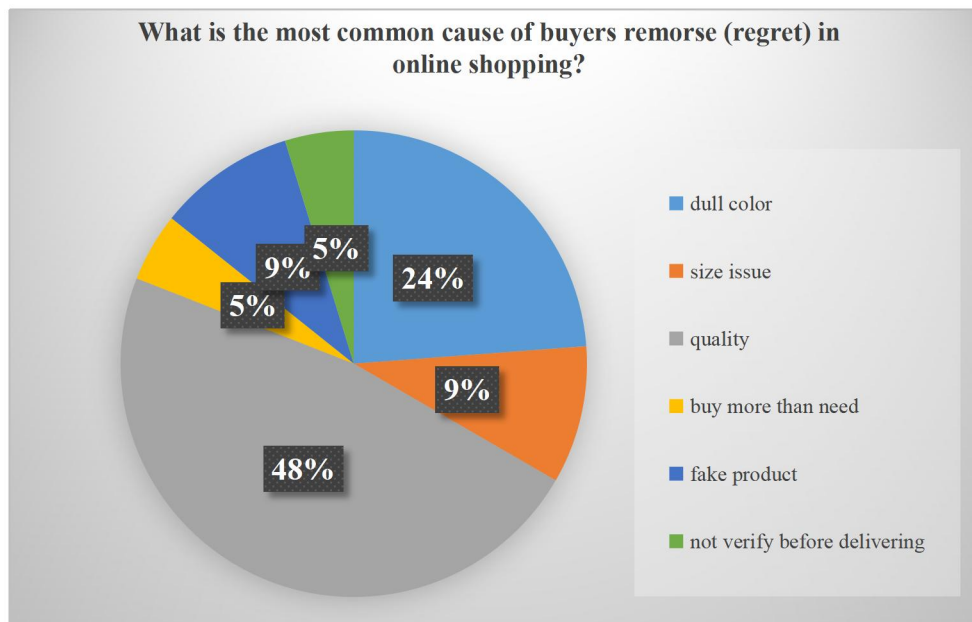


Figure 1

**Outcomes of Buyer's Remorse (RQ2):** The second question we asked our respondents was, "What will you do after experiencing buyer's remorse". Responses to this question are as follows. Our results uncover the first and most important outcome of remorse within Generation Z that leads to a decline in their desire to repurchase, with 37% of consumers expressing that feelings of regret following the acquisition of clothing significantly hinder their willingness to buy again, as depicted in Figure 2.

This is an important, consequential effect of buyer's remorse as it decreases the probability of subsequent purchases of the product or brand. A previous study also supports this; according to Rehman et al. (2024), there is a negative relationship between buyer's remorse and re-purchase intention. Hence, the adverse emotional consequences of remorse erode customer loyalty and disrupt the enduring relationship between the consumer and the brand. This decline in repurchase intention can have a significant influence on the brand's customer retention strategies.

The second most important outcome of remorse is a "switch to other retailers" 25% of respondents said that after experiencing remorse, they changed retailers. When consumers experience feelings of regret regarding their purchase, this leads to a decline in trust in the brand and seek out alternatives that offer enhanced satisfaction. Consequently, brand switching emerges as a frequent reaction when consumers encounter buyer's remorse as they strive to mitigate the risk of recurring disappointment.

The subsequent and equally significant outcomes related to the phenomenon of buyer's remorse that was meticulously identified in the context of this study were categorized as "dissatisfaction," which was observed to affect a notable 19% of the participants, and "negative word-of-mouth communication" (WOM), which, interestingly, also demonstrated a prevalence rate of 19% among the respondents involved in the research.

In addition, buyer's remorse frequently results in a considerable degree of dissatisfaction among consumers. This dissatisfaction arises from the realization that the acquired product or service did not adhere to the anticipated standards or failed to satisfy the expected requirements. This result is in line with the previous findings; according to Amutha et al. (2024), cognitive dissonance may play a significant role in buyer's remorse, leading consumers to reconsider their choices and experience a sense of dissatisfaction regarding their acquisitions. Similarly,

according to Zeelenberg & Pieters (2007), dissatisfaction is a direct result of the cognitive dissonance experienced post-purchase, wherein the consumer experiences regret regarding their choice, ending in emotional unease. This dissatisfaction may manifest in numerous forms, including grievances, returns, or psychological strain.

Lastly, buyer's remorse often leads to negative word of mouth. This outcome is particularly damaging in today's digital age, where a single negative review can reach a vast audience and influence the purchasing decisions of potential customers. Negative word of mouth is a powerful tool that can significantly affect a brand's reputation and market position. Consumers who regret their purchases are more likely to voice their dissatisfaction, warning others and discouraging them from making similar purchases.

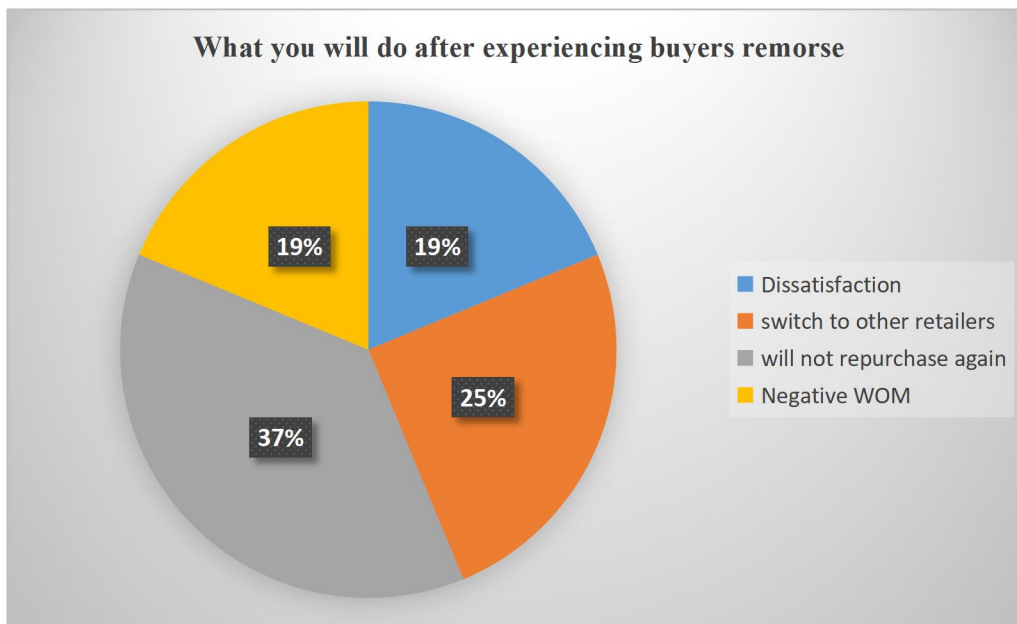
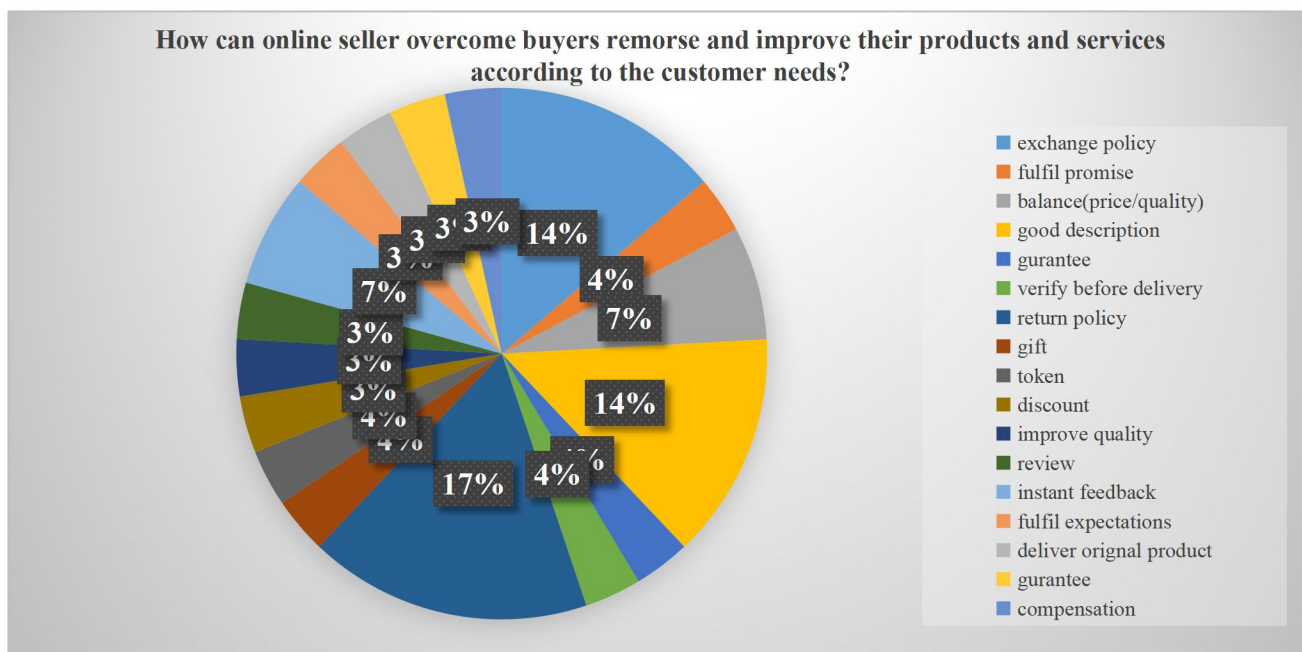


Figure 2

**Suggestions to minimize Buyer's Remorse (RQ3):** Finally, we asked our respondents for their recommendations regarding how to overcome remorse and how retailers can make improvements in the online shopping experience. Respondents identify the mitigation strategies for buyer's remorse, as illustrated in Figure 3. The most important is that the provision of a guarantee (17%) serves to reassure consumers and diminish apprehension, thereby enhancing confidence through a reduction in perceived risks. Also, an adaptable exchange policy (14%)



further alleviates anxiety by permitting product exchanges in the event of dissatisfaction. In comparison, a reasonable price/quality ratio (7%) assures consumers that they have received adequate value, averting feelings of remorse.

In addition, an explicit product description (14%) establishes precise expectations, and the confirmation of products before delivery (3%) aids in circumventing post-purchase complications and contributes to a decrease in the probability of returns. A comprehensive return policy (17%) fosters trust by mitigating purchase-related risks and promoting customer loyalty. Furthermore, minor gifts or complimentary tokens (3%) augment satisfaction and diminish feelings of remorse, while discounts (3%) enhance perceived value, leading consumers to feel that they have secured a favourable deal. The fulfilment of customer expectations (3%) and the provision of immediate feedback (7%) serve to prevent remorse by promptly addressing any concerns.

In conclusion, compensation mechanisms (3%), such as partial refunds or future discounts, effectively address dissatisfaction and contribute to the restoration of customer trust.

Figure 3

### Recommendation

Marketers must analyze why their customers feel remorse and how customers respond when they feel buyer's remorse. The current body of research establishes without a reasonable doubt



the necessity to implement measures for retail managers and marketers and identify different ways to decrease buyer's remorse. Marketers may implement mitigation tactics to reduce buyer remorse and encourage repurchase behaviour, resulting in consumer loyalty. There are several methods by which the apparel industry might decrease consumer remorse. According to Hopkins et al., (2012), by asking consumers to notify if they are not satisfied with the product, they may return the product and get their money back. Using this closure will decrease the amount of lost purchases due to buyer's remorse (Hopkins et al., 2012). Furthermore, retailers can manage buyer's remorse by giving customers some recovery strategies, i.e. money-back guarantee, replace policy, and apology (Rehman et al., 2024).

Whatever talk to customers, do not argue about the sale; instead, assist the buyer in understanding that buyer's remorse is a common occurrence when purchasing items for the first time, and the best method of dealing with buyer's remorse is to pleasantly assist the buyer in reviewing the problem and solution to summarize the sales call (Ramsey, 2009). Fashion retailers and marketers may increase customer participation with apparel goods by providing all relevant information. This will lower buyer remorse because the customer will be fully aware of the goods. According to Halepete (2006), in-depth knowledge obtained by customers' high engagement helps to decrease risk and uncertainty. Consumers who are heavily involved in the fashion industry are more inclined to wear creative and stylish items, as well as take risks (Halepete, 2006). As a result, if Generation Z customers are heavily involved with various fashion brands, it will increase their understanding of fashion brands and give greater confidence in their ability to select apparel products, resulting in fewer consumers experiencing buyer's remorse.

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

In addition to offering useful insights, this study has some limitations that should be considered. Primarily, the current research is based on Generation Z customers in Pakistan's e-commerce setting, so the results of this study are restricted to a particular market segment. Results could be more informative if data collection is expanded to include other generations, i.e. Gen X, Gen Y, etc. This study only employed qualitative research; there is also the issue of common method bias. According to Cresswell (1994), the study report contains clear statements about the researcher's views, prejudices, and judgment, which is related to the descriptive character of



qualitative research. In other words, the researcher explains and interprets the findings based on what they have seen. It would be more robust if future studies would use quantitative or mixed methodologies. All of the identified future possibilities in this study have the potential to significantly contribute new knowledge to the existing corpus of retail and marketing literature.

### Conclusion

In a nutshell, this study contributes significantly to the e-retailing and marketing literature by systematically investigating the antecedents and outcomes of buyer's remorse among Generation Z buyers in an e-commerce setting in Pakistan. In this study, keywords have been well introduced, key questions and study objectives have been identified, and a literature review has been conducted to provide an overview or a more in-depth understanding of buyer's remorse (antecedents, outcomes, recovery strategies) and Generation Z customers. Semi-structured personal interviews were used as part of a qualitative technique.

The study revealed that buyer's remorse significantly impacts Generation Z shoppers' likelihood to reduce their intention to make repeat purchases in an online shopping environment. The primary reason for buyer's remorse, as reported by 48% of respondents, was receiving low-quality products. Additionally, the study found that the most common consequence of buyer's remorse was a decrease in the intention to repurchase. Many customers indicated that if they experience regret after a purchase, they are unlikely to buy the same item again due to fear of a similar negative experience and a desire to avoid wasting money on unsatisfactory products.

None of the participants expressed a willingness to repurchase an item that caused buyer's remorse. Conversely, some customers mentioned that if their expectations are met or exceeded with a clothing purchase, they would be loyal to the brand and resist switching to other retailers. They emphasized that a positive experience with factors such as price, quality, delivery, and overall satisfaction would lead them to advocate for the product and encourage others to make similar purchases. Marketers and apparel retailers were given specific recommendations. Finally, this article contributes to a better understanding of the consumer shopping experience in an e-commerce context in Pakistan by highlighting the buyer's remorse factor, which has a significant negative impact on consumers' re-purchase intentions for apparel products.

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