

AN EVALUATIVE STUDY ON ONLINE SHOPPING & IMPACT OF WEB PLATFORMS

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ABSTRACT

In this paper an attempt is made to evaluate the customer perception towards online shopping. In the present era, online shopping has become a part of life. The wider use of internet, technology inclusion, awareness of web platforms, ease & comfort and changed lifestyle has opened many avenues for shifting towards online shopping. Further it is free from geographical barriers and time restrictions. Also facilities like easy return & exchange, free home delivery, different payment options, customer care and after sale services are making online shopping more enjoyable even by the laymen. Thus online shopping service is growing rapidly and influencing the online buying decisions of customers in larger perspectives. The present study was conducted with primary data collected through Google forms. The sample size was 86 & simple random sampling method was used. Chi square test was performed to test the hypothesis. The test results revealed acceptance of null hypothesis. The paper concluded with recommendation that e-tailers have to make more efforts to match with customer's needs & expectations and influence their online buying decisions.

Keywords: *Online Shopping, Technology, Virtual Environment & E-commerce.*

Introduction

Online shopping in present era has gained wider popularity and acceptance due to its benefits like comfort, time saver, ease & convenience. Technology has facilitated everything on one click. Online shopping in common words can be described as an act of purchasing products and services over the internet. E-commerce has aided in electronic purchase of goods smoothly in real time basis with use of technology. The use of internet facility helped in performing of the marketing activities very economically and efficiently. The post demonetized & post pandemic times had made vast changes in our economic and social spheres. It has created & developed a virtual environment in which technology is the key. Online shopping has provided a new market of opportunities and experiences for the potential customers. Technology has enabled display, selection and price comparison of various Indian & foreign brands at single click of mouse. Further, customers are now welcoming the new festive season arrivals, new product launches, combo deals and many more in the virtual world. The customers are also greatly influenced by the attitude & lifestyle of Celebs and famous personalities. Now a day's people have become much brand cautious in their online buying decisions. Thus different brands are providing wide range & variety to attract new customers and also to retain the old customers. Enormous efforts are being done by e-tailers in present times to match with online buying needs and expectations of customers.

Customers now-a-days are giving much importance to the reviews & feedbacks in their online buying decisions. The various facilities regarding returns & exchange, delivery, payment, customer care are making online shopping more enjoyable by all. But there exist some challenges also. These include delays, non- receipts, product damage, quality & payment issues and lack of trust. Thus these along with customer grievances are to be addressed to achieve customer trust and confidence towards online shopping.

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Review of Literature

Daroch Bindia, Nagrath Gitika & Gupta Ashutosh (2021) investigated the consumer behaviour towards online shopping and examined factors that online shopping are limiting the behaviour of Consumers. The sample size for the study was 170 and tools used were KMO & Bartlett's Test. The results revealed the six factors that restrain consumers to buy from online sites.

Dahiya (2012) studied the influence of demographic factors on online purchase behaviour of consumers in India. The sample size of the study was 580 and tool used was ANOVA. The study revealed that online shopping in India is deeply influenced by demographic & socio economic factors.

Nagra Dr Gagandeep & Gopal Dr R (2013) studied the impact of demographic factors of consumers on online shopping parameters such as satisfaction, future purchase, frequency etc. The sample size of the study was 70 and tool used was ANOVA. The overall results proved that respondents have perceived online shopping in a positive manner.

Naik & Sankaranarayanan (2014) studied the online shoppers and their preferences of online shoppers of Goa. The sample size of the study was 100 and tool used for analysis were percentage analysis and chi-square test.

Shanthi Dr R & kannaiyah Dr Desti (2015) studied the students attitude towards online shopping, their product preference on online shopping. The sample size of the study was 100 and tools used were Mean, Std. Deviation & Kaiser Meyer Measure along with Pie Charts and Graphs. It was concluded that consumer's perception on online shopping varies from individual to individual & the perception is limited to certain extent with the availability of proper connectivity & the exposure to online shopping.

Sidhu (2013) studied and compared the opinion regarding online shopping for the customers of Ludhiana. The sample size of the study was 100 and tool used for analysis were Mean, Standard deviation & F-test. It was concluded that more awareness is needed for various online shopping sites.

Srivastava Dr Sunita & Mathur Smriti (2016) highlighted the different aspects of online shopping. It included growing trends of online shopping in India, advantages, disadvantages and challenges faced by Indian consumers and suggested measures.

Statement of Problem

In the post demonetized & post pandemic era, digitalization has gained momentum in all spheres of life & development of a virtual environment. Majority of the people have moved towards acceptance of technology based innovative channels. This transformation has pushed us to go for online modes in shopping too in place of traditional ways of shopping. Thus there arises a need to understand the web platforms for online shopping in depth. This study attempts to evaluate the customer behaviour towards online shopping and the impact of web platforms.

Research Questions

- What are the customer perceptions towards online shopping?
- What is the impact of web platforms for online shopping?

Objectives of the Study

- To study the concept of online shopping
- To analyze the awareness towards online shopping web platforms
- To find out any association between gender and Brand purchasing
- To highlight the motivational factors in online shopping

Scope of the Study

The study has been conducted in Ajmer in Rajasthan state on 86 respondents by Random sampling method.

Limitations of the Study

- The study has been restricted to Ajmer in Rajasthan state
- The small sample size of 86 respondents and with simple random sampling method
- For the resent study only four web platforms have been taken into consideration

Hypothesis of the Study

Ho: Gender and Brand purchase has no significant association

Research Methodology

The study was exploratory in nature. Primary data was used for analysis and hypothesis testing. Primary Data was collected through Google forms. There were 86 respondents of Ajmer of Rajasthan state. Secondary data has been collected from books, Journals and websites. And the tools for analyzing the data were percentage analysis and Chi square Test.

Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Demographic Profiles

Age	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percent
18-25	18	20.93	22.5	18
26-40	22	25.58	27.5	40
41-55	24	27.91	30	64
56-70	16	18.60	20	100
Total	80	93.02	100	
Missing System	06	06.98		
Total	86	100		

Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Male	40	46.51	50	50
Female	40	46.51	50	100
Total	80	93.02	100	
Missing System	06	06.98		
Total	86	100		

Education	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Higher Secondary	16	18.60	20	20
Graduation	24	27.90	30	50
Post graduate	20	23.26	25	75
Professional	12	13.96	15	90
Technical	08	09.30	10	100
Total	80	93.02	100	
Missing System	06	06.98		
Total	86	100		

(Source: Primary data)

Table 2: Socio-Economic Profiles

Income –Monthly	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Below 25000	20	23.26	25	25
25001-50000	12	13.96	15	40
50001-75000	24	27.90	30	70
75001-100000	16	18.60	20	90
Above 100000	08	09.30	10	100
Total	80	93.02	100	
Missing System	06	06.98		
Total	86	100		

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Married	48	55.82	60	60
Un-married	32	37.20	40	100
Total	80	93.02	100	
Missing System	06	06.98		
Total	86	100		

Family Status	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Joint	42	48.84	52.5	52.5
Nuclear	38	44.18	47.5	100
Total	80	93.02	100	
Missing System	06	06.98		
Total	86	100		

Residential Status	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percent
Urban	32	37.20	40	40
Semi urban	20	23.26	25	65
Rural	28	32.56	35	100
Total	80	93.02	100	
Missing System	06	06.98		
Total	86	100		

Source: Primary data

Table 3: Level of Awareness about Online Shopping Websites

Level of Awareness	Frequency	Percentage
Very High	28	35
High	20	25
Average	14	17.5
Low	18	22.5
Total	80	100

Table 4: Web Platform -Features

Features	Frequency	Percentage
Website design & contents	12	15
Information quality	10	12.5
Reliability & security	20	25
Product description & display	08	10
Brands & Variety	10	12.5
Accessibility	08	10
Virtual assistance & Reviews	12	15
Total	80	100

Table 5: Frequency of Purchases at Online Shopping Websites

Time Period	Frequency	Percentage
Once in a day	16	20
Once in a week	24	30
Once in a fortnight	18	22.5
Once in a month	10	12.5
Once in a quarter	12	15
Total	80	100

Table 6: Purchase of Products through Online Shopping Websites

Types	Frequency	Percentage
Electronics	14	17.5
Home decor	12	15
Kitchen items	08	10
Apparels	16	20
Books	12	15
Personal	18	22.5
Total	80	100

Table 7: Preferred Online Shopping Websites

Websites	Frequency	Percentage
Amazon	20	25
Flipkart	24	30
Snapdeal	16	20
eBay	12	15
others	08	10
Total	80	100

Table 8: Brands of Online Purchases

Brands	Gender	Male		Female	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Indian		24	60	18	45
Foreign		16	40	22	55
Total		40	100	40	100

Table 9: Motivational Factors in Online Shopping

Motivational Factors	Male		Female	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Discounts & offers	12	30	08	20
Free home delivery	05	12.5	12	30
Return & exchange	09	22.5	08	20
Cash on delivery	08	20	10	25
Customer care & Reviews	06	15	02	05
Total	40	100	40	100

Source: Primary data

Testing of Hypothesis

The chi-square test is used to test the hypothesis of the study.

$$\text{Chi-square value is } \chi^2 = \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$$

Ho: Gender and Brand purchase has no significant association

Table 10: Calculation: Cross Tab

Gender of Respondents	Usage	Brand purchase		Total
		Indian	Foreign	
Male		24	16	40
		(60.0%)	(40.0%)	
Female		18	22	40
		(45.0%)	(55.0%)	
Total		42	38	80

Chi-Square Test				
	Value	d f	Tabled Value	p-value
Pearson Chi-Square	1.80	1	3.841	0.179
Insignificant				

Primary data based calculations

Inference

The result of chi-square test to prove any association between gender of respondents and purchase of brands is that since calculated value of χ^2 statistic is less than the tabled value, at 5% significance level & 1 degree of freedom, it is concluded that null hypothesis (Ho) is accepted.

Major Findings of the Study

- Table-1 (a): The age group (41-55 years) constitutes the maximum 30% of the respondents.
- Table-1 (b): As per requirement of study, male and female respondents are taken equally constituting 50% of the population each.
- Table-1 (c): In the study, maximum 30% coverage is of respondents who possess graduation educational qualification.
- Table-2 (a): In the study, maximum 30% respondents are in the monthly income group of Rupees 50001-75000 per month.
- Table-2 (b): Amongst the population, 60% respondents are married and 40% are un-married.
- Table-2 (c): As per the family status, maximum 52.5% of the respondents live in joint family.
- Table-2 (d): As per the residential status, maximum 40% of the respondents reside in urban areas.
- Table-3: As per the status of awareness level about online shopping websites, maximum 35% of the respondents have very high awareness.
- Table-4: As per the important feature of web platforms, maximum 25% of the respondents inform reliability & security feature of website as important.
- Table-5: As par frequency of purchases at online shopping websites, maximum 30% of the respondents make purchases once a week.
- Table-6: According to type of purchase of products through online shopping websites, maximum 20% of the respondents go for apparels.

- Table-7: As per the preference of online shopping websites, maximum 30% of the respondents visit Flipkart.
- Table-8: According to the purchase of Brands in online shopping, maximum 60% of the male respondents prefer Indian brands. Whereas amongst the female population, maximum 55% respondents prefer foreign brands.
- Table-9: For the male respondents, Discounts & offers is the motivational factor in online shopping for maximum 30% respondents whereas amongst the females, free home delivery is the motivational factor for maximum 30% respondents.
- Table-10: The Chi-square test is performed as per the requirement of the study to test the hypothesis at 5% significance level. As per the outcome, the null hypothesis (Ho1) is accepted.
- To conclude it is stated that chi square test proved that difference is insignificant in purchase of brands in online shopping between male and female respondents.

Conclusion

In the nutshell, it can be stated that technology has opened many avenues for searching and virtually visiting of shopping destinations with merits of ease, convenience & time saving. It has shifted the generations towards one stop destinations and has facilitated everything on one click. The customers feel delighted with the facilities like new product launch and new seasonal arrivals. The virtual display of product and price comparison helps & adds to its wider acceptance even by the laymen. Thus it can be summarized that it has helped the customer in evaluating & finalizing different brands at a click of mouse. Hence an attempt is made to study the behaviour of customers towards online shopping.

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