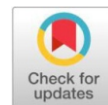


Original Research Article

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Online shopping behaviour pattern and problems among post graduate students

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ABSTRACT

India is a massive market that is expanding and evolving rapidly. Everyone now has access to the internet, and mobile phone usage is on the rise. Online shopping is expanding rapidly as the number of people who have access to the internet continues to rise. Online shopping's popularity is increasing as the pace of business has quickened. As a relatively new phenomenon in e-commerce, online shopping is unquestionably the way of the future for consumers everywhere. The majority of businesses now conduct sales exclusively through their websites. Because of internet shopping's promising future, researchers in India have decided to examine online shoppers' habits and the challenges they confront. This study employed both qualitative and quantitative techniques to investigate the routines of internet shoppers and the issues they encounter. Sixty post-graduate students from the University of Agricultural Sciences in Dharwad were surveyed using questionnaires to compile the data. A major challenge was obtaining timely responses, which was addressed through repeated follow-ups and flexible scheduling. According to the research, the key reasons Indians prefer to shop online are the broad selection of products available and the time savings it provides. The biggest issues that internet shoppers confront are colour variance, expensive delivery costs, and a lack of physical product inspection. Only 5 per cent of the web-based shoppers feel ambivalent about their experience.

Keywords: e-commerce, online shopping, internet, buying behavior, purchase motives, online consumers, consumer satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

The internet is now used by millions of people every day as a means of communication, study, entertainment, and, more lately, commerce. In fact, shopping online is among the most common uses of the internet.

India is the world's second-largest Internet market, after China, with more than 560 million users. Over 650 million people in the country were predicted to be online by 2023. In 2020, the internet adoption rate in the country was around 50 per cent, despite the vast number of people who had access to the internet. With 1.37 billion people living in India, this meant that roughly half of them had internet connection that year. Access to the internet has steadily increased over the past five years, when it was only available to about 27 per cent of the population.

Consumers' attitudes have seen dramatic transformations in the previous few years. Customers still prefer buying in actual stores, but they acknowledge the convenience of online purchasing due to not having to leave the house.

The word "online shopping" refers to the practice of buying goods or services directly from a vendor over the Internet without the need of a middleman. [14] It is a type of e-commerce. Electronic and real-time interactivity characterises the selling and buying process, as seen, for example, on Amazon.com for brand-new books. Online shopping used to be limited to things like airline and theatre tickets, but now consumers are increasingly turning to sites like Amazon and eBay to buy anything from saris and kurtis to T-shirts and shoes to lingerie and consumer durables. Some sales and purchases, like those conducted on eBay.com, may yet include the participation of a third party. A virtual store, also known as an online shop or online store, e-shop, e-store, internet shop, web shop or web store is conceptually similar to a real store or shopping mall. Online commerce between companies is referred to as B2C e-commerce. Companies like Amazon, Flipkart, Snapdeal, Paytm, Myntra, Jabong, Ajio, FirstCry, TataCliQ etc. engage in this form of online business. Business-to-Business e-commerce refers to transactions between businesses rather than consumers.

In today's fast-paced world, it's far more convenient to do shopping online. People today are so busy that they rarely have time to go shopping; therefore, the time they save by doing their shopping online is invaluable. When consumers purchase online, they gain access to a myriad of products and the convenience of never having to leave their house, while businesses gain low-cost entry into new markets.

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As a relatively new phenomenon in E-Business, online shopping is unquestionably the way of the future for consumers everywhere. Most businesses now have their own websites where they sell goods and services online. As of [10], while internet shopping is increasingly popular around the world, its rise in the Indian Market, a sizable and strategically important consumer market, has lagged behind that of the rest of the world.

Understanding how people choose, acquire, use, and eventually discard goods, services, concepts, and experiences to fulfil wants and needs is the focus of consumer behavior research (Solomon, 1998). Understanding the consumer's perspective, motivation, and actions in relation to their online shopping experience is crucial to the development of the Internet as a retail channel.

Different authors provide different explanations of what e-commerce is. The World Wide Web is the focus of the former, whereas radio, telephones, multimedia kiosks, and video catalogues are included in the latter [6]

Rapid information delivery to consumers and expanded surfing options in a short amount of time are two of the main reasons for the Internet's rising popularity. For instance: [5] Online buying saves time and energy compared to visiting a physical store, and it has its own benefits. People are increasingly inclined to use their smartphones, laptops, Tablets, and other digital devices to learn about the world around them. What this means is that consumers' thoughts and actions are increasingly influenced by their interactions with the digital world.

According to [8], consumer behavior is "the process by which individuals or groups make decisions regarding the acquisition, use, and disposal of goods, services, experiences, and ideas" (emphasis added). From the comfort of your own home, you may browse the available options and compare them to the costs of the competition. With this in mind, the study set out to achieve the following objectives:

- 1) To analyze the online shopping behavior pattern among students.
- 2) To study online shopping problems faced by the students.
- 3) To know the satisfaction level of students towards online purchases.

RESEARCH METHODS

The objectives of this investigation were accomplished through a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods of research. In order to validate and extract the most crucial variables and aspects, the exploratory study relied on a review of the available literature. A cross-sectional survey was conducted in University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad. A Purposive random sampling method was used to select the sample. Sixty college and university post graduates who frequently shop online were chosen as participants. Data was collected using a self-designed questionnaire. Information was gathered from both primary and secondary resources. In-depth interviews and surveys served as primary sources, while periodicals, newspapers, national and international media, the internet, and personal books and libraries served as secondary sources. The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) VERSION 16.0 was used to analyse the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It is clear from Table 1 that 50.00 per cent of the students were male and 50.00 per cent students were female.

Among the 60 students, 3.33 per cent of the students belong to age group of 21 years, 38.34 per cent of the students belong to the group 22 years, 41.67 per cent of the students belong to the age group 23 years, 13.33 per cent of the students belong to the age group 24 years, 3.33 per cent of the students belong to the age group of 25 years. The majority of the students surveyed were in the age group of 23 years. Cent per cent of the students were pursuing their education at post-graduation level. According to [9] the distribution of students according to their level of education shown that 76 per cent of the students have post-graduation degrees. Among the 60 students, 76.67 per cent of the students are from nuclear family, 16.66 per cent of the students were from joint family and 6.67 per cent of the students were from extended family. The average monthly income of the males was Rs. 28,633 /- with standard deviation of Rs. 17,580/-. The average monthly income of the female was Rs. 24,933/- with standard deviation of Rs. 12,048/-.

Table 2 shows that out of 60 students, 71.66 per cent of the students were having accessibility for internet from more than 4 years, 15 per cent of the students were having access to internet from 2-4 years, 8.34 per cent of the students were having access to internet from 1-2 years and 5 per cent of the students were having access to internet from less than 1 year of which cent per cent of the students use internet daily. The majority of the boys (90%) and girls (86%) are using internet for online shopping occasionally. Only 10 per cent boys and 13 per cent girls are using internet weekly for online shopping. [6] noted that students who spent a greater amount of time online were significantly more likely to shop online. The average time spent on internet usage by male in a day was about 5.13 hours with standard deviation of 4.17 hours and average time spent on internet usage by female in a day was about 4.13 hours with standard deviation of 1.13 hours. [11] revealed that the majority of students spent between three and four hours on the internet for the purpose of doing online shopping.

Table 3 shows that the amount spent on electronic products are higher by both female and male which are on par with the study conducted by Alpna ^[1] (2017). Female were spending more money on purchase of gifts, clothes and foot wears. Male are spending much amount of money on foot wares followed by clothes and gifts.

Table 4 reveals that convenience and time saving is the prime factor for preferring online shopping. Male prefer online shopping for its best prices, variety and discount on products. Female prefer online shopping for the discounts, availability of the product reviews and its best prices on different products. Price comparison and privacy are the other reasons for preferring online shopping. [4] (2012) and [7] (2013) both came to similar inferences that people prefer e-commerce because it's more convenient for them in terms of time saving, information availability, usability, product variety, privacy, complexity, utility and reliability. Functionality, privacy, firm reputation, perceived value, and trust influence online purchase behavior, according to [5].

Table 5 explains that majority of the male (70%) and female (76%) students have faced problems while making an online purchase whereas 30 per cent of male and 23 per cent of female students haven't faced any problems while making an online purchase.

Simple ranking method was used to rank the order of problems faced by the post graduate college students while shopping online.

Table- 6 described that color variation and high shipping cost (43.30%) were the major problems faced by male followed by cannot touch and seen (33.30%), delay in delivery (30%), poor product quality (26.70%), low trust level on online store and warranty and claims (20%), vat, high delivery charge, product damage and difficulty in returning product (16.70%), receiving wrong product and refund policy (13.30%), non-delivery (3.30%), others like money deduction (3.30%). [11] discovered that majority of the customers are faced the problems line can't touch and feel and non-availability of delivery point, delay in delivery, poor quality of goods etc.

Color variation (70%) was the major problem faced by female followed by cannot touch and see (66.70%), high delivery charge and poor product quality (43.30%), high shipping cost (40%), difficulty in returning product (33.30%), product damage (23.30%), low trust level on online store, vat and delay in delivery (20%), warranty and claims and receiving wrong product (13.30%), safety of payment and refund policy (10%), non-delivery (6.70%).

It is clear from the Table-6 that color variation ranks first as the major problem faced by online shoppers followed by can't touch and see, high shipping cost, poor quality of the products and high delivery are the top five problems faced by the students where as transaction issues, non-delivery of product, refund policies are the minor problems faced by the students.

Table-7 shows the satisfaction levels of the students with online shopping. Majority of the male (51%) and female (50%) were neutrally satisfied with the online purchases made followed by highly satisfied (35 per cent and 43 per cents male and female respectively). Six per cent of male were very highly satisfied whereas 6.40 per cent male were less satisfied. Only 3.30 per cent of female were very highly and less satisfied with the online purchases made by them. [11] found that 34 per cent of online shoppers are highly satisfied and 20 per cent are very highly satisfied. The experience of internet buying is indifferent for 22 per cent of the students. Table-8 shows that there is a negligible positive correlation between students' time spent on the internet and online shopping done by them.

Table 1: Demographic profile of the post graduate students N=60

Demographic factors	Factors	Male (n=30)	Female (n=30)	Total
Education	Post-graduation	30 (50)	30 (50)	60 (100)
	21	-	2 (6.67)	2 (3.33)
Age (in years)	22	10 (33.33)	13 (43.33)	23 (38.34)
	23	11 (36.67)	14 (46.67)	25 (41.67)
	24	7 (23.33)	1 (3.33)	8 (13.33)
	25	2 (6.67)	-	2 (3.33)
	Mean (std. dev)	23.03 (+0.9)	22.40 (+ 0.6)	22.71 (+ 0.7)
Type of Family	Nuclear family	21 (70.00)	25 (83.30)	46 (6.67)
	Joint family	5 (16.0)	5 (16.70)	10 (16.66)
	Extended family	4 (13.30)	-	4 (6.67)
Monthly Income (in rupees)	Mean (std. dev)	28633 (+17580)	24933 (+12048)	26783 (+14814)

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentage

Table 2: History of internet usage by the respondents N=60

Internet history	Factors	Male (n=30)	Female (n=30)	Total
Accessibility for Internet	Less than 1 year	3 (10.00)	-	3 (5.00)
	1-2 years	4 (13.30)	1 (3.30)	5 (8.34)
	2-4 years	1 (3.30)	8 (26.70)	9 (15.00)
	More than 4 years	22 (73.30)	21 (70.00)	43 (71.66)
Frequency of usage of internet	Daily	30 (100)	30 (100)	60 (100)
	Alternate days	-	-	-
	Weekly	-	-	-
	Hardly ever	-	-	-
Usage of internet for online shopping	Daily	-	-	-
	Alternate days	-	-	-
	Weekly	3 (10.00)	4 (13.33)	7 (11.67)
	Occasionally	27 (90.00)	26 (86.67)	53 (88.33)
Time spent on internet usage	Mean (std. dev)	5.13 (+4.17)	4.31 (+1.13)	4.72 (+2.65)

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentage

Table 3: Price range of products purchased on internet by the students N=60

Product category	Male (price in Rupees)	Female (price in Rupees)
Books	900	1800
Clothes	1500	2500
Electronic products	9000	13500
Cosmetics	500	1000
Foot wares	3200	2500
Food items	400	900
Gifts	1500	4500
Others	-	2000 (watch)

Table 4: Reasons for preferring online shopping by the students N=60

Reasons for preference	Male		Female	
	Garret score	Rank	Garret score	Rank
The best prices	59.30	II	51.06	IV
Convenience and time saving	61.67	I	62.50	I
Not available in local stores	53.33	III	45.80	V
Price comparison available	50.23	V	43.96	VI
Product reviews available	45.30	VI	51.83	III
Discount	52.93	IV	58.20	II
Privacy	27.20	VII	39.23	VII

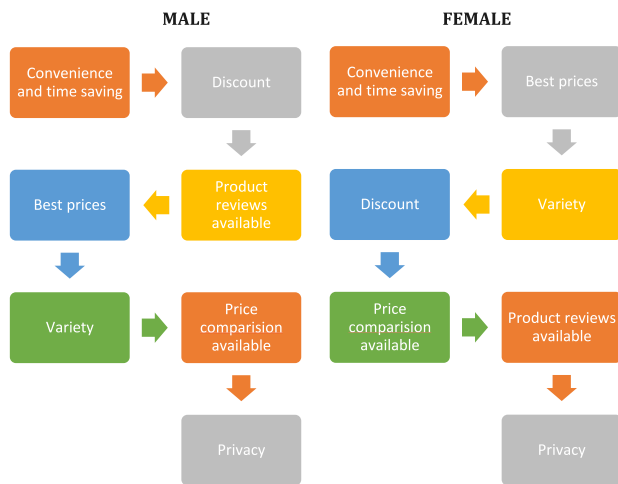


Fig 1: Reasons for preferring online shopping by the students

Table 5: Problems faced during online shopping N=60

Particulars	Male	Female
Problems faced	21 (70.00)	23 (76.70)
No problems faced	9 (30.00)	7 (23.30)

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentage

Table 6: Various problems faced during online shopping by male and female N=60

Problems	Male (n=21)	Female (n=23)	Total (n=44)	Rank
Safety of payment	4 (13.30)	3 (10.00)	7 (15.09)	XIII
Low trust level of online store / Brand	6 (20.00)	6 (20.00)	12 (27.28)	IX
Value added tax / customs duty	5 (16.70)	6 (20.00)	11 (25.00)	X
High Shipping Cost	13 (43.30)	12 (40.00)	25 (56.81)	III
Refund Policy	4 (13.30)	3 (10.00)	7 (15.09)	XIV
Warranty and claims	6 (20.00)	4 (13.30)	10 (22.2)	XI
Poor quality of product	8 (26.70)	13 (43.30)	21 (47.72)	IV
Delay in delivery	9 (30.00)	6 (20.00)	15 (34.09)	VII
High delivery charge	5 (16.70)	13 (43.30)	18 (40.90)	V
Non-delivery	1 (3.30)	2 (6.70)	3 (6.81)	XV
Product damage	5 (16.70)	7 (23.30)	12 (27.28)	VIII
Receive wrong product	4 (13.30)	4 (13.30)	8 (18.18)	XII
Can't touch and seen	10 (33.30)	20 (66.70)	30 (68.18)	II
Color variation	13 (43.30)	21 (70.00)	34 (77.27)	I
Difficulty in returning the product	5 (16.70)	10 (33.30)	15 (34.09)	VI
Transaction issues	1 (3.30)	-	1 (2.27)	XVI

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentage

Table 7: Satisfaction levels of the students with online shopping N=60

Satisfaction	Male	Female
Very high	2 (6.50)	1 (3.30)
High	11 (35.50)	13 (43.40)
Neutral	16 (51.60)	15 (50.00)
Low	2 (6.40)	1 (3.30)
Very low	-	-

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentage

Table 8: Correlation between time spent on internet and frequency of online shopping for post graduate students N=60

Variables	Male		Female	
	Time spent		Online shopping	
Time spent	1		1	
Online shopping	0.066	1	0.071	1

CONCLUSION

This study has revealed the issues and behaviour patterns related to online shopping. However, given today's scenario, it is likely that online shopping will become equally popular among people of all ages. Online shopping is increasing in popularity among people, particularly the younger generation. Convenience and time savings, as well as discounts and competitive prices, are the primary motivating factors for internet shopping. According to the findings of the study, the vast majority of customers have a positive attitude towards the practice of online shopping; yet, the vast majority of customers are negatively affected by color variation and high delivery costs. The vast majority of students reported a moderate level of contentment with the convenience of purchasing online; hence, businesses should make every effort to enhance the quality of their offerings and ensure that they do not overcharge for shipping.

Future Scope of the Study

1. Future studies can use larger and diverse samples across age, income, education, and urban-rural groups for more generalizable findings.
2. Further research can examine emerging trends such as mobile shopping, digital payments, social media, AI and personalized recommendations.
3. Future studies can address key online shopping challenges, including colour variation, high delivery costs and lack of physical product inspection, to improve consumer trust and satisfaction.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest associated with this study or its publication.

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