ANALYSIS ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR AND PERCEPTION TOWARDS ONLINE SHOPPING

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Abstract

This research investigates online consumer behavior in Bhopal, India's online retail sector. It examines influences such as pricing, product quality, variety, promotional schemes, and perceived online shopping benefits. The study formulates hypotheses to gauge the impact of these factors on consumer actions. It delves into pricing strategies, product assortments, promotional offers, and consumers' views on time and cost savings. Through rigorous analysis, the research provides insights into India's online shopping habits, informing strategies for retailers, marketers, and policymakers. The Bhopal-centric approach also reveals regional subtleties in global online retail trends. In essence, this study elucidates factors affecting choices in the ever-evolving online retail landscape in Bhopal, India..

Keywords: *Consumer Behavior, Online Shopping, E-Commerce, Price Sensitivity, Product Variety, Product Quality, Promotional Schemes, Time Saving, Cost Saving, Purchase Intention, Buying Behaviour, Perceptions, Preferences, Indian Market, Bhopal, Retail Strategies*

Introduction

India's surge in internet shopping is rivaling traditional retail due to a decade-long dramatic increase in internet usage. Aided by widespread mobile use and supportive government policies, India plays a pivotal role in global e-commerce growth. The 2016 demonetization, announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, reshaped the digital payment landscape, catalyzing the rise of digital wallets. This transition shifted consumer perceptions, leading to increased online transactions through various digital methods.

Online shopping provides a vast range of products and services, from fashion to insurance. According to the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI), online sales in 2011 totaled Rs. 46,520 crores. By 2013, the digital commerce sector had grown by 33%, with travel accounting for 71% of sales. In 2020, post-COVID-19 lockdowns propelled digital commerce to 5.46 lakh crore as consumers shifted to home-based purchasing.

With India housing one of the world's youngest populations, over 2 million tech-savvy new graduates annually enter its workforce. As the benefits of online shopping become apparent, such as time-saving and convenience, consumers increasingly prefer it. Giants like Amazon and Flipkart initiated their journey as online book sellers, offering a streamlined shopping experience. Despite challenges, the internet provides an efficient platform for businesses, attracting many traditional retailers to e-commerce within a decade. As e-commerce burgeoned, academics sought to understand online consumer behavior, adapting traditional models for online settings. Online shopping offers unparalleled convenience, making it an increasingly preferred choice over conventional shopping. As this trend amplifies, research in the domain intensifies. The primary aim of the present research is to delve into consumer perceptions of online shopping. The digital transformation in India is not just about convenience but also about the evolving consumer mindset. The younger generation, comfortable with technology, is challenging the norms of traditional shopping. Their inclination towards online shopping isn't solely due to the ease it offers but also the vast variety, competitive pricing, and personalized shopping experiences that e-platforms can provide.

Moreover, customer reviews and ratings available online further boost the confidence of potential buyers. Real-time feedback and the ability to compare products on the go have empowered consumers, making them more informed and selective. Furthermore, e-commerce platforms offer a plethora of discounts, loyalty programs, and cashback options, which are enticing to the Indian consumer base, known for its value-driven shopping behavior.

Additionally, the logistical infrastructure supporting online shopping in India is improving. Faster delivery times, easy return policies, and varied payment options, including cash on delivery, have further cemented the position of online shopping.

Yet, it's not just about metropolitan cities. Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities in India are also witnessing a surge in online shopping. The expansion of internet access and mobile penetration into these cities has unlocked a massive new demographic of digital consumers. Brands are becoming aware of this shift. Traditional retailers are either transitioning or augmenting their existing models with online platforms. Collaborative ventures, partnerships with delivery services, and digital marketing campaigns are on the rise, all aiming to capture a slice of the burgeoning online market.

In conclusion, as the digital landscape in India continues to evolve, so will the nuances of online consumer behavior. Understanding these shifts, backed by comprehensive research, is imperative for businesses to remain relevant and competitive in the ever-changing e-commerce scenario.

2. Literature Review

Katta and Patro (2018) categorized internet shoppers into first-time buyers, occasional, frequent, and regular online shoppers. Their study highlighted platform reliability, data security, customer service,

and website design as key influencers of purchasing decisions, noting varied perspectives among shopper categories. Alyoubi et al. (2015) emphasized the influence of the internet on e-commerce growth in developing nations, finding that Pakistani consumers prioritize convenience, trust, price perception, and data accessibility differently from Western counterparts.

Ahuja et al. (2003) assessed product and service preferences linked to buying attitudes. College students ranked convenience (28%), better pricing (25%), and time-saving (23%) as primary motivations, while non-students ranked them differently.

Alam et al. (2008) evaluated factors affecting young Malaysians' online purchases. Their study of 496 undergraduates indicated website design, reliability, customer service, and privacy as pivotal elements. Similarly, Adnan (2014) researched factors influencing Pakistani online shoppers, emphasizing psychological aspects, particularly security and trust, over website design or hedonic motivations.

Aimol et al. (2014) found time savings, ease of use, product-specific information, and straightforward price comparison as the top factors for online purchases among their sample from Allahabad. Meanwhile, Bhatnagar, Misra, and Rao (2000) studied online buying risk and convenience, noting minimal effects of demographic factors.

Baveja and Rastogi (2000) stressed online customer loyalty's impact on profitability. Bhatt (2014) examined consumer attitudes in Gujarat, identifying perceived security, privacy, and usefulness as influencing factors. Bosnjak et al. (2007) related online shopping intentions to personality traits, highlighting emotional over logical decision-making. Trust was underlined as pivotal for online retail by Büttner and Göritz (2008). Cai and Jun (2003) spotlighted six service perceptions, with accessibility impacting overall service quality but not satisfaction. Chahal and Sarangal (2016) and Chowdhury and Rahman (2015) highlighted the conveniences and challenges of e-retailing.

Datta et al. (2015) and Dai (2007) discussed technology's influence on the younger consumer base and perceived risks, respectively. Lastly, Dazhiya (2012) analyzed demographic factors' influence on online shopping across five Indian cities, emphasizing gender and family size as significant determinants.

Analysis and Finding

Online shopping has revolutionized the retail sector worldwide. Focusing on Bhopal, India, this analysis segments participants based on demographics and their e-shopping habits. Data tables detail the participants' geographical location, age, relationship status, education, occupation, gender, income, e-shopping experience, purchase frequency, internet usage, shopping motivations, website choices, product discovery, payment methods, and spending trends. These insights are pivotal for businesses and policymakers to optimize e-commerce strategies. The rise of the internet and e-

commerce platforms offer consumers unparalleled convenience, variety, and accessibility. Grasping the nuances of online shopper profiles and behaviors is essential for businesses targeting this expanding demographic.

Table No - 4.1 Classification of the respondents based on their Wards

S. No	Division of City Corporation	Number of Respondents
1.	Zone 1	140
2.	Zone 2	160
3.	Zone 3	155
4.	Zone 4	145
	Total	600

This study, conducted in Bhopal, India, delves into participant demographics and online shopping habits, including preferences, behaviors, and motivations. Covering a diverse range of participants from different city districts, age brackets, relationship statuses, educational backgrounds, professions, genders, and income levels, the data provides a detailed snapshot of the e-shopping landscape. Table 4.1 details the geographical distribution of the 600 participants across Bhopal's districts. The data reveals uneven distribution: District B leads with 160 participants, followed by District C with 155. Districts A and D have 140 and 145 participants, respectively. This disparity underscores the need for region-specific strategies in targeting online consumers effectively..

Table No - 4.2 Distribution of Participants by Age Group

S. No	Age Bracket	Participant Count	Percentage
1	Under 20	290	48.3
2	21 - 30	145	24.2
3	31 - 40	100	16.7
4	Over 40	65	10.8

Table No - 4.3 Distribution of Participants Based on Relationship Status

S. No	Relationship Status	Participant Count	Percentage
1	Married	280	46.7
2	Single	220	36.7
3	Bereaved	100	16.6

Table No - 4.4 Participants' Educational Background

S. No	Education Level	Participant Count	Percentage
1	Trade Certificate	190	31.7
2	Undergraduate	390	65.0
3	Postgraduate	10	1.7
4	Advanced Professional	10	1.6

In a study from Bhopal, India, participants' demographics and online shopping behaviors were analyzed. Table 4.2 indicates a youthful tilt, with 48.3% under 20 and 24.2% aged 21-30, emphasizing the digital preference of younger consumers. Table 4.3 reveals relationship dynamics: 46.7% married and 36.7% single, showcasing diverse shopping needs based on marital status. Education, a crucial influencer in shopping behavior, is highlighted in Table 4.4, which categorizes participants by education levels. Overall, the rise of online shopping has transformed global retail. In Bhopal, factors like age, relationship status, and education profoundly influence e-shopping behaviors. As e-commerce grows, understanding these nuances allows businesses to better serve and engage with their customers, ensuring they address specific needs and preferences across demographics..

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In a Bhopal-based study on online shopping behavior, participant demographics were extensively analyzed. The study captured diverse participants across city districts, age, relationship status, education, job types, gender, income, and e-shopping experience. Data tables provide a holistic view of these demographics and their online shopping patterns. Table 4.1 details the distribution across Bhopal's districts, with a total of 600 participants. District B leads with 160 respondents, followed by

District C with 155. Districts A and D have 140 and 145 participants respectively. The uneven distribution emphasizes the need for district-specific strategies when targeting online consumers, catering to regional variations in consumer behavior..

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Table No - 4.6 Participants' Educational Background

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3	Postgraduate	10	1.7
4	Advanced Professional	10	1.6

Table 4.2 of the Bhopal study shows the age distribution of online shoppers, with a majority (48.3%)

being under 20 years old, emphasizing the trend among younger consumers. Tables 4.3 and 4.4 categorize participants by relationship status and education. Most respondents are married (46.7%), indicating the potential differences in shopping needs based on marital status. The study further classifies participants by their educational background, highlighting its influence on shopping behaviors. Understanding these demographics, such as age, relationship status, and education, helps businesses tailor their online shopping experiences and offerings more effectively to cater to different consumer segments..

Conclusion

In an analysis of online shopping behavior in Bhopal, India, several insights emerged. Notably, gender differences were not statistically significant, implying online retailers might not need gender-specific strategies. However, inclusivity for both genders remains crucial. Similarly, educational qualifications, income levels, and job titles didn't significantly dictate online purchase preferences. E-commerce platforms should emphasize clarity in content, offer value across price ranges, and cater to a broad spectrum of professionals.

The most influential factor in online purchasing was trust. Establishing credibility and trustworthiness is vital for e-commerce businesses. The findings emphasize the importance of understanding not just demographics but also factors like trust and reputation when tailoring strategies.

These insights equip businesses, marketers, and policymakers to effectively engage with the diverse online shopping community. Factors like age, relationship status, and geographic distribution offer vital data for crafting targeted strategies. Meanwhile, understanding online shopping habits, from website preferences to payment methods, can further refine a business's approach. As e-commerce continues to evolve, staying informed on customer demographics and behaviors is essential for success.

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