

“A Study on Attitude and Perception towards Online Shopping”

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Abstract: Nowadays Consumers buy goods or services directly from a seller over the Internet. Online Shopping is a form of Electronic commerce (E-commerce) that provides both the Organisations and Consumers with many options to choose from. On one hand Consumers have access to wide range of products and the comfort to shop from home while on the other hand Organisations can cater to different markets at a very low cost. With the help of Internet whole World can revolve around our finger tips. World has become a Global village. There has been a tremendous rise in the number of internet users. Internet has revolutionized the outlook and mode of living. Various technologies like smart phones, laptops, tablets have stimulated the Consumers to go for online shopping. In this paper we have represented the results of a questionnaire survey which has focussed on understanding the perception and attitude of online shoppers when segmented by gender. A questionnaire survey has been carried out and the results were interpreted with the help of IBM SPSS tool. It has been observed that there is no significant difference in the perception and attitude of online shoppers when they are segmented by gender.

Keywords: E-commerce, perception, attitude & questionnaire survey

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I. Introduction

The aim of marketing is to meet and satisfy target customers' needs and wants. Consumers buy or acquire goods and services for personal consumption to satisfy their needs and wants. The field of consumer behaviour studies how individuals, groups buy, use and dispose of goods, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy their needs and desires. Understanding consumer behaviour is never simple – customers may say one thing but do another. Consumers may respond to influences that change their minds at the last minute. Small companies such as corner grocery store and corporate companies – Samsung, stand to gain profit from understanding how and why customers buy.

The term consumer behaviour is defined as the behaviour that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs [Consumer Behavior, L.G.Schiffman&L.L.Kanuk, 2007]. Consumer behaviour focuses on how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources (time, money, effort) on consumption-related items. That includes what they buy, why they buy it, when they buy it, where they buy it, how often they buy it, how often they use it, how they evaluate it after the purchase, the impact of such evaluations on future purchases, and how they dispose of it.

A brand is the identity of a specific product, service, or business. The American Marketing Association defines a brand as “a name, term, sign, symbol, design or a combination of the above to identify the goods or service of a seller and differentiate it from the rest of the competitors.” A brand is thus a product or service that adds dimensions that differentiate it in some way from other products or services designed to satisfy the need. These differences may be functional, rational, rational, or tangible-related to product performance of the brand. They may also be more symbolic, emotional or intangible-related to what the brand represent [Kotler, Keller, Koshy &Jha, (255) 2007].

The word brand began simply as a way to tell one person's cattle from another by means of a hot iron stamp. A legally protected brand name is called a trademark. The word brand has continued to evolve to encompass identity - it affects the personality of a product, company or service [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brand].

Branding has been around for centuries as a means to distinguish the goods of one producer from those of another. The earliest signs of branding in Europe were the medieval guilds' requirement that craftspeople put trademarks on their products to protect themselves and consumers against inferior quality. In the fine, arts

branding began with artists signing their works. Brands today play a number of important roles that improve consumers' lives and enhance the financial value of firms [Kotler, Keller, Koshy & Jha, (255) 2007].

Fashion is anything that is accepted by a substantial group of people at a given time, in a given place [Elaine Stone]. A fashion brand is something that customers want to be associated with through the conspicuous use (wearing) of its products [Tim Jackson and David Shaw 2009].

Fashion may be defined as a distinctive method of expression that has been accepted and adopted by a number of people as the result of common thought [M.S.Bohlinger, (107) 2001]. It is what the majority of people have accepted at a given time in a particular consumer market. Fashion is not a universal phenomenon what is accepted as fashion in one geographic area is not necessarily fashion in another geographic area and perhaps is not even acceptable. Different fashions exist for different age groups. Different groups have different fashion tastes. Fashion helps the individual to fulfil many emotional and practical needs.

Consumer perception applies the concept of sensory perception to marketing and advertising. Just as sensory perception relates to how humans perceive and process sensory stimuli through their five senses, consumer perception pertains to how individuals form opinions about companies and the merchandise they offer through the purchases they make. Merchants apply consumer perception theory to determine how their customers perceive them. They also use consumer perception theory to develop marketing and advertising strategies intended to retain current customers and attract new ones.

Perception is defined as “the process by which an individual selects, organizes, and interprets stimuli into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world”. It can be described as “how we see the world around us”. Two individuals may be exposed to the same stimuli under the same apparent conditions, but how each person recognizes, selects, organizes, and interprets these stimuli is a highly individual process based on each person's own needs, values, and expectations. The influence that each of these variables has on the perceptual process.

Consumer perception focuses on how marketers use the knowledge of perception to manipulate consumers.

Consumers' selection of stimuli from the environment is based on the interaction of their expectations and motives with the stimulus itself. The principles of selective perception include the following concepts: selective exposure, selective attention, perceptual defence, and perceptual blocking.

II. Literature Survey

Jenni Romaneiu (2013) the results showed a positive relationship, where those with a higher buying frequency and a higher share of category requirements are more likely to give brand associations. The findings also showed that share of category requirements was a greater driver of brand association responses than buying frequency. Consumer behavior which was earlier termed as „overt behavior“ is a continuous consumption process related to pre-purchase, purchase and post purchase issues. This refers to the physical action of consumers that can be directly observed and measured by others.

Joergens (2006)Niinimaki (2011) Although there is a demand of fashion clothes, it is not a viable level given the rate at which they are selling.

According to Michael R.Solomon, & Nancy J.Rabolt (2004), consumer behavior is the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups, select purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs and desires.

According to Frank R.Kardes (2002), consumer behavior is the study of human or consumer responds to products, services and the marketing of products and services. The concept of consumer behavior is that mostly people buy products not for what they do but for what they stand for.

Sproles and Kendall(1986) established a model to conceptualize consumer decision making behavior with eight consumer mental orientation variables viz. perfectionism consciousness, brand consciousness, novelty and fashion consciousness, impulsive and careless consumer, confused by over choice consumer, habitual and brand loyal consumer, recreational and hedonic shopping consciousness and price and value consciousness.

Park J.H and Lennon, S.J (2004) in their study on television apparel shopping and impulse buying found that there is a positive relationship between impulse buying and television exposure.

Kassarjian (1971) states that consumer behavior researchers must develop their own definitions and design their instruments to measure the personality variables that go into the purchase decision. This study developed apparel buying behavior model on the basis of five dimensions, namely consumer characteristics, reference groups, store attributes, promotion and product attributes. All these dimensions are created based on the various research studies on the consumer behavior and also through the opinion of various experts from the industry and academic institutions.

III. Research Methodology:

Exploratory and descriptive research methodology has been followed to examine buying behavior, attitude, and perception of online consumers buying fashion apparel. The research involved gathering of both primary and secondary data. Secondary data has been collected referring to text books related consumer buying behavior, fashion concepts, magazines, journals, newspapers, and various websites through internet. For the purpose of collecting primary data, survey method was used. Structured, undisguised and close and open-ended questionnaire will be prepared for the consumer survey.

Appropriate statistical tools such as Microsoft Excel or Statistics Package for Social Science software (SPSS) has been used to ascertain the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. Online consumer perception, attitude, and buying behavior with respect to fashion apparels will be validated.

IV. Results & Discussions

Statement 1: To understand the attitude and perception towards online shopping when segmented by gender.

H0: There is no difference in attitude and perception towards online shopping when segmented by gender.

H1: There is significant difference in attitude and perception towards online shopping when segmented by gender.

Factor: Gender

Independent Variables:

- It is convenient to shop online (I can shop from anywhere)
- There are Multiple Brands and more options (Better assortment and variety of products/services)
- More options for gifting at one platform
- Online shopping saves time
- No time restrictions to make purchase
- Comparison can be made simultaneously for price and offers
- Better deals, discounts and offers
- Product ratings and Review of the Product is available
- Less compulsive shopping
- No Pressure of sale
- Saves transportation costs
- Easy home delivery
- It takes less time to switch between different shopping platforms (visiting more physical stores)
- I do not like to interact with sales representative/shopkeeper
- My friends, family members, colleagues also do online shopping
- Away from Crowd (I do not like to shop in crowded shopping areas)
- Positive online shopping experience: Website image/reputation
- Positive online shopping experience: Website design/
- Positive online shopping experience: Product description and visual representation
- Positive online shopping experience: Easy to browse/ ease of navigation
- Positive online shopping experience: Website security/ payment security options
- Positive online shopping experience: Uploading time
- Positive online shopping experience: Delivery time
- Positive online shopping experience: Chat bot/box will guide you to make purchases
- Positive online shopping experience: Online customer reviews, feedbacks, complaints
- Positive online shopping experience: Return policies and after sale services (Exchange policy, Guarantee /Warranties)
- Positive online shopping experience: Promotional offers (Sales/discounts, coupons)
- Positive online shopping experience: Suggestions of Friends, family members and colleagues

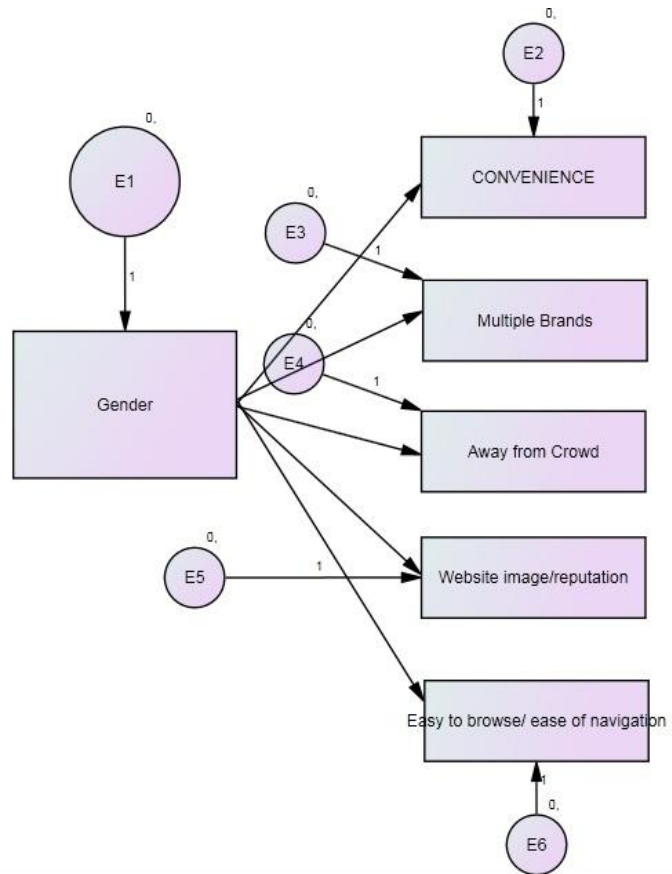


Figure 1: Structure equation model

Above figure represents few important variables and some important factors which attract more and more customers for online shopping.

Table 1: Anova Table for Hypothesis Testing

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
It is convenient to shop online (I can shop from anywhere)	Between Groups	.022	1	.022	.043	.835
	Within Groups	283.346	549	.516		
	Total	283.368	550			
There are Multiple Brands and more options (Better assortment and variety of products/services)	Between Groups	1.315	1	1.315	2.634	.105
	Within Groups	274.148	549	.499		
	Total	275.463	550			
More options for gifting at one platform	Between Groups	2.043	1	2.043	4.104	.043
	Within Groups	273.260	549	.498		
	Total	275.303	550			
Online shopping saves time	Between Groups	.299	1	.299	.665	.415
	Within Groups	246.975	549	.450		
	Total	247.274	550			
No time restrictions to make purchase	Between Groups	1.915	1	1.915	5.448	.020
	Within Groups	192.971	549	.351		
	Total	194.886	550			

Comparison can be made simultaneously for price and offers	Between Groups	2.449	1	2.449	6.766	.010
	Within Groups	198.748	549	.362		
	Total	201.198	550			
Better deals, discounts and offers	Between Groups	.850	1	.850	2.160	.142
	Within Groups	215.981	549	.393		
	Total	216.831	550			
Product ratings and Review of the Product is available	Between Groups	.091	1	.091	.219	.640
	Within Groups	227.031	549	.414		
	Total	227.122	550			
Less compulsive shopping	Between Groups	.125	1	.125	.206	.650
	Within Groups	331.462	549	.604		
	Total	331.586	550			
No Pressure of sale	Between Groups	2.085	1	2.085	4.267	.039
	Within Groups	268.231	549	.489		
	Total	270.316	550			
Saves transportation costs	Between Groups	2.792	1	2.792	6.396	.012
	Within Groups	239.640	549	.437		
	Total	242.432	550			
Easy home delivery	Between Groups	.079	1	.079	.266	.606
	Within Groups	162.161	549	.295		
	Total	162.240	550			
It takes less time to switch between different shopping platforms (visiting more physical stores)	Between Groups	.068	1	.068	.182	.670
	Within Groups	203.715	549	.371		
	Total	203.782	550			
I do not like to interact with sales representative/shopkeeper	Between Groups	3.455	1	3.455	2.274	.132
	Within Groups	833.950	549	1.519		
	Total	837.405	550			
My friends, family members, colleagues also do online shopping	Between Groups	3.105	1	3.105	6.748	.010
	Within Groups	252.641	549	.460		
	Total	255.746	550			
Away from Crowd (I do not like to shop in crowded shopping areas)	Between Groups	3.977	1	3.977	2.970	.085
	Within Groups	735.145	549	1.339		
	Total	739.122	550			
Positive online shopping experience: Website image/reputation	Between Groups	1.235	1	1.235	.773	.380
	Within Groups	876.504	549	1.597		
	Total	877.739	550			
Positive online shopping experience: Website design/	Between Groups	.270	1	.270	.189	.664
	Within Groups	783.951	549	1.428		
	Total	784.221	550			
Positive online shopping	Between Groups	.560	1	.560	.174	.676

experience: Product description and visual representation	Within Groups	1762.765	549	3.211		
	Total	1763.325	550			
Positive online shopping experience: Easy to browse/ ease of navigation	Between Groups	14.703	1	14.703	4.133	.043
	Within Groups	1953.152	549	3.558		
	Total	1967.855	550			
Positive online shopping experience: Website security/ payment security options	Between Groups	1.502	1	1.502	1.569	.211
	Within Groups	525.696	549	.958		
	Total	527.198	550			
Positive online shopping experience: Uploading time	Between Groups	6.987	1	6.987	1.950	.163
	Within Groups	1967.441	549	3.584		
	Total	1974.428	550			
Positive online shopping experience: Online customer reviews, feedbacks, complaints	Between Groups	.159	1	.159	.096	.757
	Within Groups	911.115	549	1.660		
	Total	911.274	550			
Positive online shopping experience :Return policies and after sale services (Exchange policy, Guarantee /Warranties)	Between Groups	.015	1	.015	.012	.914
	Within Groups	726.460	549	1.323		
	Total	726.475	550			
Positive online shopping experience: Promotional offers (Sales/discounts, coupons)	Between Groups	.974	1	.974	.519	.472
	Within Groups	1031.581	549	1.879		
	Total	1032.555	550			
Positive online shopping experience: Suggestions of Friends, family members and colleagues	Between Groups	2.622	1	2.622	.828	.363
	Within Groups	1738.681	549	3.167		
	Total	1741.303	550			

Degrees of freedom 1:

Degrees of freedom 2:

Probability level:

Critical F-value: 3.85845231

As observed Avg. F (statistic Value) = 2.13 < F(Critical Value) 3.8584 at Probability Level 0.05, 95% Confidence Level, & Avg. Level of Significance 0.348 > 0.05, Hence we reject Alternate Hypothesis & accept Null Hypothesis. There is no difference in attitude and perception towards online shopping when segmented by gender.

V. Conclusion

Online shopping is extremely convenient and has become extremely popular. Consumers have shown different buying behaviours when shopping online as compared to when they are shopping in a physical store. Online shopping is very convenient and beneficial. People who come from villages and are living in cities are prone to use online options. Service class is more interested in doing shopping online. Customer’s age, online transaction security, personal privacy, convenience, price transparency, accessibility, time saving, trust etc. are several factors which doesn’t remain same all the time but they cannot be ignored. Customer should be given a free orientation for how to use debit card, credit card and inter banking fund transfer so that most of people can use digital mode of payment while doing online shopping and they would not feel any risk with online transaction. Customers are purchasing the goods and services online because it saves time, and more selection,

for goods is available as compare to offline shopping. It has been observed that there is no significant difference in the perception and attitude of online shoppers when they are segmented by gender

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