



ONLINE SHOPPERS BEHAVIOUR AND PERCEPTION - AN EMPERICAL STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO COIMBATORE CITY

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Abstract:

Online shopping is purchasing of products or services over the Internet. Online shopping has grown in popularity over the years, mainly because people find it convenient and easy to shop from the comfort of their home or office. The study is confined to the analysis of the perception of online shopping with respect to the selected product categories and websites. The statistical tools have been employed in analyzing the data are Chi-square test, Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). In India, online shopping is just gathering momentum and people have just started using it since the last few years. The convenience of online shopping has been realized and the word is slowly spreading. Because of this, marketers have also increased in number and variety and quantum of products offered for sale online has also increased.

Key Words: Online Shopping, Behaviour, Consumer Perception, Ebay, Flipkart & Amazon

Introduction:

Marketing is communicating the value of a product, service or brand to customers, for the purpose of promoting or selling that product, service, or brand. The main purpose is to increase sales of the product and profits of the company. Marketing acts a support system to the sales team by propagating the message and information to the target audience. Marketing techniques include choosing target markets through market analysis and marketing segmentation, as well as understanding consumer behavior and advertising a product's value to the customer. From a societal point of view, marketing is the link between a society's material requirements and its economic patterns of response. Marketing processes satisfies these needs and wants through exchange processes and building long-term relationships.

Online Shopping:

Online shopping is purchasing of products or services over the Internet. Online shopping has grown in popularity over the years, mainly because people find it convenient and easy to shop from the comfort of their home or office. One of the most enticing factor about online shopping, particularly during a holiday season, it alleviates the need to wait in long lines or search from store to store for a particular item. Online contracts are classified as distance contracts, which means that the trader (service provider, seller) and the consumer (natural person who is acting for purposes which are outside his trade, business or profession), in lack of their simultaneous, actual and physical presence enter into contract not by meeting in person (e.g. in commercial premises, market, open-air market, via trade agent etc.), but only in an electronic way.

Statement of the Problem:

There are several studies which contribute to the understanding of online shopping field. However there is a lack of clear understanding of the factors that determine online shopping attitudes and behavior. There is still a need for closer scrutiny of online shopping mainly due to the fact that there are cultural differences and imperfections in consumer markets. Coimbatore, being an industrial city, which depicts all these factors, has been taken up in the present study.

Scope of the Study:

The study is confined to the analysis of the perception of online shopping with respect to the selected product categories and websites. It is to identify the factors influencing online purchase intention and to assess the level of satisfaction of the customers regarding the selected websites.

Objectives of the Study:

- ✓ To define the demographic profile of the respondents of the study.
- ✓ To assess the online shopping behavior in general and with respect to selected product categories and websites.
- ✓ To analyse the perception of online shoppers with respect to their expectations regarding the attributes of shopping websites.
- ✓ To assess the level of satisfaction of the customers with respect to selected websites.
- ✓ To suggest suitable measures based on the findings of the study.

Research Methodology:

The following statistical tools have been employed in analysing the data in this study

- ✓ Chi-square test
- ✓ Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance

✓ Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Sample:

Items under consideration in any field of inquiry constitute a ‘universe’ or ‘population’. A sample is a part of the target population. A sample design is a definite plan for obtaining a sample from a given population. It refers to the technique or the procedure the researcher would adopt in selecting items for the sample. Depending upon the research, the researcher can select a sample design which would be reliable and appropriate for his/her research study. The sample size consisted of 150 respondents who are online shoppers in Coimbatore city. Accordingly convenient sampling method has been used in the present study. The data has been collected from the respondents for a period of four months.

Limitations of the Study:

The present study has the following limitations:

- ✓ Data has been collected only from a sample of 150 respondents who are online shoppers with the selected websites and hence the results of this study may not be applicable across.
- ✓ Data has been collected from Coimbatore and hence the results of the data is region-specific.
- ✓ Sample respondents for this research have been selected using convenient sampling technique and hence the limitations of non-random sampling is applicable.

Analysis and Interpretation:

Online Shopping Behaviour - Chi-Square Analysis

H_{01} - There is no significant association between the demographic factors and the source of awareness about online shopping.

Table 1: Demographic factors and source of awareness about online shopping- Chi-square test

Demographic Factors	Chi-square Value	Significance
Gender	2.693	0.132
Marital Status	0.632	0.275
Age	2.656	0.448
Education	3.405	0.333
Occupation	5.527	0.478
Income	4.628	0.201

As could be observed from the above table, it is evident that none of the chi-square values is significant at 5 per cent level and hence the hypothesis was accepted. It can therefore be inferred that there was no significant association between the demographic variables and source of awareness about online shopping.

H_{02} - There is no significant association between the demographic factors and the tenure of online shopping

Table 2: Demographic factors and tenure of online shopping - Chi-square test

Demographic Factors	Chi-square Value	Significance
Gender	2.390	0.534
Marital Status	13.330	0.004**
Age	27.799	0.001**
Education	28.301	0.001**
Occupation	28.321	0.047*
Income	54.085	0.000**

* Significant at 5 % level

** Significant at 1 % level

It could be observed from the above table, it is evident that the chi-square values of all the demographic factors except gender are significant and hence the hypothesis has been rejected in these cases. There is significant relationship between these factors and tenure of their online shopping. But with respect to gender, the chi-square value is not significant at 5 level and hence the hypothesis has been accepted in these cases. There is no significant relationship between gender and tenure of online shopping.

H_{03} - There is no significant association between the demographic factors and frequency of online shopping

Table 3: Demographic factors and frequency of online shopping - Chi-square test

Demographic Factors	Chi-square Value	Significance
Gender	24.546	0.105
Marital Status	15.921	0.529
Age	53.193	0.390
Education	61.204	0.155
Occupation	92.262	0.745
Income	97.592	0.000**

** Significant at 1 % level

It could be observed from the above table, that the chi-square values of demographic factors such as gender, marital status, age, education, occupation and income have not been significant and hence the

hypothesis has been accepted in these cases. There is no significant relationship between these factors and the frequency of online shopping. But with respect to income, the chi-square values has been significant at 1 level and hence the hypothesis has been rejected in this case. There is a significant relationship between income and the frequency of online shopping.

Behaviour with Respect to Product Categories –Analysis of Variance (ANOVA):

In order to study the differences in the behaviour of the online shoppers regarding the select product categories among the four categories of respondents based on their online buying behavior namely trial purchasers, occasional buyers, frequent buyers and regular buyers, analysis of variance (ANOVA) has been performed. The dependent variable was their behavior with respect to the product categories and the independent variables were the category of online shoppers. The following hypothesis has been framed for the purpose:

Ho4: There is no significant difference in the purchase behavior with respect to the product categories among the different categories of online shoppers

Table 4: Behaviour with respect to Product Categories among the different categories of Online Shoppers - ANOVA

Analysis of Variance among the Product Categories		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Books	Between Groups	6.079	3	2.026	4.404	.005**
	Within Groups	67.181	146	.460		
	Total	73.260	149			
Clothing and Accessories	Between Groups	3.291	3	1.097	2.353	.075
	Within Groups	68.069	146	.466		
	Total	71.360	149			
Electronics	Between Groups	4.783	3	1.594	3.150	.027*
	Within Groups	73.891	146	.506		
	Total	78.673	149			
Furniture and Furnishings	Between Groups	6.419	3	2.140	6.730	.000**
	Within Groups	46.414	146	.318		
	Total	52.833	149			
Kitchen Equipments	Between Groups	2.402	3	.801	1.524	.211
	Within Groups	76.691	146	.525		
	Total	79.093	149			
Gift Articles	Between Groups	2.542	3	.847	1.393	.247
	Within Groups	88.818	146	.608		
	Total	91.360	149			
Sports and Fitness Equipments	Between Groups	.821	3	.274	.663	.576
	Within Groups	60.253	146	.413		
	Total	61.073	149			
Toys and Games	Between Groups	.509	3	.170	.359	.782
	Within Groups	68.885	146	.472		
	Total	69.393	149			
Stationery	Between Groups	2.187	3	.729	1.494	.219
	Within Groups	71.253	146	.488		
	Total	73.440	149			
Cosmetics and Personal Care products	Between Groups	.606	3	.202	.332	.802
	Within Groups	88.967	146	.609		
	Total	89.573	149			

* Significant at 5 % level

** Significant at 1 % level

It could be observed from the table that all the f values (except for books, electronics and furniture and furnishings) have been found to be not significant and hence the hypothesis has been accepted. This showed that there were no significant differences among the four categories of online shoppers in their purchase behavior with respect to these product categories. In case of books, electronics and furniture and furnishings, the f value was significant and the hypothesis has been rejected. This showed that there were significant differences among the four categories of online shoppers in their purchase behavior with respect to these product categories.

Behaviour with Respect to select Shopping Websites –Analysis of Variance (ANOVA):

In order to study the differences in the behaviour of the online shoppers regarding the select online shopping websites among the four categories of respondents based on their online buying behavior namely trial purchasers, occasional buyers, frequent buyers and regular buyers, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was

performed. The dependent variable was their behavior with respect to the shopping websites and the independent variables were the category of online shoppers. The following hypothesis has been framed for this purpose:

H₀₅: There is no significant difference in the purchase behavior with respect to the online shopping websites among the different categories of online shoppers

Table 5: Behaviour with respect to Online Shopping Websites among the different categories of Online Shoppers – ANOVA

Analysis of Variance among the Product Categories		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Amazon	Between Groups	5.281	3	1.760	3.052	.031*
	Within Groups	84.219	146	.577		
	Total	89.500	149			
Ebay	Between Groups	.271	3	.090	.325	.807
	Within Groups	40.589	146	.278		
	Total	40.860	149			
Flipkart	Between Groups	1.915	3	.638	1.314	.272
	Within Groups	70.918	146	.486		
	Total	72.833	149			
Snapdeal	Between Groups	5.622	3	1.874	2.932	.036*
	Within Groups	93.318	146	.639		
	Total	98.940	149			

** Significant at 5 % level

It could be observed from the table that all the f values for Amazon and Snapdeal have been found to be significant at 5% level of significance and hence the hypothesis has been rejected. This showed that there were significant differences among the four categories of online shoppers in their purchase behavior with respect to these shopping websites. But in case of Ebay and Flipkart, the f values have not been significant and the hypothesis has been accepted. This showed that there were no significant differences among the four categories of online shoppers in their purchase behavior with respect to these shopping sites.

Perception of the Respondents Regarding Website Attributes:

The success of any business depends upon its ability to attract and retain customers and the perception of the customers regarding the business. Consumer perception describes how present customers and potential customers view a company, its products and services and their future expectations. Consumer perception is important for business since it can influence consumer behavior which ultimately affects the profitability of the business. In order to understand their perception towards online shopping websites, the respondents were given seven attributes of a website which they would probably look forward the most in them. The attributes were multiple payment gateways, credibility, social networking integration, customer friendliness, design, privacy and secure checkout and varieties of goods. The respondents were asked to rank these attributes in their order of importance from 1 to 7 giving 1 to the highest preferred factor, 2 for the next and so on. Mean ranks were calculated to consolidate the results based on the weighted average method and presented in the following table:

Table 6: Perception of the respondents regarding website attributes – Mean Rank

Website Attributes	Mean Rank	Rank
Multiple Payment Gateways	3.79	3
Credibility	4.32	6
Social Networking Integration	4.14	4
Customer Friendliness	3.43	1
Design	3.61	2
Privacy and Secure Checkout	4.49	7
Varieties of Goods	4.22	5

Based on the observation from the above table, it is evident that the respondents give the highest importance to customer friendliness in the shopping websites followed by design, multiple payment gateways, social networking integration, varieties of goods, credibility and privacy secure checkout.

Table 7: Perception of the respondents regarding website attributes– Kendall’s Coefficient of Concordance

N	150
Kendall's W ^a	.033
Df	6
Asymp. Sig.	.000

The above table has revealed that the Kendall’s Coefficient of Concordance is 0.033 i.e 3.3% to the mean ranks calculated with respect to the perception of the respondents regarding online shopping websites

attributes. This coefficient is very low which indicates that there is a vast difference of opinion among the respondents regarding their perception about the attributes.

Table 8: Gender-wise Perception of the respondents regarding website attributes– Mean Rank

Website Attributes	Male		Female	
	Mean Rank	Rank	Mean Rank	Rank
Multiple Payment Gateways	3.34	1	4.13	4
Credibility	3.91	3	4.62	6
Social Networking Integration	4.13	5	4.15	5
Customer Friendliness	3.80	2	3.15	1
Design	3.95	4	3.40	2
Privacy and Secure Checkout	4.30	6	4.63	7
Varieties of Goods	4.63	7	3.92	3

It is evident from the above table that there is a vast difference in the perception of male and female respondents regarding the shopping website attributes. The male respondents gave highest importance to multiple payment gateways followed by customer friendliness, credibility, design, social networking integration, privacy and secure check out and varieties of goods. But the female respondents have given highest importance to customer friendliness, design, varieties of goods, multiple payment gateways, then social networking integration, credibility and privacy and secure checkout. It is therefore evident that the perception and expectations of male and female respondents are different.

Table 9: Gender-wise Perception of the respondents regarding website attributes – Kendall’s Coefficient of Concordance

Particulars	Male	Female
N	64	86
Kendall's W ^a	0.036	0.069
Df	6	6
Asymp. Sig.	0.033	0.000

The above table has revealed that the Kendall’s Coefficient of Concordance is 0.036 i.e 3.6% in the case of male and 0.069 (6.9%) in the case of female respondents to the mean ranks calculated with respect to the perception of the respondents regarding online shopping websites attributes. This coefficient is very low which has indicated that there is a vast difference of opinion among the respondents in both categories regarding their perception about the attributes. The degree of agreement among the female respondents has been more than the male respondents.

Table 10: Marital Status-wise Perception of the respondents regarding website attributes– Mean Rank

Website Attributes	Married		Single	
	Mean Rank	Rank	Mean Rank	Rank
Multiple Payment Gateways	3.40	1	4.04	3
Credibility	4.24	6	4.36	6
Social Networking Integration	4.22	5	4.09	4
Customer Friendliness	3.45	2	3.41	1
Design	3.91	3	3.42	2
Privacy and Secure Checkout	4.67	7	4.38	7
Varieties of Goods	4.10	4	4.29	5

From the above table, it is clear that there is a difference in the perception of married and single respondents regarding the shopping website attributes. The married respondents gave highest importance to multiple payment gateways followed by customer friendliness, design, varieties, social networking integration, credibility and privacy and secure check out. But the single respondents have given highest importance to customer friendliness, design, multiple payment gateways, then social networking integration, varieties offered, credibility and privacy and secure checkout. It is therefore evident that the perception and expectations of married and single respondents are alike as far as credibility and privacy and security issues are concerned.

Table 11: Marital Status-wise Perception of the respondents regarding website attributes – Kendall’s Coefficient of Concordance

Particulars	Married	Single
N	58	92
Kendall's W ^a	0.045	0.037
Df	6	6

Conclusion:

In India, online shopping is just gathering momentum and people have just started using it since the last few years. The convenience of online shopping has been realized and the word is slowly spreading. Because of this, marketers have also increased in number and variety and quantum of products offered for sale online has

also increased. The findings of this study will help online retailers to understand better the psychology of consumers and also to equip themselves well to attract them. It would be helpful for the managers to work towards newer and newer areas of retailing to offer lower cost and greater service to customers and earn higher returns for themselves as well.

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