

A Study On Impact Of Web Portals On Customers With Reference To Coimbatore City

B.Shirly,MBA,Ph.D. Assistant Professor, Theaivanaiammal College for Women, Villupuram.

Abstract: At any given time there are millions of people purchasing online and each of them is a potential customer for a company providing online sales. Due to the rapid development of Internet, companies that sell their products online face fierce competition. Since there are many potential customers, it is important to understand what the customer wants and needs. If online marketers know and understand the customer's buying behaviour, they can further develop their marketing strategies to attract and retain customers. Online marketing is an area where research pertaining to behavioural issues is lacking and fragmented. Although the number of online buyers continues to increase in India, the success and failure of some web portals emphasizes the need for analysis in terms of behavioural issues. A framework is needed to structure this complex system that affects the demographic, psychographic and situational factors and impacts a customer's decision to shop online, and to develop an in-depth understanding of consumer behaviour. This study seeks to fill this gap by analyzing the opinion of online customers on web portals, which influence intention to purchase online.

Key Words: E-Commerce, Online Shopping, Web Portals, Consumer Behavior, Intention to Purchase, Internet.

1. Introduction

The trend of e-commerce has increased rapidly in recent years with the development of Internet. Easy access to Internet has driven consumers to shop online. Internet is a global communication medium that is increasingly being used as an innovative tool for marketing goods and services. Internet has added a new dimension to the traditional nature of retail shopping (Brown et al., 2003). Internet offers many advantages over traditional shopping channels. Consumers are adopting Internet shopping and shopping online is becoming popular in India. Online shopping is used as a medium for communication and electronic commerce to increase and improve in value, quality and attractiveness of delivering customer benefits and better satisfaction (Ranganathan&Ganapathy, 2002).

2. Review of Literature

Internet is one of the fastest growing media in human history (Balabanis&Vassileiou, 1999) and provides consumers with the opportunity to access an additional shopping medium. Specifically, e-shopping

has brought the retail space into the home (Kraut et al., 2000). Online shopping is more efficient in meeting the customer's needs and wants Grewal et al., (2002). It allows a customer to easily attain knowledge about a brand, product quality, availability, product specifications, prices, and compare that with another brand. This means customers can now make more intelligent purchasing decisions in a way which is not possible through traditional shopping (Brown et al., 2003). When it comes to personal products buyers may feel uncomfortable buying in stores. Moreover, they can purchase anonymously whenever it is convenient. (Monsuwé et al., 2004) Routine tasks like shopping for groceries have become easier for customers who do not like crowds and driving the trolley around the store. Presently, the online shopping trend is getting a boost by the accessibility of smart phones and better broadband connectivity service. Shopping by just clicking the mouse adds to the convenience. Especially young adults are becoming more conscious about personal image and fashion. Demographic variables, namely age, income (Donthu& Garcia, 1999) gender and education(Korgaonkar&Wolin, 2000) monthly family income, frequency of internet usage and time spent per session online (Bannerjy, Dutta& Das Gupta, 2010) are strong predictors of online shopping and thus, demographic variables were considered in the study.

3. Objectives of the Study

- To analyze the opinion of respondents on various shopping web portals.
- To find which shopping web portals are frequently used by the respondents.
- To find which product categories are purchased frequently by the respondents through online.

3.1.Hypothesis

- H1: Irrespective of their personal profile the respondents give their agreement on the shopping web portals under study.
- H2: All the shopping web portals taken into consideration for this study are equally used by the respondents.
- H3: All the Product categories taken into consideration for this study are purchased frequently by the respondents through online.

4. Research Methodology

This research is a descriptive, survey based and single cross-sectional study that is experience based and region specific focused on Impact of web portals on customers. The methodology comprised sampling, data collection and data analysis.

The sampling method followed was non-probability, purposive sampling because this study was conducted only among online buyers. Sampling element was any person who has purchased online more

than once in the previous three months. Sample size of the study was 1110. The sample was collected from Coimbatore city.

A well-structured questionnaire was framed to collect the information from the respondents. The questionnaire is divided into 2 parts. Part A has questions related to respondents' preference towards web portals and product categories. Part B consists of questions relating to the demographic variables of the respondents (age, gender, occupation, qualification, family monthly income, personal expenses, amount spent online). Primary data was collected by the researcher from the respondents by direct oral method for the purpose of research. The data collected was analyzed to study the Impact of web portals on customers.

The statistical tools applied to analyze the objectives were percentage analysis and Chi-square test. Percentage analysis was followed to have a general idea about the personal profile of the respondents. Chi-square test was applied to test the significant difference between observed (O_i's) and expected (E_i's) values.

5. Analysis and Interpretation

5.1 TABLE NO.1 DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONAL PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Profile	Group	Frequency	%
Age	15-20	137	12.3
	21-30	401	36.1
	31-40	304	27.4
	41 and above	268	24.1
	Total	1110	100
Gender	male	561	50.5
	female	549	49.5
	Total	1110	100
Qualification	high school	4	0.4
	higher secondary	100	9
	diploma	103	9.3
	under-graduation	314	28.3
	post-graduation	351	31.6
	professional qualification	238	21.4
	Total	1110	100
Occupation	student	214	19.3
	employed	252	22.7
	professional	201	18.1
	house wife	208	18.7
	business	235	21.2
	Total	1110	100
Family Monthly Income per month in Rupees	15000-30000	115	10.4
	30000-45000	261	23.5
	45000-60000	393	35.4
	60000 and above	341	30.7
	Total	1110	100
Total Monthly Personal Expenses per month in Rupees	less than 1000	176	15.9
	1000-3000	448	40.4
	3000-5000	366	33
	5000 and above	120	10.8

	Total	1110	100
Amount Spent Online per month in Rupees	less than 500	281	25.3
	500-2500	534	48.1
	2500-5000	209	18.8
	more than 5000	86	7.7
	Total	1110	100
No. of Times Purchased in Last 3 Months	Less than 2 times	272	24.5
	2-4times	374	33.7
	5-6times	303	27.3
	more than 6times	161	14.5
	Total	1110	100

5.2 ALLPICATION OF PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

Table.2: Percentage analysis of products purchased online

PRODUCTS	ONLINE PURCHASE	PERCENTAGE
Electronics	711	64.05
Clothing and apparels	711	64.05
Footwear	608	54.77
Accessories	563	50.72
Kitchen and Home appliances	626	56.4
Books	381	34.32
Groceries	501	45.14
Beauty and Skin care	334	30.1
Kids and Toys	357	32.16
Gifts	457	41.17

The items electronics, clothing and apparel, footwear, accessories, kitchen and home appliances are purchased more than 50% of the respondents. Still the interest is to find out whether all the products under study are purchased by almost equal number of respondents and hence chi-square test is applied.

5.3 Application Of (X^2) Chi-Square Test

5.3.1 To find which shopping web portals are frequently used by the respondents.

Chi-square is used to find out which particular shopping web portal is frequently used by majority of the respondents.

Null hypothesis: All the shopping web portals taken into consideration for this study are equally used by the respondents.

Alternative hypothesis: All the shopping web portals taken into consideration for this study are not equally used by the respondents.

Table.3: Test statistics showing frequently used web portals

Web portals	Flipkart	Amazon	Snapdeal	E-Bay	Jabong	Paytm	Shopclues	Total
Observed Value	443	365	365	186	214	251	261	2085
Expected Value	297.85	297.85	297.85	297.85	297.85	297.85	297.85	

$(O_i - E_i)2/E_i$	70.73	15.13	15.13	42	23.06	7.37	4.56	177.98
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$X^2_o = 177.98$, $X^2_e = 12.592$ at 5% level of significance for 6.d.f.

Since $X^2_o > X^2_e$ the null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that all the web portals are not used equally by the respondents. By comparing O_i 's and E_i 's it is understood that flipkart, amazon and snapdeal are the web portals frequently used by the respondents.

5.3.2 To find which products categories are purchased frequently through online by the respondents.

Chi-square is used to find out which particular product categories are frequently purchased through online by majority of the respondents.

Null hypothesis: All the products taken into consideration for this study are equally used by the respondents.

Alternative hypothesis: All the products taken into consideration for this study are not equally used by the respondents.

Table.4: Test statistics showing products categories purchased frequently through online

Products	Electronics	Clothing And Apparels	Footwear	Accessories	Kitchen And Home Appliances	Books	Groceries	Beauty And Skin Care	Kids And Toys	Gifts	Total
Observed Value	711	711	608	563	626	381	501	334	375	457	5239
Expected Value	523.9	523.9	523.9	523.9	523.9	523.9	523.9	523.9	523.9	523.9	
$(O_i - E_i)2/E_i$	66.8	66.8	13.5	0.002	21.08	38.99	1	68.83	53.17	8.39	338.56

$X^2_o = 16.919$ for 5% level at 9d.f

Since $X^2_o > X^2_e$, the null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that all the items are not equally purchased through online. Comparing O_i 's and E_i 's it is found that the items electronics, clothing and apparels, footwear, accessories, kitchen and home appliances are purchased through online by more number of respondents.

5.3.3 To find whether demographic variables influence online purchase through web portals

Chi-square is used to find whether demographic variables influence online purchase through web portals. Based on the results of the chi-square test a consolidated table is drawn as follows.

TABLE5. .DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES VS WEB PORTALS

	Flipkart	Amazon	Snapdeal	E-Bay	Jobong	Paytm	Shopclues
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Age	15-30	NS	NS	>30	>30	>30	>30
Gender	NS	NS	Female	NS	Female	NS	NS
Qualification	Post Graduate	Diploma	Higher secondary	NS	Under Graduation	NS	Under Graduation
Occupation	Student	Professional	Professional	Employed	Employed	Employed	Employed
Income per month (Rs.)	NS	NS	>60000	NS	NS	NS	NS
Personal Expenses per month (Rs.)	NS	NS	>3000	1000-5000	NS	1000-3000	NS
Amount Spent Online per month (Rs.)	NS	NS	>2500	NS	NS	500-2500	>2500
No. of Times Purchased	<2 Times	>2 Times	>4 Times	NS	NS	>4 Times	>4 Times

Note: NS - Not significant and does not influence online purchase through website.

The above table 5 shows the influence of demographic variable towards online purchases through web portals. A consolidate table displaying the demographic variables that differs significantly from other groups, for each web portal. The category shown in each cell is the one that scored the maximum for the respective web portal.

6. Findings

1. Flipkart, Amazon and Snapdeal are the web portals frequently used by the respondents.
2. Product categories like electronics, clothing and apparels, footwear, accessories, kitchen and home appliances are purchased through online by more number of respondents.
3. The experience of the respondents remains at a reasonable level.

7. Conclusion and Scope of the Study

Irrespective of their personal profile the respondents give their agreement or positive opinion on the impacts of web portals under the study. This study has given an in-depth understanding about the demographics of online customers in Coimbatore. Marketing academicians may use this study for assessing customer's behaviour towards online retail shopping. This could also be used as a resource while constructing, managing, and evaluating their marketing strategies. Flipkart, Amazon and Snapdeal are the web portals frequently used by the respondents. Product categories like electronics, clothing and apparels, footwear, accessories, kitchen and home appliances are purchased through online by more number of

respondents. . It is important to turn existing Internet shoppers into repeat shoppers by providing them with satisfying online shopping experiences.

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