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A Behavioural Study on Online Shopping After Covid-19 In India

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Abstract:

The retail industry has been changed by the rise of e-commerce, giving consumers convenient and fast purchasing experiences. The rapid proliferation of internet, smart phone usage, digital payment systems and logistical services has made online shopping a fundamental element of current consumer lifestyles. The COVID-19 epidemic boosted the spread of online shopping as a preferred form of acquiring goods and services. The objective of this research paper is to analyze the online shopping behaviour of customers in the academic year 2022–23. The study deals with the elements which influence the consumer choices in online buying, their preferences, frequency of shopping, the most often used payment methods, customer satisfaction and challenges faced in online shopping. The primary data were acquired from 120 respondents using a structured questionnaire and the secondary data were taken from books, journals, research articles, websites and government reports. The interpretation of data was made by using statistical methods such as percentage analysis and tabular display. The results indicate that the online purchasing behavior is significantly influenced by the ease of use, attractive discounts, product diversity, safe payment systems and user reviews. However consumers still have issues such as late delivery, products not being the same quality as advertised and cybersecurity concerns. The study ends with recommendations for enhancing customer happiness and increasing consumer trust in online buying platforms.

Keywords: Online Shopping, Consumer Behaviour, E-Commerce, Digital Payments, Customer Satisfaction, Consumer Preferences, Buying Behaviour, Internet Shopping, Online Retailing, Digital Marketing.

Introduction:

Traditional shopping has been shifted to online platforms as a result of variables such as the proliferation of the internet, smartphones, and digital payment methods. This transition has been brought about by the advent of information and communication technology, which has had a tremendous impact on the retail sector. The accessibility of the internet, the availability of affordable gadgets, the support of the government for digital payments, and the improvement of logistics have all contributed to the rapid growth of online shopping in India. Further acceleration of this transformation occurred as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, since customers preferred shopping without using contact. The quality of the product, the price, the convenience, the usability of the website, and the customer service are all important factors that influence consumer behavior. In the study that will be conducted for the academic year 2022–23, the habits of consumers about online shopping, purchasing patterns, preferences, and obstacles that they confront will be investigated.

Statement of the Problem:

Online shopping's rise in popularity is attributed to convenience, diverse product options, competitive pricing, and home delivery. However, challenges like delayed delivery, quality mismatches, counterfeit products, payment security issues, misleading ads, and complex return policies affect consumer satisfaction and their online shopping habits. To remain competitive, e-commerce businesses must understand consumer purchasing behavior and the factors influencing their decisions, as explored in this study.

Objectives of the Study:

The major objectives of the study are:

1. To identify the factors influencing consumers' online purchase decisions.
2. To examine consumers' online shopping preferences, including preferred shopping platforms, frequency of online shopping, and payment methods.
3. To evaluate the level of customer satisfaction and identify the problems faced by consumers while shopping online.
4. To provide suitable suggestions for improving online shopping services based on the
   findings of the study.

Research Questions:

The study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. What factors influence consumers' online shopping behaviour?
2. Which online shopping platforms are most preferred by consumers?
3. How frequently do consumers purchase products online?
4. Which payment methods are commonly used for online shopping?
5. What are the major problems faced during online shopping?
6. Are consumers satisfied with their online shopping experiences?
7. What measures can improve customer satisfaction and trust in online shopping?

Hypotheses:

1. H_0:There is no significant relationship between convenience and consumers' online shopping behaviour.
   H_1:There is a significant relationship between convenience and consumers' online shopping behaviour.

2. H_0:Price discounts do not significantly influence online purchasing decisions.
   H_1: Price discounts significantly influence online purchasing decisions.
3. H_0:Customer reviews do not significantly affect online shopping behaviour.
   H_1: Customer reviews significantly affect online shopping behaviour.

Review of Literature:

Kotler and Keller (2022) emphasized that consumer behaviour is strongly influenced by convenience, digital marketing strategies, product availability, and technological advancements. Their work highlights that e-commerce platforms have transformed purchasing decisions by offering personalized shopping experiences and easy access to product information.

Laudon and Traver (2022) explained that trust, website quality, payment security, and customer service significantly determine consumers' willingness to engage in online shopping. They observed that secure transactions and efficient logistics contribute to higher customer satisfaction.

Chaffey (2022) discussed the role of digital marketing and social media in influencing online consumer behaviour. According to the study, promotional campaigns, personalized advertisements, and online reviews encourage consumers to make purchase decisions.

Statista (2022) reported continuous growth in global e-commerce sales due to increasing internet users and smartphone penetration. The report indicated that online shopping has become one of the fastest-growing retail channels worldwide.

Previous studies indicate that convenience, competitive pricing, secure payment systems, product quality, customer reviews, and delivery services are among the major determinants of online shopping behaviour.

Scope of the Study:

The study examines the online shopping behavior of consumers during the 2022–23 academic year, highlighting the impact of e-commerce on retail. Factors such as convenience, discounts, product variety, secure payments, and customer reviews significantly influence purchasing decisions, while challenges include delayed delivery, product quality mismatches, and cybersecurity issues. Primary data were collected from 120 respondents through a structured questionnaire, complemented by secondary data. The findings underscore the need for strategies to enhance customer satisfaction and trust in online shopping platforms.

Limitations of the Study:

The present study has certain limitations that may affect the generalization of its findings. The research is limited to 120 respondents and is confined to the academic year 2022–23. The findings are based on the opinions and experiences of the respondents, which may be influenced by personal perceptions.

Due to limitations of time, financial resources, and geographical coverage, the study could not include a larger sample. Moreover, consumer behaviour in online shopping changes rapidly because of technological advancements, changing market conditions, and evolving customer preferences.

Research Methodology:

Research methodology is the systematic process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data to achieve the objectives of the study. The study follows a Descriptive Research Design to analyze consumers' online shopping behaviour and preferences. The research is descriptive and analytical in nature. The study is based on primary data collected through a structured questionnaire and secondary data collected from books, journals, websites, and reports. The Convenience Sampling Method was used to select respondents for the study. The study consists of 120 respondents who have experience with online shopping. Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The data were analyzed using percentage analysis, frequency distribution, tables, charts, graphs, and mean and ranking techniques.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data:

The analysis was conducted using responses collected from 120 online shoppers.

Table 1: Frequency of Online Shopping

Frequency	Respondents	Percentage
Weekly	28	23.3%
Monthly	52	43.3%
Occasionally	30	25.0%
Rarely	10	8.4%
Total	**120**	**100%**

Interpretation:

Most respondents (43.3%) shop online monthly, indicating moderate purchasing frequency.

Table 2: Preferred Online Shopping Platform

Platform	Respondents	Percentage
Amazon	48	40%
Flipkart	34	28.3%
Myntra	20	16.7%
Meesho	10	8.3%
Others	8	6.7%

Interpretation:

Amazon is the most preferred online shopping platform among respondents.

Table 3: Preferred Payment Method

Payment Method	Respondents	Percentage
UPI	62	51.7%
Debit Card	18	15%
Credit Card	14	11.7%
Cash on Delivery	20	16.6%
Net Banking	6	5%

Interpretation:

UPI is the most preferred payment method due to its convenience and speed.

Table 4: Major Factor Influencing Online Shopping

Factor	Respondents	Percentage
Convenience	40	33.3%
Discounts	32	26.7%
Product Variety	20	16.7%
Reviews	18	15%
Fast Delivery	10	8.3%

Interpretation:

Convenience is the most influential factor affecting online shopping behaviour.

Findings:

1. The study reveals that monthly online shopping is the most common purchasing pattern among consumers.
2. Amazon emerged as the most preferred online shopping platform due to its product variety, reliable services, and competitive pricing.
3. UPI is the most frequently used payment method because of its speed and convenience.
4. Convenience, attractive discounts, and product variety significantly influence consumers' online purchasing decisions.
5. Most respondents expressed satisfaction with online shopping; however, concerns related to delayed delivery, product quality mismatch, counterfeit products, and cybersecurity continue to affect consumer confidence.

Suggestions:

1. E-commerce companies should strengthen product quality assurance and ensure that delivered products match the descriptions displayed online.
2. Delivery systems should be improved to minimize delays and enhance customer satisfaction.
3. Payment security should be continuously upgraded to protect customers from cyber fraud.
4. Return and refund procedures should be simplified to increase consumer trust.
5. Companies should encourage genuine customer reviews and take strict action against fake reviews.
6. Personalized marketing strategies, loyalty programs, and improved customer support services can further enhance consumer satisfaction and long-term customer retention.

Conclusion:

Online shopping has become an essential component of modern consumer lifestyles. The study concludes that convenience, competitive pricing, secure digital payment systems, product variety, and positive customer reviews are the major factors influencing online shopping behaviour. Consumers increasingly prefer online shopping due to its accessibility and time-saving benefits. Nevertheless, challenges such as product quality issues, delivery delays, and security concerns continue to affect customer satisfaction. E-commerce companies that prioritize customer trust, service quality, and technological innovation are likely to achieve sustainable growth. Understanding consumer behaviour enables businesses to develop effective strategies that improve customer satisfaction and strengthen competitiveness in the digital marketplace.

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