



CHANGING CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ONLINE SHOPPING

Manisha Vinay Aole

Department of Economics, S.P. College of Law, Chandrapur

*Corresponding Author: manishaaole@gmail.com

Communicated : 20.12.2022

Revision : 12.01.2023
Accepted : 20.01.2023

Published: 30.01.2023

ABSTRACT:

Consumer behaviour in marketing refers to the actions and decisions that people make when they are purchasing or consuming products/commodities. The rational consumers' behaviour with regard to purchase of any commodity includes everything from the initial decision to purchase it, to how to use it and whether or not to continue to purchase it in future. In present era of E-commerce the consumers' behaviour towards the purchase of commodity or availing of any services are witnessing a very drastic change in the name of online shopping. Online shopping is a form of electronic commerce which allows consumers to directly buy goods or services from a seller over the Internet using a web browser or a mobile app. It is an activity or action of buying products or services over the online platform. Online shopping has become a part of daily life for some consumers, while for some others may not even care about it. The primary objective of this research paper is to study the changes in consumers' behaviour with regard to shopping. The paper will focus on two basic objectives one is to know about the customer perception and changing behaviour about shopping and another is to find out the factors influencing the customers to go for online shopping.

Key words: - Consumer, Behaviour, Online shopping, Internet, customers, e-commerce, virtual market, Goods and Services.

INTRODUCTION :

Any individual who purchase goods and services from the market for fulfilling their desire is called a consumer. In general consumer is one who consumes goods and services available in the market. Every prudent consumer shows leaning towards particular products and services. Consumers' willingness to purchase products and services largely depends upon their taste, need and capacity to pay. Consumer behaviour is a branch which deals with the various stages a consumer goes through before purchasing of any products or services for his end use. Consumer behaviour, in its broadest sense, is concerned with understanding both how purchase decisions are made by the consumer and how products or services are consumed or experienced. Basically every consumer is active decision-makers. The decision of the consumer with regard to purchase of any goods or services depends upon

their disposable income or budget that has been fixed.

The study of consumer behaviour with regard to shopping is most important for marketers as it could make them aware about the expectations of the consumers. It is helpful to understand the reasons behind the purchase of any particular commodity or service. It is very important for the producers and traders to understand the consumers' behaviour and the kind of products liked by the customers, so that they can release it accordingly in the market. There are many factors which influence the consumers behaviour in the market out of which the culture, social, personal and psychological factors impact more.

Online shopping has obtained very important position in the 21st century as most of the people are busy, loaded with hectic schedule. In this situation online shopping became the easiest and most suitable mode for shopping by the people. Online shopping is a form of e-

commerce which permits consumers to directly purchase goods or services from a seller by using the internet. The common name for online shopping's are, e-shop, e-store, Internet shop, web-store, virtual store and online store. An online shop stimulates the physical similarity of buying products as well as services from internet shop and this process of shopping is called business-to-consumer online shopping. Basically online shopping is the practice in which consumers decide to buy the product through internet.

Objective of Paper :

- To study the changing trends in consumer behaviour.
- To study the nature and scope of online shopping.
- To study how the online shopping differs from traditional shopping.
- To study the consumer perception and behaviour towards online shopping.
- To suggest the measures to channelize the online shopping for benefitting the economy of the Nation and to protect consumer interest

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY :

The present study is based on secondary data. The data has been extracted from various sources like research articles, publications from Ministry of Finance and E-Commerce, Government of India, various bulletins and journals on E-Commerce, Theories related to consumer behaviour, articles in daily newspaper and authentic websites.

HYPOTHESIS :

In this era of internet and computer the consumer behaviour has changed drastically. The revolution of Information technology has brought rapid changes in the economy of the country. New generation consumers are techno sound and largely rely upon technology for fulfilling their demand for various goods and services. Electronic commerce has now become quite common and is playing very important role

in the modern world and impacting the consumer behaviour, especially with regard to shopping. The online shopping has become trend of life.

The present research paper is based on the hypothesis that in present days E-commerce has become an internal part of economic life of every individual. Consumer's motivations for online shopping are witnessing dual characterization. In these days customers have become enthusiastic about the online shopping and consumer behaviour has changed from traditional shopping towards online shopping.

Evolution of Online Consumer Behaviour :

There has been a rapid evolution in online consumer behaviour. This progression is largely considered to be a byproduct of drastic changes in e-commerce as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 pandemic is an unparalleled situation which has emerged on the mankind affecting everyone in the nook and corner of this world. No one has expected the seriousness of this pandemic condition where everything would come to stand still. The situation has risen to such a condition that everyone locked them up in their homes and animals started roaming freely in the streets. But the need and desires of the human beings are fighters and they became resilient to such conditions. Even in this dire situation they try to fight back to sustain their buying process if not possible offline then in online mode.

During the initial period of pandemic, in 2020 it has been observed that the online shopping platforms like Flipkart, Amazon, Myntra, Zomato, and Swiggy have flourished, when every other business had suffered because of lockdown, shutdown etc. Consumers have never been frightened down by anything, when they are considered to be the king in this business world. In India, e-commerce is projected to increase from 4% of the total food and grocery, apparels and electronics retail trade in 2020 to

8% by 2025. Indians now days have started shopping online rather going outside their houses, this has witnessed an increase in the e-commerce sector.

The pandemic COVID-19 has somehow enhanced the shifting of people towards the digital world from the physical interactions and it had also triggered changes in online shopping behaviors that will last long for sure. Consumers also intended to explore a lot many online channels to purchase smartphones, CPG, apparels in the past one year. It had also shown; in a recent survey that the stay in home lifestyle or lockdown period had completely increased the use of mobile than before. People started depending on the mobiles and internet even more during the lockdown. It had also been studied by the Facebook and Boston Consulting group that 90% of customers, who had purchased apparels online during the lockdown, are willing to continue their online buying even in the future.

So, there is a complete increase in the online shopping in past two and half years that is the pandemic days. People use to prefer buying products online rather than sleeping outside during this time.

Online Shopping V/s Traditional Shopping :

Online shopping is very different from traditional shopping. In traditional shopping where the customers use to touch and check the quality of the product before purchasing it, the chances of quality compromises and duplication were very rare to be found. On the other hand in online shopping this kind of quality check is absent and the chances of fraud on the part of customer are at higher risk than in traditional shopping. But still now a day's online shopping has been more convenient and approachable to the large number of customers. One of the major reasons for preferring online shopping to traditional shopping is its availability at 24/7.

The cost of traveling to the stores, the burden of parking the vehicle, the hectic traveling schedule and heavy traffic are such major problems are bypassed on this platform of shopping. It not only this but the consumers who are coming from other cities/countries can easily get access to the native and specialty goods on one click instead of going to that city/country themselves. The relevant information about the products can be received from any location in seconds. Online shoppers mostly prefer to surf online rather than going to retail store to attain the information about the product. Online shopping is not just a task relying on just the purchase of any commodity rather it is also a fun and playful for many customers. Especially young generation preferably choose to purchase from online shops.

In the 21st Century, Shopping is not just going to brick and mortar stores as more and more consumers are turning to online shopping. Traditional shopping is where consumers have the opportunity to observe, feel, and examine goods sold. It requires consumers' physical presence to examine the products personally and physically. If the customers are satisfied with the quality and price of the product, immediately payment will be made and product will be brought at home for consumption. Traditional selling has been around from a long time and is still being used to buy products although there are certain advantages and disadvantages to. In traditional shopping consumer can test the quality of the product before purchasing it. It helps a customer to feel better about the environment they are for shopping the products physically.

Traditional shopping is a process, wherein consumers purchase their desired products and brands by physically visiting a shop. It can be any local stores, like Big Bazar, D-mat, Spencer, and many more. In this type of shopping,

customers can directly check the product and by touching the product decide the quality of the product specifically. It indicates that the customers can directly visit a shopping center and decides to buy the product in cash or with credit card after giving a quality check to the particular product.

On the other hand e-commerce shopping process, customers directly purchase their favourite brands from the seller in stipulated time and that to without any interference by middleman. The entire process is done on a web browser using the internet, or in a mobile shopping application, preferably, in smartphones or with the help of computer.

In traditional shopping, products were usually exhibited in front of the customers in proper sets, so that the customer can view the product personally and take the decision with regard to purchase of the commodity. Rather in this type of shopping there are very rare chances of fake products sold. One of the major plus point of traditional shopping is that products always speak for them. So, real products can be bought at the original price.

Consumer Behaviour and Changing Trends :

With the promotion of e-commerce, online shopping is gradually preferred by the customers in place of off-line shopping. The economy is witnessing a changing trends and consumer behaviour in this regard is not an exception to it. The internet has modernized the way of shopping by the customers in this smart era. Because of the abundant advantages and merits of online shopping, more and more people these days prefer buying things online over the conservative method of going into stores. Shopping online has many benefits; some of them are discussed below-

- **Accessibility-** Easy accessibility is the prime incentive of online shopping. The customer can shop anything, by sitting on sofa with folded legs and wearing pajamas. Now there is no need

to wait in a queue for making the payment and shopping can be done in few minutes. One of basic advantage of online shopping is that it provide an opportunity to the customer to shop 24/7 and also be away for pollution created by heavy traffics on the road. Different vendors make their goods and services available on online stores. In order to beat the competition and attract more patronage, these vendors cut down on the prices of their products and services. Online shopping gives shoppers the huge advantage of purchasing goods and services at cheap or affordable prices.

- **Cheap Deals-** Availability of goods and services at cheap or marginal price is one of the major advantages of online shopping. As the products are directly made available by the manufacturer himself, the cost of intermediaries is also removed. On the other hand it is easier to compare prices and find a better deal. Many online sites offer discount coupons and discount, as well. Through online shopping one can also get tax benefit on the purchase of many commodities.

- **More Changeability-** It is one of the best advantages of online shopping. In online shopping, the customer has multiple options and multiple brands to choose and that to from a single platform. There is large volume of stock available at this mode of shopping. The addition to it customer can get a choice for various brand both at national and international level.

- **No pressure from seller-** Many times the customers in off-line shopping come under the pressure tactics of the seller in selling of the commodity. The salesmen apply the pressure tactics, which force the customer to purchase the goods, though they have no intention to purchase it. Such pressure from seller is not found in online shopping rather customer can use their free will for the purchase or not to purchase any commodity as per their choice.

- **Concessions and Offer-** Modest arrangements and reasonable cost are accessible online since items come directly to the customer from the producer or vendor without including mediators. Many online destinations offer concession coupons and refunds, in addition to the fact that prices are better in comparison to physical shops prices. Many online shopping platforms provide its regular customers heavy rebates on the purchase of bulk commodities.

The above discussed advantages of online shopping suggest that it is the easiest and comfortable way of shopping at home and from home. But it is not an unmixed blessing for the customer as well as the economy of the country. Following are the some disadvantages of online shopping-

- **Undesirable environmental impact of wrapping and gas-** The goods which are delivered to the customers at home are packed in several layers of plastic and cardboard packaging are not environmental friendly. They are not desirable for healthy environment rather supplements the pollution in the area.

- **Delay and Shipping Issues-** Many biggest and best shipping companies and online retailers have issues related to shipping services. It results in delay in the delivery of the commodities which many a time painful for the customers. Items get lost, detoured, damaged, or delivered to the wrong address more often.

- **Chances of Fraud** – One cannot deny the chances of fraud while making payment with credit card, phishing, hacking, identity theft, counterfeit products, bogus websites, and many other kinds of fraud in online shopping are evident too. Duplicate goods are delivered through online delivery of goods and many they are not returnable. Such types of fraud are evident in online shopping possibility of which is very less in traditional shopping.

- **Community Contact Will be Lost-** Following all the business online, the chances of coming out of home will be mitigated and it may result in no contact with the people in the community. It results in isolation and will affect the real human connection. Human being as a social animal cannot leave in isolation and all the demerits of isolation will be observed once the customer become addict of online shopping.

- **Online Shopping Impact the Local Economy-** The biggest negative impact that online shopping have on the economy is that they reduce the amount of sales tax the state collects and other local taxes that town and regions collect. Online shopping also removes money from the local economy.

All these demerits are under the control of the consumer and if a prudent consumer maintained a proper balance in online shopping and physical shopping, the economy can get its benefits and prosper. Local businesses can also build a website and ad campaigns that can bring them in front of smart customers.

CONCLUSION:

The growing use of internet online shopping has taken important place among people. As online shopping is more convenient as well as time saving, fuel saving, the consumer's behaviour has transformed drastically. Almost a big part of the society has accepted the growing technology as integral part of life. Online establishment of business has proved to be a help to even those who are unable to buy products because of long distance from the residence to market. The problem of restrictions put forward by the pandemic situation has largely responsible for promoting online shopping and impacted consumers behaviour in this regard.

One has to be very cautious while shopping online. There are risks associated with online shopping. These include fraud, delayed delivery of goods, and damage of goods during shipping. While purchasing goods or making online

payment must ensure that they should use only reliable e-commerce sites and when appropriate, resort to physical or conventional stores and markets for their needs. In this digital era where e-commerce is taking its importance everywhere, the local businesses requires to adopt savvy online sale strategy and a skilled digital marketing company, who are good service provider.

To Conclude :

“Innovation needs to be part of your culture. Customers are transforming faster than we are, and if we don’t catch up, we’re in trouble” – Ian Schafer

REFERENCES :

- Economicstimes.indiatimes.com.
<https://www.economicstimes.indiatimes.com-online-shopping>
- Business Wire India:
<https://www.businesswireindia.com>(Oct-2022)
- The Hindu: <https://www.thehindu.com>
- Reserve bank of India Press Release
<https://m.rbi.org.in> (Oct.2022)
- Chizoba Morah, “ Shopping Online: Convenience, Bargains, and a Few Scams”(August,2021)
- Daroch Bindia, Gitika Nagrath, Ashutosh Gupta, “A study on factors limiting online shopping behavior of consumers”, Rajagiri Management Journal, Vol.15 Issue 1(March,2021)
- Dwi Nita Aryani,Rajesh Kumar Nair, Dana Xing Yue Hoo, Daisy Kee Mui Hung, Deborah Hong Ru Lim, Dharaniya A.P., Ravi Chandran, Wei Ping Chew, Amey Desai.,(2021) “ A Study on Consumer Behaviour: Transition from Traditional Shopping to Online Shopping During the COVID-19 Pandemic” International mJournal of Applied Business and International Management, Vol.6 No.2 (August 2021)
- Edeh Samuel Chukwuemeka ACMC, “ Advantges and Disadvantages of Online Shopping”, bscholarly.com (August,2021)
- Kumar Amit., “Consumer Behavior in Online Shopping: A study of Aizawl”, Research gate, (January 2014)
- Somabhusana Janakiballav Mishra,Debashish Rout., “ Consumer Behaviour Towards Online Shopping And its impact in Bhubaneshwar During Covid-19” JASC Journal of Applied Science and Computations(May, 2021)
<https://www.researchgate.net>
- Wenzl Megan, “Understanding Online Consumer Behaviors for a Better Customer journey”, shipbob.com/blc (April 2021)
<https://kwingy.com/importance-of-online-shopping/>
www.researchgate.net
<https://toughnickel.com>
<https://bscholarly.com>
<https://www.aplustopper.com>
www.investopedia.com
<https://www.thebalancemoney.com>