



Paradigm Shift in Online Shopping During Pandemic (Covid-19)

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Abstract: Marketing is the art of buying and selling goods and commodities through physical and virtual modes. The present day of marketing is in transition mode, and it implies the significance of physical shopping and online shopping. However, during the pandemic, COVID-19 shopping mode was very minimal and online shopping mode was augmented to the peak. As per the COVID protocol and guidelines of the Ministry of Health Affairs, most of the buyers are discouraged from purchasing physically. The challenges and constraints of online shopping have been tested through the research paper, and conclusions are made by taking the opinions and views of online shopping buyers. The recommendations were duly incorporated.

Key Words: COVID-19, Online shopping, Buyers, Physical buying, Purchase, Sale.

1. INTRODUCTION:

The outbreak of COVID-19 creates panic situations and dramatically changes the buying patterns of individuals all over the world. The country, like India, also experienced the grave side of COVID-19, which badly affected every sector and individual. At an initial stage, the pandemic situation impacts on consumer buying behaviour at large and becomes one of the essential modes of shopping. As per a report by the World Health Organization, 2.8 million people were infected by coronavirus in 2020. Due to the COVID protocol and restrictions on physical shopping, online shopping was the only alternative to using the internet (smart phones and computers) and even using the social media platform. Online shopping has had some peculiar behavioural patterns that might have occurred due to pandemic situations that may cause impulsivity and ill-conceived (Faridathalla & Hatta, 2016). Looking towards the expansion of online shopping networks, lots of buyers indulge in online shopping. According to ComScore (2013), the internet audience in India is dominated by the young as three-quarters of the population is under the age of 35 years. The 15–24 age groups of internet users are driving the highest internet consumption in the country. It has been found that there is a significant difference between compulsive and non-compulsive consumers on envy and non-generosity subscales. Therefore, the present study reflects on the behaviour of consumers while doing online shopping. The study also reveals the fact that the impact of COVID-19 on the behavioural patterns of consumers changes towards online preferences rather than offline shopping.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

UNCTAD and Net-comm. Suisse e-Commerce Association reports say that Internet shopping has been augmented by 6 to 10 percentage points for almost all product categories within a limited time period. A dramatic shift can be seen from bulk shopping to online shopping. COVID-19 Because of social distancing and self-quarantine, a large chunk of customers is moving towards online shopping. Within a limited time-span, shopping behaviour suddenly changes from bulk shopping to online shopping. (Inveon, 2020).

In the period of COVID-19, a large number of populations were either in containment zones or had no alternative remaining for making necessary and optional purchases. This makes consumers search for new channels, products & services or their own brands, which in turn has resulted in changes to shopping behaviour and their ways of purchasing habits (Impact of COVID-19 on shopping behaviour in India, 2020).

The survey has been conducted by the National Retail Federation (NRF) regarding the behaviour of consumers in doing online shopping in an epidemic situation and has analysed certain changes in consumer behaviour which are as follows: (Federation, 2020).

- Due to some limitations, 90 percent of customers have changed their shopping practises.



- By purchasing products online, 50% of customers have shifted from traditional to online shopping habits.
- Due to the COVID-19 protocol, the customer avoids going outside or into a store due to fear of being infected and instead orders essential goods through an online mode (Internet/mobile/social media).

Fig 1. Percentage of online shoppers making at least one online purchase every two months



However, average online monthly spending per shopper has dropped markedly (Figure 2). Consumers in both emerging and developed economies have experienced lower expenditures since, with those in emerging economies focusing more on essential needs like

Source: UNCTAD and Net-Comm. Suisse e-Commerce Association

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- To Study the influence of covid-19 Pandemic on online shopping.
- To know the sudden changes in behaviour in doing traditional way of shopping in Covid -19 phase.
- To study the role of gender in consumer's attitudes towards online shopping.

4. DATA COLLECTIONS:

The method selected by the researcher for exploring customer perception and behaviour towards online shopping was based on survey research. The research starts with the identification of different variables related to those responsible for building customer perception. The primary data collection method for the research study was a survey method, which was carried out in the northern region of Maharashtra, namely the Khandesh region. The sample size was 400. The Questionnaire was used to collect primary data.

Framework of Analysis:

Researchers represent the data graphically by using pie charts and bar diagrams. The chi-square test has been used by researchers to check attribute dependency, and the proportion test is used to test equality proportion.

Statistical Analysis for Online Shopping Data:

The respondents were categorised into several factors, such as gender, age, education, location, occupation, etc.

5. HYPOTHESIS:

1) Test for Independence of Gender and Types of Products Purchased,

Two Attributes Are Defined as:

A: Gender

B: Type of Items Purchased

Level of Significance (L.O.S =0.05)

To Test:

H₀: The products purchased by men and women who shop online are distinct.



H1: Males and females who shop online purchase different types of products.

Observation Table:

Types of products	Gender	
	Male	Female
Garments	33	25
Electronic goods	71	13
xBooks	28	9
Cosmetics	9	14
Toys	5	9
Other	12	5

```
> y=scan("clipboard") Read
12items
> x=matrix (y,byrow = T,ncol =2)
> x
     [, 1] [, 2]
[1,] 33 25
[2,] 71 13
[3,] 28  9
[4,]  9 14
[5,]  5  9
[6,] 12  5
> chisq.test(x)
Pearson's Chi-squared test data:x
X-squared = 30.298, df = 5, p-value = 1.288e-05
> a=0.05
> pv=c$p.value
> pv
[1] 1.288363e-05
> if(pv<=a){cat ("we reject Ho")} else {cat ("we acceptHo")} we
rejectHo
```

Result

We reject Ho at 5% l.o.s.

Conclusion:

Dependent on the type of product purchased by males and that by females in a pandemic situation.

2) Assess Qualification Independence and Shopping Status During a Pandemic

Two attributes are defined as:

A: Education

B: Shopping status

Level of significance (l.o.s.) = 0.05

To Test:

H0: The shopper's qualification and status are unrelated.



H1: Qualification and shopping status are interdependent.

Observation Table:

Qualification	Status of shopping	
	Shop Online	Not Shop Online
Up to 10th	26	56
11th & 12th	55	35
Graduate	155	16
Post Graduate	51	6

```
> m=matrix(c(26,56,55,35,155,16,51,6),byrow =T,ncol=2)
```

```
> m
  [, 1] [, 2]
[1,] 2656
[2,] 5535
[3,] 15516
[4,] 51 6
```

```
> c=chisq.test(m)
```

Pearson's Chi-squared test data:s m

X-squared = 108.84, df = 3, p-value = 2.2e-16

```
> a=0.05
```

```
> pv=c$p.value
```

```
> pv
```

```
[1] 1.94978e-23
```

```
> if(pv<=a) {cat ("we reject Ho")} else {cat ("we accept Ho")}
```

```
> we rejectHo
```

```
>
```

Result

We reject Ho at 5% I.o.s.

Conclusion:

Qualification and Status of shopping are dependent.

3) Testing Equality of Two Population Proportion ($P_1=P_2$)

H₀: Proportion of males in urban who shop online is same as that of males in rural who shop online, i.e., $P_1=P_2$

H₁: Proportion of males in urban who shop online is not same as that of males in rural who shop online, i.e., $P_1 \neq P_2$

```
> x=c (119,81)
```

```
> n=c(176,100)
```

```
>prop.test(x, n)
```

2-sample test for equality of proportions with continuity correction

Data: x out of n

X-squared = 5.0755, df = 1, p-value = 0.02427

Alternative hypothesis: two sided

95 percent confidence interval:

-0.24510415 -0.02262312

Sample estimates:

prop1 prop2

0.6761364 0.8100000



Conclusion

Proportion of males in urban is not same as that of males in rural whoshop online, i.e., $P_1 \neq P_2$

6. FINDINGS:

The research study delineates the salient findings of the study along with related discussion under the following sections:

- Considering the North Maharashtra region for the research study, most of the customers, i.e., 57 % of respondents from the urban region, preferred to do online shopping as compared to the respondents residing in rural areas of North Maharashtra.
- Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, customers are more health-conscious and customers think that online shopping is the safest mode of shopping without going anywhere else. Also, they think that a wide range of product availability is possible only through the online mode of shopping.
- Most of the respondents prefer to do online shopping because they are more health-conscious and also because they have a friendly nature. 25 % of respondents are of the opinion that online shopping is the safest mode of shopping in the outbreak of coronaviruses.
- It was evident from the above hypothesis that the products which were purchased during the time of lockdown were from the male category as compared to females. Thus, it can be said that men are much fonder of purchasing products through online shopping as compared to females in the urban regions of North Maharashtra.
- From the last hypothesis, it was proved that the qualification is dependent upon the status of purchase, i.e., more qualified respondents prefer to do online shopping as compared to less qualified respondents.

7. CONCLUSION:

Covid-19 brings out a lifelong lesson and has impacted a lot in every stage of life. Online shopping is not an exception to this. But, in the outbreak of such a pandemic situation, online shopping was the only option for customers to buy essential things. Preferences might be changed while purchasing in such a pandemic situation, but customer behaviour is being forced to change and consumers are progressively moving towards online shopping. Online shopping will definitely change the mode of preferences in any condition and will always attract youngsters to purchase online even in adverse situations. Thus, customer behaviour is entitled to change purchasing habits and progressively move towards online shopping.

8. LIMITATIONS:

The research study is limited to a particular jurisdiction, i.e., the preliminary survey of 400 was done only in Jalgaon, Dhule, and Nandurbar districts of the North Maharashtra region. Also, due to limitations in time, we could reach out to only a small part of the population, which could not be a good representative of the entire population. The fact that people may not have revealed correct personal information might have affected the authenticity of the data.

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