

A CONICAL RESEARCH BASED STUDY ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR WITH REGARDS TO GENDER PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract: Today's global village has developed a diversity which is swiftly increasing. This usually perceives the consumer towards online shopping. In particular, consumers' behaviour in online shopping, from acquiring motivation to after sales behaviour, has become a centre of attention for research in the field of marketing, especially within consumer behaviour. Global village has changed the way of Bricks-and-Mortar Store, and has expeditiously flourished into a global stance. The study has been undertaken to realize the behaviour of online consumers through empirical data obtained from 100 online shoppers in India where Website Design/Features, convenience, security and Time Saving are the salient factors. Due to COVID-19 outbreak online shopping became trouble-free, safe and the most acceptable mode for shopping. This paper surveys the evidence for the hypothesis that there is significant difference between the online behaviour of females and males. It is assumed that females prefer more online shopping than men. The result of the research confirms that most of the consumers are concerned about privacy. The research has also found that there are some other factors which influence online shoppers including, less price, discount, and quality of product. Moreover, when online shoppers are compared in terms of demography, the correlation for the age towards online shopping has shown that adults are not so keen to shop online. Whereas for education it is concluded that higher education makes online shopping less attractive, for the income the correlation is inversely proportional. Additionally, three sections were recognized high spenders, price easers, and bargain seekers through these sections we found a contrast of hybrid significant factors and establish implications for online shopping.

Key Words: Consumer behaviour, E-commerce, online shopping, marketing research.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Online shopping is a buzzword in this modern tech-based business world. The online shopping process involves an exchange of time, effort and money for the receipt of products or services in a virtual store (Rezaei et al. , 2014). Public usually favoured a territory where majority of the shops are present such as enormous and massive air conditioned malls. In the past decades, there has been a vast mutation in the way of consumer's shopping but consumers usually prefer to pay in legal tender and therefore postal codes are rarely used.

With the entry of the American E-commerce giant, things are taking a U-turn because E-commerce gives information and communication not only to businesses but to consumers as well. Moreover, trade and commerce have been so diversified that multichannel is taking place and online shopping is increasing routinely.

Over the world, two billion people purchase goods and services online, in the year 2020. In the same year, sales surpassed 4.2 trillion US dollars worldwide. As compared to 2020, there will be a downshift of 14.3 % in the year 2021. Asia Pacific region is leading the growth of online shopping as compared to E-commerce giants such as UK, US, Japan and other European countries. Unlike Bricks-and-Mortar Store, all the commodities in online store expressed through text, with photos, and with multimedia files. Many online stores also provide links for subsidiary details of the products. Moreover, some online consumers are valorous explorer, fun seeker, shopping lover, and some are technology muddler, hate waiting for the product to get delivered. Consequently, online consumer behaviour became an ultra-modern research area for an increasing number of researchers to understand this eccentric nature of online shopping.

Therefore, the objective of this paper is to construct, test and validate a trade for measuring online consumer behaviour in E-commerce. Furthermore, it also helps to understand the consumer's behaviour towards online shopping, their liking and disliking and their satisfaction level.

2. METHODOLOGY

To know the consumer behaviour of online shopping, we have undertaken descriptive study by conducting our initial research in literature. We reviewed studies that had similar aims and paid particular attention to the product. The research started with identifying different variables which is related for building consumer perception. Research included both primary and secondary data. For our primary research, we decided that the most relevant approach would be a questionnaire and so we prepared a questionnaire considering the research objective.

Convenient non-probability sampling method has been adopted in this study to acquire data from respondents. This method is easy to implement and cost effective. We have targeted respondents who belong from different age groups, qualification and income. Out of 125, 100 participated in the survey. This information is then used in order to find relationships and correlation between these variables.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Online shopping specifies electronic commerce to buy products or services directly from the seller through the Internet. The Internet-based or Click and Order business model has put back the traditional Brick and Mortar business model. More people than before are using the web to shop for a wide variety of items, from house to shoes to airplane tickets. Now people have multiple options to choose their products and services while they are shopping through an online platform.

Sonal Kala (2015) performed a research study on "Behaviour of Customers" towards Online Shopping in India". The main objective of the research was to investigate the relationship between various characteristics of online shopping and customer purchase Behaviour.

Ashish Bhatt (2014) performed a research work on "Consumer Attitude towards Online Shopping in Selected Regions of Gujarat". The objective of the research mainly focused on the various factors online buyers would keep in mind while shopping through online mode. The researcher had adapted a Descriptive Research and collected data samples accordingly.

Kalpana Mathur, Arti Sharma (2014) performed a research study on "A Study of Online Shopping Habits of Consumers in India". The main objective of the research was to examine the online shopping habits of consumers in India, to identify factors which determine the online shopping trends and to examine the growth of online shopping in India.

K.S. Silpa, P.U. Rajasree, P. Balasubramanian (2016) performed a research study on "A Study on People's" Perceptions towards Online Shopping". The main objective of the research was to study people's perception towards online shopping within a selected group of respondents and study the merits and demerits of online shopping.

Lakshmi. S. (2016) performed a research study on "Consumer Buying Behaviour towards Online Shopping". The main objective of the research was to explain online shopping importance and consumer buying Behaviour in online shopping. The author explained how online shopping and consumer Behaviour is important and closely bonded with each other. Also the author had explained the factors that affect consumer Behaviours, consumer characteristics in the online medium, which are personal characteristics, psychological characteristics, social characteristics and cultural characteristics. There are many factors that influence online shopping decisions such as Motivations, Convenience, Price visibility, Brand browser segment, New design, Saves travel time, Website security, Easy payment, Cash on delivery and Free home delivery.

Finally the author concludes that convenience and trust were the most essential variables for consumers when they decide to shop online. Web design and delivery time were not the important variables for consumers while doing online shopping purchases. The Younger generation prefers buying goods from the original source, so they prefer online shopping. Buying online can be of great benefit to the consumer in terms of convenience, saving time and money.

4. OVERVIEW OF ONLINE SHOPPING

4.1. EMERGENCE OF ONLINE SHOPPING IN INDIA:

Online shopping had an almost moderate and chaotic journey in India, it has not elevated as much as it should have primarily, as a result internet penetration itself was quite low and secondly, the consumers were not aware about it. Moreover, the consumers are not ready to take the chance of purchasing a product without seeing or touching it physically. Conventionally, Indians are attentive in their perspective when shopping online. They want to touch and feel the products and test their components before buying anything.

Online shopping started early in 1995 by the establishment of the global village in India. Online shopping became well liked during the Internet boom in 1999-2000 with the well known auction site known as baze.com. Soon amazon.com, the online bookstore set up by Jeff Bezos, created history by becoming the first bookstore with its appearance only in the global village. Ensuring the success of Amazon, many other bookstores with a physical presence also produced an online existence in the global village. Subsequently in 2005, baze.com was taken up by eBay.

The drift of online shopping took a good pace and many gateways started like flipkart, snapdeal, myntra, makemytrip, yatra, craftsvilla and so on. New portals such as Yahoo.com, Indiatimes.com and Rediff.com came up with online shopping alternates for the Indian consumer. It is convenient, faster and cheaper than the traditional buying. Nowadays, buying train tickets, bus tickets, and air tickets all go through an online option as well. Rather than standing in a long queue and waiting for your turn to purchase a ticket, people are finding it simpler to log on to a website and buy it. In some cases, you may have to pay a premium for an online purchase but it is still preferred because the convenience factor is much higher. Consequently, shopping for goods and services online offers various benefits, such as efficiency, convenience, and greater selection, as well as potentially better pricing than what we would find in a brick-and-mortar shop.

1 Jan 1995	India times, Yahoo, Sify, Rediff set the ball rolling!!
16 Jan 2005	Website giant eBay acquired Baazee.com, it was doing good business at that point of time
15 Jan 2007	Flipkart!! (nobody knew it would grow so BIG)
1 Jan 2010	Niche websites like Yebhi, gadgetsguru, Myntra, iBibo, MakeMyTrip, yatra, Craftsvilla joined the fleet
1 Jan 2011	Groupon bought the Indian deal-of-the-day website sosasta.com point of time
1 Feb 2012	Amazon has entered online market with Junglee.com

Source: Author 2020

4.2. ADVANTAGES:

1. Universal Scope	Online shopping helps the users to purchase goods and services online from all over the world.
2. Relief from nagging sales representatives	Traditionally, in physical stores, retailers seek to manipulate their consumers to purchase goods or services for their personal motive. But, in online shopping, consumers have alternatives without any interference from retailers.
3. Discounted Deals	Consumers can buy goods or services online with the benefit of getting discounts. Discount coupons are accessible for various products and one just needs to redeem it to avail it. Furthermore, when paid through debit/credit cards or mobile banking, extra discounts are given to consumers. This could be the best benefit one can get.
4. Available Varieties	Consumers can get numerous options with different brands to choose from and purchase at online platforms. One can easily get access to different varieties and simultaneously there is a huge proportion of stocks available there as compared to brick-and-mortar stores.
5. No Crowds	One can get easy access to different goods or services without waiting in a long queue. In times of COVID-19, this has become crucial to avoid crowds and hence helps people to get things easily.
6. Comparative shopping and Reviews	Consumers can compare the features, price, etc.. of the products and can also see the consumers reviews to know whether the product is the same as it is displayed and to determine whether to buy such product or not. This is much helpful to get the desired and satisfactory products.
7. Shop Privately	There are some products such as undergarments where consumers want some privacy to purchase them. Such privacy can be maintained when shopped online as one can simply refer to different options and can choose accordingly.
8. Perfect source to buy and send gifts	Consumers can easily gift anyone regardless of time, place or things as the service provider itself wraps the gifts and delivers it to the mentioned location.

4.3. DISADVANTAGES

1. Less Credibility	It means you have placed the order looking towards the images and features mentioned on the site but when it actually comes to you find it to be different from what was mentioned on the site.
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2. Delay in delivery	This happens very rarely but still there are chances of delay in the delivery of the product as per their communication.
3. Inability to touch and feel	You can't have that actual shopping experience of touch and feel about the product.
4. Chances of substandard goods	In terms of products, especially electronic items like chargers and accessories etc, there are chances. Hence it is sensible to shop from reliable stores and also read user reviews about the seller and the product before buying it.
5. Return Policy	While most sellers offer replacement of return guarantees, they may not cover the cost of shipping it back. So you need to be clear with the terms and conditions of online shopping.
6. Internet issues	Poor internet connection may eat up your time and still you may not be able to browse the products and when we talk about buying if the speed is slow the payment gateway gets expired and it becomes a horrible experience.
7. Fitting issues	You may be able to get all sizes when shopping online, however the fittings of the clothes may at times be weird and different from what you expected. The size of the garments varies from company to company. This can be worrying.
8. Fraudulent activities	Even though online payment is getting easier and secure by each rising day, still it is not assured. Personal information such as card details, bank details information can be hacked, if not cautious while making online payments. Use online virtual keyboards for entering passwords. OTP or One Time Password is also an added layer of security to stop fraudulent activities.

Even though it's easy to overindulge in retail therapy and overspend, the benefits of online shopping tend to outweigh the negatives if you know how to shop smartly.

5. ANALYSIS OF DATA

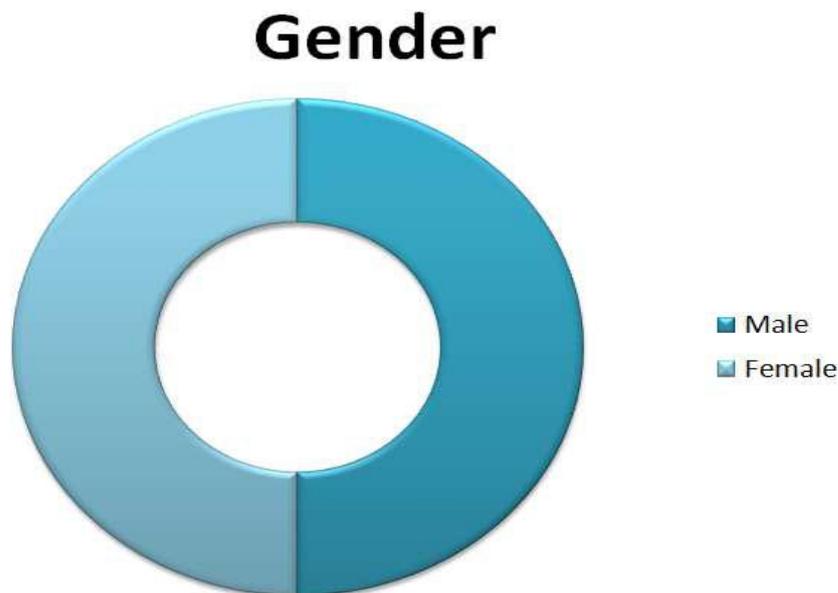


Figure 1 According to the demography profile, both male and female are equally active in online shopping. This shows that gender does not play a crucial role for online shopping.

Age

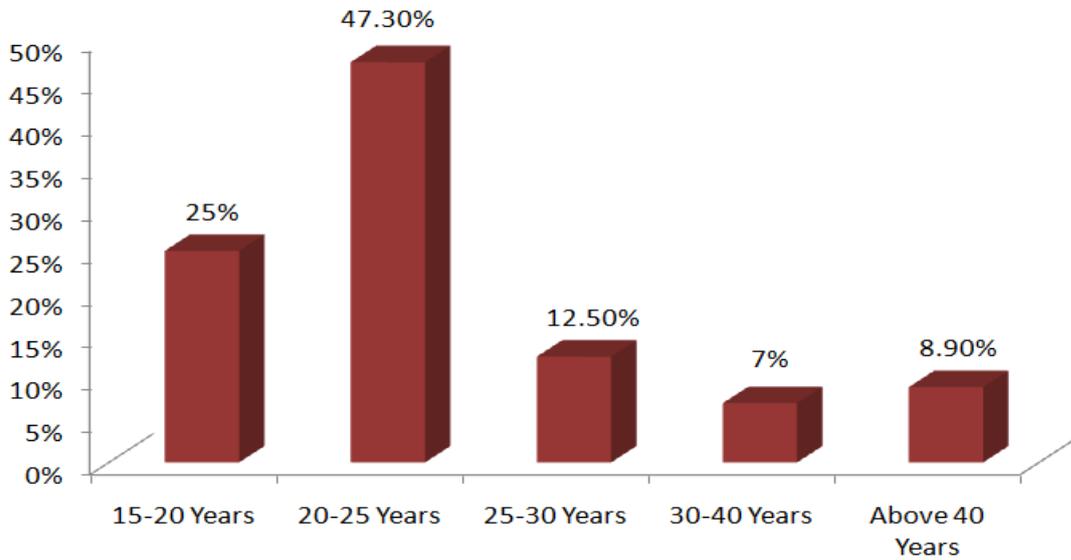


Figure 2 Above figure shows that 25% respondents are between 15-20 years old, 47.3% respondents are between 20-25 years old, 12.5% respondents between 25-30 years old, 7% respondents are between 30-40 years old, and 8.9% respondents are above 40 years. This shows that as age increases interest in online shopping decreases among people, or one can say that elderly people are not so keen to shop on-line.

Income

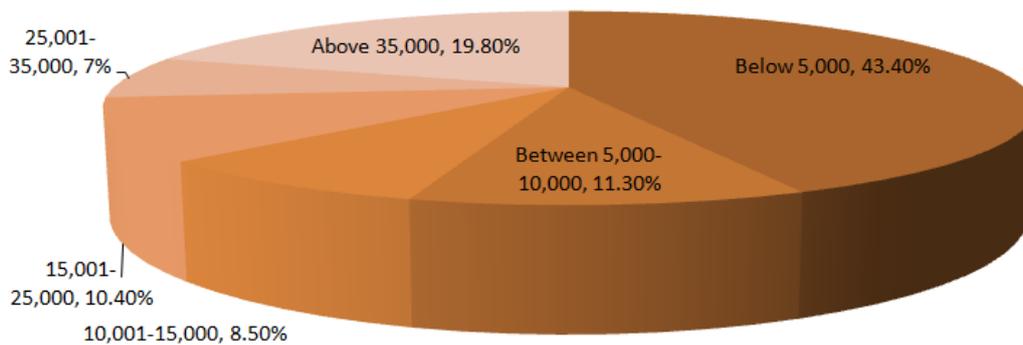


Figure 3 It is one of the important and sensitive demographic variables. This figure shows that 43.4 % respondents' monthly income is below ₹5000, 11.3% respondents monthly income is between ₹5000-10000, 8.5% respondents monthly income is between ₹10001-15000, 10.4% respondents monthly income is between ₹15001-25000, 7% respondents monthly income is more than ₹25001-35000 and 19.8% respondents monthly income is above ₹35000. This shows that people below the income of ₹5000 are keen to shop online and as a result income is inversely proportional when compared with shopping.

Education

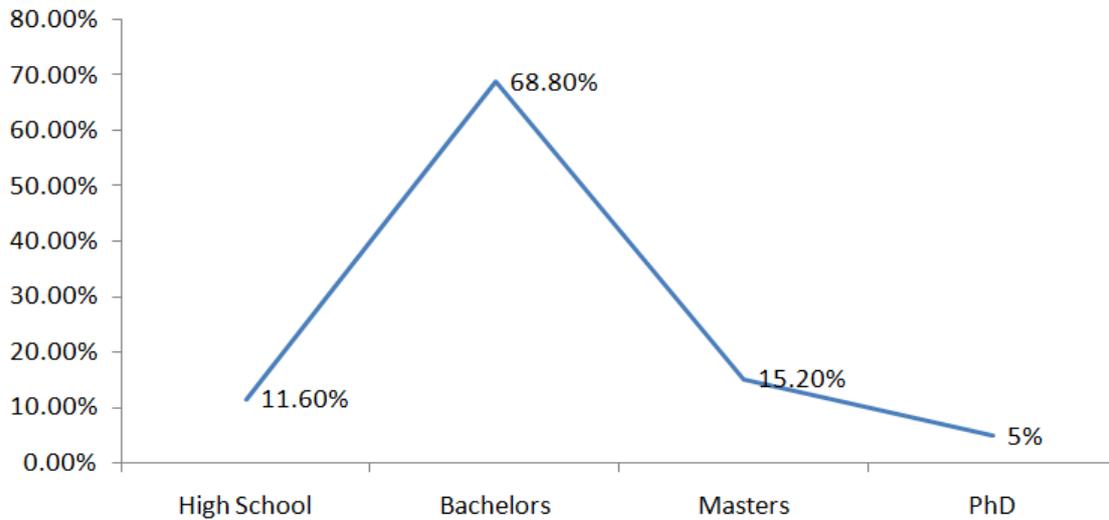


Figure 4 The study is conducted with 100 respondents, between them 68.80% respondents are bachelor students, 11.60% respondents are high school students, 15.20% respondents are master students and only 5% PhD students. Of all of the respondents, the maximum number of respondents (68.8%) is bachelor students. This shows that higher educated students are less keen to shop online.

Corresponding Averages

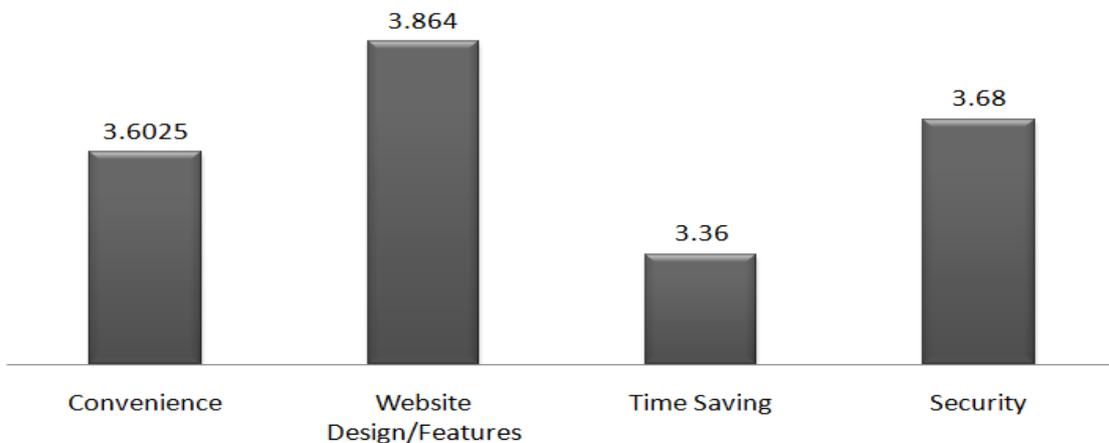
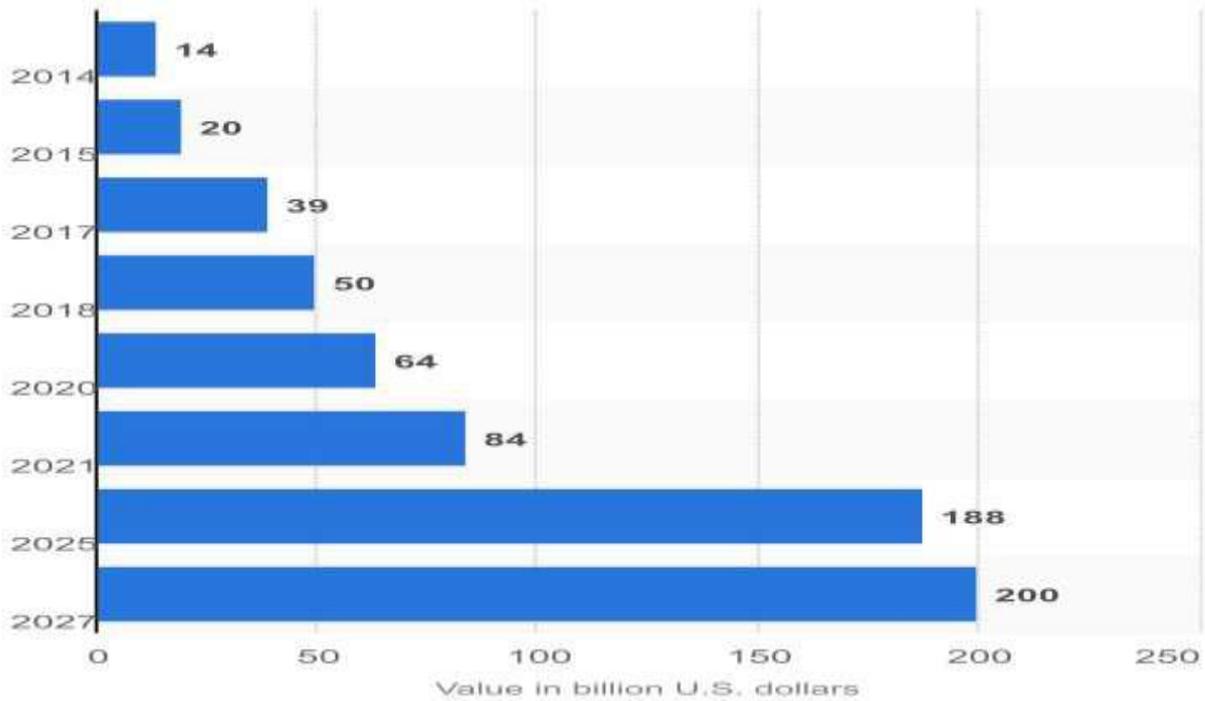


Figure 5 In the comparative analysis of four factors we will take the averages of each factor by their corresponding modules, for instance “Convenience” as one of the four factors contains four modules, we will take the average of four modules under convenience and compare with other factors averages to see which factor is relatively more attractive, we will also discuss the each factor as well. In our questionnaire, we have taken 15 question modules in which Convenience contains 4 modules, Website design/ Features contains 5 modules, Time saving with 3 modules and Security contains 3 modules. The average score for convenience is 3.6025 and convenience as a factor influences consumers to shop online and it also attracts online shoppers. If we compare convenience with the other factors it has the highest score and this also indicates it is one of the important factors for online shoppers. The corresponding average scores of Website Design/Features is 3.864, so it is concluded that for online shoppers website design/Features is the attractive factor that influences consumers to shop online. Though time saving has the lowest score of all i.e. 3.36 but still the score is positive and it indicates that time saving is also an attractive factor for online shoppers. Lastly the average score for the security i.e.3.68 is also positive which shows security is an important factor that online shoppers keep in mind while shopping online.

6. FINDINGS

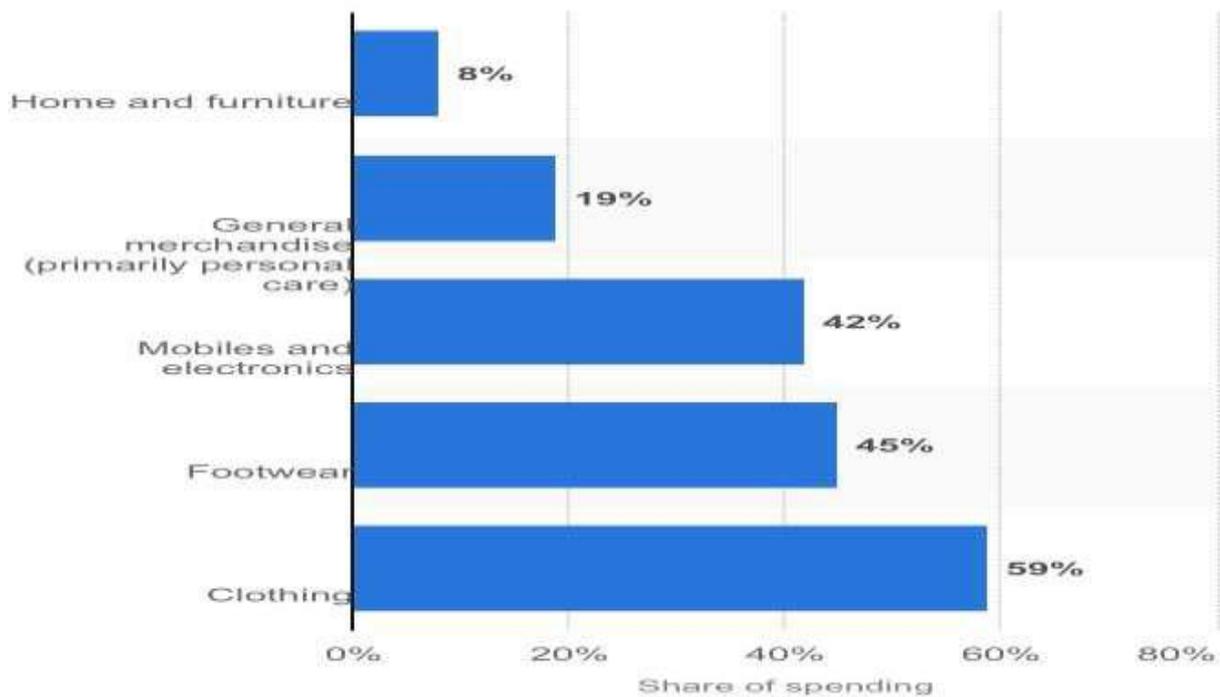
6.1. Market size of e-commerce industry across India from 2014 to 2020, with forecasts until 2027



Source: Statista

Figure 6. It is interpreted that in 2014, there was 14 billion U.S. dollars e-commerce value whereas at present in the year 2021, e-commerce value is 84 billion U.S. dollars and it is estimated that in the year 2027 e-commerce value will be 200 billion U.S. dollars. This means that slowly, e-commerce value is increasing and will bring a different era in the field of shopping.

6.2 Share of spending in the year 2020



Source: Statista

Figure 7 It is interpreted that 59% consumers purchase clothing while shopped online whereas 8% consumers purchase home and furniture products. This shows less engrossment for the products which are expensive as well as enduring when shopped online.

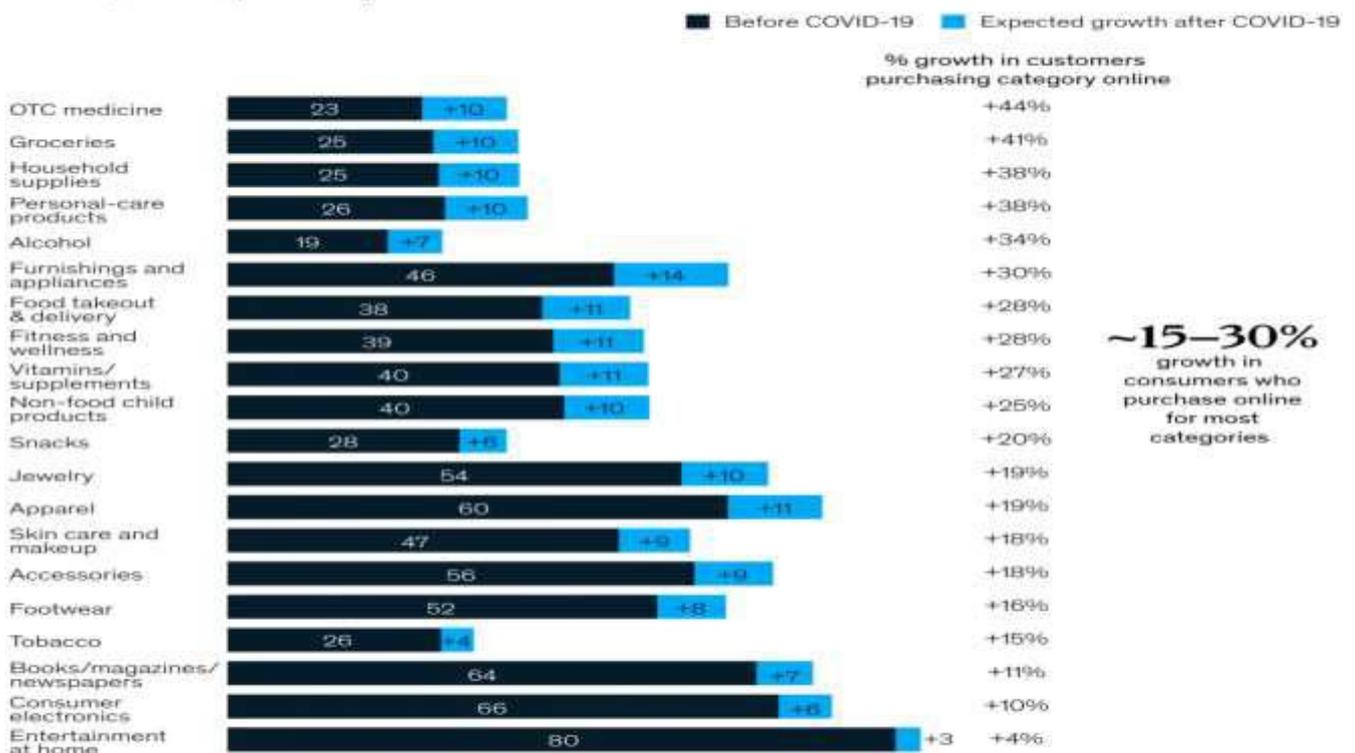
6.3. Rising sectors in 2021



6.4. Post Covid19 Online Purchases

More people expect to make a portion of their purchases online post-COVID-19 than before.

Consumers' use of online channels before and expected use after COVID-19^{1,2}
 % of respondents purchasing online³



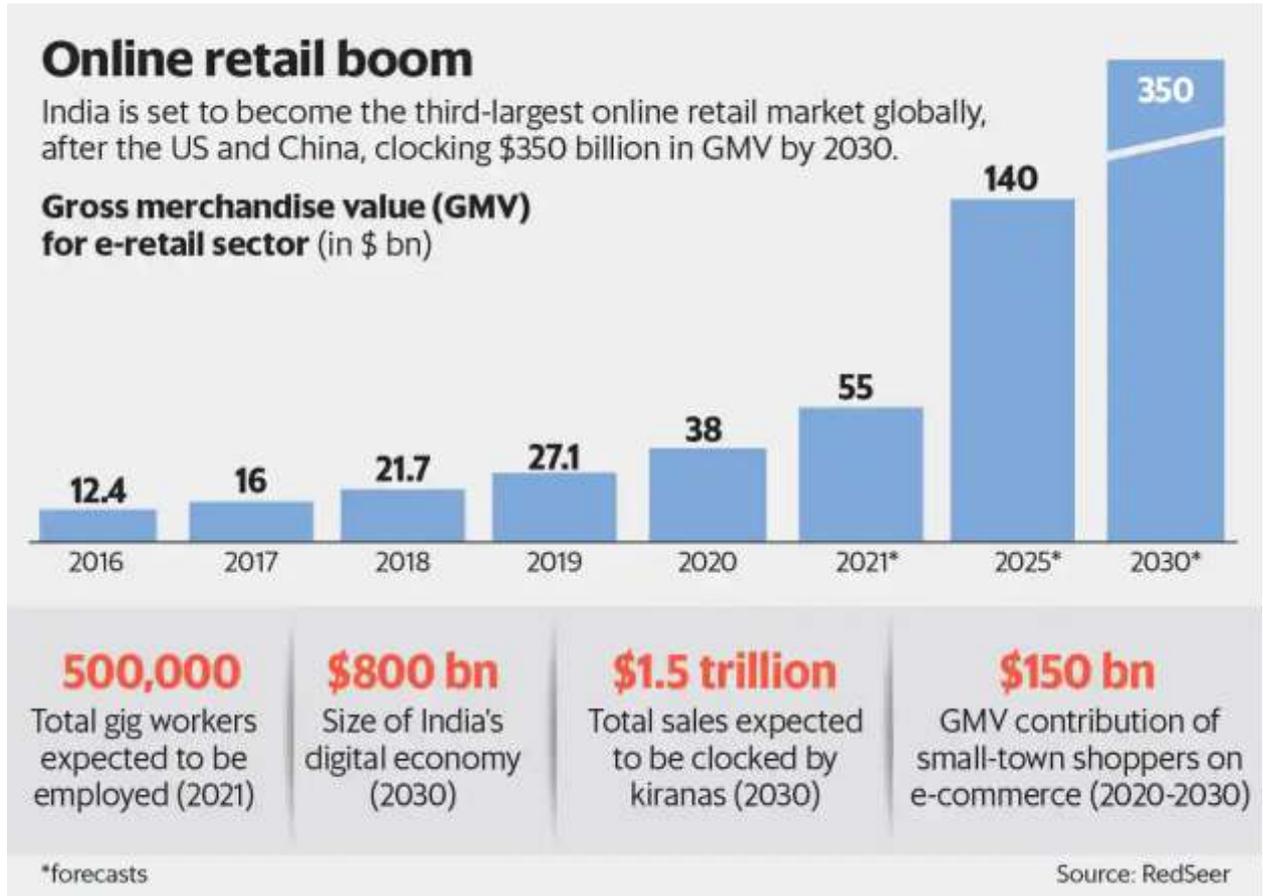
¹Q: Before the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation started, what proportion of your purchases in this category were online vs from a physical store/in person?
²Q: Once the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation has subsided, tell us what proportion of your purchases in this category you think will be online vs from a physical store/in person?
³Respondents who indicated that they have not bought the category online and do not intend to do so in the next 2 weeks are classified as not purchasing online.
 Source: McKinsey & Company COVID-19 US Consumer Pulse Survey 6/15-6/21/2020, n = 3,006, sampled and weighted to match the US general population.

McKinsey & Company

Source: McKinsey

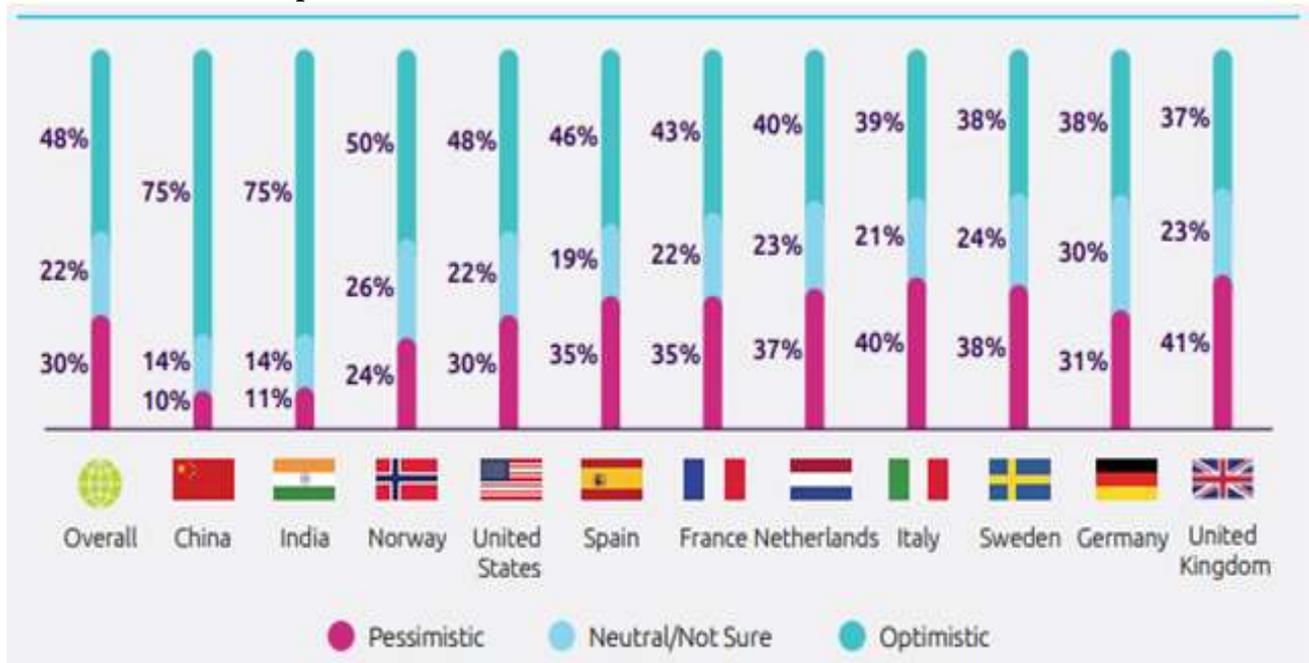
Figure 8 When people faced a decline in wages during the outbreak, around 18% people shifted their spending to lower priced goods and brands, according to the McKinsey report. Among these, around half of them agreed with the low cost option and 34% no longer preferred higher priced goods.

6.5. Online Market's Future in India

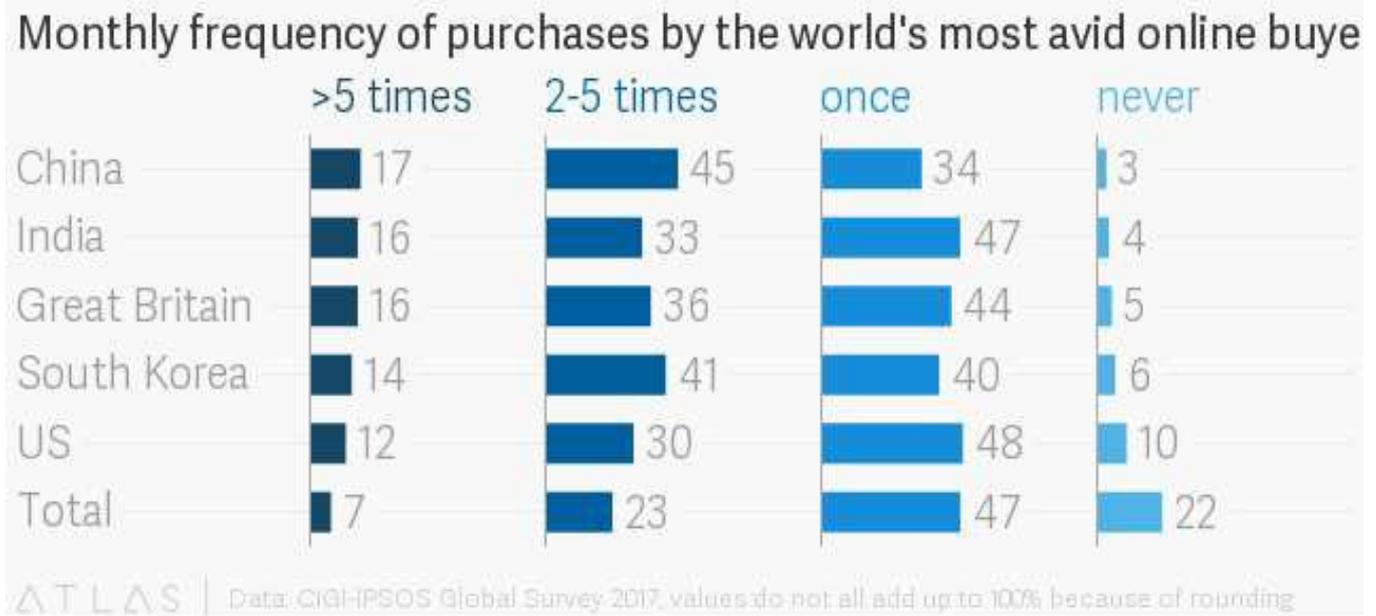


Source: RedSeer

6.6. Different Countries Expected Growth in 2023



6.7. Monthly Frequency of Purchases by the most Online Shopping Giants



7. RESULTS:

	MALES	FEMALES
Mean	53.96	58.58
Variance	54.28408	65.14653
Observations	50	50
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
Df	97	
t Stat	-2.9893	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.001772	
t Critical one-tail	1.660715	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.003543	
t Critical two-tail	1.984723	

From the above table, mean for males and females is 53.96 and 58.58 respectively therefore we accept the hypothesis. Hence, there is a significant difference between the online behaviour of females and males.

The result showed that most of the respondents have both positive and negative experiences while shopping online. There were many problems or issues that consumer’s face while using e-commerce platforms. Total four factors came out from the study that encourages consumers to buy from online sites like convenience, website design/features, time saving and security.

8. CONCLUSION:

Online shopping is fetching more popularity day by day with the increase in the usage of the information server. Considering customer’s requirements for online selling has become a challenge for sellers. Specially, understanding the consumer’s attitudes towards online shopping, making refinement in the factors that impact consumers to shop online and working on factors that affect consumers to shop online will help marketers to gain the competitive edge over others. Therefore our study has focused mainly on gender perspective. Moreover, it showed that website design, trust, security and product performance were the significant external online factors of online shopping context. These online factors also confirm the previous studies and literature review.

The findings of the study have given better understanding to e-retailers and will help to construct their online marketing strategies according to the consumers need. Based on the findings of this research, e-retailers should take important measures to get rid of the psychological factors like trust & security and build trust in the online retail form and ensure the privacy of online consumers. The website factor encourages consumers to spend more time on the website and compare prices, detailed availability of product information, and more discounts. A highly attractive and user-friendly web page can influence the consumer’s decision in a more favourable way for marketers. In addition based on the study’s results online respondents are concerned about their products (product performance risk), e-retailers should

provide accurate and authenticate information about product's performance, through this e-retailers can get consumers' confident, so online consumers will buy more from them and consumers will not worry about their product's performance.

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