

FACTORS INFLUENCING ONLINE SHOPPING EASE OF USE AMONG FEMALE STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN KANNIYAKUMARI DISTRICT

Anu Radha S (Reg.no: 18223162008),

Research Scholar, Scott Christian College (Autonomous) Nagercoil. (Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Abhisekapatti ,Tirunelveli).

Dr. J. Jane Theeba Jeya Vanathy ,

Assistant Professor, Department of Business Studies, Scott Christian College (Autonomous), Nagercoil.

ABSTRACT

The e-commerce industry has had a direct impact on India's micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSME) by providing funding, technology, and training, as well as having a positive cascading effect on other industries. What is the major influencing factor that forces the consumers to do online shopping? Particularly the case of the female students who are studying in the higher educational institutions located in the Kanyakumari districts the focus of the present research. 502 complete responses were selected for the present research. However, respondents have been selected by Purposive sampling technique from Non probability sampling method. The Main suggestions are online shopping websites need to provides enough categories, classification, and filtering options in order to make the online purchasing experience of the consumers a breeze. The consumers need to be able locate the exact product that they are looking for in a short span of time in order to increase the purchasing chances of the consumers.

Key Words: Online shopping, Female students, Ease of Use and Quality.

INTRODUCTION

Since 2014, the Indian government has announced several initiatives, such as Digital India, Make in India, Start-up India, Skill India, and the Innovation Fund. The timely and successful implementation of such programmes will most likely support the country's e-commerce development. The following are some of the major government initiatives to promote E-commerce in India:

- i. The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) is reportedly planning to use the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) to standardise the on-boarding phase of retailers on e-commerce platforms by establishing protocols for cataloguing, vendor discovery, and price discovery. In the interests of the country and its people, the department seeks to provide equal opportunities for all marketplace participants to benefit from the e-commerce ecosystem.

- ii. National Retail Policy: The government proposed a national retail policy with five components: ease of doing business, rationalisation of the licencing process, digitisation of retail, an emphasis on changes, and an open network for digital shopping, stating that offline and online retail must be managed concurrently.
- iii. In July, the Consumer Affairs Ministry issued the Consumer Protection (e-commerce) Rules 2020, which mandated that e-commerce companies display the country of origin alongside product listings. In addition, the companies would be required to disclose the factors that influence product listings on their websites.
- iv. The Government e-Marketplace (GeM) and Union Bank of India signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in October 2019 to enable a cashless, paperless, and transparent payment system for a variety of services.
- v. As part of the Digital India movement, the government launched various initiatives such as Umang, Start-up India Portal, Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM), and others to promote digitisation.
- vi. Mr. Piyush Goyal, Minister of Commerce and Industry, invited start-ups to register on the GeM public procurement platform in October 2020 and sell products and services to government organisations and PSUs.
- vii. In October 2020, the government amended the equalisation levy rules to require international companies operating e-commerce platforms in India to provide permanent account numbers. (PAN). It imposed a 2% tax on the sale of goods or the distribution of services by a non-resident ecommerce operator in the FY21 budget.
- viii. The Indian government increased the FDI cap in E-commerce marketplace models to 100% in order to encourage foreign players to participate in E-commerce. (In business-to-business models).
- ix. The government's large investment in building a 5G fibre network will aid India's e-commerce development.
- x. By providing funding, technology, and training, the e-commerce industry has had a direct impact on India's micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSME), as well as a positive cascading effect on other industries. The Indian e-commerce industry is on the rise, and by 2034, it is expected to overtake the United States as the world's second largest e-commerce market. Digital payments, hyper-local logistics, analytics-driven customer interaction, and digital advertisements are examples of technology-enabled technologies that will most likely aid the sector's growth. In the long run, the expansion of the e-commerce market would increase jobs, export sales, tax collection by exchequers, and consumer goods and services. Smart phone use is expected to increase by 84 percent to 859 million by 2022.

The e-commerce market is expected to expand rapidly, with a CAGR of more than 35% expected to reach Rs. 1.8 trillion (US\$ 25.75 billion) in FY20. In the next five years, the Indian e-

commerce industry is expected to grow to 300-350 million shoppers, bringing the online Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) to US\$ 100-120 billion by 2025.

Reviews of Literature

The researchers, Busara, Hemantkumar P. & S. Vaghela (2020), focused their research on the motivational factors that influenced the consumers to prefer online shopping. The research was carried out among 274 respondents, college students, who had the background of Indian set up. In order to find the major influencing factors, the collected data were analyzed with exploratory factor analysis. Compared to other products, the highest online selling product was electronic items. The main influencing factors of consumers were perceived behavioral control, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, perceived risk, trust, service quality, and subjective norms which kindled the consumers to prefer online shopping especially to the purchase of electronic gadgets.

The researchers, Liang, yuli&Chuanlan Liu (2019) , studied the utilization of various modes to customize online apparels. 388 university students in America were chosen for this study. Structural equation modeling, multiple group comparison and MONOVA were applied to analyze the collected data. Besides the study examined various influencing factors that led customers to customize online apparels. These factors included choice variety, enjoyment and ease of use. The finding of the study was that the consumers preferred web channels instead of the mobile channel to mass customization of online apparels.

The researchers, Do, Toan, Thanh Nguyen &Cuong Nguyen (2019), made a study in Vietnam with the objective to find out the major influencing factors of consumers towards online shopping. The research was conducted in two stages. The first considering the previous available research sources with relevance to the related area. The second was to conduct research through quantitative method by choosing 349 volunteers to conduct the research. The consumers received a positivity towards online shopping from three important factors namely - perceived transaction security, perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Demographical profile like age and income too had an impact in making purchase intention of the consumers. Hence the online retailers were suggested to focus their attention towards these factors also.

Statement of the Problems

The demand in online shopping has further seen another boost during the Covid– 19 period due to the restriction in venturing out. People turned to online shopping in order to fulfil their daily needs and thus the number of users for online shopping has doubled in the year 2020 compared to 2019. The government also is pushing forward the notion of Digital India and as part of this initiative the government has allowed 100% FDI in B2B E-commerce. Moreover it is the younger generation who are more interested and involved in e-commerce and they form the majority of the population in India. Thus, there is a huge potential in this field for both the industries and the consumers.

With all these developments aiding the growth of e-commerce, it is high time that these developments were scrutinized. But despite of these positive factors, there is also some negative

factors that might have some influence among the purchase behaviour of the consumers. These negative factors include the possibility of getting a duplicate products or a damaged product, the complications involved in return and refund, the various policies that the various websites follow related to return and replacing, etc. Moreover, in the case of school students, when they spend a lot of time online, there is a possibility of impulse buying. When considering these negative factors, does this factor affect the buying behaviour of the consumers or does the positive outweighs the negative side? What is the major influencing factor that forces the consumers to do online shopping? Particularly the case of the female students who are studying in the higher educational institutions located in the Kanyakumari districts the focus of the present research. It is beneficial to know the level of ease of use of the online shopping website and similarly is there any usefulness of online shopping? What are they buying online? Do they face any problems in online shopping? Does it affect their buying behaviour? And finally are they satisfied with their shopping experience online? Taking these as the focus point, the researcher has conducted the present research.

Objectives of the study

- To find out the factors influencing online shopping ease of use among female students.

Methodology

The researcher has targeted 570 sample respondents those who are doing online buying of girls' student of higher education institutions, Kanyakumari district of Tamil nadu. Among the 570 respondents, only 521 respondents responded properly. From that 521, only 502 complete responses were selected for the present research. However, respondents have been selected by Purposive sampling technique from Non probability sampling method. The primary data was collected with the help of Structured Questionnaire; and also the required information was gathered through questionnaire method. The collected data was carefully processed, edited and tabulated for analytical purposes.

Path Analysis - awareness, information quality, service quality and website quality of online shopping impact on Ease of use:

In order to analyse the relationship between the dependent variable of ease of use and the independent variables such as awareness, information quality, service quality and website quality of online shopping, the following multiple regression analysis has been conducted.

- Independent variables are Awareness, Information quality, Service quality and website quality of online shopping.
- Dependent variable is ease of Use.

H_a – Awareness level on online shopping has positive influences on ease of Use.

H_a – Information Quality of online shopping has positive influences on ease of Use.

H_a – Service Quality of online shopping has positive influences on ease of Use.

H_a – Website quality online shopping has positive influences on ease of Use.

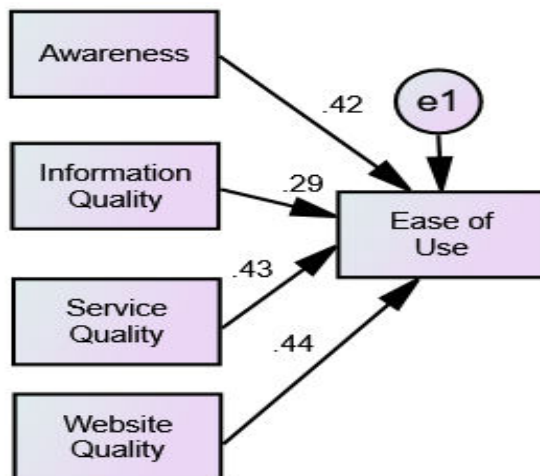


Fig. 1 Standardized estimates of awareness, information quality, service quality and website quality of online shopping impact on Ease of use

Table No. 1

Unstandardized Regression Weights

Paths	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
Ease of Use <--- Awareness	.259	.017	15.636	***	Supported
Ease of Use <--- Information Quality	.157	.014	10.946	***	Supported
Ease of Use <--- Service quality	.260	.016	15.965	***	Supported
Ease of Use <--- Website Quality	.250	.015	16.617	***	Supported

Note: *** denotes .000

The relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables is discussed in the multiple regression analysis. Because the p value is less than the significant value of 0.05, it can be concluded that the independent variables and the dependent variable have a positive relationship. The awareness level has a positive impact on the ease of use of online shopping, and for every unit increase in the awareness level of female students, the ease of use of online shopping increases by 0.42 unit. Similarly, the quality of information influences the ease of use of online shopping. When the information quality increases by one unit, the ease of use of online shopping increases by 0.29 unit. The ease of use of online shopping is also influenced by the service quality of the online shopping websites. When the service quality of an online shopping website increases by one unit, the ease of use of online shopping increases by 0.43 unit. Finally,

there is a link between website quality and ease of use when shopping online. When the website quality increases by one point, the ease of use of online shopping increases by 0.44 unit.

Findings

The level of awareness influences the ease of use of online shopping. Similarly, the quality of information influences the ease of use of online shopping. The ease of use of online shopping is also influenced by the service quality of the online shopping websites. Finally, there is a link between website quality and ease of use when shopping online.

Suggestions and Conclusion

This study provides further evidence that, when used responsibly, online shopping can be a useful tool. Since this is a tool for mutual gain, honesty on both sides is essential to making it a successful medium. Both parties are impacted by carelessness on the part of one. For students, books and beauty products top the list of online cosmetics. Therefore, e-commerce platforms should stock up sufficiently to accommodate the youth market. Additionally, e-commerce platforms must facilitate a simple and stress-free shopping experience for their customers. Online retailers should also make it easy for customers to find what they're looking for by including a variety of organisation and filtering tools. Consumers' likelihood of making a purchase is increased if they can quickly find the specific product they're seeking. The shoppers, meanwhile, should only go to the online store when they have to. They must guard against the time and money wasted on impulsive purchases. Consequently, the current study has provided a number of recommendations to enhance the online shopping behaviour of female students.

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