

FACTORS INFLUENCING STUDENTS ONLINE SHOPPING ATTITUDES AND INTENTIONS

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Abstract: The ever increasing use of the Internet provides a developing prospect for E-marketers. Such marketers' awareness of the factors affecting student's shopping attitudes and intentions is crucial to further develop their marketing strategies in converting potential customers into active ones, while maintaining the existing online customers. As part of Generation Y, college students represent a beneficial market for businesses selling a wide array of goods and services, and they are extremely computer savvy.

This study sets out to examine the factors influencing students' online shopping attitudes and intentions at various colleges of Nagda (Madhya Pradesh) through a self-administered questionnaire. A sample of 190 students was selected from various colleges of Nagda (Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh). A five-level Likert scale was used to determine students' attitudes towards online shopping. The questionnaire was developed on the basis of prior literature, and a total of 190 post graduate students were selected by random sampling. Based on an economic framework, factors affecting the online purchase of different products categories were examined. Logistic analysis revealed that variations in the effect of age, gender, income, ability to identify a secure Internet site, and compulsive buying behavior existed between the products categories. The results of the study showed that the level of online shopping intention was relatively high and direction of attitude towards online shopping was positive among the college students.

Keywords: Online shopping, gender shopping behavior, College students

INTRODUCTION

Today Internet is not only a networking media, but also as a means of transaction for consumers at global market. Internet usage has grown rapidly over the past years and it has become common means for delivering and trading information, services and goods [1]. According to ACNielsen, [2] (more than 627 million people in the world have shopped online. The projected growth of online consumers and expenditures leads marketers to believe that the possibilities for consumer value creation are greater in the electronic commerce market space than in the traditional marketplace.

Consumers have different personalities, which may influence their perception and how they perceive their online shopping behaviors [3]. Consumer shopping behaviour is strongly influenced by consumers' characteristics. In addition, attitudes serve as the bridge between consumer's characteristics and online shopping behavior. As mentioned by Moe WW (2003) [4] attitude towards online shopping is influencing by demography factors, such as gender, age and income. In addition consumers have different personality, which may influence how they perceive their online shopping behavior [3]. The opportunities of online shopping can be restricted by internal and external constraints on behavior[5]. It is important in explaining human behavior since an individual who has the intention of accomplishing a

certain action may be unable to do so because his or her environment prevents the act from being performed. Moreover there are some barriers which have contributed to the unwillingness of students to shop online because they afraid their personal information will be stole or misused by others [6]. Despite the high potential of online shopping in India, there is still a lack of understanding concerning the online shopping and its impact on marketing [7]. Consequently a framework is needed to structure the complex system of effects of these different factors, and develop an in-depth understanding of consumers' attitudes towards Internet shopping and their intentions to shop online.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Study Area

Nagda is very close to tropic of cancer at 23°27'N and 75°25' and 517 meters above MSL. Nagda is a city and municipality in Ujjain district in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. There are four degree colleges in which more than 2500 students are enrolled. Study data were collected by questionnaire based on previous studies. Since university students have been found to be frequent users of technology and likely to buy products online and activities participate in online purchasing, as a result, college students were chosen as the target sample during the first semester of 2012. It must be mentioned that the majorities

of student's parents are employed in Grasim Industries Ltd. and have different online cards to purchase products through the internet.

The majority of the respondents 43.8% fall in the age range between 20 to 25 years of age. Respondents having a monthly income ranging from Rs 10000 to 30000/month comprised the majority income group 37.3% followed by those with a monthly income within the range of Rs 20000 to 50000 (9%). From the ethnic point of view, 44% of the study sample is from Birlagram while Business and agricultural background comprised 49 and 13.7% respectively. Goods mostly purchased by students are "Computer/Electronics/ Software" and "book/DVD/CD". Only a small proportion of purchases were mobiles and apparels.

First section of questionnaire contains eight question related personal demographic data. Demographic questions are gender, age, internet connection place how long have participant connected to internet, how frequently does participant connect internet, connection time to internet, monthly personal income and credit card ownership.

Second section of questionnaire contains 15 sub scale and 64 questions. First four subscales named as online shopping familiarity, online shopping anxiety, trust toward online shopping and these sub scale were adopted. Seven sub scales were named as shopping convenience, product selection, ease/comfort of shopping, hedonic / enjoyment, financial risk, product risk, time / convenience risk and these seven sub scale were adopted from Forsythe et al (2006) [8]. And last four sub scales were names as attitude, intensions, personal innovativeness, perceived consequences and adopted form Limayem, et al (2000) [9]. Questionnaire administered face to face, and researcher visited all classes and explained aim of the study and questionnaire. Finally 190 questionnaire were given to students and 168 questionnaire returned from the participants. After checking questionnaire 27 questionnaire were eliminated and finally research carried with 151 questionnaires.

Both the primary and secondary data collection methods were considered. The primary data was collected through a questionnaire designed exclusively for the study. Secondary data was taken from Research papers, Journals, Magazines and Websites. Data was analyzed by 't' test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results obtained from the questionnaire were shown in the table 1 and table 2. All the respondents are having 100% awareness about online shopping. Income of respondents largely falls in the bracket of Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 30,000 (76%). Maximum numbers of respondents (38%) feel that online shopping is having easy buying

procedures while others think that they can have wide variety of products, Lower price of the products, various modes of payments etc. Most of the respondents think that Availability of online information about Product & Services is excellent (54%). The result of 't' test analysis for attitude toward online shopping and factors of online shopping orientation, online shopping perceived benefits showed significant positive correlation for purchase convenience, price, wider selection and practical orientation. Results also clearly shown a positive relationship between convenience, price, wider selection, practical orientation, and attitude, imply that the predictors explained 54% of the variance/ variation in the attitude toward online shopping.

		Frequency	Percentage	
Gender	Male	94	63	
	Female	57	37	
	Age	18	7	4.7
		19	22	10.4
		20	72	48.0
		21	44	3.9
		22	06	4
		>above		
Internet connection place	Home	82	58	
	School/college	11	7.4	
	Work	11	7.4	
	Internet café	42	28	
	others	5	3.3	
How long have you connected to internet	Less than 1 year	23	10.4	
	1-2 years	56	37.3	
	2-3 years	44	29.3	
	3-4 years	18	10.2	
	More than 4 years	10	6.6	

How frequently connect internet	Twice in a month		
	Twice in a week	11	7.3
	Twice in a day	17	10.3
	More than twice in a day	86	57.3
		37	24.6
Connect ion time to internet	30 min – 1 hour in a week		
	1 hour – 3 hours in a week		
	3 hour – 5 hours in a week	07	5
	5 hour – 10 hours in a week	12	8
	10 hour – 20 hours in a week	15	10
	More than 20 hours in a week	16	15
		56	37.3
		44	30
Parents income in a month	Rs.10000-20000	34	20.2
	20,000-30000	76	50
		24	16
		17	11

	30,000-50000		
	50,000 and above		
Credit card ownership	Yes	46	30
	No	105	70

Table 2 T-test results concerning subscales score by participant’s gender

		N	S.D	t	df
Online shopping Familiarity	Female	5			
	Male	6	1.1	-2.3	15
		9	1.5		1
Shopping Convenience	Female	5			
	Male	6	2.1	-1.9	15
		9	1.4	8	1
Financial Risk	Female	5			
	Male	6	2.6	2.6	15
		9	1.9	1	1
Attitude	Female	5			
	Male	6	2.1	-2.3	15
		9	2.2	8	1

Intensions	Femal	5	1.3	-	15
	e	6			
	Male	9	1.1	3.8	1
		5			
Perceived Consequences	Femal	5	1.6	3.1	15
	e	6			
	Male	9	1.3		1
		5			
Time convenience risk	Femal	5	1.6	2.3	15
	e	6			
	Male	9	1.3		1
		5			

S.D= standard deviation, t= t test value, df= degrees of freedom

The result is consistent with the findings that has been shown in the literature [8] consumers have generally revealed that their main motivation to use the Internet to shop that it is more convenient to shop online than in-store, wider selection of retailers and comparing price among retailer [10,11,12,]. As a result, convenience and wider selection and price are the main determinant of attitude toward online shopping. Moreover, it was also observed that time efficiency and convenience (24-hour availability of online storefront and accessibility from almost any location) have been found to be significant explanatory factors for Internet shopping adoption [5] and also provides consumers with a powerful alternative channel for making purchases. The second dominant factor that motivates online consumers to purchase goods and services over the Internet is the good selection and wider availability of product choices offered by online retailers. Online retailers are able to provide a wide range and assortments of products as compared to traditional channels simply because there is no physical space limit on the number of products that online retailers can display on their online storefronts. Furthermore, the number of online stores that consumers are able to visit online compared to far physical stores, thus, exceeds the number of providing them with a wider selection of products to choose from [13].

The third dominant factor that influences consumers to shop online through the internet is good price offered by online retailers. Our finding are in agreement with the research done by Rohm AJ, Swaminathan [12] on online

purchasing in general, the study identified price as the major factors influencing online purchase behavior. Online retailers are able to offer cheaper price because of the shrinking cost of information processing, lower operating cost and global reach provided by the internet [14]. In addition, Strauss and Frost [15] also identified the ease of comparing price as one of the most important motivator to online shopping. The simplest reason for consumers to purchase online is to save money from the cheaper price offered by online retailers compared to traditional channel.

Finally, in terms of shopping orientation, effective orientation seems to have an effect on attitude toward online shopping. Therefore, online shopping is more likely to be goal-oriented rather than experiential.

CONCLUSION

With the use of internet, consumers can shop anywhere, anything and anytime with easy and safe payment options. Consumers can do comparison shopping between products, as well as, online stores. The findings suggest that useful orientations, convenience, price and wider selection are an important determinant of consumer's attitude toward online shopping. Moreover they have a significant positive impact on consumers' attitude toward online shopping. Consumers' personality tendency was shown to affect their attitude toward online shopping. Moreover, the next aspect of the study is online shopping perceived benefits. The findings of the study also implies that consumers are looking for more convenience (time and money saving), cheaper prices and wider selection when they shop online, making them as the dominant factors that motivates online consumers to shop online. Consumers who value the convenience, prices and wider selection of Internet shopping tend to purchase more online and more often.

A practical assessment of these dimensions revealed that individuals who purchase online, perceived significantly greater benefit in terms of convenience and price. Clearly, shopping motivations explain consumer's adoption of the internet as a shopping medium and consequently contribute to innovation adoption research. Therefore, online retailers need to ensure that the online shopping process through their websites and made as easy, simple and convenient for consumers to shop online.

Limitations and future direction

1. Firstly, since the survey was conducted among a group of graduate students from the students of backward area of Madhya Pradesh, the results should be interpreted with caution, particularly with respect to the generalization of research findings of Indian consumers as a whole. Next, the sample size itself is relatively small. To

- accurately evaluate Indian consumers' perceptions of online shopping, a larger sample size is desirable.
- Future research needs to focus on a larger cross section of Internet users and more diversified random samples to verify the findings of the current study. Moreover, to further studies clarity of the factors influence on attitude toward online shopping, other behavioral model could be used.
 - Certainly, there are other factors that influenced attitude toward online shopping, which have not been included in this study. Enhancement of the model by addition of other relevant variables could produce a model that has more clarifying power. Therefore, future research needs to select the other variables by means of other essential elements such as system, product/service and vendor-related factors that influence consumers' e-shopping behavior.
 - The study has been conducted based on the data acquired from the online buyers of India only and the findings may not be applicable to other countries of the world because of socio-cultural differences. Sample size is very small.

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