

CONSUMER BEHAVIOR TRENDS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Vidya Gopinath

Assistant Professor,
Department of MCA
SCMS School of Technology and Management, Cochin, Kerala

Abstract: Online shopping enables the consumers to purchase products or services from various sellers with the help of internet using web browser or a web application. Consumer Behavior is a difficult and inspiring field to analyze as preferences vary over a period of time. During Covid-19 pandemic The temporary closure of various restaurants and related establishments, consumers spending more on grocery purchase during the COVID-19 pandemic. Grocery shopping is one of the essential activity .With an intention to make aware the variability in the consumer behavior of grocery shopping under different scenarios of the COVID-19 pandemic, we conducted an online formulated experiment to draw out the preferences for purchasing methods, product requirements, time windows, minimum order necessity, and delivery charge. Using various choice decisions from a sample of 100 grocery shoppers in India, we conclude that the trend in the COVID-19 pandemic produce significant differences in grocery shopping inclinations. To maintain isolation, nowadays consumers preferring digital medium to connect, learn and work and they will continue to.

Keywords: Covid 19, Online shopping, Purchasing decisions

INTRODUCTION

The novel corona virus disease (COVID-19) has affected the day today life of many People. In an endeavor to limit the virus spread of COVID-19, people have changed their shopping behavior. According to the recent study, various expenses like on air travel, grocery delivery, entertainment and other categories changed substantially from week to week during the period of COVID-19 pandemic [1]. In the India, lot of people consumed food from restaurants under normal circumstances .However, during the pandemic; groceries are one of the basic human necessities. In fact, consumer expenditure on groceries and related items increased in every aspect. India has been under lockdown since March 25 in an effort to decrease the spread of Novel corona virus. The police department has imposed various types of the restrictions on movements. While understanding a significant impact of the two outbreaks on consumer behavior and expenditure, neither study considered the roles of purchasing methods, time windows, minimum order requirements, and fees. We thus contribute to the scarce literature with evidence of consumer preferences for these grocery shopping attributes under various scenarios of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our novel findings inform numerous recommendations for academics, practitioners, and retailers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

To find out the consumer behavior towards on online shopping in India, we have been carried out a detailed study through a survey by forming a brief set of questionnaire. Considering the research factor, A set of questions in three -point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree been used to collect an easy response from various category of people. The importance of this type of study is based on an assumption that there is a significant change in consumers behavior toward online shopping, most of them are demand to remain post-pandemic situation also. The covid 19 outbreak has not only refashioning the way customer's view in personal and health care routines but also the way they mingle with friends, relatives and communities. Isolation leads human to cuddle technology and gadgets more than ever. The way people are put in their free time is also becoming more reliant on technology. This adaption of technology is expect to continue post-Covid situation as well.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Considering the recent studies on online shopping we include the following four product attributes with their status:

Purchasing Pattern: Generally, there are three alternative methods to self-service grocery shopping inside the store. (1) In-store pick-up: The consumer goes inside the store and collects the ordered groceries.(2) Take out service : The customer waits inside his/her car outside the store and store keeper Places the ordered items in the vehicle. (3) Home delivery: delivery person delivers the ordered Groceries to the home of the customer.

Time frame: While placing the order through online applications, customers may pick or indicate a favored time for delivery window to collect the groceries. Based on information from various vendors as we considered four levels: (1) Less than 4 h, (2) between 4 and 12 h, (3) next day delivery (4) delivery within a week.

Minimum Order Requirement: Online customers are forced to meet a minimum order requirement to make transactions. Again, based on information from various vendors we taken into account some levels.

Delivery charge. If the purchasing method is home delivery some amount of delivery charges may be taken by the vendor.

FACTORS AFFECTING ONLINE SHOPPING BEHAVIOR OF THE CUSTOMER

Since online shopping is still a fairly new experience for the customers and vendor, respondents were asked to list their most important reasons for using the Internet to buy groceries. Questionnaire is setting up in such a way that customers can give their opinion in an easy way. In order to study the factors affecting online shopping behavior of customers; the exploratory factor analysis has been employed. The principal component method of factor analysis has been carried out with Eigen values greater than one through varimax rotation and the results obtained through rotated component matrix. The consumers who make online shopping in our country is collected using survey and after identifying them, primary data were collected from 188 consumers in Ernakulum district and 224 consumers from Trivandrum district. Thus, a total of 412 consumers constituted as the core respondents from the top two districts in Kerala are taken in to account for this study.

Table 1: factors affecting online shopping behavior of consumers

Factor	Item	Rotated Factor Loadings	Eigen Value	% of Variation	Factor Name
1	I can buy the products anytime 24 hours a day while shopping online	.67	2.123	23.75	Convenience
	Detail information is available while shopping online	.63			
	It is easy to choose and make comparison with other products while shopping online	.65			
	Finding right product online is easy	.61			
	I get on-time delivery by shopping on-line	.58			
2	The website layout helps me in searching and selecting the right product while shopping online	.65	1.43	19.45	Website Features
	The website design helps me in searching the products easily	.58			
	I prefer to purchase from a website that provides safety and ease of navigation and order	.54			
	I prefer to buy from website that provides me with quality of information	.49			
3	Online Shopping protects my security	.65	1.17	16.2	Security
	online Shopping protects my security	.64			
	I like to shop online from a trustworthy website	.68			
4	It takes less time in evaluating and selecting a product while shopping online	.59	1.04	11.90	Time Saving
	Online shopping takes less time to purchase	.55			
	Online shopping doesn't waste time	.56			
	Cumulative % of Variation			71.6	

INFLUENCE OF FACTORS AFFECTING ON PURCHASING DECISION

In order to examine the influence of factors affecting online shopping behavior on purchasing decision of consumers, the multiple linear regressions has been applied and the results are presented in Table 2. The factors affecting online shopping behavior are considered as independent variables and the purchasing decision is considered as dependent variable. The results show that the coefficient of multiple determinations (R^2) is 0.66 and adjusted R^2 is 0.64 indicating the regression

Model is good fit. It is inferred that about 64.00 per cent of the variation in dependent variable (Purchasing Decision) is explained by the independent variables (Factors Affecting Online Shopping Behavior). The F-value of 13.827 is statistically significant at one per cent level indicating that the model is significant

Table 3: Influence of Factors Affecting Online Shopping Behavior on Purchasing Decision of Consumers

Factors Affecting Online Shopping Behavior	Regression Co-efficient	t-value	Sig.
Convenience	.54	8.5	.00
Website Features	.53	8.4	.00
Security	.45	8.2	.00
Time saving	.47	8.4	.00
R ²	.65	-	
Adjusted R ²	.33	-	0
F	13	-	
N	298	-	

The results shown in the table indicate that convenience, security, website features and time saving are positively and significantly influencing the purchasing decision of consumers at one per cent level. Hence, the null hypothesis of there is no significant influence of factors affecting online shopping behavior on purchasing decision of consumers is rejected. Convenience and Security is two main considerations during the current pandemic situation.

FINDINGS & RESULTS

Majority of the survey respondents are in the age group of 25-35 years. Most of the respondents are employees and they earn a pay of Rs30000- Rs 80000. The chi-square analysis proves that the factors that allow us to get knowledge about the online shopping for number of years, Educational qualification, Job environment decides the frequency of online purchases and preferred mode of payment have an association with the awareness and knowledge towards online shopping. There is no direct and significant relationship between monthly income, Occupation and the level of satisfaction of the respondents towards Online Shopping. The product dimensions considered are positively correlated with satisfaction towards Online Shopping. During covid Pandemic the consumer behavior changes a lot due to security and convenience is main consideration So the frequency of online shopping is increased in a very high rate in the last 6 months and the expectation is that the same trend will be continuing hereafter.

CONCLUSION

The online shopping consumers at Kerala in both Ernakulum and Trivandrum are satisfied with the online shopping process. They are benefited with various facilities like convenience, less procedure, timely delivery, safety during covid pandemic, product offers, low cost, convenience etc. The product dimensions are identified to be highly satisfied and highly correlated. The understanding of the nature, needs and wants of the consumers as such in other business is very much vital for the study.

SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- The current study of consumer behavior during pandemic considers only the online based product features .Further research can be done on website features.
- This study can be conducted specifically by considering a product or a company

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