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CONSUMER PREFERENCE AND PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS ONLINE SHOPPING: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF GOA, INDIA

Dr. SHARMILA B. DESSAI ASST. PROFESSOR GOVERNMENT COLLEGE OF ARTS, SCIENCE & COMMERCE KHANDOLA

ABSTRACT

The present paper is an attempt to study the consumer behavior towards online shopping. The objectives of the study are: to study the consumer preference towards online shopping, to understand the consumer perception towards online shopping and to suggest measures that could help in bringing improvement in online shopping. Random sampling method has been used to collect the data primary data was collected from 200 respondents by means of a self-constructed questionnaire having 15 questions. Collected data was analyzed using Excel and SPSS software. Analysis also includes addition, subtraction, tabulation and graphical presentation. Major findings of the study are: large proportion of customers follow modern trend in shopping and thus they shop online. Cash on delivery is found most popular payment method for online shopping among consumers. Majority of the respondent's buys from flipkart.com which is thus one of the leading online shopping websites in Goa. Consumer prefers to buy consumer durables through online shopping. Unreliable online delivery system as well as unexpected quality of the product personally has a significant impact on online shopping. The main barrier in the process of online shopping is the payment safety and privacy issue.

KEYWORDS

Consumer preferences, perceptions, online Shopping and Cash on Delivery.

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1. INTRODUCTION

ow a day's life style of the people has undergone a incredible change. People feel it painful and time consuming to go in jam-packed markets for shopping. So E shopping is a fortunate thing as it saves lot of time. Online shopping is a process whereby consumer directly buys goods and services from a seller without a conciliator services in the market. Shoppers can visit web stores from placate of their house and shop by sitting in front of the computer. Online stores are usually available 24 hours a day and many consumers have internet contact both at work and at home. Online shopping is a form of electronic commerce which allows consumers to directly buy goods or services from a seller over the internet using a web browser. Consumers find a product of interest by visiting the website of the retailer directly or by searching among alternative vendors using a shopping search engine, which displays the same products availability and pricing at different computers, laptops, tablet computers and smart phones. So, it is very suitable for them to shop online. One of the most tempting factor about online shopping particularly during festive seasons is that, it alleviates need to wait in long lines or search from a store for a particular item as variety of goods are accessible in online. Online shopping is flattering all the time more popular for variety of reasons there are some external factors such as increase in population, difficulties in getting traditional stores, troubles associated with shopping mall as well as with other traditional stores and availability of internet facilities have contributed to the increase in on online shopping. Consumers get in sequence about the product with its appraisal so the real information is passed on by the onhand customers to the new buyers. If one wants to buy a product he/she no longer is limited from to asking friends and families because there are many products review on the web which gives opinion of the existing users of the product. Online customers must have access to the internet and a valid method of payment in order to complete a transaction, such as a credit card, debit card or a service such as PayPal. By taking all the above discussion into consideration efforts are made in the present study to know the perceptions of the consumer as well as the consumer behavior towards online shopping so that it would be easy to know what can be done to bring about more improvement in modern techniques of online shopping.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Rapid global growth in electronic commerce (e-commerce), businesses are attempting to gain a competitive advantage by using e-commerce to interact with customers (Demangeot and Broderick, (2007). Online shopping is getting popular among younger generation. The main problem in the process of online shopping is the safety issue and low level of trust on online stores therefore; sellers have to adopt better strategies to increase the consumer's level of trust on them (Mahalaxmi and Nagamanikandan, (2016). Delafrooz et al, (2011), said that online shopping enables consumers to purchase products and services at any point of time and wherever they are located. Dobre and Milovan – Ciuta (2015), are of the view that, personality influences the attitude towards internet, motivations for visiting websites in which they shop. Shergill and Chen, (2005), found that the benefit of online shopping is immense and it increases day by day. Vinerean et al. (2013) state that, social media influences online shopping specially in the developing countries like India where consumers get influenced easily by the surrounding situations. Vijayasarathy and Jones (2000) showed that Internet shopping convenience, lifestyle of the people, fashion, trdaitions compatibility and fun positively influence attitude towards Internet shopping and intention to shop online. Ling et al. (2010) found that brand and quality orientation are positively related to online purchase intention.

3. OBJECTIVES

- 1. To study the consumer preference towards online shopping
- 2. To understand the consumer perception towards online shopping.
- 3. To suggest measures that could help in bringing improvement in online shopping

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. SAMPLE STUDY

An attempt is made in this study to focus on the consumer behavior towards online shopping by selecting respondents from 2 talukas out of 12 talukas from the state of Goa. Two talukas that is Ponda from south Goa district of Goa and Tiswadi from North Goa district of Goa is selected for the purpose of the present study. All together 200 respondents were randomly selected.

B. DATA COLLECTION

Data was collected both from primary source as well as secondary sources.

PRIMARY DATA

Primary data was collected through personal interviews of randomly selected respondents with an interview schedule. Structured questionnaire containing open ended as well as closed ended questions were used for collecting the primary data. The questionnaire was framed on the basis of objectives of the project hence

only the relevant information was obtained from the consumers so that, all the objectives could be achieved and proper inferences can be drawn. Required data was collected during the month of January 2022.

SECONDARY DATA

Secondary data is collected from various books, journals, magazines, periodicals, libraries, organisations as well as through websites.

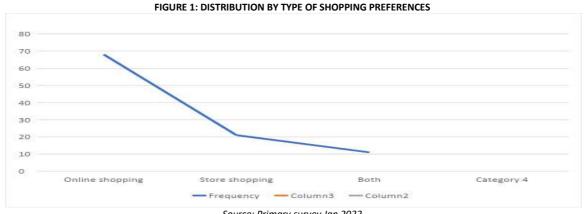
5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

There are different processes involved in the consumer behavior. Initially the consumer tries to find out what commodities he would like to consume, then he selects only those commodities that promise greater utility. After selecting the commodities, the consumer makes an estimate of the available money which he can spend. Lastly, the consumer analyses the prevailing prices of commodities and takes the decision about the commodities he should consume. In order study the attitude of the consumers towards online shopping, different views of the consumers as well as factors affecting consumer behavior were analyzed in detail so that, an insight into the online shopping can be obtained from the present study. Following analysis helped us in achieving the objectives of the study.

CONSUMER PREFERENCE TOWARDS ONLINE SHOPPING.

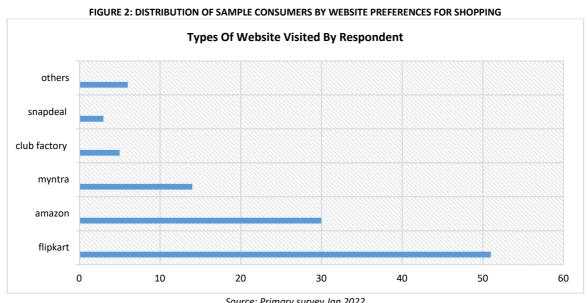
Preferences of the consumer depends on various factors like convenience, variety of products, discounts available, price charged for the product, delivery of the product on time, purchase return function and so on. Efforts are made in this study to analyze how effective are the factors in determining consumer behavior towards online shopping

Type of shopping preferences of the Consumer: In recent years online shopping has emerged as a distinct trend in customers shopping preferences, i. driven by the factors like convenience and range of products offered by online shops. Despite the rise in number of customers preferring online shopping consumers still look to shop in the physical store. Besides this there are customers who prefer shopping online as well as through physical store. Present study indicates that, (68%) (Fig.1) customers prefer online shopping while (21%) customers prefer shopping through physical store besides this, there are (11%) of the customers shop through both that is through online as well as through the physical store. Thus, study reveals that, large proportion of customers follow modern trend in shopping and thus they shop online. This could be because online shopping requires less time, no transport cost. Customers who prefer shopping trough physical shops might be because of the reason that these customers might be interested in personal experience of shopping or they might have had bad experience in the past through online shopping or consumers might not be aware about online shopping.



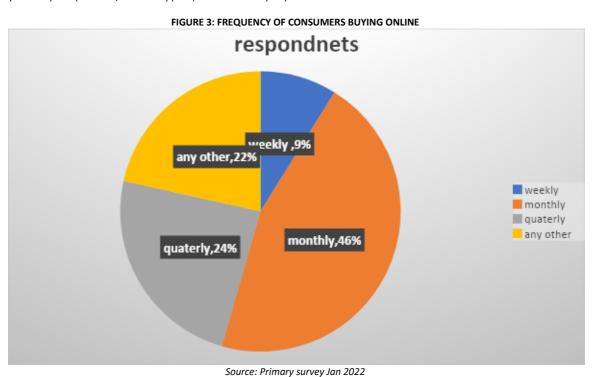
Source: Primary survey Jan 2022

ii. Website Preferences of the Consumer for Shopping There are lots of online websites for everything that you need. You type something in the search bar of your browser; a list of sites is displayed in front of you. These sites sell everything from clothes, medicines, cosmetics, kitchen appliances, electronics, and many more things. In short everything and anything you need is available online. Even though, there are hundreds of websites available few among them are very popular and most of the consumer prefer to buy only from those websites. Present study shows that, (51%) (Fig 2.) of the respondent shop online on Flipkart because they feel that Flipkart is one of the reputed and trusted company in Goa. There are various offers and exclusively fast delivery. Around (30%) of the respondent shop online on Amazon is because any time respondents have ever had a problem, their customer service has always been great about fixing the issues whether it damaged merchandised or if it is a refund or required to know about a product. They feel that customer service provided by Amazon is excellent. Only (14%) of the consumer's shop on Myntra it is because they say that Myntra is not considered a good site for online fashion store in Goa. Myntra has a negative review because they never deliver on time. Their customer support team was unhelpful and they took 6 complete working days to deliver one product from the same city this is a review shared by a respondent.

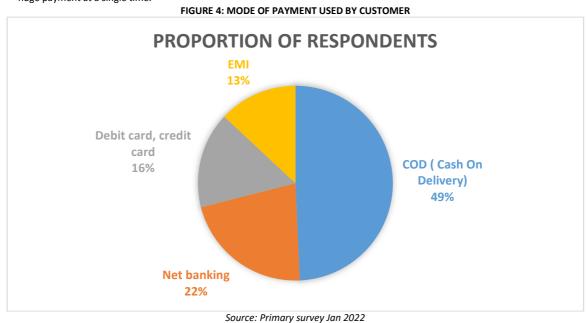


Source: Primary survey Jan 2022

Frequency of online shopping Online shopping has become a lifestyle growing at exponential rates. The ease of researching, buying, shopping and the huge availability of options from small retailers of large brands is driving more consumers online than ever before. No doubt that higher proportion of consumer buy on line but how often they buy online is an important question. Present study revealed that, (46%) of online buyers shop at least once in month (Fig3). In addition to that, (24%) of online shoppers shop online quarterly while (22%) of online shoppers do not keep any track on their frequency of buying online. They shop online as and when need arises. (9%) of the online shoppers buy weekly. Consumers frequency of buying online depends on various factors like, what type of products are brought online, that is they a perishable or non-perishable, if consumers buy perishable products like food products including vegetables, milk than consumers tend to buy either daily or weekly. If online shoppers prefer to buy durable products like clothes, shoes, books than they tend to buy either monthly or quarterly or yearly. In the present since larger proportion of online shoppers shop monthly it implies that, online shoppers prefer and mostly buy consumer durables.

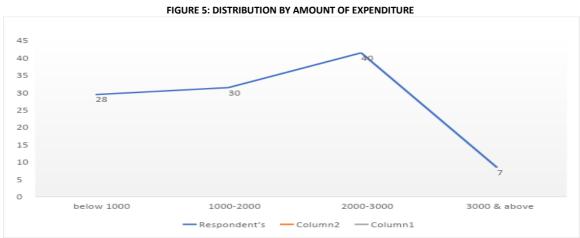


Mode of Payment for online shopping: As the world is changing day by day the mode of payment is also changing day by day. Earlier we used to pay by cash to each other but as the year pass by the different types of payment mode is coming in the existing world and people prefer to do payment through such modes. Net banking it is one of the payment modes which are done by using online banking services from one bank to another bank using security code. Another mode of payment is debit card and credit cards. One more mode available for online payments is EMI in which the buyer needs to pay a regular monthly instalment to the selling party. Form the survey conducted we have found that (49%) of the people prefer COD (Cash on Delivery) as a mode of making payment as they feel it is the safest mode of payment (Fig 4). Consumers feel that they will not be cheated when they opt for COD as the product reach to them and then the payment is made. (22%) of the respondent prefer net banking as they think it is the easiest way of doing payment. About (16%) of the people told that debit card or credit card is the easiest way as they get additional discount on the things they purchase from online shopping. About (13%) of the respondent said that EMI option is good the reason that they cited the reason that, they can make a huge amount of payment in small pieces as they will not have a burdened of making a huge payment at a single time.



v. Expenditure on online shopping: Income is a major determinant the standard of living of the people. In fact, many studies in the past have established a direct correlation between the income level of the consumer and standard of living. People define income as just one of the tools that enhances

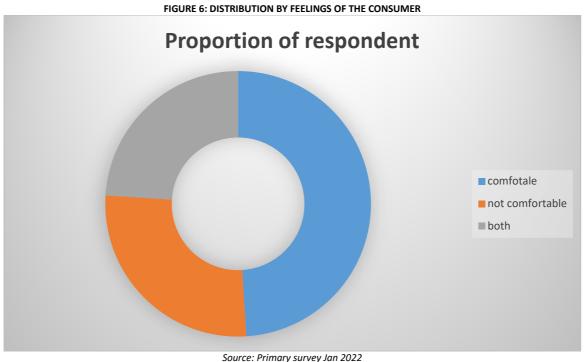
people's living environment. Often times, people say that they cannot live without income. As shown in the above figure (28%) of the consumer spend Rs. 1000 and below on online shopping and usually they go for online shopping once in six months (Fig.5). (30%) of the consumers spend Rs. 1000 -Rs.2000 on online shopping these consumers mostly constitute middle income group of the society. They do online shopping on quarterly basis. They purchase commodities like hair dryer and electronic items. (14%) of the respondents who shop in the range of Rs.2000-Rs.3000, are the higher earning respondents who don't have time to visit the shop and would like do their purchase online in order save their time. They are the respondents who buy products every month based on their availability these respondents are the business man, doctor, lawyer and teachers. Around (7%) respondents shop above Rs. 3000 these respondents basically belong to high business class of the society. They purchase goods like television, gaming products and household appliances. The differences in the amount spend on online shopping may be due to various reasons like the income level of the consumers, habit of consumer buying online and attitude of the consumers towards online shopping.



Source: Primary survey Jan 2022

CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS ONLINE SHOPPING

Feelings of the customer about on-line shopping: Now a day's people don't want to go to crowded markets to buy the things as because of the Pandemic like Covid 19. Some people find that, shopping online is a comfortable as in shopping online they did not need to pay real cash and move as it is advanced technology they can do payment by net banking, cards, or EMI facility as per the present survey (49%) of the people who do online shopping are comfortable the reason behind is that, it is a new trend and we need to follow the new trend and a cashless transaction (Fig 7). About (24%) of the people said that, to shop online as well as on the shop is a good habit. As some time, it is the quality goods we get at a cheaper rate in the physical market. About (27%) of the people feel that online shopping is not comfortable as it is a new idea and to do online transaction is not a safe kind of a thing. People feel that, before making purchases they should physically touch, and see the product, that is they should have cent per cent guarantee that the product that they buy is of good quality and is worth for the amount what they pay for it.



Views of the consumer buying online: Online shopping is good and today most of the people prefer online shopping but still there are some consumers who are not in favour of online shopping because there are many reasons behind it like cybercrime. The survey conducted in two talukas revealed that (79%) of the people who make their purchases online believed it is very easy and convenient (Fig. 8). (21%) of the people found that it is a not good kind of shopping. People who do not buy online products are because they are afraid of fraudulent activities; there are many deceptive practices like manipulation in online cash transaction, product fraud, if product is not good then while returning the product the delivery is not delivered on time. Besides this in the case of online shopping customers cannot touch and feel the product so they do not have any idea about the quality of the product. Some products are best in picture but when the product arrives it is not accurate and up to the mark as shown on the website. For example, change in color, size, shape and

damage products. Sometimes no refund is made even after complaining or returning the product. Those consumers who do not make purchases online feel that online shopping is not good, they are of the view that, they should physically visit the shop checking the material, quality, size and also purchase the product at cheaper rate.

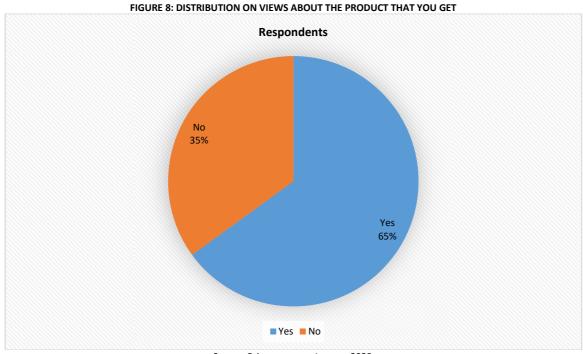
PROPORTION OF RESPONDENTS 21% yes no 79%

FIGURE 7: VIEWS OF THE CONSUMER BUYING ONLINE

Source: Primary survey Jan 2022

Views about differences in the product that you see and that you get.

In today's world there is a big competition in online shopping. When customer shops online most of the time they do not get their product as per their expectation. The product displayed on various online sites is different as and when product is received in reality. As per the survey conducted around 65% of the respondent said that they received products which are not expected as per the product ordered by them, (Fig 9) the reason is because, product shown on online site is very realistic and appealing but when receiving the product, the product is not expected as per the image displayed. Only 35% of the respondent said that, they receive the product as per their expectation.



Source: Primary survey January 2022.

6. CONCLUSION

Larger proportion of customers follow modern trend in shopping and thus they shop online. This is because online shopping requires less time and no transport cost. Most prominent sites of online shopping are Flip kart and Amazon. Higher proportion of online buyers shop at least once in month. Consumers frequency of buying online depends on various factors like, what type of products are brought on line, that is they are perishable or nonperishable, Consumer prefer to buy consumer durables through online shopping. Higher proportion of people prefer COD (Cash On Delivery) as a mode of making payment as they feel it is the most safest mode of payment. So online shopping is gaining importance in the developing countries like India.

7. SUGGESTIONS

Although online shopping is preferred by most of the customers there are customers who prefer physical store maybe because of lack of knowledge, bad experiences and other threats. In this regard information should be provided to the people by using various media like advertisement on newspapers, television so that availability of product through online shopping should be made known to the customers.

Delivery charges are found to be very high so most of the time people prefer physical shopping. Customers responded that there is a increase in delivery charges for the last two years. Earlier when online shopping was a new concept in India most of the websites were delivering their product free of cost. Different websites which are available for online shopping should be made known to the people. So actions should be taken by the company itself on the websites which are charging high delivery charges.

8. LIMITATIONS

One of the limitations of the present study is that the size of the sample is limited only to 200 numbers of consumers. As it is a well-known fact that there are lakhs of consumers in one district or taluka of Goa who follow the modern trend of online shopping the sample size taken into consideration is very small and hence whatever inferences are drawn can be applied only to small talukas or districts where actually small number of consumers reside. Another limitation is that, the study was undertaken soon after the lifting of the ban period which was implemented by the government to protect its citizens from the pandemic 2019. So whatever responses that were obtained from consumers might always may not be true. This is because consumers still do not want to visit crowded places for shopping and hence they prefer online shopping.

9. SCOPE FOR FURTHER STUDY

The present study titled "Consumers behavior towards online shopping" covers the respondents only from two talukas that is Tiswadi and Ponda. There is a scope for including a greater number of talukas so that, conclusions drawn could be more accurate. Secondly, a greater number of respondents should have been covered so that more realistic information could be collected. Thirdly There is wide scope for covering a greater number of consumers trait so that the proper inferences can be drawn. The geographical limits for present research are only Ponda and Tiswadi talukas of Goa. It is undertaken with a view of making an in-depth study of the consumers attitude towards online shopping.

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