Consumer Orientation Towards Online Buying Via Social Media Platforms

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ABSTRACT

From the very first day when internet was introduced, it has touched almost everyone out of us directly or indirectly. Internet has emerged as the most powerful tool and controlled everyone’s day to day activities. Mostly youth got affected via this tool and with the introduction of social media platforms it has made immense impact on youth, marketers, sellers and manufacturers as a strategic business tool. When you are on these social platforms any eye catching advertisements always grabs your attention away and forces you to grab the offer leaving behind your social interactions for which you were really there on the platform. In recent era of innovation in management social platforms becomes a powerful and cost free approach for businesses to promote the product to consumer. The product advertisement on these social platforms with catchy ad words like best deal, best sale, up to 80% off is gaining more attention among online buyers than to traditional advertisements tools. As now internet plays a major role in the life of today’s youth globally so, India is no exception. Among the young generation today a trend of moving from window shopping to online shopping has been witnessed and websites like Amazon, Myntra, Flipkart, Snapdeal, yepme, Olx, Jabong etc are big examples among the success stories of online shopping sites.

In this research an attempt to study the adaptation of online buying by today’s youngsters while their presence on social media platforms is undertaken and also the factors which are responsible for their inclination and move for online buying has been considered.

Keywords: - Youth, social media platforms, Internet, online buying.

INTRODUCTION

As nothing is constant in this world similarly technology never remains same, change is crucial and inevitable. Especially youngsters are more fascinated and adaptive towards any kind of change that makes their life more interesting and adventurous. For today’s youth web plays a major role in their life globally and India is no exception under it. Over 82 million active users of Facebook alone are from India which is clearly representing the craze of social media sites among the enormous population. Moreover, 75% of such population uses smart phones to access their Facebook which shows that information easily gets passed on to other groups with a simple click on the device and these smart phones practically are the real sole-mate of today’s majority youth. The Internet and worldwide web (www) have dramatically changed the way consumers seek and use information. Earlier internet was used as a means of getting information but now in this transformational era it is one the best instrument among business peoples along with edge of social media platforms. Now, the key to survival for the businesses in the future depends on how well they can...
integrate the medium of internet and social media platforms in their business model today in marking their success in the industry. 

Online buying has emerged as one of the most prominent services available through internet. As rightly said “Customer is the King”, and the concept of online shopping will not be rewarded if the customers are not provided with advantages under it.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sisk (2000); Hoffman and Novak (1996); Liao and Cheung (2001) :- “Consumers with longer histories of Internet usage educated and equipped with better skills and perceptions of the Web environment have significantly higher intensities of online shopping experiences and are better candidates to be captured in the well known concept of flow in the cyber world.”

Emmanouilides and Hammond, (2000):- In their research analysis concluded that the consumers who are using the Internet for a longer time from various areas and for a different variety of services are generally considered to be more active users of the internet services.

Sultan and Henrichs (2000):- In his study concluded that “consumer’s willingness to and preference for adopting the Internet as his or her shopping medium were also positively related to income, household size, and innovativeness.”

Kwak (2002); Miyazaki and Fernandez (2001):- In their research study analyzed that Consumers who prefer high levels of privacy and concern for security have lower purchasing rates in online markets, but the consumers balance this by their quest for making use of such information for the advantage of the environment.

Andrews and Currim (2004):- In their study they concluded that in online and offline environments factors like price sensitivity and importance attributed to various brands or the choice sets considered are significantly different from each other.

Slyke (2005):-“On the basis of various studies it also revealed that gender, age, income level and educational qualification are significant factor that influence how one would use and adopt technology.”

Kumar, Lang & Peng, (2005), Zhou, Dai & Zhang, (2007):- In their analysis they identified that there are many factors like access to detailed information, competitive prices, greater choice and convenience that would motivate a consumer towards online purchase.

Vijay, Sai. T. & Balaji, M. S. (May 2009), In their study revealed that Consumers, all over the world, are increasingly shifting from the crowded stores to the one click online shopping format but however, in spite of the comfort offered, online shopping is far from being the most preferred form of shopping in India.

Ramírez Nicolas (2010) state that "The Internet has changed many facets of our daily lives: the way we relate and communicate with one another, how we interact with a bank, read newspapers or watch television. Even the way we buy and sell. These changes have occurred due to the constant flow of companies offering new business models and innovative formulae. Discount coupons have always been a powerful marketing tool. Whether inserted in printed media or posted through letter boxes, they attracted new customers and were also offered at the time of purchase to endorse customer faithfulness by encouraging repeat purchases.”

Bisen Ankur (2012) Vice president of Retail consulting firm in Delhi said social commerce websites are leveraging the hike of online social networking to drive their sales. "Social media has become quite powerful. The network effect or power of suggestion gets multiplied at such a prolific level that it has a profound effect on sales. New innovations in social media are set to change this, and what people are calling 'social shopping' is predicted to boom.”
Agarwal, (2013): “A study of factors affecting online shopping behavior of consumers in Mumbai region, factors that affect online shopping are time saving, money saving, no risk in transaction, easy to choose and compare with other products and delivery of product on time.”

A study made by RavalTulsi,(2014): “A Study of effectiveness of online shopping, stated that privacy of personal information is a significant issue for some consumers. Many consumers wish to avoid spam and telemarketing which could result from supplying contact information to an online merchant. In response, many merchants promise to not use consumer information for these purposes. To increase online purchases, businesses must use significant time and money to define, design, develop, test, implement, and maintain the web store as it is truly said that it is easier to lose a customer than to gain one.”

In the findings made by Sen Rahul, (2014), revealed that “the cost factor, convenience factor, product factor and seller related factor are the four important factors influencing the online purchase of products in Kolkata.”

Research objectives of the study:-

Before undertaking this study following objectives were taken into consideration while collecting data from the sample population.

To analyze the frequency of Internet use to do online buying.

To analyze the level of adaptation of online buying by the youth while their presence on social network.

To understand a modus operandi of online buying process that attracts the youth.

To detect out that how the youth get a level of satisfaction by doing online buying over traditional method.

To find out whether online advertisements captivates the person online or not.

**QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS**

The questionnaire with 15 questions was distributed to 40 respondents in Delhi which included 13 women and 27 men. Majority of respondents were working professionals and following analysis is done with the help of the answers received from these respondents.

Q1. Do you have access to internet?

   a) Male:-
   b) Female:-

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<th>FEMALES</th>
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<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>NO</td>
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It is seen that 100% Respondents have access to the internet.

Q2. Where do they have access to internet?

   At home
   At office
   At cyber café
   On cell phone
   At college lab
   Some other place
It is seen that most male respondents are using cell phones to access internet, while maximum females have access to the internet at their home.

Q3. What is the main purpose of accessing internet?
Office purpose
Academic purpose
General surfing
Checking mails
Social networking
The purpose of asking this question was to know whether respondents access internet more for social networking or any other work like office purpose, academic purpose, general surfing or checking emails. It is seen that most respondents go to social networking sites while accessing internet.

Q4. Which is your favourite social networking site?
Facebook
Twitter
Instagram
None of the above

Facebook is the favourite social networking site for both men and women.

Q5. Do you click on advertisements while you are on social networking sites?
Yes
No
46% women click on the banners and advertisements while on social network while 30% young men click on banners while on social network. This indicates that there is medium level interest among people to see ads while accessing their social networking sites. Others prefer to engage purely in social networking activities rather than online shopping.

Q 6. If yes, how frequently do you browse various products on different websites while on social networking sites in a day?
Very rarely
Very frequently
Almost every time
Can’t say
Generally, the respondents very rarely browse ads while on social network but it is found that they do shop online directly but not via social network.

Q7. What drives your interest in clicking on ads on social networking sites?
To know more about shopping portals
Browse the other products on that site
Known brand
Attractive photograph
Catch ad-words like 70%off/ best deal
Moving images/flashig screen/unique multimedia effects

While a number of respondents chose multiple options, it is seen that higher percentage of respondents were driven towards clicking the ads because of catchy adwords like best deal/75% off.
Q8. Do you like online shopping?
Yes
No

100% women and 93% men like online shopping. This shows that the interest level for shopping online is high in today's world.

Q9. Why do you choose online shopping?
Global access
Less time required
Wide range of products
Affordable price
On time delivery
Any other
Most of the respondents are attracted to online shopping because of the wide variety of Products.

Q10. How frequently do you buy products online in a month?
1-2 times
2-4 times
No purchase

It can be seen that most of the respondents buy products online 1-2 times a month.

Q11. Which is your favourite online shopping portal?
Flipkart
Amazon
Snapdeal
Jabong
Myntra
yebhi
e-bay
It can be seen that most of the respondents buy products from Amazon or Flipkart.

Q12. What kind of products you usually buy from online sites?
Book, media and music
Fashion accessories
Mobile and tablets
Electronics
Any other
It can be seen that most of the female respondents buy fashion accessories from online sites. On the other hand, there is a mixed response among the male respondents about the type of product usually bought from online sites.

Q13. Do online shopping experiences shared by your acquaintances/friends trigger your interest in online shopping?
Yes
No

85% women and 56% men said their interest in online shopping was mostly triggered by their friends/acquaintances’ experiences while shopping online. 44% men and 15% women said their interest was not triggered by friends/acquaintances’ shopping experiences.

Q14. What drives satisfaction of online shopping Experience?

a) On time Delivery
b) Better quality of Products
c) Seamless Transaction
d) Better Presentation
e) Wide range of products
f) Good policy of returning defective goods
h) One stop shop

Online shopping is liked by most men and women because of wide variety / wide range of products. Also, the respondents are happy with the policy of returning defective goods.

Q15. Why Youth is inclined towards online shopping while on social network?
a) Unavailability of product elsewhere
b) I develop need by looking at the product
c) For gifting someone
d) For adding to my collection
e) Due to discounted price
Most of the respondents are inclined towards online shopping as they feel that product is offered with discounted price than the store price or actual price. Also, 31% of female respondents and 22% of male respondents said that they develop need by looking at the product.

**LIMITATIONS**
This study is limited to a specific area so results can’t be applicable to every area.
Time was a constraint for the study.
Representative sample was taken from population, so results are not applicable to entire universe population.
This research was a mini research and results are based on that no universal applicability can be claim from the results of the study.

**CONCLUSION**
Online shopping via social media platforms gained a special attention and place among consumers. The convenience which is offered by online shopping is present no where in any of the traditional tools of marketing and every second person is using this medium due to its popularity and easy access to everyone.
In our study to we found that this medium is quite popular among youth and specially women. Males are using this medium for hi-tech gadgets and tools and females for fashion and accessories and hence it is evident from the study that online shopping via such social media platforms are effective way for marketers to promote their products in the market and for building a brand image among consumers.

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