

The Role of External Influence on Buying Behaviour of Online Consumers

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Abstract: Today people are doing business online which has made life much easier. Online retailing is becoming an integral part of an economy and country and worldwide increasingly seeing trust and confidence in purchasing online. E commerce is gaining several advantages by increasing user comfort for online shopping experience. Customer behaviours are influenced by external factors such as External Influence, Web - Site Design / Feature and Merchants Attribute. Previous research streams on online shopping behaviour, investigated main factors influencing online shopping adoption. However there has been limited number of studies on comparison of two different shopping portals. In this study, research has been conducted to assess the comparative online buying behaviours of consumers towards two different shopping portals. The population for the present research is internet users in Tamilnadu. The current study utilizes a non-probability sampling techniques that is convenience sampling. This study was carried out through the Web-based survey methodology because our study focuses on consumers who have ever experienced the Internet.

Keywords: .E commerce, External Influence, Web - Site Design, shopping portals

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I. Introduction

Consumer behaviour is the study of individual or groups and the process they use to select a product or service that satisfy their needs. The behaviour of customers is different in both online and physical environment. In modern world the popularity of internet is increasing rapidly. Today people are doing business online which has made life much easier. The online retailing is becoming an integral part of an economy and country and worldwide increasingly seeing trust and confidence in purchasing online. E commerce is gaining several advantages by increasing user comfort online shopping experience. The internet has played a significant role in our daily life such that people can talk through the internet to one who is actually on the other side of the Earth, can send email around the clock, can search information, can play game with others, and even can buy things online Internet shopping has been widely accepted as a way of purchasing products and services It has become a more popular means in the Internet world ((Bourlakis et al., 2008)). It also provides consumer more information and choices to compare product and price, more choice, convenience, easier to find anything online ((Butler and Peppard, 1998)). Online shopping has been shown to provide more satisfaction to modern consumers seeking convenience and speed ((Yu and Wu, 2007)).

Problem statement

Nowadays, Internet is a part of our everyday life and it definitely changed our vision of shopping with the progress of e-commerce. As online shopping is a new medium, the consumer behavior in the field of online shopping is also pretty diverse in nature compared to traditional consumer behavior. So it is equally important for one to identify what factors influence consumers to shop online. In order to reach towards purchase decision, it consists of several factors which influence consumers to shop online. So it is important to analyze and identify the factors which influence consumers to shop online in order to capture the demands of consumers. Customer behaviours are influenced by external factors such as External Influence, Web - Site Design / Feature and Merchants Attribute. Previous research streams on online shopping behaviour, investigated main factors influencing online shopping adoption. However there has been limited number of studies on comparison two different shopping portal. In this study, research has been conducted to assess the comparative online buying behaviours of consumers towards two different shopping portals.

Objectives of the study

1. To analyze the opinion of respondents towards the factors influencing the online purchase behavioural intention
2. To analyze the opinion of respondents towards external influence on online shopping portal
3. To analyze the opinion of respondents towards Web - Site Design / Feature influence on online shopping portal
4. To analyze the opinion of respondents towards the influence of merchant's attribute on online shopping portal

Sample Design and Sampling Techniques

The population for the present research is internet users in Tamilnadu. The current study utilizes a non-probability sampling techniques that is convenience sampling. As Tan and Teo ((Tan et al. 2000)) state, Web-based surveys are appropriate when the target subjects are Internet users and a short time frame for responses is required. This study was carried out through the Web-based survey methodology because our study focuses on consumers who have ever experienced the Internet. The questionnaires were posted on the Web using Java Servlet, and we utilized JavaScript to check for missing responses and prompt users to answer them. Thus 1582 responses for the questionnaires have been received through online. Among them, 794 responses from Amazon customers and 788 responses from Flipkart customers have been considered for analysis.

Table: 3-External Influence

External Influence	Amazon		Flipkart	
	Mean	Sd	Mean	Sd
Experiences shared from friends / relatives influence the decision to buy products / services over internet (peer groups)	3.79	.664	4.15	.523
Experiences shared from boss / managers / elder influence the decision to buy products / services over internet (Reference groups)	3.49	.640	3.68	.550
Acceptance from society influence the decision to buy products / services over internet	3.63	.511	3.91	.394
Decide to buy products / services over internet based on their country of origin (Japan, Germany, America etc.). (Country of origin)	3.26	.486	3.20	.689
Decide to buy products / services over internet based on the reliability or trust of the websites (Reliability to websites).	4.12	.692	4.20	.674
Decide to buy products / services over internet based on my previous experience (Previous experience)	3.51	.655	3.42	.700
Decide to buy the products / services over internet depend on their brand reputation (Brand reputation).	3.63	.583	3.59	.600
Mean Score	3.70	.461	3.71	.455

Amazon

The respondents from Amazon strongly agree with the statement that they “Decide to buy products / services over internet based on the reliability or trust of the websites (Reliability to websites)” with a mean value of 4.12 and also agree with the statement that “Experiences shared from friends / relatives influence the decision to buy products / services over internet with a mean value of 3.79 Similarly the respondents agree with the statement “Decide to buy the products / services over internet depends on their brand reputation (Brand reputation)” with a mean value of 3.63 and agree with the statement “Acceptance from society influence the decision to buy products / services over internet” with a mean value of 3.63. Similarly the respondents agree that they “Decide to buy products / services over internet based on my previous experience (Previous experience)” with a mean value of 3.51, “Experiences shared from boss / managers / elder influence the decision to buy products / services over internet (Reference groups)” with a mean value of 3.49 and “Decide to buy products / services over internet based on their country of origin (Japan, Germany, America etc.). (Country of origin)” with a mean value of 3.26.

Flipkart

The respondents from Flipkart strongly agree with the statements that they “Decide to buy products / services over internet based on the reliability or trust of the websites (Reliability to websites)” with a mean value of 4.20 and “Experiences shared from friends / relatives influence the decision to buy products / services over internet (peer groups)” with a mean value of 4.15. Similarly they agree with the statements that the “Acceptance from society influence the decision to buy products / services over internet” with a mean value of 3.91 “Experiences shared from boss / managers / elder influence the decision to buy products / services over internet (Reference groups)” with a mean value of 3.68., “Decide to buy the products / services over internet depends on their brand reputation (Brand reputation)” with a mean value of 3.63 “Decide to buy the products / services over internet depends on their brand reputation (Brand reputation)” with a mean value of 3.59 and

finally the respondents agree with the statement “Decide to buy products / services over internet based on my previous experience (Previous experience)” with a mean value of 3.42 and a standard deviation of 0.600. Both respondents from Amazon and Flipkart have agreed that the variables of external influence influences them to buy the product through online with respective mean value of 3.70 and 3.71.

Table: 2- Web - Site Design / Feature

Measuring Questions	Amazon		Flipkart	
	Mean	Sd	Mean	Sd
The website design and layout helps me in searching the products easily	3.09	.683	3.53	.805
I prefer to buy from website that provides me with quality information	3.19	.873	3.64	.994
I find internet shopping quite easy	3.28	.766	4.03	.749
The website designs of the Internet retailers are easy to navigate and aesthetically attractive.	3.54	.664	4.14	.807
It is quick and easy for me to complete a transaction through the website.	3.19	.562	3.74	.681
The Internet retailers' websites provide in-depth information to answer my questions.	3.10	.655	3.69	.869
Mean Score	3.28	.555	3.82	.574

Amazon

The respondents from Amazon strongly agree with the statements that “the website designs of the Internet retailers are easy to navigate and aesthetically attractive” with a mean value of 3.54 and they find internet shopping quite easy” with a mean value of 3.28. “They prefer to buy from website that provides them with quality information” with a mean value of 3.19. Similarly the respondents agree with the statement “It is quick and easy for them to complete a transaction through the website” with a mean value of 3.19, “the Internet retailers' websites provide in-depth information to answer their questions.” with a mean value of 3.10 and finally the respondents agree with the statement that “The website design and layout helps them in searching the products easily” with a mean value of 3.09.

Flipkart

The respondents from Flipkart strongly agree with the statements that “The website designs of the Internet retailers are easy to navigate and aesthetically attractive.” with a mean value of 4.14 and “they find internet shopping quite easy” with a mean value of 4.03 0.749 and agree with the statement “It is quick and easy for them to complete a transaction through the website” with a mean value of 3.74. Similarly the respondents agree with the statement “The Internet retailers' websites provide in-depth information to answer my questions.” with a mean value of 3.69, “I prefer to buy from website that provides me with quality information” with a mean value of 3.64 and finally the respondents agree with the statement “The website design and layout helps me in searching the products easily” with a mean value of 3.53.

Both respondents from Amazon and Flipkart have agreed that the variables of web - site design / feature influences them to buy the product through online with respective mean value of 3.28 and 3.82.

Table: 3 Merchants Attribute

Measuring Questions	Amazon		Flipkart	
	Mean	Sd	Mean	Sd
I am never overcharged by Internet merchants during sales transactions	3.73	1.004	3.90	.967
Most Internet merchants have a good reputation	3.97	.945	4.09	1.056
In general, I can rely on Internet vendors to keep the promises that they make	3.82	.769	3.93	.831
Internet merchants have sufficient expertise and resources to do business on the Internet	4.13	.798	4.38	.774
If there is any problem with my transaction, Internet merchants will go out of their way to help me	3.82	.899	3.97	1.045
Internet merchants always keep promises and commitments	3.94	.940	3.98	.869
I feel that Internet merchants are likely to care for my welfare	3.52	.923	3.74	1.002
Mean Score	3.87	.559	3.97	.634

Amazon

The respondents from Amazon strongly agree with the statements that “Internet merchants have sufficient expertise and resources to do business on the Internet” with a mean value of 4.13 but the respondents simply agree with the statements that “Most Internet merchants have a good reputation” with a mean value of 3.97, “Internet merchants always keep promises and commitments” with a mean value of 3.94, “If there is any problem with my transaction, Internet merchants will go out of their way to help me” with a mean value of 3.82. Similarly the respondents agree with the statements that “In general, they can rely on Internet vendors to keep

the promises that they make” with a mean value of 3.82 “they never overcharged by Internet merchants during sales transactions” with a mean value of 3.73 and finally the respondents agree with the statement that “they feel that Internet merchants are likely to care for my welfare” with a mean value of 3.52.

Flipkart

The respondents from Flipkart strongly agree with the statements that “Internet merchants have sufficient expertise and resources to do business on the Internet” with a mean value of 4.38 and “Most Internet merchants have a good reputation” with a mean value of 4.09. Similarly the respondents simply agree with the statements that “Internet merchants always keep promises and commitments” with a mean value of 3.98, “If there is any problem with my transaction, Internet merchants will go out of their way to help me” with a mean value of 3.97, “In general, they can rely on Internet vendors to keep the promises that they make” with a mean value of 3.90 and finally the respondents agree with the statement “I feel that Internet merchants are likely to care for my welfare” with a mean value of 3.74. Both respondents from Amazon and Flipkart have agreed that the variable of merchants attribute influences them to buy the product through online with respective mean value of 3.87 and 3.897.

II. Findings And Conclusion

This study is mainly focus on the factors from the Internet and examines those factors that affect the consumer’s online shopping behaviors. The respondents from Amazon as well as Flipkart have agreed that the variables of external influence influence them to buy the product through online. They have also agreed that the variable such as web - site design / feature and also the variable such as merchants attribute influences them to buy the product through online. Marketers need to realize that the online marketing environment affects the way consumers view and develop relationships. So the online websites must of aware of these factors to be successful and retain the customers.

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