



An Assessment on the Influence of Demographics in Virtual Shopping of the people of Kerala

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the study is to determine the effects of sociodemographic characteristics (gender, age, income, education, and area) on people's perceptions of internet shopping in Kerala. When customers choose to purchase online, they go through an online purchasing procedure. Along with finding things and learning about them, online shopping has emerged as one of the most popular advances of the internet. One cannot stress the importance of identifying and analysing the elements that influence a consumer's choice to make an online purchase. Because the Internet is a contemporary medium, customers have different expectations. Some of the factors that online shoppers take into account are revealed by examining the steps they take to decide and complete an online purchase. Online sellers must recognise and take into account these variables to satisfy client wants and compete in the online market. This dissertation's objective was to see whether any specific criteria impact internet buyers. To explore internet buying habits, a survey was performed by taking samples of the people of Kerala.

Keywords: Online shopping behaviour, socio-demographics, online platform, preference and attitude

I. INTRODUCTION

According to the research in Statista, 2020, the US comes in third place amongst countries with the most internet users, with 313.3 million users. Despite having a population that is almost similar to that of China and higher than those in the US, Japan, and Korea, India is regrettably ranked fourth in terms of e-commerce sales. According to sources from Golob 2018, the top-leading nations in e-commerce sales are the US (\$8640 billion), Japan (\$3280 billion), China (\$2304 billion), and Korea (Rep) (\$1364 billion). India suffers behind other countries in e-commerce sales because Internet

traffic is limited to simple tasks like browsing, chatting, reading news, booking flights, etc. However, due to the explosive growth of online transactions, the Internet has recently evolved into a new distribution channel. This has given consumers access to a different perspective on online shopping. Consumer behavior is the study of consumers and the processes they use to choose, use (consume), and dispose of products and services, including consumers' emotional, mental, and behavioral responses. Consumer purchase decisions in online commerce are referred to as online consumer behaviour. Online purchases are influenced by several aspects, including product cost, faith, and satisfaction. For the majority of consumers, the product's price was seen as the most important consideration. A consumer is no longer required to physically visit the store or location in light of the paradigm change that the Internet has brought about in terms of traditional shopping. As a result, the consumer can practically act whenever and wherever he wishes to buy the goods or services he wants. The growing use of the internet suggests that more people are making shopping easier. Consumer behaviour explains quick growth. The Internet is a popular media that facilitates public benefits unsurpassed by any other. Online shopping is proving to be more convenient for the consumer than traditional shopping thanks to features like the ability to explore and purchase things, visualize needs with products, and debate products with other consumers. Internet users who choose to shop online are believed to engage in the phenomenon of internet shopping. Consumers have judged the Internet as a new distribution channel that has recently appeared. Online shopping has become one of the most prominent ways to find out about things and discover them for sale as e-commerce on the Internet has grown in importance. Due to the rise in Internet usage, businesses also perform several other activities online, such as information sharing within or between businesses, distributing product



information, collecting feedback, and conducting customer satisfaction surveys. Customers use the Internet to make purchases online and to research the products they want to buy as well as to compare features, prices, and after-sales services.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To evaluate the perception of the people of Kerala on virtual shopping and how they are influenced by socio-demographic parameters such as gender, age, income, education, and location.
- To determine the major variables that affect the online buying behaviour of the people of Kerala
- To examine the factors influencing online buying behaviour concerning the demographics.
- To understand the customer review based on the demographics

HYPOTHESIS:

Online Shopping Preferences Vs. Gender

H0: Online Purchasing Gender has some influence on how individuals behave in Kerala.

H1: Online Purchasing in Kerala, gender influences how individuals behave.

Online shopping behaviour Vs. Age

H0: Online shopping behaviour of Keralites is not related to their age group

H1: Online Shopping Age has an impact on how people behave in Kerala.

Online shopping behaviour Vs. education

H0: People in Kerala do not engage in online shopping about their level of education.

H1: Online Shopping behaviour: The educational level of an individual has an impact on their behaviour.

Online shopping behaviour Vs. location

H0: People in Kerala do not participate in online shopping about their location.

H1: Online shopping behaviour of people in Kerala is influenced by their location.

Online Shopping Behaviour Vs Annual Income

H0: Consumers' online shopping preferences in Kerala are independent of their annual income.

H1: online shopping preferences of people of Kerala are correlated with their annual income.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Consumerism is the idea that increasing the consumption of goods and services purchased in the market is always a desirable goal, and that a person's well-being and happiness depend fundamentally on obtaining consumer goods and material possessions. The majority of sales of FMCG products are made to middle-class households and

over 50% of the middle class is in rural India. The sector is excited about the burgeoning rural population whose incomes are rising and who are willing to spend on goods designed to improve their lifestyle. Rural India has more than 70% population in 6.27 lakh villages, which is a huge market for FMCG products (Nayak et.al, 2021). The prominent factors like detailed information, comfort and relaxed shopping, less time consumption, and easy price comparison influence consumers towards online shopping (Agift et al., 2014). Furthermore, factors like variety, quick service, and discounted prices, feedback from previous customers make customers prefer online shopping over traditional shopping (Jayasubramanian et al., 2015). It is more preferred by youth, as during festival and holiday seasons online retailers give ample offers and discounts, which increases the online traffic to a great extent (Karthikeyan, 2016). Moreover, services like free shipping, cash on delivery, exchange and returns are also luring customers towards online purchases. Online shoppers are more motivated to buy online as it is easy to payment, and it is time-saving. Online shopping helps in comparison of products from different online shopping websites also to a certain level the comparison of products in websites and the physical market in terms of quality, price etc (Kumar Singh et.al, 2013). Prof. Ashish Bhatt (2014) in article entitled "Consumer Attitude towards Online Shopping in Selected Regions of Gujarat" published in Journal of Marketing Management stated that online shopping is gaining popularity among people especially the younger generation but in today scenario to become equally popular among all age groups e-marketing will have to cover a longer distance. In a study conducted by (Dwivedi et.al, 2007) suggests that primary influence, facilitating conditions, resources, cost, perceived knowledge and perceived ease of use were all significant factors in explaining consumers' BIs to adopt broadband.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Population

In the study, the population taken are the consumers who have performed past online buying in Kerala. All participants were given access to an online survey created in Google Forms via social media. Personal information like age, name, email, and other details were properly anonymized in the answers and records, and it was never made public in any manner. The population was categorized as early adolescence, adults, and senior adults of both genders.



B. Tools used

Simple Percentage analysis, Chi-square analysis, and Weighted average methods were used to study the online shopping behaviour of the people of Kerala. In this study, participants were asked to complete an online questionnaire created on Google Forms.

C. Sample

225 people were selected randomly for the study and this is one of the limitations of the study as we could analyse the consumer behavior of the selected samples alone.

D. Analysis and Interpretation

Participants in the research study were required to respond to an online survey made with Google Forms. The questionnaire has two sections: Statements and Demographics. Gender, age, location, education level, and annual income are among the socio-demographic factors included in the socio-demographic part, while questions on online purchasing patterns using a 5-point Likert scale were included in the statements. Participants were able to view their responses after completing the multiple-choice questions. It took two to three minutes to complete the online survey.

E. Socio-Demographic profile

Based on information received from participants in Kerala, a socio-demographic profile was created that included information on each person's age, gender, level of education, location of residence, and annual income. The distribution of participants according to their profiles is shown in Table I.

The demographic details of the people included in this study are shown in Table I. Although there were 119(53%) more men than women among the participants, the percentage was almost equal to 106 (47%). Almost 60% of the population is of the age group 19-29 years. Undergraduates in the sample size more which comprises 42% of the samples. Here in this study, the locations chosen were three major districts of Kerala which includes Kozhikode, Ernakulam, and Thiruvananthapuram. 44% of the respondents were from Ernakulam district which lies in the central part of Kerala. Almost 65% of the respondents earn the most annual income of 5-10 lakhs and the least earns 10 lakhs and above.

TABLE I: Socio-Demographic Profile of the respondents

Variables and categories	N= 225	Percentage
GENDER		
Male	119	52.88
Female	106	47.11
AGE		
Less than 18 years	15	6.6
19- 29 years	136	60.4
30- 44 years	41	18.2
45- 59 years	31	13.7
60 and above	2	0.8
EDUCATION		
High School degree or equivalent	35	15.5
Undergraduate	96	42.6
Postgraduate	82	36.4
Ph.D	12	5.3
LOCATION		
Kozhikode	43	19.1
Ernakulam	100	44.4
Thiruvananthapuram	82	36.4
ANNUAL INCOME		
Less than 2 lakhs	25	11.1
2-5 lakhs	146	64.8
5-10 lakhs	46	20.4



10 lakhs and above	8	3.5
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F. Virtual Buying Behaviour

There are steps in the online purchasing process that are equivalent to those in the traditional shopping method. Consumer behaviour online is influenced by a psychological factor as it relates to the purchase decision. The purchasing habits of online shoppers are shown in Table II.

Observing table II, When comparing the respondents' online buying behaviour with their reported frequency of shopping online, it is clear that the majority of them (27% only shop once a month, and 13% of the respondents said they have made an online purchase once in a month, almost 24% respondents stated that they did the online shopping once in 3 months and 15% respondents opinionated that they purchase only once in a year.

From table II, more than half of the respondents had 2-5 years of online shopping experience and it comprises 52%. Even though internet shopping has been a popular trend in India for a while, this sector has only recently seen a surge in popularity.

Table II: Experience of respondents in online shopping

Variables and categories	N= 225	Percentage
ONLINE SHOPPING FREQUENCY		
Once in a week	28	12.5
Once in a month	60	26.6
Once in 3 month	53	23.5
Once in 6 months	51	22.7
Once in a year	33	14.6
ONLINE SHOPPING EXPERIENCE		
0-2 years	61	27.1
2-5 years	117	52
5-10 years	34	15.1
10 years and above	12	5.3

G. Online Shopping Platforms and Influencing Factors

As per our Study, the most popular shopping sites in India are Amazon and Flipkart; "Online Shopping Websites" refers to websites on the internet from which the participants choose to shop. Online purchasing definitely has a benefit over traditional ones from both a psychological and technological viewpoint. Given these benefits, consumers will probably solely engage in online buying. Here, the benefits are listed as being time and convenience efficient, products not found in nearby stores, the flexibility to compare prices, the availability of product reviews, and the best pricing in contrast to traditional shopping. Selected Items are purchased by the respondents often which includes Clothing, Electronics, Mobile phones, food and restaurant, entertainment and Grocery. Table III, refers to the online platforms for shopping and the factors influencing it.

Table III: Online shopping platforms and Influencing Factors

Variables and categories	N= 225	Percentage
ONLINE SHOPPING PLATFORMS		
Amazon	105	46.7
Flipkart	87	38.7
others	33	14.7
ITEMS PURCHASED		
Clothing	64	28.4
Electronics	51	22.7
Mobile phones	39	17.3
Food and Restaurant	23	10.2
Entertainment	34	15.1
Grocery	14	6.2
INFLUENCING FACTORS		
Time saving and convenience	39	17.4



Products not found in nearby stores	62	27.7
Flexibility to compare prices	32	14.2
Availability of product reviews	58	25.8
Best pricing in contrast to traditional shopping	34	15.1

Table III, gives the idea that some of the influential factors are related to the online shopping platforms. In this study, we can assume that people of Kerala tend to purchase more on Amazon (47%), and Flipkart (39%) and also prefer to purchase on other websites (15%) too. Taking these factors, people prefer to purchase products which are not available in the nearby stores(28%). Almost 26% People look for the product review before making the purchase. 18% of the respondents have the opinion that buying online is more convenient and time saving. 14% of the respondents have the opinion that they can compare the prices with other brands or websites and make their decision easily. From the above table, most of the respondents prefer to purchase clothes 29% on online platforms.

H. Attitude of Online Buyers

Table IV, shows the attitude of consumers while purchasing online. For the study, a 5-point Likert scale, Never = 1, Rarely = 2, Sometimes = 3, Often = 4, and Very Often = 5, these data were examined. According to Table IV, we could observe that the mean value for Statements 1 to 5 was less than 4, which indicated positive responses from the participants. The respondents frequently agreed that online shopping is more time saving and convenient for consumers, gives the greatest pricing on a range of goods, and has accurate product descriptions. Additionally, it means that consumers may frequently locate those goods online that are not available offline. Participants also discovered that it was rare to find things that were inexpensive, flawed, or broken. There have been situations where deliveries of goods were delayed, and it has been noted that this is rarely the case. Considering their satisfaction with behaviour, respondents were nevertheless cautious about some concerns. people with little resources online shopping expertise. Frequently, people decide to engage in risky online transactions by shopping online. The majority of the people quite frequently believe that there is

absolutely some online illiteracy among online buyers.

Table IV: Shows the Attitude and problems faced by online consumers

Sl. no	Respondents attitude	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	Time saving and convenience	3.3	1.4
2	Best prices available	3.17	1.47
3	Product reviews available	3.25	1.36
4	Price comparison available	3.23	1.35
5	Unavailability in nearby stores	3.21	1.54
6	Cheap Quality of the product	2.34	1.36
7	Non availability of delivery	2.35	1.34
8	Damaged product or packing	2.36	1.35
9	Delay in delivery	2.47	1.54
10	Risk of online transaction	4.47	1.26
11	Risk in identity theft	4.34	1.43
12	Internet illiteracy	4.66	1.32

IV. Analysis and Discussion

A statistical technique called the chi-square test is used to compare actual outcomes with expectations. The goal of this test is to establish if a difference between actual and predicted data is the result of chance or a correlation between the variables you are investigating. Here the Chi-square analysis is done to analyse the relationship with demographic data on online buying behaviour.



Variables	Chi-square - 'r' values
Age	0.146
Gender	0.01
Education	0.02
Location	0.76
Annual income	0.04

The Chi-square is significant at 'r' value <0.05 . Here the Gender, education and annual income had significant value less than 0.05 and there is a relationship with the online buying behaviour, null hypothesis is rejected and H1 is accepted. We were able to see that both age 0.146 and location 0.76, had no significance with the online buying behaviour, here null hypothesis is accepted and H1 is rejected.

V. Conclusion

Technology advancements have made a significant impact on consumer needs and wants, which has led to the expansion of retail. Online purchasing is thus growing more and more common in India. In the course of our research, we discovered that people of Kerala are extremely engaged with, informed about, and active online. Additionally, they have a very positive opinion of online shopping. The study indicated that gender does not play a role in the online platforms that review products. There is no gender bias in the reviews. Another finding was that people's online buying habits did not appear to be affected by whether they resided in Kozhikode (North Kerala), Ernakulam (Central Kerala), or Thruvananthapuram (South Kerala). It was observed that young people used the internet more frequently to read consumer product reviews and make purchasing decisions. The more educated respondents to the study depended more on online consumer reviews. They study different consumer reviews on various web review platforms, conducting more research on the items. It was obvious that the product's pricing is a crucial factor that can only be addressed by people's financial resources.

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