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A PARADIGM SHIFT IN THE CONSUMER'S BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS ONLINE SHOPPING**MEGHNA MEENA****JUNIOR RESEARCH FELLOW****DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC ADMINISTRATION & FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT****UNIVERSITY OF RAJASTHAN****JAIPUR****ABHISHEK SHARMA****JUNIOR RESEARCH FELLOW****DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC ADMINISTRATION & FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT****UNIVERSITY OF RAJASTHAN****JAIPUR****ABSTRACT**

The rapid growth of online shopping and the consumer's increasing interest in purchasing online has significantly changed the Indian retail market. Digital revolution and advanced technology are playing a vital role in strengthening the roots of online shopping. Consumers use the Internet not only to buy the product online, but also to compare prices, product features and after sale service facilities they will receive if they purchased the product from particular website. Today consumers are more inclined to accept the changes and keep their eyes on the benefits they can obtain from online retailers. To reach the full potential of online shopping, business owners who use e-commerce as a distribution channel need to have a clear understanding of who buys online, what they buy online, why they buy online, and how the non-Internet buyer can be transformed into an online buyer in order to increase online sale. The purpose of this study is to understand and analyze the change in online buying behaviour of Indian consumer. The study also analyzes the advantages of using online shopping sites and factors contributing to its growth. For fact finding secondary data are used. The framework of the research enhances understanding of the factors affecting consumer online shopping behaviour, helps in profiling typical Indian online consumers and may help online retailers developing more specific marketing strategies to increase e-commerce sales.

KEYWORDS

online shopping, digital revolution, marketing strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Today, internet acts as a channel through which millions of people communicate, perform research, find entertainment and most recently buy and sell products and services. Online Shopping is one of the most popular activities that take place on internet. Consumer is getting fascinated by online shopping. A study reveals that over the past few years, online shopping has increased percentage of online consumer's in India and is unquestionably going to be the future of shopping in the human race. The concept of online shopping is a great example of the business revolution in India. Currently, Online shopping in India is experiencing a period of rapid development. Online shopping is a form of E-commerce. In online shopping, consumers purchase the products directly from the online retailer by using web browsers. Online retailers offer best price for the product and a completely hassle-free shopping experience. These stores offer free home delivery, cash on delivery options, Interest free EMI options, 24 x 7 customer care service, and payment through Debit or Credit cards of their consumers. Online shopping is growing at a phenomenal pace in India. It is the use of technology for better marketing performance. Through online shopping, different types of business and organization have gained a tremendous opportunity to increase their sale and to maintain a direct relationship with its consumers. The increasing use of internet by the young generation in India provides an emerging prospect for online retailers. Online shopping includes products sold through online media by using internet and it also includes a platform given by various internet sites for buying and selling the products online. There are various reasons of shifting the consumers buying patterns towards online shopping. The facility of comparing product with competitive products on the basis of price, colour, size and quality is one of the biggest benefits of online shopping. The facilities of various coupon and discount scheme are also fascinating the consumers in online shopping. The increasing consumer base, principally of youths, is playing a significant role in the online shopping. Because of wide communication network e-commerce has become the new mediator between the manufacturers and their consumers. The more innovative ways of online payment and increasing internet penetration has given a paradigm shift and push to online industry. The increase of internet technology in India has enormous potential. It will cut down the cost and abbreviate the geographical boundaries in bringing buyers and sellers together. The boost in use of internet by the young consumer has provided a promising outlook for online retailers. The majority of the companies are operating their on-line portals to put up for sale, to condense marketing costs, and subsequently crater the prices of their products and services to continue the same position in the future market. The internet has become an essential medium for all the companies to market their products & services. Online marketing is becoming increasingly important to small business of all types. Now with increasing local search and people's new habit of searching on the Internet first, all businesses should include some online marketing in their marketing mix. Online retailing is giving benefits to both kind of consumers who use plastic money to make payments through cards like debit card, credit card and also through online banking but those who don't use plastic money can go for another option available in online-retailing i.e. Cash On Delivery.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Last three decades have seen a phenomenal growth of World Wide Web. A wide acceptance of internet technology in the field of business has changed the traditional shopping format to the new form popularly known as online shopping. The internet is a platform that provides the customer with purchase characteristics as no other medium.

Jones, Christie, Soyoung Kim, "Influences of retail brand trust, off-line patronage, clothing involvement and website quality on online apparel shopping intention" (2009) this study examines the influence of retail brand trust, off-line patronage, clothing involvement, and website quality on online apparel shopping intention for young female US consumers. Retail brand trust, off-line patronage, clothing involvement and two factors of website quality were found to significantly influence online apparel shopping intention. Off-line patronage was the strongest predictor of online shopping intention. Implications for multi-channel apparel retailers were discussed based on these findings.

Agrawal, Mohan Sandhir, Vidushi Gupta, Gaurav (2010), "Emerging Profile of Online Apparel Shoppers in India" Online shopping is most common these days in the developed world especially in the USA. Though rapidly rising, online shopping in the developing countries particularly in India is yet to become strong and diversified. The theme hasn't been researched strongly either. Towards researching the emerging profile and identifying differences between the American and Indian online shoppers, this study reports a survey and several other empirical tests. The study reveals a huge potential for converting Indian in-store consumers into online buyers. This study facilitates retailers and brands in expanding their presence and impact though online portals.

The penetration rate of Internet users in Asia was just higher than Africa, as at 30 June 2010, according to the Internet World Statistics (2010). No doubt that the Internet has been influencing our lives deeply in which it plays an important, indispensable and irreplaceable role (Guo and Noor, 2011). Online shopping has become a popular and easy way for consumers. This new innovative type of shopping brings a great number and also wide range of merchandise to consumers; it also offers a huge market and numerous business opportunities (Guo June and Noor, 2011).

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.

Economic times article "Bata, Fabindia & Evok going for the plan to cash in on online shopping craze" (2014) A growing number of brick-and-mortar retailers and mall operators are adopting a "click-and-collect" strategy — where consumers buy products online but take deliveries from physical stores — in a bid to join the online shopping frenzy and, at the same time, ensure higher footfall in offline shops, ethnic wear brand Fabindia, Flying Machine jeans, furniture seller Evok and mall operators Infiniti Mall and Virtuous Retail are among retailers that offer or plan 'clickand-collect' service — a concept introduced by retailers such as Wal-Mart, Tesco and Target that has taken off in a big way in the US and Europe this year. The move comes at a time when a burgeoning number of Indian consumers are shifting a good part of their shopping to e-commerce players such as Flipkart, Amazon and Snapdeal. Infiniti Mall in Mumbai, for example, is working on an e-commerce concept where its tenants are encouraged to give about 10% discount to online shoppers, but the consumers must visit the stores to take delivery. Virtuous Retail, which operates malls in six cities across the country, too, is working on a similar model.

Chitra Sharma (2015) in her study "consumer buying behaviour towards online shopping" concluded that online shopping is having very bright future in India. Perception towards online shopping is getting better in India. With the use of internet, consumers can shop anywhere, anything and anytime with easy and safe payment options. There are two factors mainly influencing the consumers for decision making: Risk aversion and innovativeness. Risk aversion is a measure of how much consumers need to be certain and sure of what they are purchasing. Highly risk adverse consumers need to be very certain about what they are buying. Whereas less risk adverse consumers can tolerate some risk and uncertainty in their purchases. The second variable, innovativeness, is a global measure which captures the degree to which consumers are willing to take chances and experiment with new ways of doing things.

The size of online-retail market is about 1% of overall retail (CRISIL Research). The current market size of online-retail sector has been pegged at \$3.5 billion and is projected to grow at a compound annual rate of 40-45% during 2014-18 (RNCOS report).

OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the emerging trends in online shopping in India.
2. To throw light on factors motivating retailers to go online.
3. To analyze the benefits of using online shopping sites.
4. To determine the factors affecting the perception of Indian online buyers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research on a change in consumer behaviour towards online shopping is a descriptive search. This research is confined to India. It also aimed at fact finding. This paper is based on secondary data. Information has been sourced from various books, articles, journals, reports, government publications, newspapers, internet etc. and research is descriptive in nature.

WHY ONLINE SHOPPING?

Digital revolution and changing habits of consumers are the main reasons for the growth of online shopping in India. Transactional internet users, earlier people used to casual browsing and accessing e-mails etc. but now internet users are more aware about various other uses of internet like now they buy products online; make comparisons, online payments etc. Because of the numerous advantages and benefits, more and more people say they prefer online shopping over conventional shopping these days. The augmentation of internet usage has tailor made the habits of consumers to pick up trends, compare things, learn about new in the market and consumer products. Problems of traditional retail are also removed by online retail such as lack of retail space, real estate issues, problems of HR-training of sales person, receptionist etc., cultural diversity etc. The bigger online retailers have enough checks and balances in place to ensure consumer's details are safe. Consumers can easily compare price, features, function, and get the latest updates of any products just by a click. Online shopping is convenient and hassle free. In India more and more people are shopping online each day. Some websites are also offering online shopping of grocery products – which is a leap forward from the typical online retailing. Better prices are one of the main reasons that online shopping has taken off. The simple fact that the middle men are cut out of the delivery chain leads to a reduction in the cost and thus the final price of the product.

ONLINE SHOPPING IN INDIA

It is a fact that India has entered the phase of a great online shopping revolution in the last few years. The up gradation of mobile technology has influenced people immensely, which has resulted in more and more consumers using mobile for online shopping in India. It also allows consumers to switch faster from retail to online shopping. The ease online marketing delivers during shopping encourages more and more consumers to feel the experience of online shopping. India is a young country and youth has a huge purchasing power, which are fascinated by online shopping. In India the growth of Internet Subscribers is getting doubled year by year. This is also getting increased day by day as the costs of computers are decreasing and net penetration is increasing. The cost of internet usage is also getting lower, with good competition among the providers. This will increase the usage as it goes more on wireless internet. Indians are proving every time that they can beat the world when it comes to figures of online shopping. More and more Indians are going to online shopping and the frequency of India's online buying is crossing the overall global averages. Online shopping is poised to get convenient like never before owing to the escalating influence of social media. The social media platforms have become an effective marketing tool for the online firms, making the purchase transactions easier for consumers and benefitting online retailers in pocketing more profits.

Initially, the Indian consumers were more attracted towards mobile phones and electronic gadgets for online shopping but nowadays the products denotative of lifestyle, namely, apparels, perfumes, watches, handbags, beauty products are also in high demand through online shopping. The market is also developing for books, jewellery, home decors and kitchen appliances etc.

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE GROWTH OF ONLINE SHOPPING IN INDIA

1. India is the top performing mobile advertising region in Asia. Rapid increase in mobile internet user and more advertising through mobile gives the scope of opportunity for untapped potential in online shopping.
2. Market penetration of mobile internet particularly by youth is increasing year by year which provides ease of shopping to the consumer.
3. Comparing and researching products and their prices are so much easier online.
4. India is a young country with a very high percentage of its population in the working age of 15-50 years, this deliver a high income growth. This age group in more inclined towards online shopping as it saves time and money both.
5. Advancement in technology, boom in networks like 4G, 3G, Wi-Fi, hotspot and other wireless devices.
6. Families with double earning as husband and wife both are working which increase their income size and increase purchasing powers.

BENEFITS TO ONLINE RETAILERS

1. **Consumer Relationship Building:** Companies can know their consumers better and can interact with them to learn more about their needs and to build consumer databases.
2. **Access to Global Markets:** The Internet is a global medium, which allows buyers and sellers to click from one country to another in seconds. This also helps international marketer to popularize their product.
3. **Convenience:** By developing an online marketing campaign, retailers can essentially be "open for business" 24 hours a day, without having to worry about store hours or overtime wages for staff.
4. **Reduce Costs and Increase Efficiency:** It avoids the expense of maintaining a physical store, costs of rent, insurance, and utilities. Digital catalogs cost less to produce than printing and mailing paper catalogs.
5. **Personalization:** With a quality Internet marketing campaign, retailers can tailor their advertising techniques to target audience, ensuring that retailers product or service will meet consumer's eye in a timely and concentrated manner.
6. **Greater Flexibility:** an online catalog can be adjusted daily or even hourly, adapting product availability, prices, and promotions to match changing market conditions by changing a graphic or wording and do it without any problems.
7. **Track Real Time Results:** It allows tracking real time results using online analytics to determine how marketing campaign is performing. There are ways to track traditional marketing efforts, but most the time it cannot be done in real-time.

SUGGESTIONS

Online shopping must be seen as revolutionary in the world of retail industry and viewed through a reformist lens to capture the potential in it. Online shopping, even its size is smaller than traditional shops, is giving a threatening competition to traditional shops. Traditional sellers may not be able to compete with these online players without stepping into their shoes. Traditional retailers have to go online as in many segments such as apparel, books, music, electronics etc. where product specifications are standard and differentiation is low, consumers are going online and traditional retailers unable to match their huge discounts & volume games played by online retailers. More time should spend on online marketing as the rural areas are not aware of the online shopping facilities. As the online shopping is at its sprouting stage in India, t online retailers should build trust, confidence and comfort among customers and should maintain consumers services by forming an efficient model for tracking the movement of ordered goods & ensure timely deliveries, cash back system as well as replacement of product if broken, damaged etc. A need for an efficient and effective order management model is there in online shopping in India. Overall online shopping in India offers many opportunities for growth of retail sector in the coming years and also making India an attractive destination for other countries to invest in.

CONCLUSION

Online shopping is rapidly changing the way people do business all over the world. In the business-to-consumer segment, online shopping have been increasing dramatically over the last few years. Traditional retailers have to go online as in many segments such as apparel, books, music, electronics etc. where product specifications are standard and differentiation is low, customers are going online and traditional retailers unable to match their huge discounts & volume games played by online retailers.

Online shopping is gaining popularity among people specially the younger generation but in today scenario to become equally popular among all age groups e-marketing will have to cover a longer distance. By creating and implementing a balanced marketing strategy, using both short-term and long-term strategies, one can drive a steady stream of targeted traffic to their web site. This simple strategy of any business can guarantee the success of online marketing. Retailers would however have to be on the lookout for changing trends in the marketplace and use it to their advantage. Online retailing may prove life changing for small businesses, by opting online selling strategies small businesses may earn huge profits and unbelievable growth in future. Small businesses may tie up with the pure online retail players or develop their own websites. We are now living in a digital age and thus need to keep up with new trends in the online apparel shopping and where new norms are created over time; many challenges evolve that we need to keep up with the new updates in the market creating value along with delivering delight to the consumers. It can be concluded that the online retailers operating in India have this major responsibility of keeping their consumers updated with facilities as e-commerce is the fastest growing industry and has a lot of innovation to be made in time. The variables that keep online shopping of apparel are the facilities, time factor, offers, advertisements, price, services, impact on the economy, flexibility to adapt to new changes are all the aspects of the changing trends in online shopping of apparel amongst Indian consumers and has influence on the economy and these factors are said to have a strong impact on the changing trends.

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