

**UNDERSTANDING INDIAN CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AFTER COVID PANDEMIC: A
STUDY OF ONLINE SHOPPING BEHAVIOR OF YOUNG CUSTOMERS OF
FARIDABAD, INDIA.**

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ABSTRACT

In 2023, there are large numbers of online shopping customers in India as compared to the year 2010-11, there was a slow growth in the number of Online shopping users from 2011-12 but after the year 2020 there was excellent growth in online shopping users in India thanks to the lockdown period in the year 2020. Surprisingly after the lockdown and social distancing guidelines were removed in 2020-2021 and brick brick-and-mortars in the offline market werereopened but the growthof online shopping users increased.

Therefore, this research paper will focus on investigating the trends and numbers of the Indian online shopping industry and will conclude with reasons why customers are preferring more online shopping. For this there will be a comprehensive review of existing literature and original data will be collected from the young customers (aged between 19 and 21) of Faridabad, India and that original data will be analyzed.

KEYWORDS

Online shopping; growth; Faridabad.

BRIEF EXPLANATION

Online Shopping

In India, in the year 2023 E-Commerce industry is very large, products like beverages, food, groceries, personal care, electronics, and clothes, and services like online entertainment streaming services, healthcare booking services, and hotel booking services are available online. Online shopping is famous with various names like e-shops, e-buying, online stores, e-stores, etc. The basic concept of online shopping is to search for preferred and desired products and services with the help of a mobile browser or any E-Commerce app or maybe the website and app of the

brand from which the customer wants to buy but all these components and process required internet connectivity in an electronic device which can connect to the internet like mobile phone, tablets, computers and laptop, etc. Ordering online products through the internet also requires payment to the seller just like offline any person shopping but here the customers and sellers both can accept online / digital payment methods using the Google Pay app, Paytm app, bank mobile app, etc. Otherwise, the cash-on-delivery option is also viable in this process which is the most preferred method of payment before the proper introduction of the digital payment method in India.

“An online shop evokes the physical analogy of buying products or services at a regular “brick-and-mortar” retailer or shopping center; the process is called business-to-consumer (B2C) online shopping. When an online store is set up to enable businesses to buy from another business, the process is called business-to-business (B2B) online shopping.”(Wikipedia,2023, para.2)

From the seller's point of view brands, Firms, sellers, and manufacturers are required to start an online store of their products and services otherwise, it is only a waste of time to start a business without an online market. Online shopping benefits the seller by improving sales, customer satisfaction, and customer retention. The behavior of the online shopper is influenced by different factors. (Neger and uddin, 2020) mentioned in their study that less time consuming, convenient mode of payment and other organisational factors influence the online purchasing behaviour. Post-COVID-19, factors such as limited movement, fear of COVID-19, rapid growth of mobile devices, scarcity of products, convenience, time-saving, and digital transformation of local Kirana shops drive online shopping. (Aggarwal, Kapoor, 2020).

COVID-19 Pandemic

A dangerous virus spread all over the world in the starting months of the year 2020, It infected an estimated total number of 3.8 billion people in the world till year 2021 and many lives were lost also. Therefore, all the government agencies of different countries imposed restrictions and guidelines to prevent the spread of the virus. People were not allowed to gather in public and mask was compulsory for every individual. Due to these restrictions people were getting short of their basic needs as production was very limited. People were using online shopping so that they don't have to go to the public area. The lockdown disrupted food supplies and threatened to trigger a food crisis. (Biswas, 2020). By the first week of April, essential industries such as growing, harvesting and food deliveries were allowed to operate. (Roy, Agarwal, 2020).

Online Consumer Behaviour in India

With the improvement in the Internet, a technology of internet buying has also developed. It is a helpful way of buying products and services that provides shoppers the options for different varieties of products. Internet purchasing behavior is a kind of behavior of customers at the time of browsing websites or apps in order to search, select, and buy goods and services to fulfill their needs and wants. (Saravanan and Devi, 2015). Now online shopping Trend reflected its rise in 2009-2010 in India but online shopping was introduced in 1995 in India when 2G internet services was there and people started to use it major drawback of online shopping in India especially in Faridabad was that most of the online customers were not in favour of online payment as the cash payment for the preferred way of payment and people considered it more therefore online shopping was not high in numbers and had less users as compared to year 2022-2023 in India. From the starting of year 2011 people mostly use b2c distribution channel, where a online website or app works as a user interface between business and customers example of b2c channels are Flipkart, Snapdeal, Amazon, etc.

Objective of the study

1. To study the Trends of online shopping consumer behavior of young customers before and after the COVID-19 pandemic in India.
2. To study whether the trends changed and if changed then examine what are the factors and reasons for that.
3. To study the current scenario of young online shopping customers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Analysis of previous researchers regarding Covid-19 and Online Shopping Consumer behaviour

Author concluded that trust, complexity, relative advantage, trialability and observability are the important parameters which affect perception of youth specially students towards effectiveness of online shopping. (Yadav, Goel and Sharma, 2020).

Author concluded that After COVID-19 in India, attitude towards online shopping is getting better. It will be very helpful in stopping panic of spreading the Corona from person to person. The Covid-19 pandemic has encouraged online shopping activities of consumers more active. Now a day, E-shopping is become a better source in this situation of Corona virus, and E-retailers supply products that are normally purchased in the supermarket by consumers. (Aggarwal, Kapoor, 2020).

“A Study on Consumer Behaviour: Transition from Traditional Shopping to Online Shopping During the COVID-19 Pandemic.” (Aryani, et al, 2021) concludes that data gathered shows that despite the increase in online shopping platform you said during the COVID-19 pandemic they equally value both online and offline shopping..... There is a likelihood that the trend of online shopping will increase and accelerate in the coming year the data analysis leads to our conclusion that customers prefer both traditional and online shopping methods in the data the samples preferred more traditional shopping more due to the fact of online shopping includes privacy protection online fraud and fake sellers but that does not mean they do not value or prefer online shopping as the samples were found lazy to leave the house despite their need to purchase products and services.

According to ‘The Economic Times’ in their article “Online shopping continues to grow even after Covid-19 pandemic” (Mukherjee, 2023) Consumers continued to shop online last year despite retail chains and malls reporting complete recovery in sales and higher footfalls than pre-Covid period..... Industry executives said there has been a marginal growth in online contribution to their sales in the last calendar year. “The shift towards ecommerce is permanent in technology products where decision makers are younger consumers and which are logistically possible to sell easily online,” electronics company Haier India president Satish NS said.

The Author (Koutsou-Wehling, 2023) has mentioned that As a proportion of post-millennials are yet to reach adulthood, they are more likely to live with their parents, which is attributed to

cultural traditions and high youth unemployment. Accordingly, their need to participate in the online economy may be reduced due to this fact. An analysis of activity on social media shows a higher level of caution towards digital sociality and a reluctance to interact with companies online as much as millennials are used to it is to be expected that a large number of Gen Z Indian consumers will also be living with their parents, which has a significant impact on the way they shop online.

Pandemic COVID-19 has expedited towards more digital world, and triggered changes in Online shopping behaviour that will have long lasting effect, COVID-19 pandemic forever Changed the purchase behaviour of consumers, consumers buying behaviour shifted from Offline to online buying behaviour. (Asati, 2022, p.g.7).

(Vanithamani, 2020) concludes that “Online shopping is transforming the perception of purchase in India, particularly among the youth. With limited choices and limited offers, online shopping

offers a convenient and efficient way for consumers to make purchases. By focusing on product performance over promotional activities, e-commerce businesses can reduce perception risks and increase purchase intentions”.

Gaps of existing studies

1. Researchers did focus on the online consumer behaviour before and after the Covid pandemic and also focused on explanation of reasons and factors that shows why their behaviour changed but they stretched little on the behaviour of the young customers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Type of Research

This research includes descriptive approach and exploratory approach of the mentioned study as the descriptive analysis includes survey and fact finding of the mentioned topic. This research shows previous existing information related to study and the survey conducted by previous researchers. The exploratory research includes critical evaluation of the material and analysis of the findings.

Scope of Study

Population of the study consists of young customers of Faridabad region and stratified random sampling is used in this study.

Sample size - 22

Data collection methods

Primary data collection – Questioner method will be used for survey of the consumer.

Secondary data collection – Research papers, Internet webpages.

Research limitations

This study has some limitations which is Small Sample size of the research from the population of Faridabad region and lack of availability of time which can be rectified in further studies and research using a bigger sample size and also a longitudinal study.

Survey

A survey will be conducted to investigate the online shopping consumer behavior of young customers of Faridabad region and will try to analyze the outcomes. A questionnaire will be asked from the samples of the population in the form of Google forms and different questions will be asked. If consumer behavior is changed then the reasons and factors will be asked for this and the data will be analyzed.

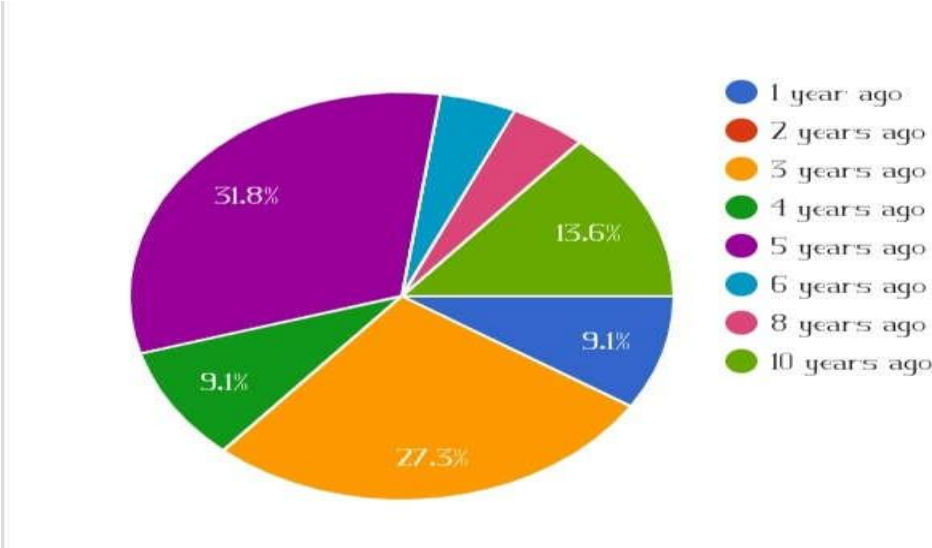
Questionnaire

Do you order online products or anybody does for you from any online product like healthcare, food, movie tickets, grocery, fashion items, electronics, etc.?

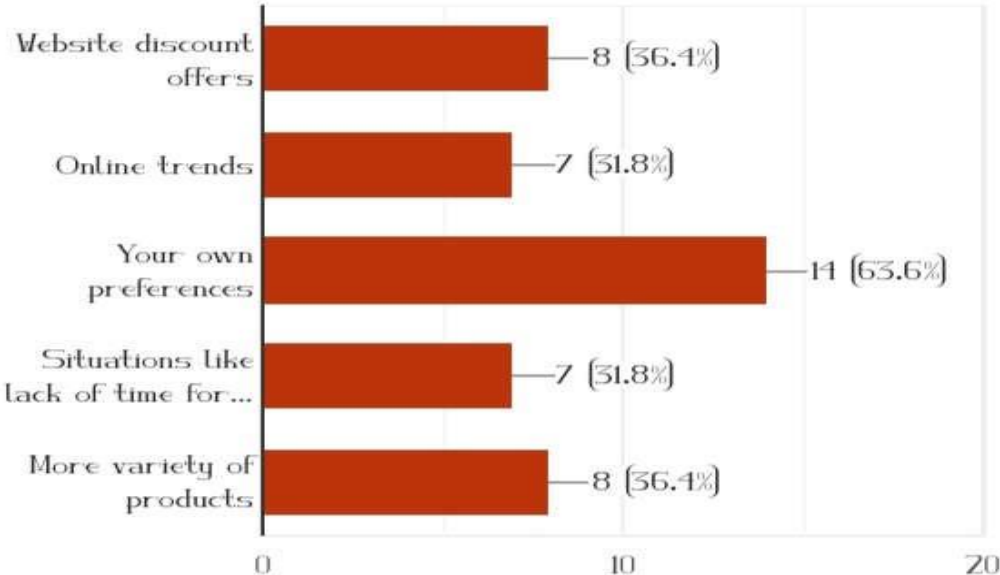
Yes- 22 (100%)

No.- 0

How often you order in a year ?



When Which facilities and factors on the website makes you order more online than offline?



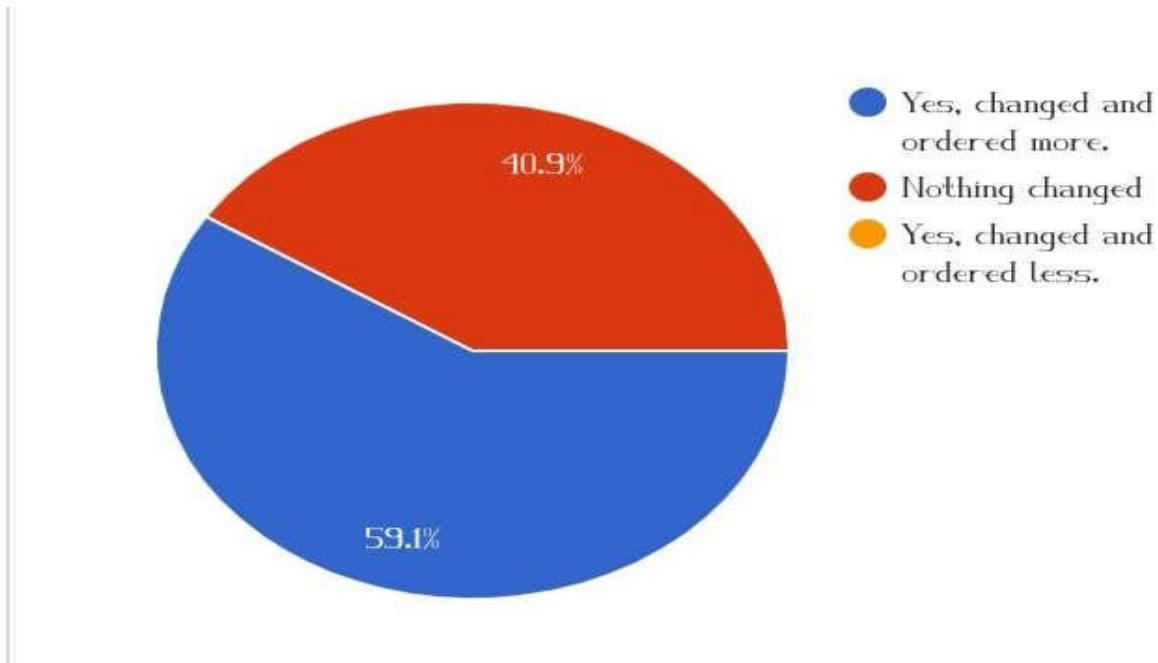
Data shown is mutually inclusive

Time saving	7
Variety	6
Product quality	2
Price and discounts	7
Prefers offline more	1
Ease and convenience	6
Trends	1

was your first order?

Did your shopping behaviour changed post covid pandemic?

If changed, then you ordered more or less?



If your online shopping behaviour changed after covid pandemic, then why?

Only consumer behaviour of 12 samples was changed after Covid pandemic

Reasons and factors that changed their behaviour –

Wanted products at their home and wanted convince	8
Trends	4

RESEARCH DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

We have earlier seen that consumer's changes their shopping behavior when they experience a special situation. For example, when the demonetization was announced in India in year 2016

then the some parts of shopping base switched to digital payment and online shopping and after Covid pandemic people also switched to online shopping methods but now when the pandemic ended people are still using online shopping and continuously increasing year after year.

Survey conducted shows data samples who were involved in the survey 91% of the sample used online shopping before Covid pandemic and 31.8% of the sample size preferred getting products at their home because they want convenience and they don't have time and 63 % of the samples preferred online shopping because of their own preferences. When we further investigated for their reasons to do online shopping then 43.5% preferred saving time and wanted convenience and easy shopping. Therefore, we say that behavior of the online shopping of young customers is that they order more online products than buying offline products as shown in the survey data that 59.1% of the sample's behavior is changed and they wanted more convenient and easy shopping.

CONCLUSION

After all the data gathered and analyzed, we can conclude that young online customer's behaviour is changed after Covid 19 pandemic. Now, when the restrictions have ended in year 2023 the customers are still shopping regularly because now the Indian young online shopping base want easy and convenient shopping they don't want offline shopping because they don't want to waste time in offline shopping experience.

The research (Aryani, et al, 2021) has said that customers are too lazy to leave their home and buy products and we agree with this statement because it matches our conclusion.

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