
Online Shopping during COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract: *Online shopping is growing all over India and youth contributes a considerable proportion in the global internet users. The increase of online shopping has become a trend for consumers and recently there has been a massive change in the way of customer shopping. Pattern and preference towards online is mainly due to reasons like cash on delivery, discounts and different type of quality products offered. Increasing use of internet, satisfactory results in online shopping, rise in standard of living, influence of friendship and attractive offers had prompted people to prefer online shopping. Due to coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, there is a dramatic shift from in-person to online shopping. Consumers are relying on the digital world more than ever and businesses are forced to adapt their strategies and shift towards digital transformation with much more urgency than before.*

Key Words: *Covid-19, Online Shopping, Pandemic.*

1. Introduction

In India due to variety of reasons, online shopping has been growing drastically. Developed internet penetration, increasing adoption of devices like smart phone, laptops and tablets and shift in buying behaviour has contributed towards preference for shopping online in the country. Online shopping has been predominant during the COVID-19 pandemic. Retailers put much effort in building, improving, and promoting their online stores. Some small retailers that did not manage online stores before shutdown developed temporary solutions to sell their products online. Others have offered discounts for their online channels and started promotion campaigns on social media. Different forms of economic uncertainty during the COVID-19 period provide a unique opportunity to investigate how the online social networks influence consumers' purchase behaviour. In this context, this paper investigates shopping motivations that drive online purchase behaviour during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.1. Objectives: COVID-19 has underlined the value of digital sales and customer relationships. The study therefore investigated the keep up position during the changing consumer behaviour, anticipate their requirements and study the stay ahead of competitors in the new digital landscapeto examine these aspects of online shopping in the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.2. Review of Literature: Blasio, G. D. (2008), Srivastava, S and Barmola, Kailash. (2010) and Awais Muhammad and Samin Tanzila (2012) analysed the advanced aspects of e commerce. Karunakaran N and Linda Jacob (2020) and Karunakaran N (2020), examined the online shopping in India. Petra Jilkova1 and Petra Kralova1 (2021), Julia Koch, Britta Frommeyer and Gerhard Schewe (2020), and Susan Meyer (2020) in their paper demonstrated the digital consumer behaviour and e commerce trends during the COVID-19 crisis.

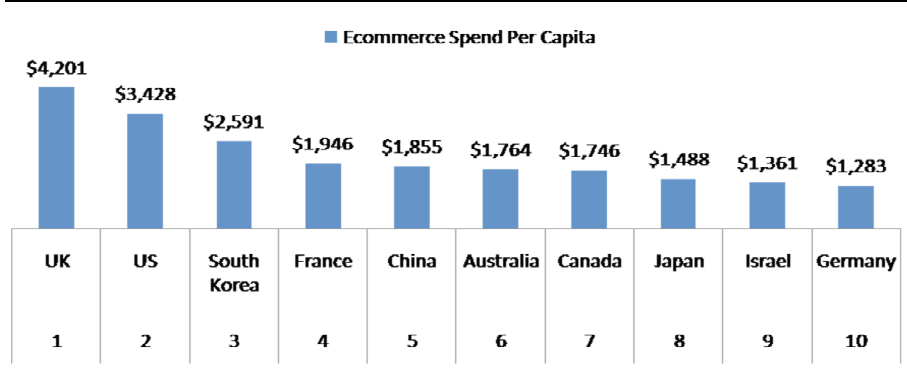
2. Materials and Methods

To realize the objectives specified, survey was conducted to examine the different aspects during COVID-19 from hundred adults aged 18 and older consumers of Kasaragod in Kerala.

3. Results, Analysis and Discussion

Increasing expansion in e commerce, created different purchase and selling pattern and preferences have emerged. Government had introduced various initiatives and the achievement in this regard was evaluated.

Figure1: Purchase Online by Top Ten Countries in the World



Source: Website Builder Expert.com

3.1. Online Shopping in India: Global internet shopping scenario is presented in figure 1. India's system of online shopping has a history and is popular since 1990 (table 1).

Table 1: Online Shopping in India

Year	Description
1969	CompuServe, the first major American e-commerce company, is founded.
1979	Electronic shopping is invented by Michael Aldrich.
1982	The Boston Computer Exchange, a prominent bulletin board system-based (BBS) marketplace for selling used computers, launches. This is one of the first, if not the first, ever platforms for e-commerce.
1982	Minitel, a pre-Internet Video tex online service, launches. This service could only be used in France.
1984	Electronic Mall by CompuServe, a popular online marketplace, launches. It offered pictures of products in full color.
1986	The United States (US) National Science Foundation (NSF) limits use of the National Science Foundation Network (NSFNET) for academic purposes only.
1990	The first ever web browser called World Wide Web is released by Tim Berners-Lee. Millions who have access to the internet can now browse e-commerce platforms with greater ease.
1992	Book Stacks Unlimited, an online marketplace for selling books, launches. Initially, it launched on BBS, then moved to the internet in 1994, in the form of <i>www.books.com</i> .
1994	Netscape launches Netscape Navigator, a very prominent web browser.
1994	IpswitchIMail Server became the first software to be sold online and then be available for immediate download.
1995	The NSF lifts its ban of internet commerce on NSFNET.

- 1995 eBay.com, also an extremely prominent online marketplace, launches. Initially, eBay.com was called AuctionWeb.
- 1995 Double Click, a prominent and influential advertising launches. This one of the first services to serve ads on the internet.
- 1995 Amazon.com, an extremely prominent online marketplace, is launched by Jeff Bezos.
- 1996 India MART, a prominent Indian online marketplace, launches.
- 1996 ECPlaza, a prominent Korean online marketplace, launches.
- 1997 Netflix, an extremely popular subscription video on demand service, launches. Netflix also offers a DVD delivery service. Netflix only began offering online video streaming in 2007.
- 1998 PayPal, a very prominent online payment system, launches.
- 1998 CompuServe is acquired by AOL.
- 1999 Zappos, a popular online marketplace for shoes and other apparel, launches.
- 1999 Tradera, an online marketplace similar to eBay.com in function, launches.
- 1999 Amazon patents its 1-Click service, which allows users to make faster purchases.
- 1999 Alibaba.com, a very prominent Chinese online marketplace, launches.
- 2000 Walmart launches its website, allowing customers to shop online.
- 2000 StubHub, a very popular online marketplace for event tickets, launches.
- 2000 Google launches Ad Words, an advertising service that allows users to show an advertisement in Google search results that is related to the viewer's search.
- 2001 Skrill (formerly known as Moneybookers.com), a prominent online payment platform, launches.

- 2001 Newegg, a very prominent online marketplace for technology, launches.
- 2001 Costco launches its own business-to-business online shopping system.
- 2002 Safeway Inc. launches an online delivery service, allowing customers to shop online.
- 2002 eBay.com acquires PayPal for \$1.5 billion in stocks.
- 2002 Bossgoo, a prominent business-to-business online marketplace, launches.
- 2003 Valve launches Steam, the most popular Digital rights management and gaming platform in the world.
- 2003 Google launches Ad Sense, allowing users to promote their goods on the web based on the product's relevance to the viewer of the advertisement.
- 2005 Amazon launches its Amazon Prime service, which allows users to expedite shipping on any purchases for a flat annual fee.
- 2006 Tradera is acquired by eBay.com for approximately \$50 million.
- 2006 Shopify, a prominent storefront service, launches.
- 2007 StubHub is acquired by eBay.com.
- 2007 Hulu, a popular subscription video on demand service, launches. Hulu is composed of various media organizations.
- 2007 Flipkart, a popular Indian online marketplace, launches.
- 2007 Facebook launches its Facebook Beacon service to display more relevant information to users by collecting data on their web browsing outside of Facebook. With this, Facebook can also promote products based on whatever is relevant.
- 2007 Amazon Fresh, a very prominent online food ordering service, launches in Seattle. It has since spread to dozens of cities across the US.
- 2008 PayPal Credit (formerly known as Bill Me Later), is acquired by eBay.com.

- 2008 Magento. a popular online storefront service, launches.
- 2008 Google acquires Double Click for \$3.1 billion in cash.
- 2008 GOG.com, a prominent online gaming marketplace that offers DRM-free games, launches.
- 2009 BitCoin, a very prominent crypto currency launches, and changes how consumers can pay for online purchases or even in restaurants.
- 2009 Big Commerce, another popular online storefront service, launches.
- 2009 Amazon acquires Zappos.com for \$1.2 billion.
- 2010 HBO Go, a popular subscription video on demand service that offers streaming of exclusively HBO content, launches.
- 2010 Groupon, a prominent online marketplace, launches.
- 2011 Magento is acquired by eBay.com.
- 2011 Google Wallet, a prominent online payment system similar to PayPal, launches.
- 2011 Facebook Beacon is shut down due to privacy concerns.
- 2012 Instacart a popular and growing online food ordering and delivery, launches.
- 2013 Google Express (formerly known as Google Shopping Express), a service similar to Amazon Fresh and Instacart launches in several cities across the US, starting with San Francisco.
- 2013 Facebook begins letting users sponsor posts, which helps give their posts or products more publicity among their friends, followers, and those to whom the post is relevant.
- 2013 China becomes the largest e-commerce market in the world.
- 2014 Singles' Day sales on Alibaba sites reach US\$9.3 billion.
- 2014 Jet.com, an online marketplace, launches.
- 2014 Apple Pay, a prominent payment system in the form of a mobile app that mimics a credit or debit card, launches.

2015	Singles' Day sales on Alibaba sites reach US\$14.3 billion.
2015	Pinterest enters the e-commerce scene by adding Buyable Pins, a feature that allows users to sell their pins to other users.
2015	Google launches Android Pay, a prominent payment system similar to Apple Pay.
2015	Cyber Monday sales set a new record of \$3 billion.
2016	Walmart announces it will be acquiring Jet.com for \$3 billion.
2016	Singles' Day sales on Alibaba sites reach US\$17.7 billion.
2016	Alibaba announces it will be acquiring a controlling stake in Lazada Group for around US\$1 billion.
2018	Flipkart is acquired by Walmart.

Source: Karunakaran N and Linda Jacob (2020), "Online shopping among college students in Kasaragod: pattern and preference", *Journal of Management Research and Analysis*, 7 (2): 70.

3.2. Pandemic's Impact on Online Shopping: Before 2019, majority of retailers ended with a greater number of bricks and mortar stores. In the wake of coronavirus, bricks and mortar retail has slowed to a standstill. As a consequence, many Omni channel retail organizations around the world have been scrambling to improve their customers flock online [10]. Corona virus (COVID-19) pandemic saw a dramatic shift from in-person to online shopping. Consumers are relying on the digital world more than ever and businesses are forced to adapt their strategies and shift toward digital transformation with much more urgency than before [12].

3.2.1. Shopping Behaviour during COVID-19 Times: 45 percent of respondents indicated to do more online shopping, followed by 25 percent as less. 40 percent indicated that they will do more online shopping than they are doing at present during COVID-19. For online shoppers, the most important factors that influence their loyalty to a given brand are previous positive experience (34 percent) and user-friendliness (23 percent). When asking the respondents about their likeliness to fill out feedback surveys about their shopping experience, 82 percent is either very likely or somewhat likely to complete one of those surveys. When asking the respondents how

important it would be that the company informs them on how they resolved the problem after reporting a negative online experience and deciding to buy from them in the future, the vast majority indicated this to be either extremely important or very important (69 percent) (table 2).

Table 2: Online Shopping Behaviour during COVID-19 Times

Question 1: Compared to the amount of online shopping you did prior to the Corona virus (COVID-19) pandemic, would you say you have been doing more, less or about the same amount of shopping online?

Number of respondents	Shopping online (more) in %	Shopping online (less) in %	Shopping online (about the same) in %	No answer in %
100	45	25	30	0

Question 2: Thinking ahead to the future, do you plan to do more shopping online than you are doing today?

Number of respondents	Shopping online (more) in %	Shopping online (less) in %	Shopping online (about the same) in %	No answer in %
100	40	22	38	0

Question 3: If you reported a negative online experience to a company how important would it be that the company tell you how they resolved the problem when it comes to deciding if you will make purchase from them in the future?

Number of respondents	Extremely important in %	Very important in %	Somewhat important in %	Not too important in %	Not at all important in %	No answer in %
100	30	39	22	4	3	2

Question 4: Which of these matters most in your decision?

Number of respondents	Previous positive experience in %	User friendless of websites in %	Ease of checkout or payment experience	Customer service and support in %	Ability to provide feedback in real time in %	No answer in %
100	34	23	16	12	12	3

Question 5: Sometimes companies will send surveys after you purchase a product to gather feedback about your experience how likely you complete response of such surveys?

Number of respondents	Very likely in %	Somewhat likely in %	Somewhat unlikely in %	Very unlikely in %	No answer in %
100	38	44	14	3	1

Question 6: Are you more likely to take this survey when you have a positive or negative experience ?

Number of respondents	Positive experience in %	Negative experience in %	Makeno difference/ equally likely in %	No answer in %
100	42	14	43	1

Question 7: If you reported a negative online experience to a company how important would it be that the company tell you how they resolved the problem when it comes to deciding if you will make a purchase from them in future?

Number of respondents	Extremely important in %	Very important in %	Somewhat important in %	Not too important in %	Not at all important in %	No answer in %
100	30	39	22	4	3	2

4. Conclusion

Compared to shopping pre-pandemic, online shoppers have all boosted their online buying behaviours since the coronavirus outbreak began. One-third plan to increase their buying behaviour in the future online. While total cost is initially the top factor in deciding whether to buy from one company over another, previous positive experiences is the number one cited factor in deciding to return to make a purchase on a website. It is important to note that the company follow up with the resolution in deciding if they will make a purchase from that company in the future. With the exception of shoppers, majorities are likely to respond to feedback surveys even though there is negative experience.

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