

A STUDY OF IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON WOMEN SHOPPERS' TOWARDS ONLINE SHOPPING IN INDIA

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Abstract. Online shopping for Indian consumers is becoming highly accessible and one major influencing factor is the use of social media particularly for women. Online shopping for women is becoming popular due to various motivating factors. This paper provides a comprehensive review of the impact of social media on online shopping by women in India. This study reviewed existing literature to recognize the role of social media in influencing the online buying behaviour of women. Hypothesis testing methodology is adopted and findings indicate that there is a positive impact on the factors aimed to be studied. Further the scope of the study is identified considering the future possible studies and limitations of the paper.

Keywords: Social media, marketing, women consumers, online shopping, buying behaviour, purchase intention

Introduction

Buying Behaviour of consumers is the study of how people choose, purchase, use and depart goods, services, ideas, or experiences in order to satisfy their needs and wants. It is an aggregate of consumer's attitudes, their preferences towards products, intentions to buy, and decisions regarding their purchases. (Zhou L, 2007) The most common reasons why people buy online are comfort, less time consumed, variety, available of product details, no sales person pressure. Their study indicates that convenience and price are the strong influencing factors for consumers' to buy online. (Phau I, 2000) The product category is also an important contributor to consumer inclination to shop online. Consumers prefer to buy the low price and regularly purchased items online as compared to those of high price and seldomly purchased. In recent years, people of different age groups are connected to each other through different social mediums which is one of the major reasons for people to be influenced by social media and make their purchase decisions as they are able to connect with their friends and families who can provide them information about their own experiences. This paper aims to study the underlying impact of social media on women shoppers' towards their online shopping in India.

The use of social media is highly preferred by women for their online search for various products. The convenience to shop online is one of the major influencing factor for women to shop online. Traditionally, women had several reasons to shop, like, to select products of their choice by negotiating on a large scale, to buy products that were not in their shopping list, to relax and spend time with their friends and to socialize. Women in India has always been considered the most prospective consumers for the marketers. Women influence the buying behaviour of other women which in turn results in shopping. However the role of men and women differ in terms of shopping, both offline and online which has a significant impact on their buying behaviour. (Mitchell, 2004) highlighted the fact that men and women prefer varied products and they are likely to have different means of liking and obtaining those products. They also studied that women value products and brands that are distinctive and that can be used to differentiate them from others and women desire new fashion trends than men and are more thoughtful about their choices. Women are considered to be more emotional than men and they have an emotional tendency to feel something and share it with their families and friends. Women also differ from men because of their differences in their biological and behavioural features which in turn impacts their purchase intention towards a

paraduct. Women always prioritize their purchases by taking their family members in consideration. It also indicates that marketers need to position their brands in such a way that woman and her family can avail the benefits. Women in India prefer risk free and desire for an easy shopping affair by making their purchase choice based on the experiences and feedbacks shared by prior users whereas, men require enough information and details about a product or service through various sources to make a purchase decision. This paper provides a comprehensive review of the social media and its impact on the online buying behaviour of women, however, the study of online consumer behaviour is evolving promptly and there is a need to examine and recognize new techniques, ways and measures to understand the role of social media in online buying behaviour of consumers particularly women.

Review of Literature

Various studies conducted in the past clearly highlight that online shopping is recently being opted by the shoppers in India. Various results have suggested that a steady rise in number of people who buy online over the years is visible. (Ramsey, 1999). A study by (Lohse, 2000) categorises online shoppers into four different segments—one who never buy, ones who are dropouts, ones who are newbies and ones who are reliable buyers. (Kiran, 2008) recognized the evolving patterns of online shopping by consumers in India. Their research suggested that the consumers have high access to the unlimited information available to them regarding the products and this awareness is on a high trend. Individuals are highly likeable to book online tickets, books, purchase music and use online services for various reasons. A method for knowing the consumer decision making process was presented by researchers by taking the various constructs like performance variables together. The results of this method suggested that consumers are highly satisfied by their online purchase because of reasons like cost effectiveness and time-saving which has gained attention of a large number of online shoppers. (Kohli R., 2004). (Goldsmith, 2005) studied the important factors influencing the buying behaviour of consumers. They identified that consumers prefer variety of products at reasonable prices and their buying tendency is highly impacted by these factors. According to (Tlapana, 2009) there are other such factors that affect the buying decision process of consumers online. These factors are location, price, packaging, service provided, storage and the environment of the stores and these elements could either be tangible or intangible like the interiors and exteriors and the employees which combined together greatly impact the consumers' mind. Other literature also reveals the nature of online shopping and its influence on the consumers.

Studies have been conducted to identify the role of social media in the online buying behaviour of consumers. (Argo, 2019) demonstrated the presence of social media and its impact on consumers. The study suggested that social media has a great influence on consumer's cognitive, affective and behavioural factors. The inter-connection between consumers and products available online is changing because of the increasing role of social media in public relations. Consumers now use various web tools like online discussion forums, consumer review sites, and social network sites to share and exchange the product information with other consumers. Social media has entered the deeper roots in the lives of consumers to a great extent and its use by men and women differs which in turn results in variations in their buying behaviour decisions. In addition to the research conducted on social media and its impact on online consumers, there have been numerous studies conducted to understand the impact of social media on women shoppers' towards online shopping in India. The (Tribune, 1955) conducted a study on women shoppers through interviews. The types of women shoppers identified were dependant, compelling and unconventional. (Bakewell C, 2006) proposed that men as compared to women have opposed values and attitude towards shopping. (Thrassou Alkis. Kone, 2008) stated that women as compared to men are proactive in shopping and women enjoy browsing and searching for products and the major reasons for women to go for shopping includes social interactions and leisure time. This plays an important role in their emotional and psychological behaviours. (Bakshi, 2012) highlighted that one of the main factors for marketers to segment and target their products is the gender differentiation because for women shopping is an

exhilarating activity unlike men. A study by (Eva M. Gonzalez, 2020) stated that Women and men have different constructs that they consider prior to their purchase that also impacts their buying behaviour. For women in particular, social networking and entertainment are important while being involved in shopping activities. (Haytko, 2004). (Kolesar, 2000) found that there is less personal connection between the consumers and the marketers due to which internet is emerging as the social space for women and it is suggested that there is a huge opportunity for e-retailers to use social networking for online shopping. The findings by (Charles Dennis, 2010) reveal that young women prefer social online shopping sites as compared to traditional methods of shopping which impacts their online purchase intentions. (Nupur Arora A. A., 2018) revealed that the price, convenience, product variety matters the most to women and it highly impacts the online shopping behaviour of women in India.

Research Methodology

The main objective of this paper is to understand the Impact of social media on women shoppers' towards online shopping in India. Furthermore, it studies the factors that influence Indian women consumers to shop online. For this research, Secondary data is studied and included in the paper. The research objectives and hypothesis are as given below:-

Research Objectives

- To study the impact of social media on women shoppers'
- To study the impact of social media on online shopping behaviour of women
- To study the impact of factors that influence Indian women consumers to shop online

Hypothesis

Following hypotheses are formed to test the hypotheses:

H0: Social media has a positive impact on women shoppers'

H1: Social media does not have a positive impact on women shoppers'

Ho: Social media has a positive impact on online shopping behaviour of women

H2: Social media does not have a positive impact on online shopping behaviour of women

Ho: The factors influencing Indian women consumers to shop online have a positive impact

H3: The factors influencing Indian women consumers to shop online does not have a positive impact

Data Analysis and Findings

Hypothesis 1

Objective 1:-To study the impact of social media on women shoppers'

We hypothesize as:

H0= Social media has a positive impact on women shoppers'

H1= Social media does not have a positive impact on women shoppers'

Figure.1 indicates that women increase their buying intention when there is a display of product in a usage context whereas, for men, it doesn't affect their buying intentions.

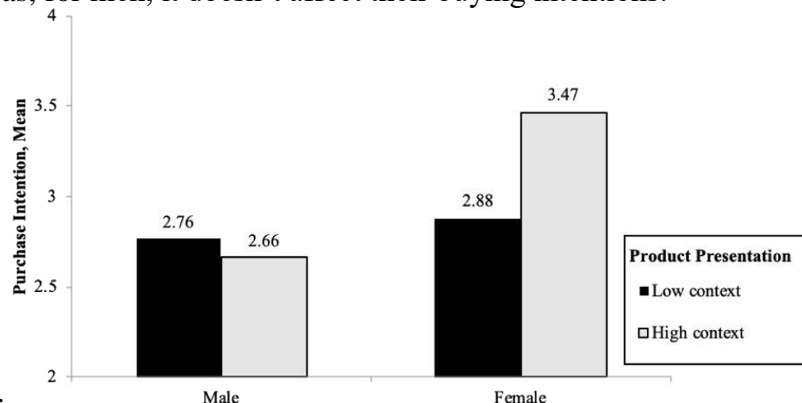


Figure. 1 Source: (Eva M. Gonzalez, 2020)

Hypothesis 2

Objective 2:- To study the impact of social media on online shopping behaviour of women
We hypothesize as:

H0= Social media has a positive impact on online shopping behaviour of women

H2= Social media does not have a positive impact on online shopping behaviour of women

Figure.2 illustrates that for women, emotional values matters the most which in turn results in purchase intentions.

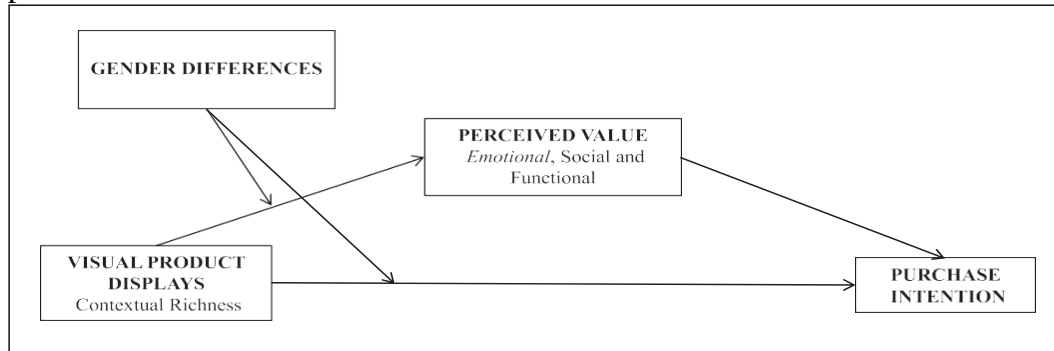


Figure. 2 Source: (Eva M. Gonzalez, 2020)

Hypothesis 3:

Objective 3:- To study the impact of factors that influence Indian women consumers to shop online
We hypothesize as:

H0= The factors influencing Indian women consumers to shop online have a positive impact

H3= The factors influencing Indian women consumers to shop online does not have a positive impact

Table 1 illustrates that for women who shop online, it is important to consider the types of risks involved which impacts their purchase intentions.

Table 1:- Effects of constructs on the attitude of online buying

Constructs	Summary of findings
Online attitude and intention of purchase	Attitude is an important element
Perceived risks	Perceived risk is an important element

Source: (Nupur Arora M. R., 2018)

Suggestions

The study suggests that in order to target the huge online market of women, marketers need to understand their buying behaviour through various online channels particularly social media. The study suggests that emotional factors for women should be catered to, through social media platforms to influence them to buy online. Online retailers should implement methodologies that help women feel risk free while doing online shopping and there needs to be a better understanding of women psychology in online buying.

Limitations and future scope

Future studies might focus on the influencing factors that have a strong impact on the women buying behaviour in various aspects towards online shopping. There is a need to study the gender differences in online shopping because of social media and its usage. Future Research can aim to study the psychological factors impacting women's buying behaviour.

Conclusion

The study examined the role of social media on women in online shopping. The study of consumer buying behaviour is changing and it is important to note that men and women are adopting online shopping to a great extent especially through social media and its usage. The process of women to

purchase online is greatly influenced by social media. For women, shopping is an exciting activity and they find various means to shop. The paper highlights that for women shoppers there are various reasons to shop online. The aim of the paper was to understand the Impact of social media on women shoppers' towards online shopping in India and the studies and various literature revealed that there is a positive impact of social media on online shopping behaviour of women in India.

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