



International Journal of Home Science

ISSN: 2395-7476

IJHS 2024; 10(1): 178-182

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www.homesciencejournal.com

Received: 06-01-2024

Accepted: 09-02-2024

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The fascination of youngsters towards online shopping: Positive and negative aspects

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Abstract

Even while traditional retail establishments continue to be vital and serve a sizable portion of the Indian consumer base, online shopping is a relatively new trend in the industry. E-retailers are investing more time in this emerging medium as e-commerce grows and consumers grow more accustomed to purchasing from the comfort of their homes. This involves identifying target customers and developing a marketing strategy that is specifically tailored to them and their customers. The number of people using the internet, particularly children, is growing quickly. Internet service providers, which enable computer users to access the web, recognise the value of websites in terms of consumer purchases, and they employ multi-media advertising campaigns to draw in and encourage users to sign up. Nearly all products, including clothing, jewellery, and shoes, are sold online these days. E-commerce refers to purchasing via the internet and other media platforms. Teenagers and young children who are drawn to videos these days are more inclined to embrace electronic buying because it saves them time and allows them to purchase whenever they want from the comfort of their own home. The customer often uses a credit card to make payment, and the merchandise is delivered to the address they provide. It establishes a new platform on which goods from around the globe can be ordered and imported. Internet buying has certain disadvantages over traditional retailing and shopping methods, despite the fact that it offers many advantages to both customers and sellers.

Some consumers are afraid about fraud while using their credit or debit cards to make purchases online, especially when the website is insecure. Some people dislike not being able to view or touch the products in person. Delivery fees can occasionally significantly raise the price of the goods. Online sellers do not give customers the option to haggle over the price. Delivered goods could be of poor quality, opened, or past their expiration date, and returning them to the consumer might be difficult. Some individuals still view shopping as a family outing and view it as a touch, feel, and hear experience. These folks have a dislike for internet buying. Numerous websites have been developed in India to offer this online purchasing feature. The only way to make this experience worthwhile and efficient is to use these websites with caution. It is best to buy products from a specific website only after carefully reviewing its terms of service and confirming that the portal is reliable and can be held responsible for any inconsistencies.

Keywords: Positive and negative aspects, online shopping, online sellers, retail sales

Introduction

Although traditional shops continue to account for the majority of retail sales, the quantity of business realized via off-store venues, notably the Internet, E-Catalogs, and home - shopping channels, is steadily increasing. For many young people, the internet has transformed the way they shop. Working folks with limited time to go shopping now favors internet shopping. Internet buying and e-commerce have grown in popularity among the general public, particularly among young women and men. There are various websites that provide numerous discounts in order to attract more customers. Online websites are also updated with current fashion trends and occasionally provide free product delivery. A vast variety of commodities can now be purchased on the internet, allowing access to products from all over the world regardless of where you live, a virtual shop is built with the use of a web space, and the products are shown through photographs in this area with the features and price tags. A customer can load his products into a cart by accessing this shopping site. Payment for the product can be made in a variety of ways, including credit/debit cards and cash on delivery.

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Customers and retailers alike increasingly speak in terms of search engines, dot-coms, websites, and high-speed access as a result of the emergence of this purchasing channel. A multitude of solutions, for example, have been launched to reduce fraudulent activity and make people feel more secure when purchasing on the internet. Cyber Source, a corporation established in California-based startup that assists merchants in detecting fraudulent transactions by evaluating risk indicators.

Youth and online shopping

The youth constitute a significant percentage of internet purchasers. This is due to the fact that younger generations, notably millennials and Generation Z, have grown up with the internet and digital technologies, making them more likely to engage in online shopping. It was found in a national survey conducted in India that six out of ten youngsters between age group of 9-17 years spend over three hours daily on social media or gaming sites (TNN / Updated: Sep 23). Youngsters are known for being early adopters of new technologies, and social media platforms are no exception. Here are some of the reasons why young people account for a sizable proportion of online buyers.

Younger generations are increasingly tech-savvy and comfortable utilizing smartphones, computers, and the internet for a variety of purposes, including shopping. Online buying is convenient since it allows young customers to make purchases from the comfort of their homes or while they are on the go, which corresponds to their fast-paced lifestyles. Online businesses offer a varied range of products, appealing to the diverse interests and tastes of the youth, ranging from fashion and technology to specialty and niche items. Online platforms offer tools and resources for easy pricing and product comparisons, which appeals to price-conscious younger shoppers. Young shoppers have access to products from all over the world, allowing them to discover unusual and trendy items.

In order to make informed purchasing selections, the youth frequently rely on user reviews and ratings, which are available on online shopping platforms. Influencers and celebrities promote items and trends on platforms such as Instagram and TikTok, and this has a big impact on the purchasing habits of young purchasers. Many young consumers use mobile shopping applications to explore, buy, and track their items on their cellphones. The youth frequently use digital wallets, credit cards, and online payment alternatives, making the checkout process quick and straightforward.

Many online merchants, such as Amazon Prime, provide membership services that appeal to youthful shoppers by giving benefits such as free shipping, exclusive content, and discounts. Younger generations are frequently more environmentally sensitive, and they may prefer internet shopping to lessen their carbon impact by reducing the need for physical businesses. Trends in fashion, technology, and lifestyle are more likely to affect the youth, which they can readily discover and follow through online buying. The ease and convenience of online purchasing can lead to more impulse purchases, which may be especially typical among young people.

Reasons for growing youngster's engagement in online shopping

- **Convenience:** Online buying is unrivalled in terms of convenience. Shoppers may explore and make purchases

from the comfort of their own homes, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, eliminating the need to visit physical establishments.

- Online businesses frequently feature enormous product catalogues with a wide range of alternatives, including niche and specialty items that may not be readily available in local locations.
- **Competitive Pricing:** Because online retailers may save on overhead costs connected with brick-and-mortar stores, they usually offer competitive rates and promotions. Consumers may easily find the greatest bargains thanks to price comparison websites and tools.
- **User Reviews and Ratings:** Customers may access user-generated reviews and ratings, which can help them make more educated purchasing decisions and avoid low-quality products.
- **Product study Convenience:** Online buyers may easily study products, read reviews, compare prices, and access product information and specifications from the comfort of their own homes.
- **Access to Global Markets:** Online shopping allows consumers to access products from all over the world, which can be especially enticing for items that are not readily available in their home country.
- **Personalization:** To offer personalized product recommendations, many online retailers use algorithms and data analytics, making the shopping experience more tailored to individual preferences.
- **Savings in Time:** Online shopping saves time that would otherwise be spent driving to physical stores, looking for parking, and waiting in lines.
- **Returns and Refunds are Simple:** Most online shops have simple return policies that allow customers to return things they are unhappy with and receive refunds or swaps.
- **Accessibility:** People with physical limitations or others who have difficulties navigating physical stores can shop online.
- The COVID-19 pandemic increased the popularity of internet shopping as consumers sought to limit physical connections and lower the danger of viral exposure.
- **E-commerce Platforms and Apps:** The development of user-friendly e-commerce platforms and mobile apps has increased the accessibility and convenience of online buying.
- **Payment Methods:** Online shopping provides a range of payment methods, such as credit cards, digital wallets, and buy-now-pay-later services, allowing customers to select their chosen payment method.
- **Subscription Services:** Consumers have been drawn to subscription models such as Amazon Prime because they provide benefits such as free shipping and exclusive content.
- **Considerations for the Environment:** Some consumers prefer online shopping because it has the potential to minimize the carbon footprint associated with traditional retail, as it eliminates the need for physical stores and accompanying transportation.
- **Incentives & Loyalty Programmes:** To keep customers engaged and returning for future purchases, many online businesses offer loyalty programmes, discounts, and incentives.

The combination of these reasons has resulted in a considerable surge in online shopping popularity and has

altered the retail landscape.

Expanding trend of E-tailors or online shopping sites in India

India's e-commerce business is constantly expanding, and there are several well-known e-commerce stores that offer a diverse range of products and services. Some well-known e-commerce sites in India include.

Amazon India: Amazon is one of the world's largest e-commerce platforms, with a considerable presence in India, offering a diverse range of products such as electronics, apparel, and books. **Flipkart** is one of India's leading e-commerce enterprises, selling everything from electronics and fashion to home goods and groceries. Walmart purchased it in 2018. **Myntra** is a Flipkart subsidiary that specializes in fashion and lifestyle products such as apparel, footwear, and accessories. **Snapdeal** is an Indian e-commerce site that sells a wide range of products such as electronics, fashion, and home goods. Run by **Paytm**, a mobile payments and financial services platform, **Paytm Mall** provides a diverse range of products and services such as electronics, fashion, and groceries. **First Cry** is a well-known e-commerce portal that specializes in baby and children's products such as apparel, toys, and accessories. **Pepper fry** is an online furniture and home decor retailer that offers a large variety of furniture, lighting, and home goods. **Lens kart** is a well-known online eyewear retailer that sells eyeglasses, sunglasses, and contact lenses. **Croma** is Tata Group's online retail branch, specializing in electronics and appliances. **Shop Clues** is an online marketplace that focuses on providing a variety of things at low rates, such as electronics, fashion, and home goods. **Tata Cliq** is the Tata Group's e-commerce site, selling a variety of products such as electronics, fashion, and luxury goods. **Big Basket** is a renowned online grocery store in India that sells a large range of food, fresh vegetables, and household goods. **Grofers** is another popular online grocery delivery service in India, offering groceries, fruits, vegetables, and other items. **Nykaa** is a prominent e-commerce site that specializes in cosmetics and beauty products, offering a diverse selection of brands and beauty-related things. While most recognized for its meal delivery and restaurant finding services, **Zomato** also provides grocery delivery services in India.

Encountered problems while on-line shopping: A reason behind the increasing frustration among youngsters

These days' youngsters are facing several physical and psychological problems as they indulge most of the times in their mobiles or on social platforms. Psychiatrist Dr. Harish Shetty in a report said, "Social media is designed to be addictive. There is no denying that social media addiction, depression, loneliness and self-harm are related".

- **Long time wait for delivery of products:** The products ordered online can take more than month to reach its destination sometimes. Which can be quite frustrating. By the time when items arrive, the customers become less excited than getting on some day they made the payment.
- **Chances of mishandling while shipping:** Sometime customers don't get the items they were expecting. Many times, Courier Company leaves the package on your door when they are not at home and after opening the package, product may be broken. The seller might claim that the customer broke it and the customer cannot do anything in

this case.

- **Shipping costs:** A number of website, as a part of a smart marketing gimmick, do not include the shipping cost while giving out the price of an item. It may be mentioned minutely at the end of the screen which many would not even notice. The valuable gets delivered at the customer's house and they are asked to pay more than what they are prepared for. They have no option but to oblige that. Shipping costs in most cases raise the price of an article and they may end up buying it at a rate higher than the market price.
- **Problem of returning the products:** The customers face the problem of returning the products delivered after online purchasing. Even if the seller agrees to take back the defective piece, the customers often have to pay the cost of shipping it back.
- **Problem of tangibility:** The moment when one touch and feel the thing he/she wants to own, it is something irreplaceable. In case of clothes and shoes, one can touch the item and understand how good or bad a material it has been made of. During a real shopping of gadgets, one can try them out and know if they are working properly. Online purchasing makes it extremely difficult to exchange items as well, in case of discrepancies.
- **Language Problem:** Most of the internet retail shops use English as a communication mode. English may not be comprehensible to the majority of the Indian population. To increase the customer base, content in the online retail shops should be provided in local language.
- **Offline presence of companies:** The customers should be assured that the online retailers are not only available online but offline as well. This gives them the psychological comfort that these companies can be relied upon.
- **Time zone difference:** In countries like USA there are various time zones and the customer service hours of the online shopping site may be different from the customer's time zone, making it difficult for customers to get in touch with a human when they need help.
- **Sales Tax:** Although an online shopping site may not charge the customers a sales tax during the purchase, they are legally obliged to pay taxes when they file annual taxes. Most people are able to get by, but in case of a scrutiny not paying sales tax on online purchases may become an issue.
- **Cannot buy perishable items on the web:** Small items like pencil, eraser, socks, water bottles etc. are low priced items and shipping them will likely double the cost. Some items like milk, fruits and vegetables are perishable items and cannot be ordered online.
- **Deal hunting can be frustrating:** It is common that the price of items is different on different sites. Some people find excitement in finding good deals online while others hate to check various sites to find the best price.
- **Security:** Payments done online are usually safe but not always. There may be sites which are not secure or do not encrypt the personal credit card data of customer, so if a hacker breaks in their system, the data can be compromised. In the spring of 2014, hackers successfully gained access to the customer database of auction giant eBay. The database contained personal information including client names, birthdays, physical addresses,

phone number, email and passwords. The theft of this information left customers at risk for phishing schemes, which has the potential to lead to identify theft.

- **Risk of fraud:** Some people pretend selling items at a very cheap price and often send to the customers a low quality, opened or unfinished item, in other cases the sites may shut down unexpectedly, leaving lot of customers who might have already paid for the item but did not receive anything.
- **Limited access to the Internet:** All the customer does not have knowledge to access the web. The adoption of broadband has been slowed down due to the last mile connectivity issue. This has put a limitation on the ability to design the right e-tailing environment to encourage online transactions.
- **No suggestions of friends and family while shopping:** Usually, when people go out shopping to a market place, their aim does not remain only to shop for one thing they end up buying many things and a lot more with their friends and family members. In case of online shopping, that cannot be a possibility as they do not have more than one screen to concentrate on each item.
- **No Bargaining:** It's a major drawback of online shopping. Bargaining is an interesting part in the entire shopping experience. It gives us immense pleasure when we manage to convince the seller to give us our desired product at a lesser price. Online buying does not offer us that liberty to bargain.
- **Makes them lazy and addicted:** Youngsters who have an access to the internet, hardly show an interest to venture out of their house into the markets. They order eatables, clothes, furniture, books etc. via internet and remain restricted to the house. This all makes them fat, lazy and addictive to the online buying.
- **Lack of accuracy:** While shopping online, one cannot try or check the garment's fitting. Color, size and fitting of apparel cannot be checked accurately without trials.

Ways to safeguard the youngsters while e-shopping

They should stick to well-known and reliable internet stores when shopping and look for reviews and ratings to determine the website's credibility. They should make sure the website they are visiting, has a secure connection by checking for "https://" in the URL, which indicates that the site is secure. Entering personal information on insecure websites should be avoided.

They should be wary of emails or links that them to click on them in order to make a purchase. Phishing emails are frequently used by scammers to deceive into disclosing personal and financial information. They should make strong, one-of-a-kind passwords for online purchasing accounts by using a mix of letters, numbers, and special characters.

When possible, enable two-factor authentication to shop safely when shopping on the internet. They should avoid making online purchases when connected to public Wi-Fi networks, which are frequently insecure and shop from a private and secure network instead.

They should make sure that their computer or mobile device is running the most recent antivirus and anti-malware software. Update the operating system and programmes on a regular basis. Credit cards, unlike debit cards or direct bank transfers, usually provide greater protection against fraudulent

charges. They should try to consider using a credit card when shopping online. Some banks provide virtual credit card numbers that are connected to the real credit card but can only be used once. This can provide an additional layer of security. Scammers frequently utilize ridiculously low pricing to entice naive customers. If an offer appears to be too good to be true, it most likely is. They should save any receipts, email confirmations, and shipping information from the online purchases.

Credit card and bank statements should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure there are no unauthorized or questionable activities.

Consider using trusted payment systems such as PayPal, which can add an extra degree of security by not exchanging financial information with the vendor directly.

Conclusion

The internet provides global access in every field and activity in today's fast-paced, highly linked world. Indeed, internet use has expanded to include business-to-business transactions, online retail, and the digitalization of banking other industries. The Internet has evolved into a fantastic tool for businesses to advertise their goods and services. In 2021, the number of annual online shoppers was about 185 million across India. This was a significant increase as compared to the previous year. The annual number of shoppers are likely to increase to 425 million in 2027. Online shopping has grown in popularity over the last decade, and online vendors are likely to increase their market share in the next years. Young people like internet shopping because it is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and every month of the year. They can access a large choice of products and series through the internet in a shorter period of time. However, internet purchasing is not always successful and simple. Youngsters are frequently duped by fraudulent websites, which provide them with faulty, obsolete products at higher costs and deliver the things after the needed timeframe. Some fraudulent firms may exploit the personal information provided by customers. So, while online shopping has become a more convenient and speedier way of shopping, it still has some fundamental problems that need be addressed, such as different payment alternatives. They should research the reasons why clients should buy from a website rather than a store and try to effectively explain these reasons. It is best to shop for low-cost items online, preferably with a cash-on-delivery option. To purchase more expensive items, we should try to visit standardized shops outside and bargain for the best price. If an issue arises, we can contact the individual from whom you purchased the product. Many things need to be done in India to increase the popularity of online shopping. Only if e-tailers modify their business models and better understand their clients will this be a success. We must always remember to compare costs and look for discounts. Furthermore, it's critical to understand how social media affects youngsters—both the good and bad, including negative body image and cyberbullying, as well as increased connectivity and self-expression.

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