Consumer Preference and Satisfaction towards Online Shopping in Guwahati

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Abstract

In today's world people are facing problems for managing their time for doing normal activities like shopping. Internet has been constantly gaining importance now-a-days. The number of people using internet for their day to day activities also keeps on increasing. The increased use of internet has lead to the growth of e-commerce. Internet shopping or online shopping is the use of technology for purchasing goods or services over the internet. It allows the consumers to directly buy goods from the seller through Internet. Online shopping has grown in popularity over the years, mainly because people find it convenient and they can look at the websites of online stores and purchase products in comfort from home. By using online shopping people can equally manage their time for shopping as well as for other work. The number of online shoppers from various districts of Assam has been increased at a steady rate. In the present study the researcher has made an attempt to analyse the preference and satisfaction of the consumers towards online shopping in Guwahati city. For the purpose of the study six well known online shopping portals e.g. Flipkart, Amazon, Myntra, Paytm, Snapdeal and ShopClues are selected.

Keywords: Online Shopping, Consumer Preference, Consumer Satisfaction, Index, Online Retailers.

Introduction:

Now a day's people are getting busy with their own work and they find it difficult to manage their time for doing activities like shopping. Internet has been constantly gaining importance now-a-days. The user of internet for doing day to day activities also keeps on increasing. People Most of their domestic works are now done online. Few examples are electricity payments, mobile bill, taxes, insurance payments through online, etc. The increased use of internet has lead to the growth of e-commerce. Internet shopping or online shopping is the use of technology for purchasing goods or services over the internet. It facilitates the consumers to make purchases through internet. The popularity of online

shopping has grown over the years, mainly because people find it convenient to search the websites of online stores and purchase products from home or work place. The use of online shopping helps people to equally manage their time for shopping and other work.

The online purchase behaviour is similar to traditional shopping behaviour of consumers. Online purchase behaviour of consumers consists of five steps. For instance, consumer recognize the need for buying some product, then refers to the internet to buy online and start to search for the information and look for all the alternatives and finally make a purchase which best fits to their needs (Liang and Lai 2000).

People are more attracted towards online shopping instead of traditional shopping. Online retailers have bright prospects in India the due to the fast growth of internet users. Indian e-commerce industry has been growing at a very fast rate during the last few years. According to Indian online retail market forecast and opportunities, India will witness changing shopping trends in the next few years. India is set to become the third largest nation of internet user in the next 2 years itself. North-East India is fast taking to online shopping. A study conducted by a popular online shopping portal in Guwahati highlighted that there is a growing prominence of electronic shopping among the youth. The study ranked Guwahati 11th among the top 15 cities in India for online shopping. The number of online shoppers from various districts of Assam has been increased at a steady rate. Therefore, the retailers need to carefully analyse the consumer preference towards the online shopping and take wise decision for spending money in online retailing.

The present paper tries to analyse the consumer preference and satisfaction towards online shopping in Guwahati city. For the purpose of the study six well known online shopping portals e.g. Flipkart, Amazon, Myntra, Paytm, Snapdeal and ShopClues are selected.

Conceptual Framework:

Development of internet in the recent years and due to the easy accessibility of internet usage there is an upward trend of the e-commerce industry. The UCLA Communication Policy (2001) stated that consumers are driven towards online shopping because they find it easy to access internet and hence apart from Email and Web Browsing, online shopping is also becoming popular among the internet users. AC Nielsen Report on Global Consumer Attitudes towards Online Shopping, (2005) identified Books, Airline Tickets, Clothing, Shoes, Video Games and Other Electronic Products as the most accepted items purchased from the online portals.

The retailers need to be aware of the preferences and concerns that drive the online shoppers so that they can grow their online retail business. Preferences for online shopping among consumers may vary from product to product, person to person, their experiences gained while shopping online, etc. So, this research aims at understanding the preference of online shopping of both genders and different age groups at Guwahati who are already users of internet and also aware of online shopping.

Review of Literature:

Mishra (2007) in her study "Consumers Attitude towards Online Shopping for clothing" examines the demographic characteristics of online consumers and their attitude towards online shopping behaviour for clothing. The study was based on a sample of 200 internet users in NCR Delhi. The analysis showed that city and sex do not affect consumers' attitude but age and income indicates a significant association. Convenience and technological advancement played a major role in online shopping. The study concluded that consumers have positive attitude towards online shopping but they have low attitude towards purchase of clothes over online.

Hooda and Aggarwal (2012) examined the attributes of consumer behaviour and the relationship among these attributes. They showed that the consumers of different age group find e-shopping more convenient and time saving and prefer credit card as the convenient mode of payment. The suggested the online trading companies to build brand awareness, advertising of web-products and services to grow in the long run.

Sinha and Kim (2012) identified convenience risk is the only factor that influence the Indian Consumers' online buying behaviour. But gender wise male consumers are more concerned towards perceived risk while the female

consumers are more concerned about convenience risk. They also showed that most of the online shopping consumers are in the age group of 40-49 years.

Kumar (2013) in his study tried to show the role of perceived risk in online consumer behaviour of youth. The study showed that consumer's perception of risk is affected by personal characteristics of the consumers and perception of risk varies across people, across products and across situation. Different types of risks perceived by the consumers in online shopping are classified into two types i.e. product risk and process risk. Prospect of online shopping in India is huge due to the big size of youth population. The study suggests the retailers to point out the risks perceived by consumers and try to come up with the some solutions.

Banu et al. (2014) in their study tried to investigate the determinants of online purchase intension among the consumers. The findings showed that there is no significant association between preferable products of the respondents and their overall shopping preference. Again, there is no significant difference between gender and their overall online shopping preferences. The study concluded that delivery time, reputation of the company, proper description of the products, security are the important factors that influence the consumers to shop online.

Bhatt (2014) in his paper stated that consumers use internet to buy the product online and also to compare prices of products. Product features and the after sale service facilities to be provided by the particular website. The Indian consumers' attitude has been changed with the change in time and they find online shopping very comfortable. Convenience sampling technique was used in the. The researcher has identified information, perceived usefulness, perceived enjoyment, security and privacy as five dominant factors that influence consumer perception on online shopping.

Malviya (2014) tried to determine the factors influence the perception of youth towards online shopping. The study was based on a sample of 157 respondents. The study indentified six factors web portal quality, web portal ease to use, security and other policy, clear payment and delivery, pre and post sales services and trust on web portal that influence the perception of youth and all these factors have named as YPWP (Youth Perce4tion for Web Portal).

Sharma et al. (2014) highlighted that the Indian customers are also getting addicted to the online shopping. The young population may contribute substantially to the growth of online shopping in India as they are the biggest attraction of the online shopping industry. The study suggested that the e-stores can boost the demand of the products and services by improving the after sales services, providing more secured payment options and timely delivery of the goods.

Singh (2014) in his paper examined the online buying behaviour of consumer's in relation to flipcart.com. The study was conducted in Lucknow city with a sample size of 40 consumers of flipcart. Most of the consumers prefer flipcart to shop online due to the reliability of the site, attractive prices and discounts given by it. The study concluded that online shopping is more popular among the youngsters and its future in India is very bright.

Arora and Dengra (2015) in their study "Attraction of consumers towards online shopping in Indore- A descriptive Study" tried to investigate the factors influencing people towards online shopping particularly in Indore. They also tried to find out which category of people prefers online shopping more. They identified time saving, cost saving, large variety of products, 24x7 shopping facilities, attractive gifts and discounts are the factors that attracts customers towards online shopping. Some people hesitate to shop online due to delay in delivery process, lack of sufficient information about the product and lack of privacy. The present study concluded that business class people are more interested in purchasing product online and they are influenced more by it.

Rationale of the Study:

In the face of changing demand and behaviour patterns of online purchasers, companies need to determine the key drivers that motivate online transactions. The present study aims to examine the consumer preference towards online shopping and the factors influencing them towards it. It has been established that significant work on Assam in general and Guwahati in particular has not been conducted which encouraged the present researcher to venture upon the present topic to uncover the preference given on on-line

shopping. Taking this as a grey area of research the present work has been pursued. This research can also help the retailers who are planning to start their online business in this modern era.

Scope of the Study:

The researcher in this study has made an attempt to determine the consumer preference towards online shopping in Guwahati. The study also focuses on identifying the factors influence the consumers to shop online. The other areas the researcher has tried to cover are the most preferred online shopping websites. The products preferred by the consumers to buy online is also tried to find out. The scope of the study is confined only to the consumers from different areas of Guwahati who use online shopping. The time frame taken for the study is 6 months (1st June, 2020 – 30th November, 2020).

Objectives:

The present study is carried on keeping in mind the following objectives:-

• To identify the factors govern the online purchase decision of the consumers.

• To study about the preferred category of the products of the online shopping consumers.

• To know about the most preferred online shopping website among the selected websites.

• To analyse the overall consumer satisfaction towards online shopping.

Research Questions:

Based on the reviews and the objectives set for the study, the present study tries to find solutions to the following research questions:-

(1) Whether there is any difference between the gender of the respondents and their online shopping preference?

(2) Whether there is any difference between the age of the respondents and their online shopping preference?

Methodology:

The methodology adopted for the survey of this study is summarized below:-

The research design for the present study is descriptive and analytical in nature. The universe of the study will be those people who use online shopping in Guwahati. As there is no statistics available from where the researcher could be able to know the number of consumers using online shopping in Guwahati, sample survey was conducted for the purpose of the study. For the intention to complete the research project, the researcher had deployed Convenience Sampling and a sample size of 250 respondents have been randomly selected from different parts of the city comprising 125 consumers from residential area and other 125 from market area.

Table 1: Showing Distribution of Sample

Areas	No. of Sample
Residential Area (Panjabari, Chandmari, Kharghuli, Bharalumukh & Maligaon)	125
Business Area (Ganeshguri, Bhangagarh, Paltan Bazar, Fancy Bazar and Adabari)	125
Total sample	250

(Source: Primary Data)

But out of 250 respondents 200 of them returned the complete filled up questionnaire in time. So the analysis is done on the basis of 200 samples. In the present study, the researcher has used both primary and secondary sources for data collection. Primary data has been collected from the respondents through a questionnaire which consists of both open-ended and close-ended questions and informal interviews were also conducted to get some useful information. Secondary data has been collected from various published sources which include journals, magazines, newspapers, books. Some relevant websites were also searched for collection of secondary source of data.

The tabulated data are analysed and interpreted by using statistical tools like Simple Percentage Method. Ranking Method is also used to analyse the data. The researcher has also applied Impact Index Method to analyse the satisfaction of the consumers as well as the research questions.

$$Index \quad \frac{R_iW_i}{M_i} \quad 100$$

Where, Ri Wi represents Weighted Score

Mi represents Maximum Weight

Discussion and Analysis:

The collected data are analysed and interpreted in the following manner:-

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The demographic profile of the respondents is analysed below-

Table 2:- Showing the Demography of the Respondents

Demography	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	110	55
	Female	90	45
	Transgender	Nil	Nil
Age	Below 25 years	46	23
	25-50 years	120	60
	Above 50 years	34	17

(Source: Survey Questionnaire)

Interpretation:

The above table shows that out of 200 respondents, 110 (i.e. 55%) are male and 90 (45%) are female. The respondents belong to Below 25 years is 46 (23%), between 25 – 50 Years is 120 (i.e. 60) and above 50 years is 34 (i.e. 17%).

Analysis of Consumer Preference towards Online Shopping:

In this part the responses of the consumers regarding their preference for online shopping are analysed and interpreted:

Table 3:- Frequency of Use of Online Shopping

Use of online shopping	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Weekly	20	10
Monthly	50	25
Quarterly	**80**	**40**
Half-yearly	36	18
Yearly	14	7
Total	200	100

(Source: Survey Questionnaire)

Interpretation:

The above table shows that 20 (i.e. 10%) of the respondents use online shopping weekly, 50 (i.e. 25%) of the respondents use online shopping monthly, 80 (i.e. 40%) of the respondents use it quarterly, 36 (i.e. 18%) use half-yearly and the other 14 (i.e. 7%) use online shopping services once in a year.

Table 4:- Showing Response Regarding the Factors Influences to Shop Online

Factors	Responses						Total
	Rank						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Ease of use	40	**46**	36	30	21	27	200
Convenience	**60**	32	24	28	29	27	200
Product Availability	38	34	**50**	28	23	27	200
Price Comparison	25	36	33	**46**	32	28	200
Mode of Payment	29	20	24	38	**56**	33	200
Advertising	18	22	27	36	46	**51**	200

(Source: Survey Questionnaire)

Interpretation:

While analysing the factors that influence the respondents to shop online on the basis of the ranks given by them it has been found that 46 respondents has marked as Rank 2 for Ease of Use, 60 respondents has marked as Rank 1 for Convenience, product availability is marked as rank 3 by 50 respondents, 46 respondents has marked as rank 4 for price comparison, 56 of the respondents has marked as rank 5 for mode of payment and 51 respondents has marked as rank 6 for advertisement.

From the above analysis it can be interpreted that the factors that influence the consumers towards online shopping as per the rank given by them are Rank 1 for Convenience, Rank 2 for Ease of Use , Rank 3 for Product availability , Rank 4 for Price Comparison , Rank 5 for Mode of Payment and Rank 6 for Advertisement.

Table 5:- Showing Perception of Consumers Regarding the Benefits of Shopping Online

Benefits	Responses						Total
	Rank						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Discounts & Offers	49	**63**	32	25	21	10	200
Time Saving	25	29	**56**	33	30	27	200
Home Delivery	30	50	36	28	**40**	16	200
Reasonable Price	**65**	38	34	29	15	19	200
All time Services	25	48	49	**45**	17	6	200
Cash on Delivery	28	22	30	34	36	**50**	200

(Source: Survey Questionnaire)

Interpretation:

The benefits of online shopping as per the perception of the respondents are tabulated in the above table i.e. Table 5. From the above table it has been found that the maximum no of respondents i.e. 65 has marked as Rank 1 for Reasonable Price, 63 respondents has marked as Rank 2 for Discounts and Offers, 56 respondents has marked as Rank 3 for Less Time requirement, 45 respondents has marked as Rank 4 for All time Services, 40 respondents has marked as Rank 5 for Home delivery and 50 respondents has marked as Rank 6 for Cash on Delivery.

It can be further analysed that the maximum number of respondents prefer to shop online because of Reasonable Price of products and Discounts & Offers.

Table 6:- Showing Responses Regarding the Product Preferred to Purchase from Online Stores

Products	Responses Rank						Total
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	
Fashion	**69**	43	32	25	21	10	200
Sports & Fitness	25	29	26	33	30	**57**	200
Home & Appliances	30	30	46	28	**50**	16	200
Books	45	38	**54**	29	15	19	200
Electronics	25	48	49	**45**	17	6	200
Health & Beauty	48	**52**	30	24	26	20	200

(Source: Survey Questionnaire)

Interpretation:

The above table shows that 69 respondents rank 1 for Fashion Products, 52 respondents rank 2 for Health & Beauty products, 54 respondents rank 3 for Books, 45 respondents rank 4 for Electronics products, rank 5 is for Home & Appliances and 57 respondents rank 6 for Sports & Fitness products.

It can be interpreted that Fashion, Health & Beauty, Books are the products mainly preferred by the consumers to purchase from the online stores.

Table 7:- Showing Preferred Mode of Payment of the Consumers

Payment Mode	No of respondents	
	Frequency	**Percentage (%)**
Net Banking	20	10
Card Payment	44	22
Cash on Delivery	80	40
Unified Payment Interface (UPI)	56	28
Total	200	100

(Source: Survey Questionnaire)

Interpretation:

From the above table it is observed that 20 (i.e. 10%) of the respondents prefer Net Banking, 44 (i.e. 22%) of the respondents prefer Card Payment, 80 (i.e. 40%) of the respondents prefer Cash on Delivery and the other 56 (i.e. 28%) prefer UPI for making payment.

It has been further observed from the above analysis that Cash on Delivery, UPI, Card Payment are the preferred mode of payment of the consumers.

Table 8:- Showing Preferred Online Shopping Portals

Online Portals	Rank						Total
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	
Flipcart	42	**54**	32	30	27	15	200
Myntra	40	27	**45**	36	28	24	200
Snapdeal	30	37	31	22	**43**	37	200
Amazon	**50**	45	39	27	23	16	200
Paytm	27	31	35	**48**	33	26	200
ShopClues	20	28	26	39	41	**46**	200

(Source: Survey Questionnaire)

Interpretation:

The responses of the consumers regarding their preferred online shopping sites are tabulated in Table 8 While analysing the responses of the consumers regarding their preferred shopping sites, it has been found that Flipcart is marked as Rank 2 by 54 respondents, Myntra is marked as Rank 3 by 45 respondents, Snapdeal is marked as Rank 5 by 43 respondents, Amazon is marked as Rank 1 by 50 respondents, Paytm is marked as Rank 4 by 48 respondents and ShopClues is marked as Rank 6 by 46 respondents.

It can further also be analysed that Amazon, Flipcart and Myntra are the most preferred online shopping portals for the consumers.

Table 9:- Showing Consumer Satisfaction towards Online Shopping

Responses	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied	Total
Weight (W_i)	5	4	3	2	1	
No. of respondents (R_i)	40	60	46	36	18	200
Weighted Score ($\sum R_i W_i$)	200	240	138	72	18	668

(Source: Survey Questionnaire)

Estimated Ranges of Index:

Less than 20% = Highly Dissatisfied, Between 20% - 40% = Dissatisfied, Between 40% - 60% = Moderately Satisfied, Between 60% - 80% = Satisfied, Above 80% = Highly Satisfied.

Maximum Weight (Mi) = Maximum Score X Total Number of Respondents

$$= 5 \times 200$$

$$= 1000$$

$$Index = \frac{\sum R_i W_i}{M_i} \times 100$$

$$= \frac{668}{1000} \times 100 \qquad\qquad = 65.09\%$$

The impact index calculated from Table 9 is 66.80% which falls into the category of 60% - 80%. Therefore, it can be interpreted from the above analysis that the consumers are satisfied with online shopping.

Inferences on Research Questions:

Research Question 1:

Whether there is any difference between the gender of the respondents and their online shopping preference?

Table 10:- Showing Overall Preference of the both Male & Female Respondents towards Online Shopping

Category	Responses	Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very Low	Total
Male	Weight (W_i)	5	4	3	2	1	
	No. of respondents (R_i)	10	46	24	22	8	110
	Weighted Score ($R_i W_i$)	50	184	72	44	8	358
Female	Weight (W_i)	5	4	3	2	1	
	No. of respondents (R_i)	12	28	30	14	6	90
	Weighted Score ($R_i W_i$)	60	112	90	28	6	296

(Source: Survey Questionnaire)

Estimated Ranges of Index:

0% - 20% = Very Low; 20% - 40% = Low; 40% - 60% = Moderate;

60% - 80% = High; 80% - 100% = Very High

For Male:

Maximum Weight (Mi) = Maximum Score X Total Number of Respondents

$$= 5 \times 110$$

$$= 550$$

$$Index = \frac{\sum R_i W_i}{M_i} \times 100$$

$$= \frac{358}{550} \times 100$$

$$= 65.09\%$$

For Female:

Maximum Weight (Mi) = Maximum Score X Total Number of Respondents

$$= 5 \times 90$$

$$= 450$$

$$Index = \frac{\sum R_i W_i}{M_i} \times 100$$

$$= \frac{296}{450} \times 100$$

$$= 65.77\%$$

The impact index for male respondents is 65.09% which and the impact index for female respondents is 65.77%. Both indexes belong to the category of 60% - 80%. Therefore, it can be interpreted that the overall consumer preference towards online shopping of both male and female respondents is high.

Hence, it can be interpreted that there is no significant difference between the gender of the respondents and their online shopping preference.

Research Question 2:

Whether there is any difference between the age of the respondents and their online shopping preference?

To answer this research question the respondents are classified into two categories i.e. Respondents aged below 50 years and respondents aged above 50 years.

Table 11:- Showing overall preference towards online shopping on the basis of age of the respondents

Age category	Responses	Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very Low	Total
Below 50 years	Weight (W_i)	5	4	3	2	1	
	No. of respondents (R_i)	30	69	29	28	10	166
	Weighted Score ($R_i W_i$)	150	276	87	56	10	579
Above 50 years	Weight (W_i)	5	4	3	2	1	
	No. of respondents (R_i)	2	5	18	5	4	34
	Weighted Score ($R_i W_i$)	10	20	54	10	4	98

(Source: Survey Questionnaire)

Estimated Ranges of Index:

0% - 20% = Very Low   20% - 40% = Low   40% - 60% = Moderate

60% - 80% = High   80% - 100% = Very High

For Age group below 50 years

Maximum Weight (Mi) = Maximum Score X Total Number of Respondents

$$= 5 \times 166$$

$$= 880$$

$$Index = \frac{\sum R_i W_i}{M_i} \times 100$$

$$= \frac{579}{880} \times 100$$

$$= 65.79\%$$

For Age group above 50 years

Maximum Weight (Mi) = Maximum Score X Total Number of Respondents

$$= 5 \text{ X } 34$$
$$= 170$$

$$Index = \frac{\sum R_i W_i}{M_i} \times 100$$

$$= \frac{98}{170} \times 100 \qquad = 57.65\%$$

The impact index for respondents belonging to age group of below 50 years calculated from Table 11 is 65.79% which belongs to the fourth category i.e. 60% - 80%. The impact index for respondents belonging to age group of Above 50 years calculated from Table 11 is 57.65% which belongs to the third category i.e. 40% - 60%. Therefore, it can be interpreted from the above analysis that the respondents aged less than 50 years have high preference towards online shopping and the respondents aged more than 50 years have moderate preference towards online shopping.

Further, it can be interpreted that there is a significant difference between the age of the respondents and their online shopping preference.

Conclusion:

From the above discussion it has been found that the most of the consumers (40%) make purchase from the online stores on quarterly basis. The major factors that influence the consumers towards online shopping are Convenience, Ease of Use, Product Availability, Price Comparison, Mode of Payment and Advertisement. The products that the consumers prefer to purchase from the online stores includes Fashion products (Cloths, Footwear, Watches, etc.), Health & Beauty, Books, Electronic products (including mobile phones). Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra, Snapdeal are the top four preferred online shopping stores of consumers in Guwahati. The consumers are highly satisfied with their online shopping experience. Both male and female consumers equally prefer online shopping but from the age point of view there is a significant difference between the age of the respondents and their online shopping preference. So it can be concluded that the online

retailers have a bright prospect in Guwahati. They have to understand the need of the consumers and try to make availability of these products on their online portals.

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