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How pandemic has influenced the purchasing behaviour of consumers: With special reference to online shopping

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Abstract---The world will never forget about the COVID-19 Pandemic which affected the whole world till now. The pandemic has influenced human life in each and every field, the world faced a complete lock down and the condition ruined the economy, global financial crisis, unemployment, and closing of schools and colleges. During pandemic people are afraid of offline shopping this attracts the attention of consumers to shop online and satisfy their needs. The study focuses on how pandemic has influenced the purchasing behaviour of consumers through online shopping. The objective of the study is to find out how pandemic has affected the online shopping and to measure the factors that will continue to have a positive impact on online shopping growth among customers during pandemic. Random samples of 100 consumers using online shopping have been taken for the study. The study poses some analytical methods such as Percentage analysis, factor analysis, Garrett ranking, chi-square test have been used. Findings of the study will be useful for the consumers to find out the facilities provided by online shopping companies and also helps the companies to overcome the competition by using different strategies to satisfy the consumers. The study imposes that every companies which provides online shopping facilities to concentrate on customer satisfaction and implementing proper strategies to make them more satisfied with their products.

Keywords---pandemic, online shopping, consumers, purchasing behaviour, human life, offline shopping, customer satisfaction, strategies.

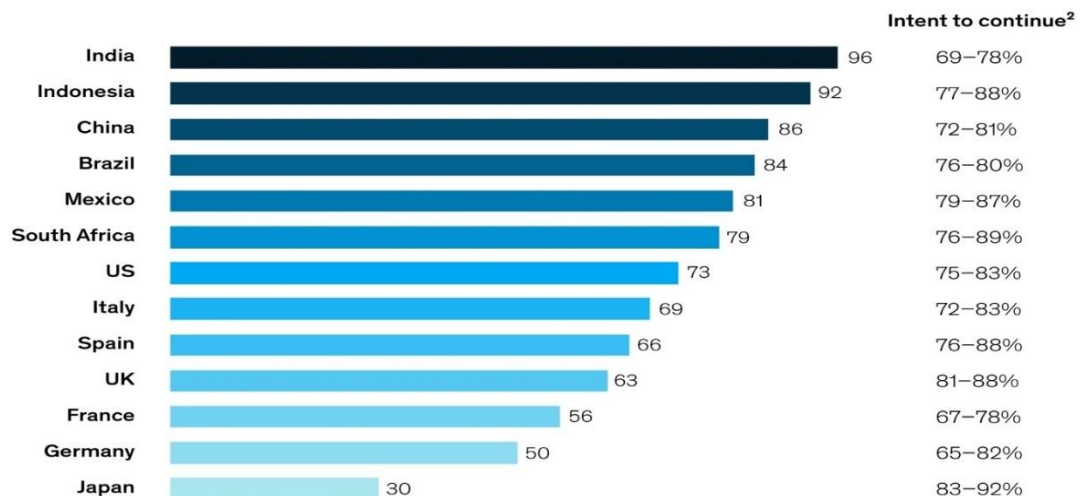
Introduction

The world will never forget about the COVID-19 Pandemic which affected the whole world till now. The pandemic has influenced human life in each and every field, the world faced a complete lock down and the condition ruined the economy, global financial crisis, unemployment, and closing of schools and colleges. The first Outbreak was reported in Wuhan, China in December 2019, it has been detected the highly infectious virus named "CORONAVIRUS" by World Health Organization (WHO). The virus transmitted from human to human and quickly enlarged to community transmission, in that situation more number of infected cases and dead cases has reported frequently. The total number of Coronavirus Cases reported worldwide are 327,199,527 by worldometer (google), and Death cases 5,555,306 with 266,643,715 Recovered cases, in that India has reported 37,122,164 number of cases and 486,094 Death cases with 35,085,72 Recovered cases by worldometer (google).

There's a spectrum of purchasing loyalty exhibited by consumers around the world.

Customers who have tried new shopping behaviors since COVID-19¹

% of respondents



¹Q: "Since the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation started (i.e., in the past ~3 months), which of the following have you done?" The chart excludes % of consumers selected "none of these."

²Q: "Which best describes whether or not you plan to continue with these shopping changes once the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation has subsided?" Possible answers: "will go back to what I did before coronavirus"; "will keep doing both this and what I did before coronavirus"; "will keep doing this and NOT go back to what I did before coronavirus." Intent to continue includes respondents who selected "will keep doing both this and that I did before coronavirus" and "will keep doing this and NOT go back to what I did before coronavirus."

Source: McKinsey & Company COVID-19 Consumer Pulse Surveys, conducted globally September 18–30, 2020

**McKinsey
& Company**

In this situation of increasing COVID cases people afraid of offline shopping, so they decided to switch over from conventional shopping to online shopping, for that they chooses websites and application to shop conveniently. The increasing risk of corona virus made customers to avoid offline shopping this attracts the attention of customers to shop online and satisfy their needs. This imposes that

every companies which provides online shopping facilities to concentrate on customer satisfaction and implementing proper strategies to make them more satisfied with their products. In recent survey companies can attains their targets much faster than expected initially during this pandemic.

Source:-<https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/marketing-and-sales/our-insights/a-global-view-of-how-consumer-behavior-is-changing-amid-covid-19>

Henceforth the pandemic, maximum number of the survey's respondents chooses to shop online frequently and they rely on the sources like internet, applications and websites for information and ratings of products. Consumers in emerging scenario have made the greatest shift to online shopping in recent times, impulses by an accelerates in customers attracting online shopping regardless of possible infections, if they are out of their places. "The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the shift towards a more digital world. The changes we make now will have lasting effects as the world economy begins to recover," said UNCTAD Secretary-General Mukhisa Kituyi.

Review of literature

- Lenka Svajdova "Consumer Behaviour During Pandemic of COVID19" Volume 6, Issue 3, (2021) talks about the current state of affairs which takes place in global markets is mainly effected by the external factor such as the COVID-19 pandemic, political, legislative and economic factors were both the retailers and customers has to accept it. The aim of the study is to identify the changes in customer behaviour which taken place in buying products in day to day life such as clothing, food, electronics, household items during pandemic.
- Maryam Ghasemaghaei, Khaled Hassanein Information & Management 52 (8), 965-981, "Online information quality and consumer satisfaction": The moderating roles of contextual factors–A meta-analysis (2015) Says that IQ and consumer satisfaction is very much important while shopping online.
- JieGao^a ChengZhang^b KeWang^b SulinBa "Understanding online purchase decision making: The effects of unconscious thought, information quality, and information quantity" (2012) says that every customer should have information quality about the product they purchase, but unfortunately most of the online shopping companies will provide limited information about the products. The companies will provide rich information regarding the products to attract customers, so the study gives a new solution by integrating information processing theory and unconscious thought theory. This theory helps the customers to take decisions when shopping online.
- Bharti Aggarwal and Deepa Kapoor "A study on influence of COVID-19 pandemic on customer's online buying behaviour" Volume 1 Issue 2 (2000) shows that customers are very much worried about the pandemic and they were not willing to come out for offline purchasing so they adopted online shopping, this attracts the customers to make internet technology on their side by shopping online . Also the study says that the manufacturer should think about customers safety and health care before delivering their products to them.

Objectives

- To know how pandemic has influenced the purchasing behaviour of consumers.
- To learn which benefits of online purchasing helps the customers to manage the pandemic.
- To measure the factors that will continue to have a positive impact on online shopping growth among customers during pandemic.

Research methodology

The research methodology used for this study is Quantitative research. The sample of 100 consumers using online shopping have been taken for the study. Purposive and Random sampling technique was used for the study to ensure that sample so obtained is customers using online shopping from various places in Chennai city. Data have been collected with the help of a well-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire is made up of three sections – the first section contains demographic details of respondents, the second section contains pandemic and online shopping details, and finally the ranking of benefits of online shopping and factors which have positive impact on online shopping details.

Analytical tools

The analytical tools used for the collected data have been analyzed with the help of statistical techniques to understand the outcomes with reference to objectives and hypothesis. Data processing was carried out with the help of MS Excel and SPSS. The analytical tools applied for the study are,

- Percentage analysis
- Garrett ranking
- Chi-square test
- Factor analysis
- Likert summated scaling technique

Data Analysis and Findings

Table Showing demographic details of the respondents

DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS OF THE RESPONDENTS	MAJORITY FIGURE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Gender	Female	53	53%
Age	20-30	49	49%
Educational qualification	Master degree	40	40%
Occupation	Full-time employment	42	42%
Family monthly income (in rs.)	Less than 20000	36	36%
Frequency of online shopping	Seldom	41	41%
Total spending on online	1000-5000	53	53%

shopping (in rs.)		
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Table showed the demographic details of the respondents. Majority respondents were taken from each demographic details.

Chart Showing Demographic Details Of The Respondents

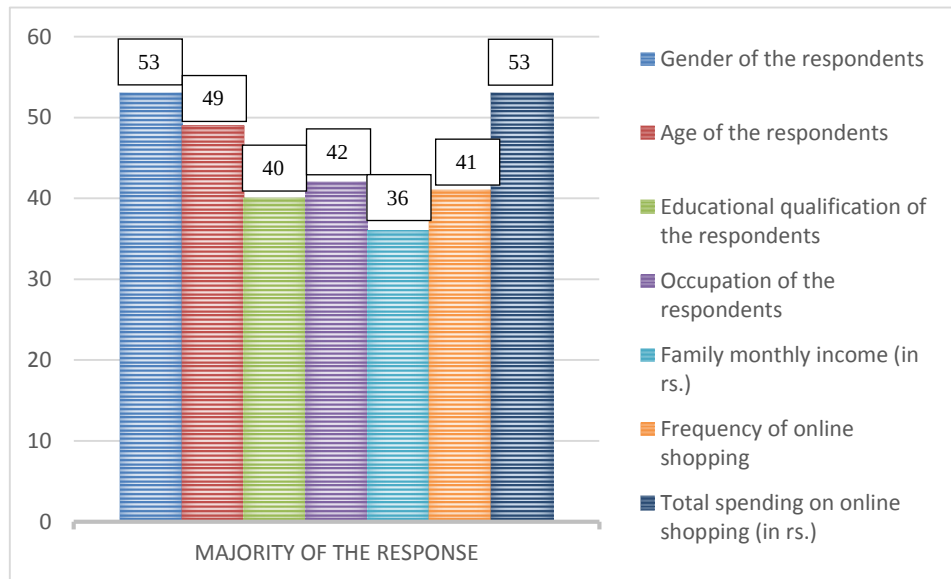


Chart shows the demographic details of the respondents with 53% of Female, 49% in the age group of 20-30, 40% of respondents having their master degree, 42% are full-time employees, 36% of respondents in the income group of less than 20000, 41% of customers using online shopping in seldom, **53%** of respondents spending 1000-5000 through online shopping.

Henry Garrett Ranking Method

Table showing percentage positions and their corresponding Garrett's table value

RANK	$100(R_{ij}-0.5)/5$	Percentage position	Garrett value
1	$100(1-0.5)/5$	10	75
2	$100(2-0.5)/5$	40	60
3	$100(3-0.5)/5$	50	50
4	$100(4-0.5)/5$	70	40
5	$100(5-0.5)/5$	90	25

Table 4.2 showed the percentage position of respecting activities and their Garrett values

Table Showing Benefits Of Online Purchasing Helps The Customers

ACTIVITIES	1st*75	2nd*60	3rd*50	4th*40	5th*25	TOTAL	AVERAGE SCORE=TOTAL/100	RANK
Convenience	1875	960	400	1160	550	4945	49.45	III
Safety	900	1620	500	640	875	4535	45.35	V
Ease to use	1500	1500	2150	320	100	5570	55.70	I
Discounts/Cheaper products	1950	1020	950	960	350	5230	52.30	II
Comparison of products	1275	900	1000	920	625	4720	47.20	IV

Table 4.3 showed the ranking of benefits while purchasing online that helps the customer to manage the pandemic.

Chi – Square Test

Association Between Income and Total Spending on Online Shopping By Customers

Ho: There is no association between income and total spending on online shopping by customers

H1: There is an association between income and total spending on online shopping by customers

Table 4.4 Income of the customers * Total spending on online shopping by customers Cross tabulation

		Total spending on online shopping				Total
		Less than 1000	1000-5000	5000-10000	More than 10000	
Family income	Less than 20000	20	14	2	0	36
	20000-30000	6	19	1	2	28
	30000-40000	1	11	8	0	20
	40000-50000	2	5	4	1	12
	More than 50000	0	4	0	0	4
	Total	29	53	15	3	100

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	40.302(a)	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	41.603	12	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	15.742	1	.000

N of Valid Cases	100		
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a 12 cells (60.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .12.

Since the p-value (0.000) is less than the level of significance (0.05) at 5%, null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. Hence, there is an association between income and total spending on online shopping by customers.

Chi – Square Test

Association Between Gender And Frequency Of Shopping Online By Customers

H₀: There is no association between gender and frequency of online shopping by customers

H₁: There is an association between gender and frequency of online shopping by customers

Table 4.5

Gender of the respondents * How often do you shop online Cross tabulation

	How often do you shop online			Total
	Very often	Seldom	Not often	
Gender Male	14	20	13	47
Female	15	21	17	53
Total	29	41	30	100

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	0.233(a)	2	0.890
Likelihood Ratio	0.234	2	0.890
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.146	1	0.703
N of Valid Cases	100		

a 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 13.63.

Since the p-value (0.890) is greater than the level of significance (0.05) at 5%, null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted. Hence there is no association between gender and frequency of online shopping by customers.

Factor Analysis

Table 4.6 Showing Kmo And Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.767
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-square Df Sig.	448.258 45 .000

From the table 4.6, it is clear that the value of KMO 0.767 is higher than the minimum value prescribed by Kaiser. This proves sample adequacy. Hence, the KMO Test supports Factor Analysis.

Table 4.7 Shows The Factor Analysis

S.NO	FACTOR NAME	VARIABLES	VARIANCE
1.	BENEFICIARY FACTORS	[Easier than ever to browse and shop online] [Customization and Flexibility] [Preferred products or services] [Convenience and Time saving] [Expectations of consumers] [Safety measures by online websites]	0.660 0.793 0.813 0.877 0.736 0.567
	Total		4.446
2.	CONGENIAL FACTORS	[New shopping habits] [The fear of COVID-19 will not disappear overnight] [Implementing a digital customer feedback program.]	0.833 0.702 0.804
	Total		2.339
3.	ACCESSIBLE FACTORS	[Items may be scarce in physical stores will be available on online]	0.855
	Total		0.855
Total		10 Variables	7.640

Table 4.7 showed the extraction of all the 10 Variables and how these are loaded on "Three factors". The % of total variance is 71.179. These three factors are named below.

Table 4.8 Naming Of Factors

S.NO	FACTORS	OVERALL SAMPLE (N=100)
Factor 1	BENEFICIARY FACTORS	4.446
Factor 2	CONGENIAL FACTORS	2.339
Factor 3	ACCESSIBLE FACTOR	0.855

Likert Summated Scaling Technique

Table 4.9 Likert Scaling Analysis For The Beneficiary Factors

S.N O	BENEFICIARY FACTORS	SA (5)	A (4)	N (3)	D A (2)	SD A (1)	TOTAL	MEAN VALUES TOTAL/100	MEAN RANK
1.	Easier than to browse and shop online	170	204	33	06	01	414	4.14	4
2.	Customization and flexibility	195	184	30	08	01	418	4.18	3
3.	Preferred products and services	190	196	27	04	02	419	4.19	2
4.	Convenience and time saving	250	164	21	02	01	438	4.38	1
5.	Expectations of consumers	80	180	108	04	01	373	3.73	5
6.	Safety measures by online websites	65	152	138	00	03	358	3.58	6

Likert Summated Scaling = Total/Number Of Factors

$$= 24.20/6 = 4.033$$

Table 4.9 showed the beneficiary factors is ranked by using likert summated scaling technique and it's shows the convenience and time saving given has (rank 1) based on their mean values followed by other factors.

Suggestions

- Though online shopping has increased, till now some of the customers are not fully aware of online shopping and their gimmicks, so customers should gain knowledge about online shopping through internet and magazines.
- Online shopping companies should concentrate on customers satisfaction by providing worthy product for money and to use them.
- Delivery is the main problems in online shopping, some products are not available on time so, companies doing online business should use some transport support/ tracking to search the customers on time with their products.

- Updating technology skills will be more helpful for online business to attract customers.

Conclusion

We see the COVID-19 pandemic plays a vital role in every human beings life, in this situation people has to survive so, they switched to shop through online. In that case during pandemic online shopping has increased among customers randomly, it is very much important to be safe and secure while such situation is happening in the world. People are very much panicked in this time so they decided to make use of online shopping instead of going to shop. They adopted online shopping for their convenience, time saving and safety. The COVID-19 changed the attitude of customers towards online shopping and now it's getting better day by day. Customers, manufacturer, and retailers are very much happy in their own ways during pandemic.

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