

Impact of Internet on Customers' Buying Behavior: A review

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Abstract

Time is moving at a faster pace with advent of new technologies daily. Economic prosperity, increased in family earning, raise in standard of living have done a great contribution in changes in market scenario. Higher education, increased income level, economic growth and technological advancement all have opened new opportunities and compelled marketer to change their traditional strategy. Buying behavior of both men and women are different due to increase in disposable income and technological advancement. This article talks about difference in buying behavior of men and women both working and non-working while doing online shopping. Perception of women for online marketer on factors like reliability, correct product delivery in proper condition, faith in payment etc is discussed. Different motivating factors which motivate to go online will be discussed. Women role is changing as family member and as an individual, previously women were interested only in satisfying family needs and now they give importance to their own needs also at the time of shopping.

Keywords: internet marketing, e-tailing.

Introduction

From the era of brick and mortar we have entered in to era of click. One can chat, purchase and sell a product from anywhere and anytime with a magic of single click. Time is moving at a faster pace with advent of new technologies daily. Human life has become so easy and cozy now which they did not have even thought of. Time has changed customers whole purchasing pattern, entire shopping pattern of family has changed. Products which were purchased previously for whole family and consumed jointly are now purchased independently as per individual choice. Economic prosperity, increased in family earning, raise in standard of living have done a great contribution in changes in market scenario. Higher education, increased income level, economic growth and technological advancement all have opened new opportunities and compelled marketer to change their traditional strategy.

In a family both male and female are earning have disposable income to spend on their own individual requirements. Men and women individual earning have changed their identity from family person to individual person. Men have started purchasing product for individual needs similarly women have started giving importance to their own individual requirements other than family need. When more numbers of family members are earning they don't have time to do shopping this has compelled marketer to provide a platform from where customers can purchase product at their own convenience without time and place limitation and due to this new era of marketing arises which is today known as e-marketing. Internet marketing allows customers to access product with a single touch. It offers products which are available worldwide. Customers now get lots of alternatives during shopping. This new era of marketing has made tremendous changes in whole market. Each and every organization is making their presence online.

Hi-tech smart phones have brought internet marketing on mobile screen. Men and women cannot imagine their lives without mobiles. They do their shopping on mobile phone. Internet marketers like Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra, Shopclues, Snapdeal etc. have made customers life easy by providing product at door step of customers. Customers don't have to move from their home to do shopping. Payment options like online and offline payments have also contributed a lot in growth of this type of marketers.

Literature review

Pamela Alreck and Robert B. Settle their paper "Gender effects on Internet, catalogue and store shopping", have concluded that there are differences in internet usage among men and women. Men are found to be more exposed to the internet as compared to women. Women have been categorized to both working and non-working women, non-working women are found to be less exposed to internet as compared to working. They have also mentioned that working women are more exposed to internet in their office only. Men are more inclined towards online shopping as they find it more convenient and time saving as compare. Gender gap in shopping give more challenges to the retailers to devise their strategies to attract both at the same time. Marketers catering to both the genders did not find it possible to devise economical strategies as same strategy will not work for both. Gender gap is a complicating factor for consumer marketers, it is suggested by the authors to recognize the gender differences and devise strategy accordingly rather than ignoring them. Without identifying gender differences and making false assumption that single strategy fits all will not be fruitful.

Ronald E. Goldsmith and Eileen Bridges in their article E-Tailing vs. Retailing: Using Attitudes to Predict Online Buying Behavior had researched that online buyer's shows positive attitude towards online shopping as compare to non-buyers. During their research they found that online buyers were more satisfied and confident from their online shopping. Non-buyers were not interested and find online buying as risky project. Non-buyers were ready to stand in queue to purchase books but they didn't want to avail online facility to purchase books online by single click while sitting in their home. Demographic studies shows that men were more confident and find internet as less risky during online shopping as compare to woman. Older students' shows positive attitude towards online shopping as compare to young students. Research findings shows that consumer attitude influences consumer behavior. Different attitude of men shows different buying behavior than women. They had suggested that online retailers should study consumer needs and try to provide more product range. Providing secure online transaction should be top priority of online marketer to increase sales and customer faith in them. In their study they found that students go online because of ease and time saving.

Enrique Bigne, Carla Ruiz and Silvia Sanz in their article "The impact of internet user shopping patterns and demographics on consumer mobile buying behavior" have emphasized on mobile shopping and how mobile has become very important part of life within such a short time span. They conducted their study on 2104 Spanish internet users and found that mobile shoppers' behavior can be predicted on the basis of age, social class and shopping behavior pattern. In coming future internet shopping will be more form mobile as compare to fixed network devices. Wireless internet through mobile is now leading the world in terms of communication and in different business activities. Online transactions are done for bill payment (electricity, phones), ticket booking (railway and airplane), hotel reservation etc are now done through mobiles. Mobile is now not only playing the role means of communication but also it has become shopping device. In future combination of internet with other methods like mobile and television will lead the whole world market.

Saadia Nasir, Prakash Vel and Hafsa Mateen in their article "Social media and buying behaviour of women in Pakistan towards the purchase of textile garments" have discussed that Pakistani fashion industry is in booming stage. New designer dresses businesses are gaining market share. Designer and branded dresses are considered as status symbol. With all these social networking sites are also gaining

momentum among women. In their research they found that word of mouth plays major role in shopping as compare to social networking. Major reason is Pakistani women have more faith on their family and friend rather than marketing promotional activities. Reach of social media is more but its effect is not more in purchasing pattern. In their research they found positive correlation between household income and purchasing behavior and no correlation between income and designer cloth preference. During their research they found that lower income group is also interested in buying designer clothes.

“A qualitative research to explore the purchase behavior determinants of middle-aged women” research work of Duygu Aydin Unal, Onur Dirlik and Pelin Arsezen Otamis. In their research they found that socio-cultural factors influence buying behavior of Turkish women. In turkey it is assumed that mothers to become role model of her children, should behave properly and coordinates in household expenses. All these influence her not to go for expensive shopping for her selves. She wants to teach her children how to be economical to run house smoothly. During interview of divorced women they found that they were restricted by their husband and husband’s family members regarding their clothing styles when they were married. Widowed woman said that due to social pressure they cannot go for colorful clothing and other designer dresses. Their research says that shopping behavior of middle-aged Turkish women depends on major three criteria other than her individual choice, first her status in the family then position in the society and lastly her role in special areas. In the interview many women told that they purchase clothes on discount period to play the role of economical family member. Working women purchases clothes as per their office requirement and married women wear clothes to maintain their husband status in the society. Housewives do their shopping to reflect their husband’s profession in the society.

Isabel J. Grant and Graeme R. Stephen in their article “Communicating culture: An examination of the buying behaviour of ‘tweenage’ girls and the key societal communicating factors influencing the buying process of fashion clothing” have explained that now a day’s teenage girls are more aware of branded products. They are much more brand consciousness. Research was done on teenage girls of one state school and one private school. Findings are that both are equally aware of all the famous branded clothes available in the market. Both groups are almost same in their buying behavior, attitudes and brand preferences. They believe branded clothes reflect their personality and frame their image in their society. Being teenage girls they are more aware of brand, design and style which suit their personality. Respondents were ready to pay a premium price for branded products to look cool in their peer group. They do not take much time in taking decision. When they had to purchase dress for some special occasion they take approval of their parents as decision making become more complex for them. The major drawback of this research was less number of respondents which give further scope for research in this field.

Meng-Shan Sharon Wu, Isabella Chaney, Cheng-Hao Steve Chen, Bang Nguyen, T.C. Melewar their article on "Luxury fashion brands: Factors influencing young female consumers' luxury fashion purchasing in Taiwan" have explained impact of luxury brands on female. They took interview of young females and concluded that to maintain social status in society they go for luxury items. Female are highly involved in luxurious fashionable items and it is now serious matter of discussion with their friends and family members. Despite of limited income female have shown their higher interest in luxurious brand. They believe that such purchase decision will last long and will be of superior quality as compare to less luxury items. Female get inspired from celebrities. Friends and society play vital role in purchasing these products. It's a matter of discussion among their group and it give them pleasure to discuss on luxurious brand. To attract this segment marketer should follow both traditional as well as new social media marketing methods.

Jayendra Sinha and Jiyeon Kim in their article “Factors affecting Indian consumers' online buying behavior” have described about Indian online market. Growing economy of India has become a

lucrative market for global brands. They have studied factors which effects online buying like risk (financial, security etc.), return policy, non-delivery etc. In their research they found that males are more technology savvy than females and more interested in online shopping.

“An exploration of how mature women buy clothing: empirical insights and a model” by Maria Holmlund, Anne Hagman and Pia Polska have described role of mature women buying behavior especially clothing. Elements which are studied during their research are clothing need, fashion sense, preference of clothing, retailer and brand preference, way of doing shopping and price sensitivity. They have suggested strategies to the marketer to entice this segment for increasing market share.

Stella Minahan and Patricia Huddleston their article on “Shopping with mum – mother and daughter consumer socialization”, have described mother and daughter relationship and how it affects their decisions. Marketers should give importance to formulate strategies as mother takes bulk buying decision about family and daughter are next generation shoppers. In their study they found daughters are interested in doing shopping with their mother as they are interested in spending quality time with their mother, full faith on mother decisions and they also bank on their mother.

Conclusion:

Online marketing is new era of marketing which came with challenges as well as opportunities. After reviewing above articles it can be concluded that advancement in technologies has taken this market into new marketing arena. Economic prosperity has raised both income and standard of living of people. This has led people to start thinking about themselves, identify their own individual needs other than family needs. Internet marketing has bought whole world market in a single platform. More varieties of products are available to customers with help of internet. Men and women both have shown their interest on online shopping. Men do more online shopping as compare women and they are found more confident during shopping. Women hesitate in online payment; cash on delivery has helped women in doing online shopping. Working women are more confident in online shopping as compare to non-working women. Working women are more exposed to internet in comparison to non-working women. Women are different now, her shopping pattern has changed. Earlier women were interested only in household items but time has changed them, now they have started giving importance to their own individual needs. This has again open lots of opportunities for new entrants to grow and flourish in this new market segment.

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