

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CONSUMER E-PURCHASING DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

Asha G, Assistant Professor, Seshadripuram Academy of Business Studies, K.S. Town, Bengaluru-560060. Mail id: ashakrishnan75@gmail.com

Lakshmi S, Associate Professor, Seshadripuram Academy of Business Studies, K. S. Town, Bengaluru-560060
Mail id: lakshmishastry2011@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The consumers have to consume various products in their day to day life. The usage of a product depends upon their needs and wants. The consumer is to purchase physically various goods on their decision-making process. But due to the Covid-19 pandemic the online process of purchase change from physical purchasing to e-purchasing. The consumers prefer & select based on e- purchasing behavior, price, brands, retailers, wholesalers, and the company is in the decision- making process. The consumers are particular about the appropriate system of distribution & pricelevel. Therefore, the consumer takes an attention to the price, brand, quality, and quantity & distribution system. This present study is focused on how the customer purchased the goods onlineand to satisfy their needs & wants. The frequency & safety level of e-purchasing during & post Covid-19 pandemic.

Keywords: Buying behavior, Customer satisfaction, safety level, Influencing factor

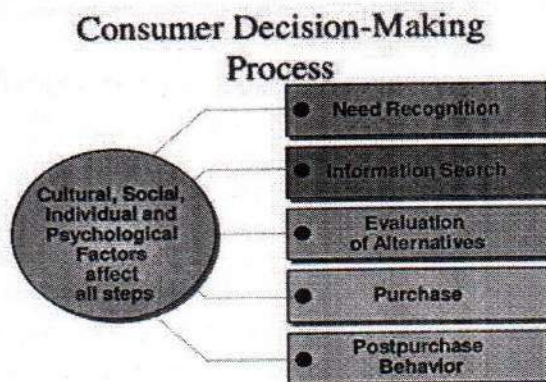
INTRODUCTION

Consumer behavior is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure and dispose of the products, services, experience, or ideas to satisfy the needs and impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society. It also tries to assess influences on the consumer from groups such as family, friends, reference groups, and society in general.

In earlier times, marketers could understand consumers through the daily experiences of selling to them. But the growth in the size of firms and markets has removed many marketing decision- makers from direct contact with consumers. The concept of e-commerce has come into the picture. Particularly the online purchasing factors increase due to the COVID-19 pandemic. So, the study of the consumer behavior decision- making process is important.

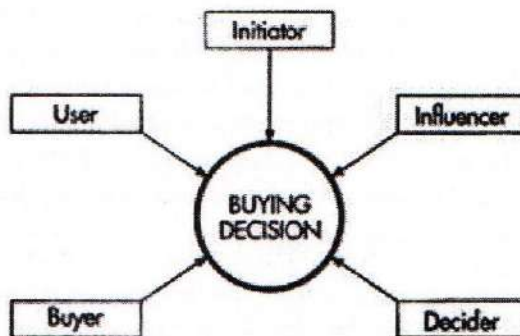
Factor influencing buyer behavior

The Major factors influencing buyer behavior are cultural, social, personal, and psychological.



Source: <https://www.iibmindialms.com>

Buying roles



Source: <https://www.businessmanagementideas.com>

In the process of buying a product or services many people influence the buyer in the decision making process. The buyer scrutinize thoroughly the products before it is being purchased. Here are five roles people might play in a buying decision:

1. Initiator: Initiator can be any person who first suggest the buyer to buy a particular product or services based on his early experience.
2. Influencer: Influencer can be a person with the ability to influence a buyer by recommending few products and services.
3. Decider: Decider is a potential buyer who thinks of buying a product based the information what he gathered from various sources. He decides whether to buy product or not, where to buy, how to buy and what to buy.
4. Buyer: Buyer is that person who initiates to purchase a product or services. He becomes a customer and spends his earnings in satisfying his wants.
5. User: User is the one who starts consuming the product or services.

Stages in buying decision process

Based on examining many consumer reports of buying episodes, proposals have been made by consumer researchers for "stage models" of the buying process. The consumer passes through the five stages of the buying decision process they are: need recognition, information search, Evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Author Lakshmi. S (2016) in her research paper "Consumer Buying Behavior towards online shopping". In her paper, she explains:

"The factors that affect consumers while shopping online, and that affect satisfaction, they consider that convenience, and trust are the most important variables, the next which are important for them are prices and quality of products. Those variables are the most essential ones for consumers when they decide to shop online. Web design and delivery time are not important for consumers while doing online shopping purchases. When a consumer to make purchases online to buy something, he or she is affected by assorted factors. The price factor exists because the prices are often lower through online shopping as compared with physical purchases in the market. Buy online can be of great benefit to the consumer in terms of convenience, saving time and money".

Research paper Consumer's Buying Decision-Making Process in E-Commerce by Nia Budi Puspitasari¹, Susatyo Nugroho W P, Deya Nilan Amyhorsea, and Aries Susanty. Department of Industrial Engineering, Indonesia. According to the analysis that has been done, it can be concluded that:

"Online purchase intention has a significant positive influence on an actual decision on the online purchase of e-

commerce. Electronic Word of Mouth has a positive effect on trust in e-commerce purchase transactions while social identity and risk perception do not have a significant influence on trust in e-commerce purchase transactions. Risk perception has no significant relationship with the online purchase intention in purchasing transactions of e-commerce but the trust has a significant positive influence on online purchase intention in e-commerce purchasing transactions. The factors that most significantly affect online purchase intention in e-commerce are trust because it has the greatest results in the processing of SEM".

Author Dr. Hemanth Kumar.S and Dr. Umakanth.S (2018) in their research paper "Influence of E-Commerce on Buying Behavior of Customers". Suggest that:

"During the survey, it was found that the consumers are using the e-commerce platform for banking, travel and tourism, stock exchange, clothing, and fashion accessories and daily usage items. For companies to achieve a high level of trust among these users, they should work on a very safe and secure pathway of transactions. It was found in the survey that people are not aware of the online support system. So for the awareness of customers companies should create awareness for the consumers with the help of social media because it is more users friendly. Also asking for feedback will help them understand the areas in which they should improve. This study mainly focuses on the factors that affect the consumer's E-Commerce behaviors. Those factors were looked at and examined to reveal the influence of online consumer behaviors. Overall, the factors from the internet that influenced or prevented online consumer behavior need to be carefully concerned by the online retailers, who can utilize the appropriate marketing communications to support the customer's purchase decision-making process and improve their performance".

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY/ HYPOTHESIS

- To know the Customer decision-making process during the COVID-19 pandemic
- To gather more accessed store & purchased goods during COVID -19 pandemic
- To know the satisfaction & safety level of customers during the Covid-19 pandemic

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for evaluating the reliability and suitability of one significant method for applying it in the study. It includes concepts such as theoretical model, phases, and quantitative or qualitative techniques and analytics. This study is conducted based on both primary and secondary data sources.

The primary source is a source from where we collect first-hand information or original data on a topic. The questionnaire technique through Google forms was used with a synthesized form of a questionnaire for the collection of primary data.

A secondary source is a source from where we collect the already collected data. We have collected secondary data from journals, magazines, newspapers, other reference books, and websites.

SCOPE & LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

1. The study is limited to Bangalore city only.
2. This study was conducted and targeted only for E-purchasing respondents who used online purchasing services.
3. The statistical tools used in this study from their inherent defects.
4. Due to time constraints, the survey was restricted to a sample size of 50 customers.
5. Inability on the part of some of the respondents to answer certain questions is a limitation of this study.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Consumers while purchasing the various goods, their mind keeps fluctuating by seeing different brand products & different modes of services. This study contributes to vital comprehension of the impact of dissimilar factors on consumer buying behavior. The factor that affects consumer behaviors on the decision-making process on online purchasing has been taken as an empirical study of this research.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The sample distribution table shows the demographic characteristics of 50 respondents. The frequency and percentage are depicted in the table below.

Table01: Profile of the Respondents

Part A- Gender Wise Distribution of Respondents			
Category	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Male	31	62%	62%
Female	19	38%	100%
Transgender	0	0%	100%
Total	50	100%	
Part B- Age Wise Distribution of Respondents			
Category	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
18-30 years	45	90%	90%
31-40 years	5	10%	100%
41-50 years	0	0%	100%
50 and above	0	0%	100%
Total	50	100%	
Part C- Education Wise Distribution of Respondents			
Category	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Under Grduation	38	76%	76%
Post Graduation	12	24%	100%
Doctrate	0	0%	100%
Total	50	100%	
Part D- Income (Monthly) Wise Distribution of Respondents			
Category	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
less than 5,000	34	68%	68%
5,001-10,000	4	8%	76%
10,001-20,000	6	12%	88%
20,001-30,000	4	8%	94%
30,000 & above	2	4%	100%
Total	50	100%	
Part E- Occupation Wise Distribution of Respondents			
Category	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative

			Percentage
Student	38	76%	76%
Business	2	4%	80%
Service	4	8%	88%
Home Maker	2	4%	92%
Others	4	8%	100%
Total	50	100%	

From Table 02: 68% of the respondents have purchased goods online before COVID-19 & 26% of the respondents are did not use the online store purchasing before the Covid-19 pandemic.

Table 02: Did you purchase any goods in online before Covid-19			
	Frequency	%	Cumulative percentage
Yes	35	68.00%	68%
No	12	26.00%	94%
May be	3	6.00%	100%
Total	50	100.00%	

Form Table 03: 74% of the respondents are shopping online when they are in need, 22% of the respondents purchasing once in a month & 4 % of the respondents are frequently buying online during Covid-19.

Table 03: Frequency Level of online shopping- during Covid-19 pandemic			
	Frequency	%	Cumulative percentage
As needed	38	74.00%	74%
Once a month	11	22.00%	96%
frequently buying in a week	2	4.00%	100%
Total	50	100%	

Form Table 03: 74% of the respondents are shopping online when they are in need, 22% of the respondents purchasing once in a month & 4 % of the respondents are frequently buying online during Covid-19.

Table 03: Frequency Level of online shopping- during Covid-19 pandemic			
	Frequency	%	Cumulative percentage
As needed	38	74.00%	74%
Once a month	11	22.00%	96%
frequently buying in a week	2	4.00%	100%
Total	50	100%	

From Table 04: 48% of the respondents are preferred online shopping is safe, 14% of the respondents do not

prefer online shopping & 38% of the respondents may prefer online shopping during Covid-19

Table 04: Is online shopping is safe During Covid-19

	Frequency	%	Cumulative percentage
Yes	24	48.00%	48%
No	7	14.00%	62%
May be	19	38.00%	100%
Total	50	100.00%	

From Table 05: 76% of respondents purchased Necessary goods from online, 24% of the respondents purchased electronic goods during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Table 05: Type of Goods purchased during Covid-19

	Frequency	%	Cumulative percentage
Necessary Goods	38	76%	76%
Electronic goods	12	24%	100%
Prestige's goods	0	0%	100%
Total	50	100%	

Table 06: Preference & Factor Influences During Covid-19 pandemic on Online Stores (Descriptive Statistics)

	Trust	Discount	Scheme & Offer	Quality	Convenience	Price	Choice	Product comparison	Availability	Saves time	S
Flip kart	13	13	12	11	14	14	13	14	20	13	
Snap deal	3	7	2	3	0	4	3	4	0	4	
Amazon	25	21	25	27	26	23	24	24	21	25	
E bay	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	
Big basket	1	1	2	1	3	1	1	1	2	1	
Myntra	2	3	1	4	1	1	3	2	1	1	
Grofers	0	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	
Others stores	5	4	7	4	4	6	5	4	6	5	
Total	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	

Mean	6.250	6.250	6.250	6.250	6.250	6.250	6.250	6.250	6.250	6.250	
Standard Deviation	8.631	7.305	8.582	9.099	9.177	8.172	8.259	8.430	9.020	8.664	

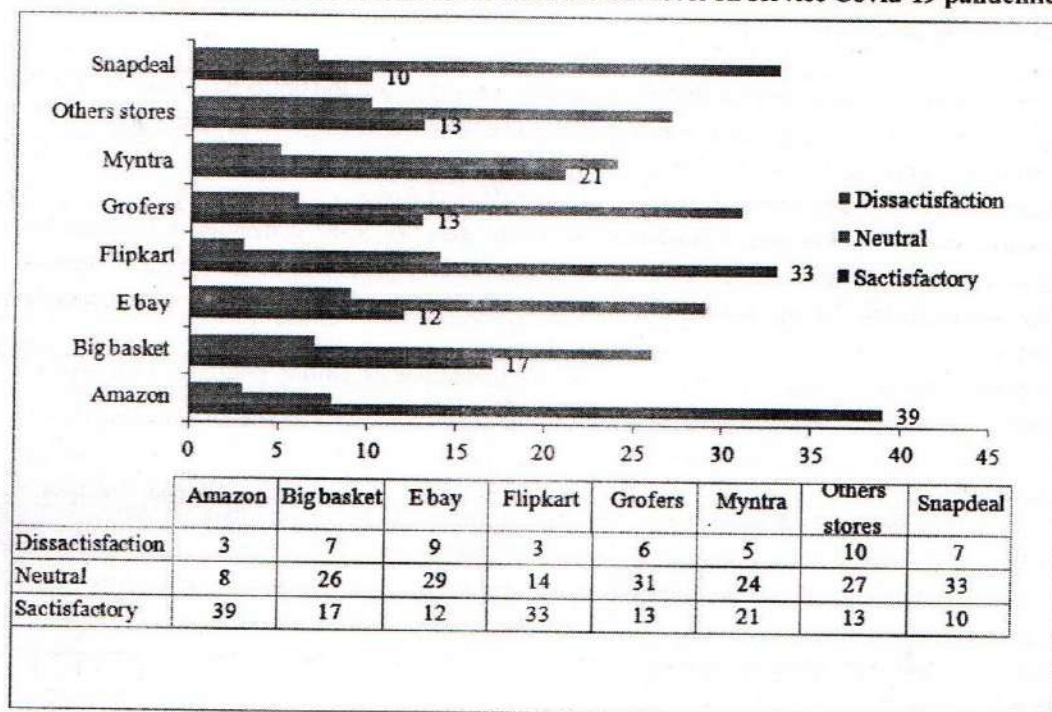
From the above table 06: Shows the influencing factor and preference of the consumer. Based on goods and services the above factors are varying from the online store to store. The standard deviation of each factor shows the average level of decision making. So the highest factors are quality, convenience, and availability i.e. 9.099, 9.177 & 9.020 respectively.

Table 07: Select the Online Store Based on Buying Behavior on goods purchased during Covid-19

	Electronic s	Grocer y	Clothing & Fashion	Medicine s	Accessories	Decor/Fu rniture	Books & Media	Other goods
Amazon	62%	28%	34%	24%	50%	46%	42%	44%
Big basket	0%	20%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%	2%
E bay	2%	0%	2%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%
Flip kart	22%	36%	28%	32%	26%	26%	38%	28%
Grofers	0%	4%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	2%
Myntra	0%	0%	16%	0%	4%	2%	0%	0%
Other s stores	4%	8%	14%	34%	14%	14%	12%	20%
Snap deal	10%	4%	6%	8%	2%	10%	8%	4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

From the above table 07: Shows that, 62% of the electronic goods purchased from Amazon, 36% of the Grocery purchased from Flip Kart, 34% of the clothing & fashions purchased from Amazon & 28% from Flip Kart, 34% of the medicines purchased other online stores, 50% of the accessories purchased from Amazon, 46% of the Decor & Furniture items are purchased from Amazon, 46% Books and media purchased from Amazon and 44% of other goods purchased from Amazon.

Table 08 & Chart 01: Preference & Satisfaction Level on service Covid-19 pandemic



From the above Chart 01 & table 08, 39 respondents are satisfied with the Amazon service, 33 respondents are satisfied with the flip kart services, and 21% of the respondents satisfied with Myntra.

FINDING

- Out of 50 respondents, 90 % of the respondents belong to the age between 18-30 years.
- The respondents who opined their view among them 62% of them are male and 38% are female.
- Out of 50 respondents, the majority of 72% response received from undergraduates.
- Out of 50 respondents, 68% of them belong to monthly income between less than or equal to 5000.
- Out of 50 respondents, the majority of 78% response received from students.
- The majority of 68 % of respondents preferred to shop in the online during pre and during the Covid-19 pandemic and which is positively impact on e-commerce.
- The majority of the respondents i.e. 74% are purchasing online when they need in COVID-19 pandemic.
- The majority of 48% of respondents are preferred online shopping is safe, but 38% of the respondents still confuse, because they felt that Coronavirus may be present in packed products. This means that it is a big challenge for the consumer while selecting an online shopping platform.
- The majority of the respondents are purchased necessary goods on pre and during lockdown down pandemic.
- Based on the online platform the standard deviation shows the highest rates on quality (9.099), convenience(9.177), and availability(9.012) which means on an average the consumer prefers the above factors while purchases.
- On the selection of online platforms during and post-pandemic, the decision-making process of the consumer is increased. The online shopping platform on the highest percentage of preference level by the consumers is Amazon and Flip kart.
- Out of 50 respondents, 39 of the respondents were satisfied with services provided by Amazon, and 33 of the respondents satisfied with flip kart services.

Based on the decision making the process of the consumer's e- purchasing factors during and post COVID-19 pandemic is a safety factor only

SUGGESTIONS

- The majority of consumers believe that e-purchasing is helpful. But the preferences level of the consumers keeps changing. So online platforms shopping depend on the customer decision making process.
- The various online platforms should need to give the appropriate and easy way of comparison of the products based on cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors.
- The factors should consider goods which include quality, quantity, price, convenience, discounts, and offers. Same as, the services include satisfaction level, timings, choice, comparison factors need to concede.
- To the above factor, Safety is the most important factor for every consumer during this COVID-19 pandemic.
- An e-purchasing factor depends on the consumer's preference & Online platform. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, physical purchasing is not that much safer, so preferred online platform.

CONCLUSION

Covid-19 pandemic had made drastic changes in the consumer shopping pattern and habits. Understanding consumer buying behavior is very important for the satisfaction level of the consumer. During Covid-19 many people started to purchase from online stores rather than an offline stores because they felt that e-purchasing is the safest and easiest platform to shop. This behavior encourages the decision-making process of the consumer on various platforms. The decision-making factors are important for every customer for purchasing. It depends on various factors and safety levels.

REFERENCES

1. Lakshmi. S(2016). "Consumer buying behavior towards online shopping", International Journal for Research Granthaalayah. ISSN- 2350-0530.
2. Dr. Hemanth Kumar S, & Dr. Umakanth S(2018). INFLUENCE OF E-COMMERCE ON BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF CUSTOMERS. EPRA International Journal Of Economic and Business Review, 6(9).
3. Anil Kumar Kashyap., &Ajay Kumar. (2016). Customer Decision Making Side of E- Commerce. Journal of Marketing Management and Consumer Behavior, 1(4).
4. Ahmet., Nurettin AYZAZ., & Mete Albayrak. (2015). Consumer Decision-Making Process in E-Commerce: Case of Salzburg-Ankara. Journal of Business Research Tuck.