

Influence of Technology on Online Shopping behavior and Brand Loyalty

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Abstract

Purpose - It is important to move from the broad topic of online shopping behavior, which is already widely researched and instead delve in depth into the most important factors that have an impact on the online buying decision making process relevant to a particular age group. Furthermore, many studies focus on either e-commerce or brand relationship with consumers respectively, however very few relational studies between these two concepts exist.

Methodology—Relevant hypotheses were constructed and a structured questionnaire was used. The proposed hypotheses were statistically tested using correlation and regression analysis.

Findings—There is a strong relationship between technology and online shopping behavior however there is a weak relationship between technology and brand loyalty.

Research Limitations - All the respondents for the questionnaire are from the university community and so the findings will not reflect the full diversity in the influence of technology on online shopping behavior and brand loyalty. Furthermore, had the respondents included students who have completed their undergraduate degree and are currently pursuing a job and yet fall in the age group of 18-25 years of age, the responses could have been different.

Practical Implications— Marketers of e-commerce sites can leverage on the online shopping behavior traits that majority of the respondents reflect. Moreover, marketers can keep in mind the possible shift of brand loyalty from loyalty to the product's brand to loyalty to the online website being purchased from. However, this may not be applicable in the luxury goods category as consumers would prefer purchasing from the product brands website.

Keywords: Influence of technology, Online shopping behavior, Brand loyalty

1. INTRODUCTION

E-commerce has become popular in the recent years however has existed since the twentieth century. In 1991, e-commerce became a popular choice among the numerous activities that the internet was commonly used for previously.

As per the study titled 'Evolution of e-commerce in India - Creating the bricks behind the clicks', currently one third of the internet users are making online purchases and the growth

of the industry is dependent on increased spending from the retained buyers rather than first time buyers.

The study conducted by Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry of India stated the main factor contributing to the increase in online purchases as the improvement in infrastructure, which includes the following: broadband, logistics, and internet-ready devices.

According to the Investopedia's definition: When consumers become committed to your brand and make repeat purchases over time. Brand loyalty is a result of consumer behavior and is affected by a person's preferences. Loyal customers will consistently purchase products from their preferred brands, regardless of convenience or price.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 influence of technology

Lalwani, K. and Singh, S. (2012) conducted a study on "Role of e-commerce in the current scenario". The research paper intends to assess the success factors and significance of e-commerce, the service quality provided to consumers through this medium of sales and to comprehend its significance for various sectors. The article gathered information and opinions revolving around e-commerce from secondary sources, which include newspaper articles, textbooks and articles from research journals. The researchers developed a conceptual framework on the basis of the e-commerce opportunity for numerous sectors and suggestions on how to develop a successful e-commerce business.

2.2 online shopping behavior abroad

Yulihari, Islam M. and Daud, K. (2011) conducted a study on "Factors that Influence Customers' Buying Intention on Shopping Online". The research paper focuses on the various factors influencing a student's Internet shopping intention in an institution of higher learning in Malaysia such as: usefulness, attitude, compatibility, security, normative-beliefs, ease of use and privacy. The paper intends on understanding the reasons as a result of which students are accepting or rejecting Internet as a shopping medium to then identify strategies to engage students to shop online and retain them as

consumers. Data was collected through a questionnaire using convenience sampling with three hundred respondents, all of who had some experience of e-tailing. The Pearson correlation analysis concluded that usefulness, ease of use, compatibility, security except privacy had an impact on attitude for online shopping. Moreover, attitude, normative beliefs, self-efficacy except usefulness influences a student's online buying intention.

Lim, Y., Yap, C. and Lau, T. (2010) conducted a study on "Online Search and Buying Behavior: Malaysian Experience. This study aims at understanding consumer online searches before purchasing online, products and services commonly purchased and lastly the type of search mode that builds to online purchase. Data was collected from two hundred employees working at a university in Malaysia all of them were from the Chinese ethnic group. The findings suggest that the most frequently visited websites being of banks, newspapers, education institutes, book publishers, hotels and airlines. Twenty percent was the average number of times the respondents clicked on online advertisements. The most common item purchased online was books among the following products which are purchased online such as CD's, computers, electronic appliances, toys, stamps, fast, collectible items etc. The various services purchased online were movie and event tickets, tour packages, workshops, seminar and online TV programs. Consumers prefer to buy search goods rather than experience goods. Furthermore, Malaysian Internet shoppers prefer buying through the company website.

Javadi, M., Dolatabadi, H., Nourbakhsh, M., Poursaedi, A. and Asadollahi, A. (2012) conducted a study on "An Analysis of Factors Affecting on Online Shopping Behavior of Consumers". This study aims to look at the compound effect of three to six factors affecting online shopping behavior that have been identified by prior studies however in the context of consumers in Iran. Two hundred respondents to the electronic questionnaire were randomly selected from five online stores in Iran. The findings of the research were as follows: perceived risk, effect of financial risk, non delivery risk had a significant impact while product risk, a friendly website and good service, infrastructural variables and return policy did not have a significant impact on attitude towards online shopping behavior. Subjective norms, domain specific innovativeness and attitude towards online shopping on online shopping behavior was significant as per the regression analysis conducted on the hypotheses.

Michal, P. (2012) conducted a study on "Online Shopping on B2C Markets in the Czech Republic". The goal of this study is to gain a general understanding of online shopping from e-stores' user preferences, expenses, purchasing frequencies, characteristics and to also understand the major fears in accepting online shopping. Data was collected through an online questionnaire with five hundred and fifty seven respondents. The research reveals that the majority of Internet users shop online irregularly. Internet auctions which form

another means to purchase goods online is not popular among consumers in Czech Republic. In terms of e-shop selection criteria: menu navigation, delivery conditions and references are the most important factors. Furthermore, majority of the online customers spend between one thousand to ten thousand Czech Koruna. A weak relationship exists between buying frequency and online expenses. The greater part of the respondents who shop regularly use shopping agents routinely. Price was identified as the most important e-product selection criteria. Lastly, for the fears by Internet shopping in Czech Republic respondents were most concerned about inability to test products, issues with product return and concerns over misuse of personal information.

So, W., Wong, T. and Sculli, D. (2005) conducted a study on "Factors affecting intentions to purchase via the Internet". The purpose of the study is to examine the general attitudes towards online shopping in Hong Kong, to research the associations between previous Internet experience as well as previous online shopping experience, formation of attitude and intentions towards online shopping, adoption decision and web usage for product information search. The research was conducted using a questionnaire with a target sample size of one thousand eighty two. Members of the sample had a high level of technical education and professionalism. A pilot study was conducted with a twenty people as a sample. The findings revealed that nine out of ten hypotheses were supported by the data collected. The only hypothesis that was not supported was that web-shopping experience is positively related to web-shopping intentions.

Smith, A., and Rupp, W., (2003) conducted a study on "Strategic online customer decision-making: leveraging the transformational power of the Internet". The objective of the study is to understand online shopping behavior characteristics and consumer acceptance through theoretical aspects of consumer decision-making. Thus a model is developed which discusses the psychological aspects of perception, personality, attitude and emotion and its impact on buying online while constantly comparing the pros and cons of online shopping versus shopping at brick and mortar stores. As per the findings while modeling the psychological aspects of perception, the disadvantage with purchases made over the Internet is that there is no immediate gratification from them, the quality of the purchase and the security, privacy in the transaction involved. Modeling psychological aspects of personality reveals that consumers want to be assured that the stock of the product they want will be available and that a particular website will offer a wide selection. As per the findings while modeling psychological aspects of attitude many web retailers tend to give huge discounts during the initial phase of their business and over a course of time these discounts are reduced. Thus consumers also begin to exit. Modeling psychological dimensions of emotions reveals that the increase in online shopping has indirectly been a result of the scare of shopping at brick and mortar stores due to the various terrorist attacks across the globe.

Dittmar, H., Long, K., and Bond R. (2007) conducted a study on “When a better self is only a button click away: Associations between materialistic values, emotional and identity related buying motives, and compulsive buying tendency online.” This study intends on examining the model of vulnerability factors in the context of the online shopping environment and to test whether materialistic values, emotions and identity related buying motives are predictors of an individual’s compulsive buying tendency. A survey was conducted with ratings for two statements both on a six point Likert scale; one statement was referring to brick and mortar stores while the second was referring to online stores. Two studies were conducted; the first study formed the basis of the second study. The results of the first study, were consistent with previous research as in strength of efficiency, economic concerns and online shopping behavior does in fact consist of individuals seeking to enhance emotions and identity gain. The findings of the second study, suggested that men were more vulnerable to compulsive buying in the Internet context.

Lee, J., Park, D., and Han, I. (2011) conducted a study on “The different effects of online consumer reviews on consumers purchase intentions depending on trust in online shopping malls”. This study aims at investigating the effects on online consumer reviews (OCR’s) and OCR’s embedded in advertisements (OEA’s) on consumer purchase intention from informational influence perspective and also the effects of OCR’s from a credibility perspective. The methodology used to collect data included a focus group interview with a total of a hundred and thirty five respondents. OCR’s and OEA’s the two types of consumer reviews in this experiment, both contained the same information. The findings revealed that both the types of reviews provide a moderate amount of information. The respondents who were shown OCR’s perceived that consumer reviews were always independently located as compared to the respondents who were shown OEA’s. Trust in online shopping malls is judged on the basis of reputation, which was determined through the awards won and popularity of the e-tailer. Moreover, trust has a huge influence in online shopping malls and on the credibility of OCR’s unlike on OEA’s as it might not be transferred from the website to the advertisement.

Constandinides, E., (2004) conducted a study on “Influencing the online consumer’s behavior: the Web experience”. The objectives of the study are to contribute to the existing theoretical debate about the factors influencing the online consumer behavior and secondly to identify similarities and differences between the virtual and traditional consumers. Literature review of forty-eight academic papers about consumer behavior in an online environment constituted of the methodology used in this study, the papers were selected on the basis of the effect of controllable factors on online buying decision making process. The findings of the study revealed that the impact of uncontrollable factors on consumer behavior is the same for both traditional and online consumers. Three factors that are identified as the main constituents of web

experience are functionality, content and psychological factors. The three factors identified were ‘functionality of the website’ which referred to usability and interactivity of the website, ‘psychological elements’ which referred to reducing consumer’s uncertainty by building trust and credibility of the vendor, and ‘content elements’ which referred to the aesthetics of online presentation.

2.3 Online shopping behavior in India

Hemamalini, K. (2013) conducted a study on “Influence of Product Types on Consumer’s Attitude towards Online Shopping: An Empirical Study in the Indian Context. This research paper attempts to investigate the personal Internet awareness of consumers and their socio-demographic profile, also the intention to shop online for each product. The final objective is to examine consumer attitude and product involvement for each product while shopping online. Primary data was collected for this study with a total of hundred and twenty-five respondents for a survey. The questionnaire was pre-tested with a convenience sample of thirty respondents. The four products considered for evaluating consumer attitude towards online shopping were computers, insurance, e-tickets and books. The research findings revealed e-tickets as the most needed product followed by books while insurance was the least needed in this study. In terms of which product was most interesting to shop for online: books ranked first and insurance was last. Secondly, the findings for attitude towards online shopping reveal that respondents like buying e-tickets the most and finally insurance. The various reasons identified by respondents for online shopping were price, time saved, ease of comparing prices, availability of choices and product reviews.

Tyagi, A. and Dr. Agarwal, P. (2012) conducted “A study of Online Buying Behavior Indian Context”. The purpose of the study was to understand the most significant influences on online buying behavior, the usage pattern of Internet users and whether they vary depending on the users’ gender. The primary source was a cross sectional survey conducted using a questionnaire consisting of three hundred respondents who have shopped online. Secondary sources included newspapers, national and international publications, journal and books. The survey identified the preferred mode of buying as buying from the shop followed by buying on the net. Females spent more time in a week online on an average as compared to men. Surprisingly shopping was regarded as the seventh activity women performed while using the internet and the fifth activity by men. The most preferred online shopping websites were eBay followed by Amazon, Future bazaar etc. The most common reason identified for not shopping online was the preference for traditional shopping methods and the concern over safety of online purchases. Among the many reasons why consumers did wish to shop online was that it is easy to order, a variety is available and home delivery.

2.4 brand loyalty

Fournier, S. (1998) conducted a study on “Consumers and Their Brands: Developing Relationship Theory in Consumer Research”. The objective of the study is to build a conceptual framework from which brand relationship theory can be developed and to portray portions of this framework as a way of demonstrating utility of the consumer brand relationship idea. The data was collected through an interview, which was conducted with life-history case studies for three women who were in three different phases of life. The findings revealed that firstly brands serve as viable relationship partners; consumer-brand relationships are valid at the level of lived experiences, moreover this relationship can be portrayed using vocabulary that is not only useful theoretically but also has managerial implications.

Danaher, P., Wilson, I. and Davis, R. (2003) conducted a study on “A Comparison of Online and Offline Consumer Brand Loyalty”. This purpose of this research is to compare brand loyalty of online versus the brick and mortar shopping environments. Research was conducted by establishing a baseline brand loyalty levels by fitting the Dirichlet model of Goodhardt et al. (1984). The measure for brand loyalty is “Share of Category Requirements”. The data collected was from a grocery retailer in New Zealand which had both an online store as well as a nationwide network of stores. The online stores mirrored the discounts and offers of the brick and mortar store. A total of a hundred and twenty nine brands were selected across nineteen categories for the online data. Four hundred and forty three households contributed to the offline data in this study. The results of this study reveals that there is higher online brand loyalty for high market share brands as compared to that of a physical store, while the reverse is applicable to lower share brands. Also, niche brands have higher loyalty than the Dirichlet model estimated and change of pace brands have lower loyalty.

Chang, H., and Wang H., (2009) conducted a study on “The moderating effect of customer perceived value on online shopping behavior”. The study aims to examine the relationship of the emotional reactions (satisfaction), appraisal process (e-service quality, customer perceived value), and coping responses (customer loyalty) and identify various ways to impact customer loyalty during different purchase stages. Secondly, to explore the moderating effect of customer perceived value on the relationship between customer loyalty and satisfaction. Data was collected for the study through a questionnaire consisting of three hundred and fifty respondents, with some online shopping experience. A pilot study was done prior to the questionnaire with seventy respondents. Two studies were conducted to study the each of the two objectives respectively. The results of the questionnaire revealed that e-service quality has a positive relationship on customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and customer perceived value. Furthermore, the impact of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty is moderated by

customer perceived value and the impact is more significant for the higher level of the customer perceived value group than for the lower group. Moreover, customer perceived value has a positive relationship on customer loyalty and customer satisfaction.

Research gaps

Numerous studies have been conducted about online shopping behavior abroad however it doesn't reflect the Indian scenario as consumer behavior differs depending on culture. Moreover, the studies conducted till date have looked at all age groups shopping online, however the population between 18-25 years of age, constitutes of the most frequent online shoppers which more studies need to focus upon. Moreover, the initial stage of the e-commerce industry in India is usually the topic of research and studies haven't kept up with the recent developments in the industry.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Objectives

- a) Identifying the influence of technology on online shopping behavior.
- b) Ascertaining the influence of technology on brand loyalty.

3.2 Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1:

H0: Technology does not influence online shopping behavior of consumers

H1: Technology influences online shopping behavior of consumers

Hypothesis 2:

H0: Technology does not influence the brand loyalty of consumers

H1: Technology does influence the brand loyalty of consumers

3.3 Need of the study

It is important to move from the broad topic of online shopping behavior, which is already widely researched and instead delve in depth into the most important factors that have an impact on the online buying decision making process relevant to a particular age group. Furthermore, many studies focus on either e-commerce or brand relationship with consumers respectively, however very few relational studies between these two concepts exist.

3.4 Sample size and technique

The student population in Bangalore city, the capital city of the state of Karnataka has been chosen for this study. The city is home to numerous colleges specializing in fields such as engineering and management and there exists a huge student

population in between 18-25 years of age. Therefore respondents in the age group being sought were easy to identify. A total of 100 respondents in this age group were surveyed for this study, which included forty six percent females and fifty four percent males. Judgment or purposive sampling a kind of non-probability sampling is used for the questionnaire. According to this method specific sample units are deliberately selected to suit certain pre-determined criteria.

4. DATA ANALYSIS & RESULTS

4.1 Reliability analysis

Table 1: Cronbach’s Alpha

Cronbach’s Alpha	N of Items
0.814	21

To check the reliability of my questionnaire Cronbach’s Alpha was used. A score of 0.70 or higher is regarded as acceptable as per research standards. The Cronbach’s Alpha score for the questionnaire is 0.814, which is acceptable thus the data is reliable and can be interpreted and analyzed.

4.3 Statistical analysis

4.3.1 Correlation

Table 2: Parametric Correlation

	Mean_Tech	Mean_OS B	Mean_B L
Pearson Correlation Mean_Tech Sig. (2-tailed) N	1	0.465	0.139
	100	100	100
Pearson Correlation Mean_OS B Sig. (2-tailed) N	0.465	1	0.345
	0.000		0.000
	100	100	100
Pearson Correlation Mean_B L Sig. (2-tailed) N	0.139	0.345	1
	0.169	0.000	
	100	100	100

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2- tailed).

The correlation analysis was done to find out the relationship between technology and online shopping behavior and the

relationship between online shopping behavior and brand loyalty.

Hypothesis 1

H0: Technology does not influence online shopping behavior of consumers

H1: Technology influences online shopping behavior of consumers

The significance value in Table 2 is 0.000 for the mean of online shopping behavior, which is greater than 0.01 and thus the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted. This means that various aspects of technology such as ease of use, frequency of purchase, security of payment and impact of online product reviews have a direct influence on the various aspects of online shopping behavior such as price, categories of goods, ease of price comparison, assortment of goods and the impact of discounts/offers.

Hypothesis 2:

H0: Technology does not influence the brand loyalty of consumers

H1: Technology does influence the brand loyalty of consumers

In the above table the significance value is 0.169 for the mean of brand loyalty, which is lower than 0.01 and thus the null hypothesis is accepted and alternate hypothesis is rejected. This means that various aspects of technology such as ease of use, frequency of purchase, security of payment and impact of online product reviews does not have an influence on the various aspects of brand loyalty such as purchase of luxury goods, loyalty to ecommerce websites and impact of loyalty to a brand due to its online presence.

Parametric correlation reveals that a stronger relationship between the variables, technology and online shopping behavior exists as the Pearson correlation value is 0.465 is higher than the Pearson correlation value of 0.139 for the variables, technology and brand loyalty.

4.3.2 Regression

Table 3: Regression 1 - Model Summary

Mode 1	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.465a	0.217	0.209	0.41245

a. Predictors: (Constant), Mean_Tech

Table 4: Regression 1 - Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
1	(Constant)					
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
	Mean_Tech	2.250	0.320		7.033	0.000
		0.420	0.081	0.465	5.205	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Mean_OS

The regression analysis was done to find out the relationship between the two variables, technology and online shopping behavior and the relationship between another set of two variables, online shopping behavior and brand loyalty.

Hypothesis 1

H0: Technology does not influence online shopping behavior of consumers

H1: Technology influences online shopping behavior of consumers

Similar to the results of the correlation analysis done previously, the above table reveals the significance value as 0.169 for the mean of online shopping behavior, which is lower than 0.01 and thus the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted.

4.3.3 Regression 2

Table 5: Regression 1 - Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.139a	0.019	0.009	0.74108

a. Predictors: (Constant), mean_tech

Table 6: Regression 1 - Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)					
	Mean_Tech	2.710	0.575		4.714	0.000
		0.201	0.145	0.139	1.385	0.169

a. Dependent Variable: Mean_BL

Hypothesis 2:

H0: Technology does not influence the brand loyalty of consumers

H1: Technology does influence the brand loyalty of consumers

Similar to the results of the correlation analysis done previously, the above table reveals the significance value as 0.169 for the mean of brand loyalty, which is lower than 0.01 and thus the null hypothesis is accepted and alternate hypothesis is rejected.

4.3.4 Overall analysis of regression 1 and 2

As per Regression 1, the “R Square” value is 21.7%, (Table 3) which is acceptable however as seen in Regression 2, the value is 1.9% (Table 5), which is unacceptable. The value of coefficient “t” in Table 4 is 7.033, which is significantly higher than the value of 3.00, which shows a very strong

relationship between the variables, technology and online shopping behavior.

The value of coefficient “t” in Table 6 is 4.714 is not significantly higher than the value of 3.00 thus there is a weak relationship between the variables technology and brand loyalty.

5. CONCLUSION

The analysis concluded that technology influences online shopping behavior, however it does not influence brand loyalty. This research would benefit from further research by expanding the cities in which the survey is conducted and by specifying the specific sub-variables being studied under the main three variables: technology, online shopping behavior and brand loyalty. Moreover, brand loyalty as a dependent variable needs to be delved into deeper as it is still an unexplored research topic as proven by the literature review and is only touched upon in this study. Another hypothesis about the similar or differing opinions between the male and female gender can be considered as an expansion to the current hypotheses that exist.

6. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Marketers of ecommerce sites can leverage on the online shopping behavior traits that majority of the respondents reflect to develop marketing strategies to attract new customers and retain the existing ones. Moreover, marketers can keep in mind the possible shift of brand loyalty from loyalty to the product’s brand to loyalty to the online website being purchased from. However, this may not be applicable in the luxury goods category as consumers would prefer purchasing from the product brands website.

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