
Attitudinal and Behavioural Study of Online Consumers in Mizoram: A Case Study of Aizawl City

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Abstract:

This article is the result of a survey which depicts the attitude and behaviour of online consumers in Mizoram. Data was collected from the entire city of Aizawl, selecting samples from buyers who have purchased through online in which non-probability convenience as well as purposive stratified sampling was used. Snapdeal was considered the most preferred online retailers by the consumers from the field study. Also, the attitude and behaviour of the online consumers are affected by different factors such as website quality, product quality, store reputation and return policy.

Key words: Quality, online shopping, online retailers.

INTRODUCTION

Online shopping has become very important in the 21st century as most of the people are loaded with hectic schedule and online shopping is considered as the easiest and most convenient mode for shopping. Due to this convenience and time saving characteristics has become even more essential in recent times.

Developed countries are utilizing online shopping to meet their requirements.

Aizawl is regarded as a backward state but it has got a huge potential which they do not realized. It is among the highest literacy state in India and are well advanced and informed in technology. Online shopping has become familiar among the people and the users are increasing rapidly which is a part of development. Though there has been a phenomenal growth over the past few years, the vast potential of conducting business over the Internet remains largely untapped. So, an analysis of the attitude and behaviour of online consumer in Aizawl, Mizoram is required to move in pace along with the rest of the world.

ONLINE MARKETING IN INDIA

As Susan Ward describes selling products or services over digital networks as the art and science, such as internet and cellular phone networks, here the art of online marketing refers to discovering the right online marketing mix of strategies which attracts the target market for actually converting into sales. Online marketing is also referred as i-marketing, e-marketing, web marketing. E-commerce (electronic commerce) is type of online marketing. Online shopping is the process consumers go through to purchase products or services over the Internet.

Internet is admired for its potential to provide interactivity (through chat and e-mail), personalized experiences (through registration, user input, personalization), multimedia (through flash animations, movies), shopping tools (through virtual sales, assistant, search engine, order tracking), community (through virtual communities, consumers reviews), increased product selection and information. As per Internet advertisement, Internet is basically used for following purposes- emailing, chain-formation/search engines, games,

news, sports, job hunting, music downloads, voice chat, plan business or personal trip, personal or internet banking, sending e-cards, games downloading, on-line e-ticketing, matrimonial, quizzes/voting, house hunting, other on-line transactions, holiday planning, online bill payment, online shopping, on-line cinema tickets.

Online shopping is considered as the most convenient and easiest mode of shopping. Berry, L.L., Seiders K. and Grewal D. (2002) defined online shopping as “a reduction of the opportunity costs of effort and time involved in shopping activities”. It offers time saving benefits to the consumers as their time is saved. Dressing, visiting to the store which requires longer travelling time, no time required for picking products and no long lines to wait, etc. Because of the changing lifestyles and lack of time (due to hectic schedule), consumers hardly have time to go out to shop at stores or shopping malls.

Due to this convenience and time saving characteristics has become even more essential in recent times. The only basic requirement for online shopping is debit card, credit card and computer with Internet access. Online shopping knows no boundary, it can be done from anywhere where Internet is accessible and shoppers can buy it from any vendors all over the world. Also, shopping can be done at any time (24 hours a day, 7 days a week and holiday) where they do not have shopping timings like malls and stores. Besides all these, they have better price information and lower prices and we can compare and find lower prices of the items.

ONLINE MARKETING IN AIZAWL

Online marketing is focused in Aizawl because delivery and stock point is available only in Aizawl not other part of Mizoram. Online shopping has become very popular among the Mizo's with the development of technology and infrastructure

and moreover delivery can be done on the doorstep which is convenient with the busy schedule of working people.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Barksdale (1982) investigating consumers' attitudes in Australia, Canada, England, Israel, Norway and the US revealed the prevalence of negative attitudes towards Marketing in all six countries.

Gaski and Etxel (1985; 1986) developed an instrument to measure consumer attitude. In respect of the four major elements of product marketing practices: quality, price, advertising and retailing or selling.

Webster (1991) found differences in consumer attitudes toward various product qualities, pricing, advertising and retailing or selling; however, many of the differences does not change even after social class and income effects were removed. Therefore, the question that comes to mind is that what factors cause the differences in consumers' attitudes and how they affect consumers experience in the market place represent an important subject of investigation. After studying the consumer attitudes towards various marketing activities in developed economies and they observed perceived importance of the marketing mix variables it moderates the effect of consumer attitudes on satisfaction, as there may be great variations in terms of the level of importance consumers attached to marketing mix variables.

Alpert (1993) came to a conclusion that, consumers may have positive beliefs or negative beliefs and skepticism about marketing.

Treise (1994) found that the two factors of consumer attitudes towards marketing to be studied are perceived importance of the marketing mix variable and consumer beliefs about marketing. Here, the important one is the level of significance of marketing mix variable perceived by consumers

to them as consumers. Consumer beliefs about marketing are whether marketing is beneficial for consumers or it may be detrimental due to the perceived characteristics of marketers. Therefore, consumer beliefs about marketing affect their experiences in the market place and their satisfaction as consumers. Moreover, consumer beliefs about marketing moderate the effect of consumer attitudes on satisfaction.

Huff and Alden (1998) conclude that models of consumers attitudes towards marketing practices developed and tested in economies may not be a success into emerging markets. So, Multinational Corporations should consider cultural and economic differences when planning marketing strategies in developing countries.

Geissler and Zinkhan (1998) came to a conclusion that the internet shifted the balance of power in favour of consumers as it became very easy for them to make shopping comparisons and evaluate alternatives without being pressured by salespeople and Online reduced transaction costs and have advantages for both consumers and vendors.

Hernandez (2011) analyzed whether individuals socioeconomic characteristics – age, gender and income-influence their online shopping behaviour. The individuals analyzed are experienced e-shoppers. The result of their research shows that socioeconomic variables moderate neither the influence of previous use of the internet nor the perceptions of e-commerce; in short, they do not affect the behaviour of the experienced e-shopper.

Barnes and Guo (2011) in a study “Purchase behaviour in virtual worlds: An empirical investigation in second life” in their study analyzed a conceptual model of purchase behaviour in virtual world using a combination of existing and new constructs. They examined a shopping behaviour of the consumers on how they spend noticeable amount of money for shopping online. The different factors influencing their behaviour are perceived value, instinct motivators like

perceived happiness, social factors and consumer's habits. The result of study indicated that the different factors have great effect on shaping online shoppers behavior.

Laldinliana and Jyoti Kumar NVR (2012) found in their studies that customer satisfaction is the individual perception of the performance of the product or service in relation to his or her expectations. They also concluded, that satisfaction does not necessarily guarantee brand loyalty even though it assumes critical significance in the entire purchase process. In their study they found, urban respondents are more aggressive than the rural respondents when dealing with dissatisfying purchase.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To study the demographic profile of the customers and its impact on online shopping.
2. To identify the factors affecting online buyers behaviour and offer suggestions for online marketers and consumers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data collection

In the present research, both quantitative and qualitative data will be collected. Data shall be collected from primary as well as secondary sources. Structured questionnaire and interview technique will be used for eliciting data from the respondents.

Analysis of data

Appropriate statistical tools shall be used through statistical packages and software like SPSS and MS Excel for analyzing the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Demographic characteristics of respondents

The age, gender, occupation, income level and educational level are the important factors in influencing the attitude and behaviour of online consumers in Aizawl.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the respondents

Profile	Category	Percentage
Age	Between 21-30	37
Gender	Female	50.4
Occupation	Public service	25.7
Income Level	Between 10,000 - 25,000	36.5
Educational Level	Degree and above	30.8

Source: Field Survey

Table 1 predicts that 37% of the respondents were in the age group between 21-30 years and out of the total respondents 50.4 of females are the main online consumers. Majority of the respondents' occupation is public service which is 25.7%. The income level of the respondents' falls mainly between 36.5 and the educational level of the respondents are mostly degree and above which is 30.8%.

Sampling

The proposed study shall cover the entire city of Aizawl, Mizoram, selecting samples from buyers who have purchased through online in which non- probability convenience as well as purposive stratified sampling will be used. The sample size is calculated by using creative research system service software, which will satisfy the statistical validity of the study. For unknown population, the population of the study is 384 at 95% confidence level and 5% precision limit. Every possible care will be taken for proper representation of gender as well as their occupation.

The following formula is used for calculating sample size by creative research system service software:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \times (p) \times (1-p)}{d^2}$$

Where,

n= Sample size

Z= Statistic for a level of confidence

P=Expected prevalence or proportion

D = Precision (If the precision is 5%, then d= 0.05)

ONLINE RETAILERS PREFERENCE OF THE CONSUMERS

Today, the online industries have grown tremendously as well as the online consumers and the consumers taste and preference have changed considerably and become very demanding. The different online retailers and their preference of the consumers are given below:

Table 2: Frequencies of online retailers' preference of the consumers.

Online Retailers	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Jabong	33	8.5
Flipkart	47	12.1
Myntra	91	23.4
Snapdeal	105	27.3
Other	70	18
Equal	37	9.5
Total	383	100

Source: Field Survey

Table 2 predicts that majority of the respondents 27.3 % preferred snapdeal as their retailers which is followed by myntra i.e. 23.4 %, other 18 %, flipkart 12.1 %, equal 9.5 %, jabong 8.5 %.

Factors influencing the buyers' attitude and behaviour towards online shopping

The factors influencing the buyers' behaviour are convenience, variation, product quality, delivery system, return policy, better

service, store reputation, website quality, customer service and security.

Table 3: Frequencies table (In percent)

Factors	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Product Quality	.3	4.9	39.6	39.1	14.9
Return Policy	2.6	26.2	43.7	23.7	2.6
Store Reputation	.8	9.3	36.0	36.8	15.9
Website Quality	.3	1.3	36.2	45.8	15.2
Security	10.8	31.4	36.0	19.8	.8

Source: Field Survey

From the given table above, we can conclude that 45.8% of the respondents agree to the website quality of online retailer. 43.7% responds to neutral for return policy. 31.4 % of the respondents disagree to the security of payment through credit system provided by the online retailers. 15.9% of the respondents strongly agree to the store reputation and 10.8 % of the respondents strongly disagree to the security provided by the retailers.

FINDINGS

The major findings of the study are as follows:

- From the study of demographic profile, we came to know that 37% of the respondents in the age between 21-30 are the main consumers and 50.4% of the respondents are female. Occupation wise public service is the main consumers with 5.7% and income level wise it mostly falls between 10,000-25,000 and also, educational level wise degree and above is the highest with 30.8%.
- With the wide availability of online retailers, the most preferred online retailers by the consumers is Snapdeal with 27.3%.

- Among the different factors influencing the buyers attitude and behaviour of the online consumers website quality has a deep impact as 45.8% of the respondents agree that website quality influences them.

CONCLUSION

In this study, we examined the demographic profile of the consumers and their impact on online shopping and identify the factors affecting online buyers' behaviour. Among the online retailers, Snapdeal is considered as the most preferred online retailers which make it clear that the consumers are concern about the website quality, product quality, customer service and overall functions of the online retailers. From the demographic profile we can understand that consumers are mostly people with technological knowledge which proves that website of the online retailers need to be user- friendly for all the different age group which can be a limitation for the online retailers to see growth in the future.

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