



Prospects of Online Shopping in Patna, with special reference to Electronic Gadgets

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Abstract: *Online shopping is a form of Electronic-commerce which allows consumers to directly buy goods from a seller over the internet. This allows consumers to view and order products online from any part of the world. People today are so busy in their day-to-day schedule that they hardly get time to visit different shops to buy a product. Online shopping has brought to them convenient shopping and they can shop anytime from anywhere. In this background, the study on the*

topic “Prospects of online shopping in Patna, with special reference to Electronic Gadgets” was conducted to know about the perception of people regarding electronic appliances from online stores. Online shopping has made a great headway and therefore, we found it appropriate to choose it as a part of our research work.

Keywords: *Online Shopping, E-Commerce, Electronic Gadgets, products and consumers.*

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Introduction :

The study entitled “Prospects of Online Shopping in Patna with special reference to Electronic Gadgets” is directed towards understanding the perception regarding the authenticity of electronic gadgets in online shopping. Online shopping is the form of electronic commerce which allows consumers to directly buy goods or avail services from a seller over the internet. E-commerce is the buzzword of the time. The world seems to have become a small global village in terms of online shopping with an internet savvy public. Online shopping has emerged as the way of shopping digitally and has become an inseparable part of our lives. It seems people are attracted to this virtual mode of shopping as varieties of products ranging from apparels, footwear to electronic gadgets are available online. Online shopping not only provides convenience to its customers but also considers the taste and preferences of the customers, saves time and money as well. A large number of online

shopping sites are available like; Flipkart, Amazon, Snapdeal, Ebay. Shops are no longer a 'brick and mortar' building. They are available 24*7 on our mobile apps. Any customer sitting anywhere in the world can buy at anytime. Since the area of online shopping is very vast, so we have confined ourselves to electronic gadgets to understand the perception of people at Patna in buying electronic appliances from online stores. We are living in the era of global marketing (Kotler, et al,2013). With this in the background, we found this topic to be relevant in context of the time with main focus on the electronic gadgets like mobile phones, laptops, speakers, and other electronic appliances.

Keeping in mind the various objectives of our study, 200 respondents were chosen and an earnest effort was made to incorporate most of the localities of Patna like Boring Road, Kankarbagh, Rajendra Nagar, Gardanibagh in order to arrive at a meaningful conclusion. In this study we made efforts in knowing people's view regarding online shopping with special reference to electronic gadgets.

Our study is focused towards finding out the factors that influence customers to buy online, and to know about customer's perception regarding the authenticity of the product and their views on the process involved in return and exchange policy.

Objectives:

- To study customer's perception regarding the authenticity of electronic gadgets in online shopping.
- To enquire about the mode of payment preferred by customers while placing orders.
- To know whether the process involved in return and exchange policy is flexible or not.
- To assess if the online stores have developed any feedback mechanisms to check out the consumer's satisfaction with the product.

Hypothesis:

- The consumers have positive response towards online shopping.
- Majority of the consumers prefer Cash on Delivery while others prefer to pay during the time of purchase itself.
- The process of return and exchange policy in online shopping is not flexible. It is very complex.

- There are feedback mechanisms to check out the consumer's satisfaction with the product in online shopping.

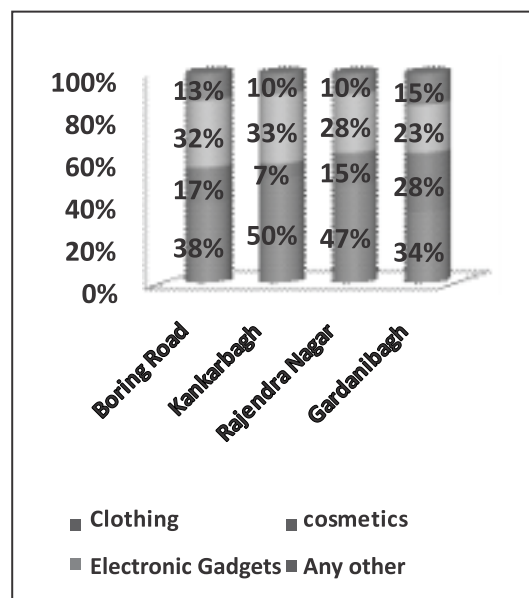
Research Methodology :

The conduct of any study requires a serious consideration of an appropriate Research Methodology. As far as our study is concerned, the research design is exploratory and descriptive in nature. As the study is intended to develop on the underlying motives for the preference of the products, exploratory research design was considered to be appropriate. The research is descriptive in nature as it explains the prevailing state of affairs with reference to online shopping of electronic gadgets.

Data was obtained from primary as well as secondary sources. The primary data was gathered by means of random sampling (C.R Kothari,2013). A group of 200 respondents were chosen and an earnest effort was made to incorporate most of the localities of Patna like Boring Road, Kankarbagh, Rajendra Nagar, Gardanibagh in order to arrive at meaningful conclusions. The secondary data included information collected from relevant books and websites. A questionnaire was administered to collect data from the respondents and a survey was conducted for the same.

Analysis and Interpretation :

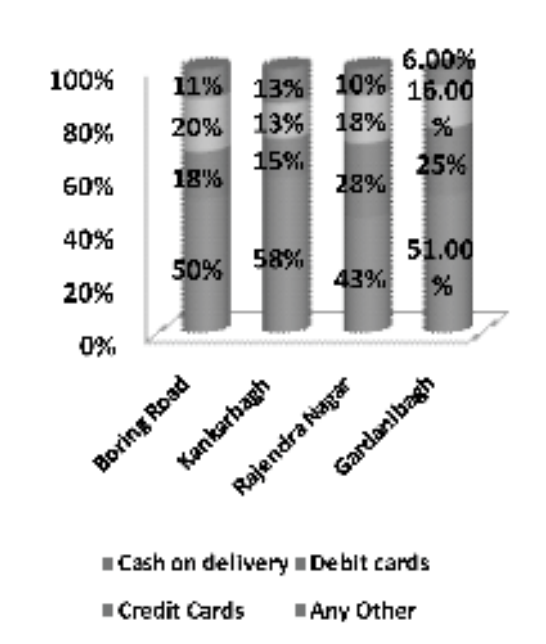
1. Preferred Online products in different Localities.



Interpretation: As we wanted to find out the preference of the consumers related to online buying, we came across the fact that the most popular item consumers like to buy online is clothes. Though the most

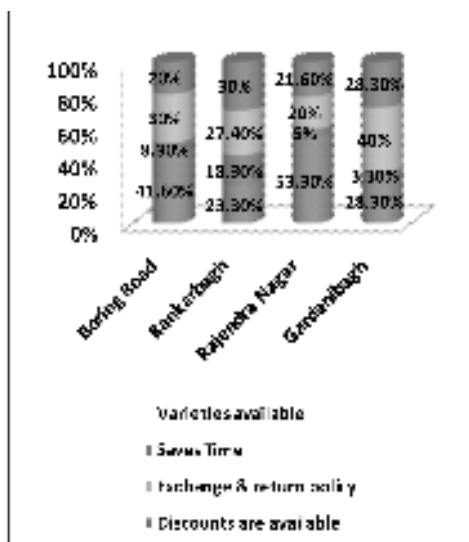
preferred product online was found to be clothes, it was also very obvious that the next most popular liking was electronic gadgets.

2. Choice of the Mode of payment while placing an order.



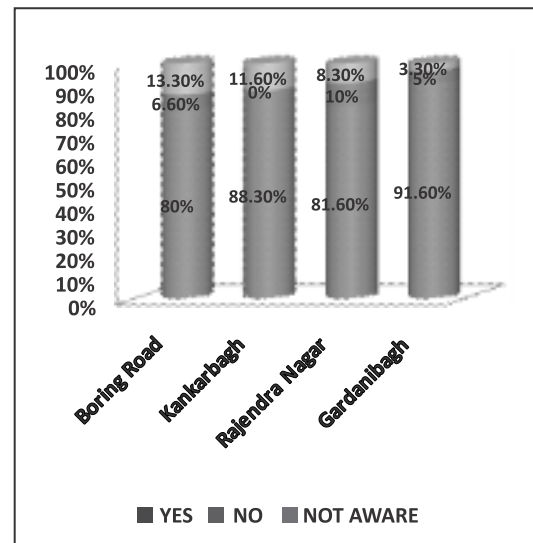
Interpretation: We wanted to figure out the mode of payment generally used while making payments in online shopping. We came to the conclusion through the survey conducted that most people choose Cash on Delivery option for payments. This is the most convenient mode of payment according to people. However, many people who avoid cash transaction prefer Net Banking method for the payment.

3. Reasons for the preferences of online shopping.



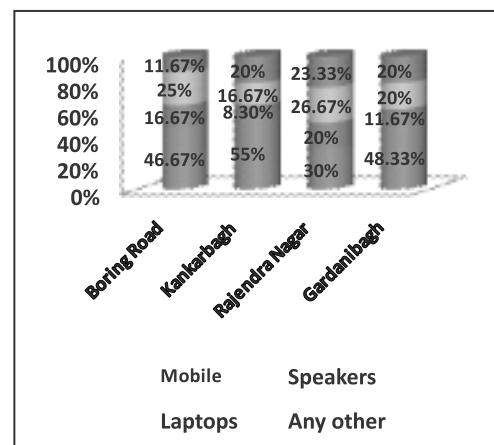
Interpretation: We were interested in knowing the reasons why people prefer online shopping. After the study, we found that most of the people buy online as varieties are available in online stores. It also provides heavy discounts and have guaranteed exchange and return policy which attracts customers to buy online.

4. Feedback mechanisms



Interpretation: In our survey we wanted to know whether there is any feedback mechanism to check whether the customers were satisfied. It was observed that most of the people had a positive response towards it. The online stores take their feedback regarding the product to find out if the customer is satisfied with the product. Our study revealed there are also few people who are not aware about the feedback mechanisms.

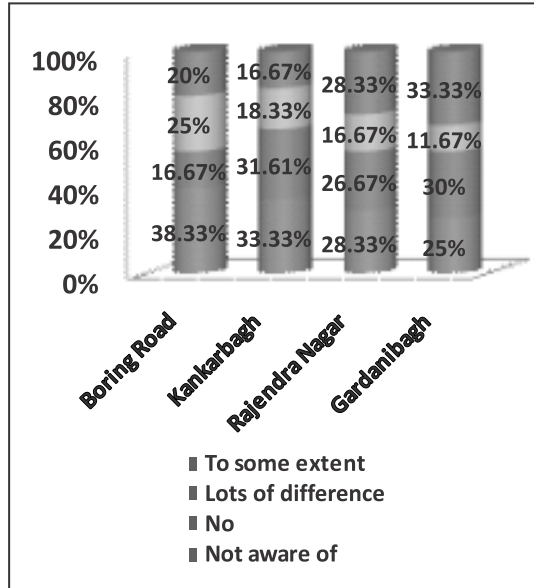
5. Commonly purchased Electronic Gadgets.



Interpretation: We also directed our questions to the customers to figure out the most commonly purchased electronic gadgets. In order of the consumer preference, we may place mobile phones as the most

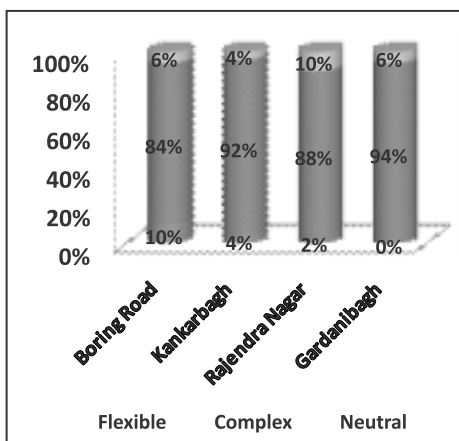
popular product followed by a list of electronic gadgets like pen drive, power bank, and mobile phone chargers.

6. Do you think the market prices are comparatively higher than the online prices of electronic goods?



Interpretation: We were also keen to know the perspectives of people regarding the differences between the market and online prices of electronic goods. It was observed that to some extent the market prices are higher than the online prices of electronic goods. The consumers felt that there were more discounts and prices were cheaper in online purchasing.

7. Nature of the Return & Exchange policy offered by online stores.



Interpretation: We wanted to know about the nature of return and exchange policy offered by online stores. The people who surveyed were of the opinion that there were certain hindrances in online shopping as far as

return and exchange policy is concerned. The customers often to face many problems while returning the product. Due to the lengthy processes involved and also because of a very short time period within which the customers had to return the product. Often, if the time was extended, online stores would refuse to take it back.

Findings of the Study :

The findings are as follows:

1. It was found that the customers in Patna have a favourable opinion regarding purchase of electronic gadgets like Laptops, Speakers, Mobile phones as far as online stores are concerned.
2. After the survey and an analysis of the collected data, we were able to figure out that while buying electronic goods, majority of the customers prefer to pay cash on delivery. A number of them are reluctant to use online shopping with the fear that their bank/credit card details might be stolen as they are aware of some online frauds.
3. Some consumers were of opinion that the process of return and exchange policy is not flexible. One has to go through several processes if they want to return or exchange the faulty product and in some cases, there is also delay in the return or exchange of the faulty product which creates frustration in the minds of the customers.
4. We received a mixed opinion when we directed our questions on availability of feedback mechanism to check consumer satisfaction. Though a considerable percentage of the respondents were positive that a feedback mechanism did exist, there were others who did not feel the same. In fact, we also came across some respondents who were not aware of the presence of feedback mechanism while buying electronic goods from different sites.

Recommendations :

The recommendations are as follows:

- Online stores should make the return and exchange policy process easier as people are facing many difficulties in returning faulty products.
- These websites must consider providing a better feedback mechanism to consumers as our study that was conducted brought to limelight that there are consumers who are

either not satisfied with the feedback mechanism or they are still unaware of the same.

Limitations :

While conducting our study, we encountered certain limitations since the first hand information was primarily obtained from the people in Patna. These limitations are:

- (i) The study has a limited validity as it is confined to Patna district only. Our research was focussed primarily on people who go for online shopping.
- (ii) It has also got limited reliability as the sample size was considered small for the purpose of a deeper analysis of the research problem

Conclusion :

Online shopping has become a part and parcel of our daily lives. There is no doubt that online shopping is gaining momentum in recent years. Though our research outcomes have shown that clothes are the most preferred item, electronic goods, home

appliances and other gadgets are also frequently bought. Customers expressed their dissatisfaction with the feedback mechanism and the return and exchange policy. The online stores need to focus on eliminating these constraints so that a more value added service is provided to the customers. There seems to be a vast scope for increasing the popularity and sales for electronic gadgets through online shopping.

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