

A Study on Perception Towards E-Commerce with Reference to Indian Sellers

Dr. Archana Patil

Assistant professor, Department of Commerce, VIVA College of Arts, Commerce and Science

ABSTRACT

Commerce is one branch of business. Indian market was dominated by offline buyers and sellers where trade activities used to take place in physical market. Sellers had to set up their products either on streets or shops. Buyers also used to visit market as per the market timings. They had to adjust themselves according to market and product availability. Customers had no choice of price negotiation as markets were dominated by sellers. Former market trend is now metamorphosed. New changes have been developed in commerce. Sellers have become customer centric. Sellers have to handle customer's changing behaviour. To ensure market survival, customer is the most important element which seller has to take care of. Today's educated customer is getting comfortable with online shopping. Now, there is a situation where online sellers are gaining more profits. Sellers have no option for online selling. This study shows that Indian sellers are now becoming familiar with online trend. They found it very convenient and less expensive. It can be concluded that Indian sellers have positive perception towards e-commerce.

Keywords: Commerce, E-Commerce and India, Indian sellers, perception of sellers towards e-commerce

INTRODUCTION

The term commerce is related with buying and selling of products. There should be active involvement of buyers and sellers in the activity of commerce. In India, concept of commerce had started with barter system where exchange of goods for goods used to take place. Later, it kept on changing as per the changes in economy. Innovative practices kept on coming in commerce. Money became the centre of trade. Money influences perception of buyers and sellers while doing trade. Indian market was highly occupied with unorganised trade. It is now gradually moving towards organised one. Unorganised trade is a very basic way of commerce. It is customer friendly as sellers charge lower prices for products. At the same time, there is no assurance of quality. It is beneficial to sellers as well because it needs less investment. It helps to reduce cost of business. As per the changing needs of customers, sellers are entering into organised trade. It is required to fulfil demands of modern customers. Today's customer is quality oriented and he is ready to pay high for that. It is very difficult for unorganised sellers to survive in market. Sellers need to change their strategies to cope with modern customers. In organised commerce, sellers and buyers can interact through modern stores. It is also possible to trade without physical stores.

E-commerce is one of the formats of organised commerce where buyers and sellers can virtually deal with each other. There is no physical meetings of buyers and sellers. This trend is gaining importance in India. Electronic commerce is convenient to buyers as well as sellers. Buyers find it very convenient as it facilitates 24×7 shopping from any place. It avails products at reasonable prices. Seller can easily enter into online market. It requires less investment. E-commerce is conducted through direct channel. It reduces

distribution costs. Internet market helps sellers to reach entire world market which is not possible in offline market. According to **Thompson S. H., 2022**, internet is a good way for marketing. In the coming years, it will become a strong channel of distribution. In E-commerce, there is a need to check requirements of customers. is aimed at studying various angles of E-commerce and giving insights to researchers and online sellers. The study of **S. Burt, L. Sparks, 2003** focuses on how E-commerce is putting its effects on retail industry. It is found that sellers are trying to take benefits of online platform. They are reducing operational costs by entering in online market and thereby strengthening themselves in competitive world. Online retailers are also finding it difficult to judge customer responses. There is a need to build up quality standards to attract customers. The process of online commerce is more innovative. Future of E-commerce can be decided on the basis of innovativeness as it keeps E-commerce at distinct place from offline trade. **Scott Hamilton (1997)** focused on three elements in his study i.e. content, convenience and confidence. Security is must for customers while doing online commerce activities.

OBJECTIVES

There are many researchers who have contributed in studying buyer's perception towards e-commerce. Therefore, in this study researcher tried to study perception of sellers towards e-commerce specifically in India. Following are the objectives of research.

1. To study development of e-commerce in India.
2. To study perception of Indian sellers towards e-commerce.

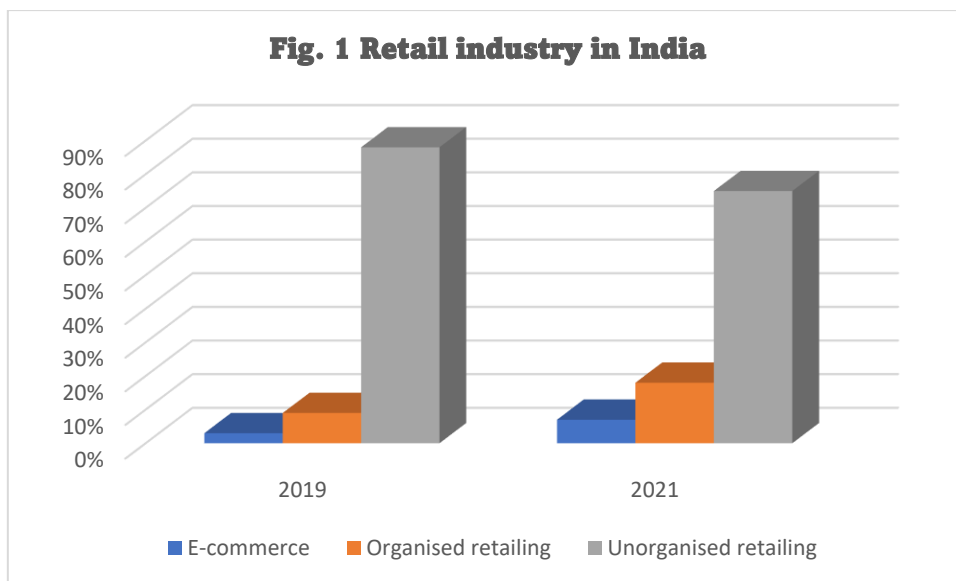
E-COMMERCE

It is a different task to sell products online as far as offline sale is concerned. It has opportunities as well as challenges. Website plays a major role in E-commerce. Website needs to be developed as per standards as customers always give preference to conventionality. Online platform facilitates easy promotion of products. Seller is required to make less investment in online business. Products can be displayed in categories so that buyer will be at convenience. Global reach is one of the benefits for seller. E-retailer can reach worldwide customers through E-selling. In online selling, seller can take some time for the delivery of the products and therefore, there is no need to make bulk production in advance. Seller is in a position to provide customized products to their customers. Electronic Data Interchange helps to make E-commerce activity more user friendly. In E-commerce, sellers get audience counts automatically. Sellers can check how many customers have visited their website, which products are searched by customers, which are highly purchased products, etc. While surfing website, buyer may be asked to accept cookies. On its acceptance, seller can collect necessary information about customers and it can be used for making further changes in business policies and customer services. E-commerce helps to reduce business costs as there is no need to maintain large number of sales staff. There is no need to maintain warehouses and thereby no need to bear expenses of inventory management. Modern customer prefers clicks over bricks. It is convenient for customer to click at home rather than visiting off-line stores. It provides a great deal of convenience for shoppers. They can do shopping of variety products through online platform. Sellers can take benefit of all these positive points of e-commerce and can try to attract large number of customers. E-commerce facilitates quick delivery to customers which helps to satisfy customers. E-commerce also have some disadvantages. In e-commerce, seller cannot provide touch and feel shopping experience to customers. Indian customers are more fond of this experience and and this is the reason why majority of the Indian customers prefer offline shopping. Technology handling is another problem of e-commerce.

Some customers find it difficult to execute the process of online transaction. Payment issues is also one of the reasons for the botheration of customers.

E-COMMERCE AND INDIA

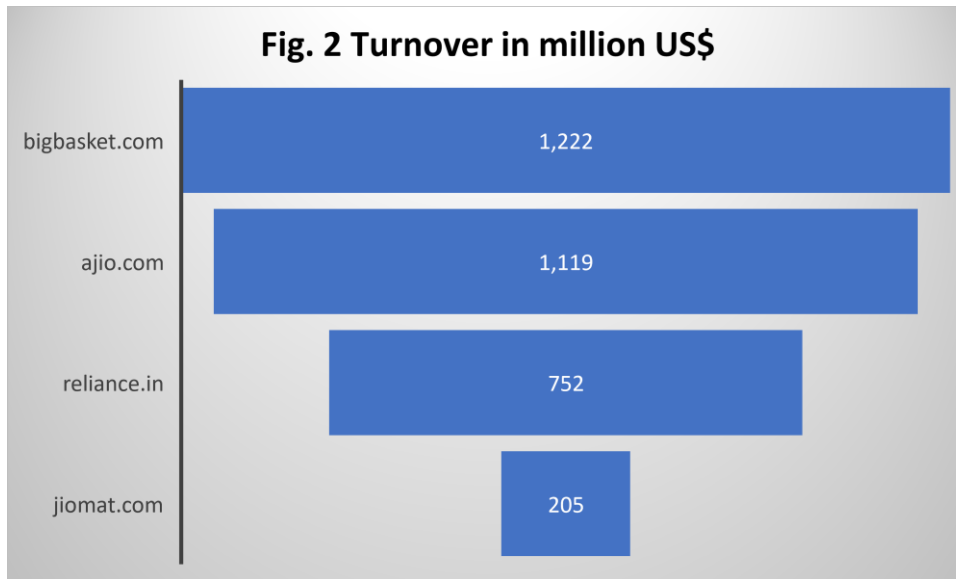
In past years, E-commerce was underdeveloped concept in India. E-commerce users could be counted on the fingers of the hand. Customers were not aware about online business. There was no basic internet and computer facility available. Gone those days. Computer education is growing rapidly in India. Number of middle class people are increasing. Most important, the share of organised retailing is on rise in India.



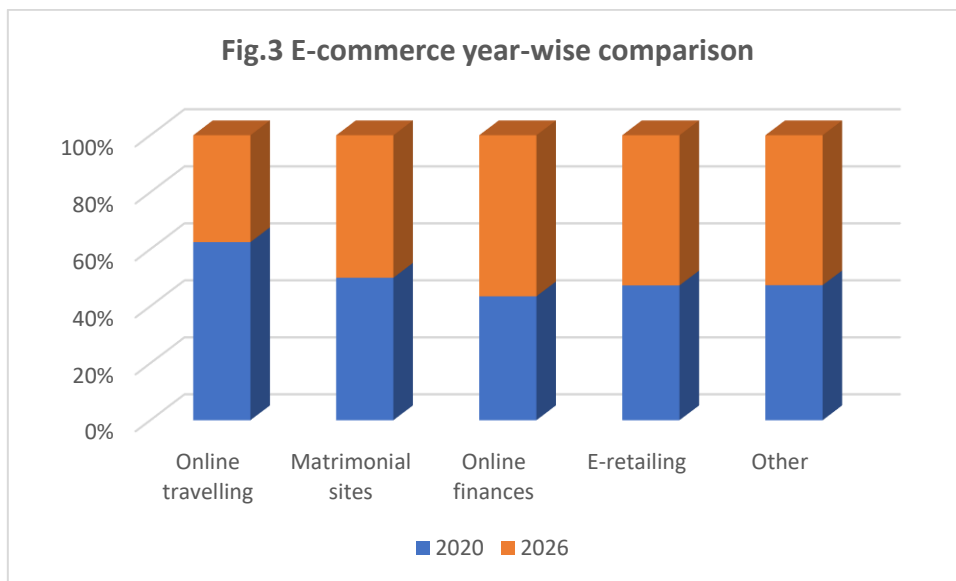
It is seen that E-commerce in India is speeding up. Especially, from COVID period, people have been getting more familiar with this trend. One of the reasons for the popularity of online commerce is availability of variety options. Unfortunately, India has no sufficient laws for E-commerce. There are no proper provisions for online frauds. Indian government is boosting online trade. In addition to that government should also take steps towards modifications of acts and laws. It will help participants in online commerce to feel secure.

INDIAN SELLERS IN E-COMMERCE

In E-commerce, sellers have to tackle very few barriers while entering in market. Government of India has created a healthy environment for online commerce. Therefore, many international online sellers are serving Indian customers. Indian sellers are also entering on this platform. Bigbasket, Ajo, Reliance, Jiomart are some major online players in India. They are selling quality products to customers. These brands also have their physical outlets and now with the changing market trend, they have developed online stores. This is the way how they are satisfying their customers in hybrid form. Indian firms have realised the importance of online selling. They came to know that the chances of getting profit are huge in online market.



E-commerce avails not only garments, grocery but also finances, matrimonial services, travelling, etc. From the following figure, comparison of online trade can be made in the year 2020 and 2026.



DATA ANALYSIS:

Researcher has taken interviews of some Indian sellers who are doing well in E-commerce.

Person 1:

She was a housewife. She always wanted to do some great job. She decided to listen her inner voice by opposing the beliefs of society. She started online business with some handicraft items and today she is a successful e-seller of home furnishing items on popular shopping websites. She proud of herself for discovering her own identity.

Person 2:

He is a successful businessman in the field of electronics. He used to sell in offline market. He strongly believes in innovation. Once he thought of expanding his business through online market. He was very new to this concept. First, he learnt techniques of online selling from experts and tried his luck in E-

commerce. He said that by god's grace he succeeded in this wave and he is fully satisfied with his achievements. He also motivates other seller to come online to earn higher efficiency.

Person 3:

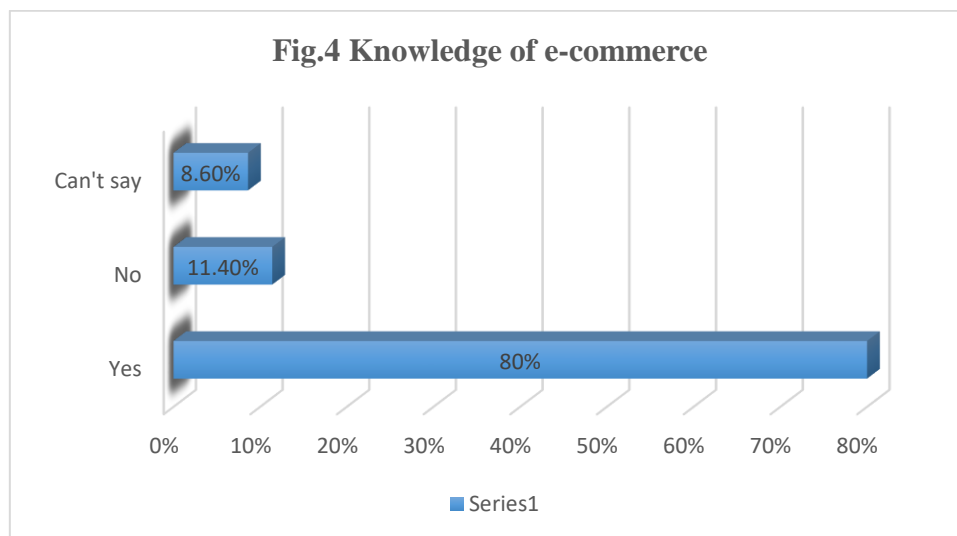
His family has business of sarees. He was successful employee in an IT company. Being an IT professional, his mind obviously caught with the idea of online business. As his product is a saree, target customer is females. When it comes to female and saree, the bond is different. Ladies invest much time in shopping sarees. In E-commerce, it is difficult to attract them towards saree. One of his friends is professional photographer. He helped him to capture attractive pictures and videos of saree. This technique worked well. His family business has reached beyond the local market. He is now a happy online seller.

Person 4:

He is the author of books. He decided to sell his books online. He entered in online market through Snapdeal. He discovered one new thing in online business that he can directly ask customers to give reviews to his books. This helps him to improve content of his writings. He is now able to increase sale of books. He has earned many happy customers through online platform.

Person 5:

This interviewer had dream to do innovation. She ensured that the products will be unique. At the initial stage, she found it difficult to identify what exactly customer wants and what he does not but after some period, she became expert in identifying customer requirements. Today, she is earning good amount of money from her business. She is one of the happy sellers in e-commerce.



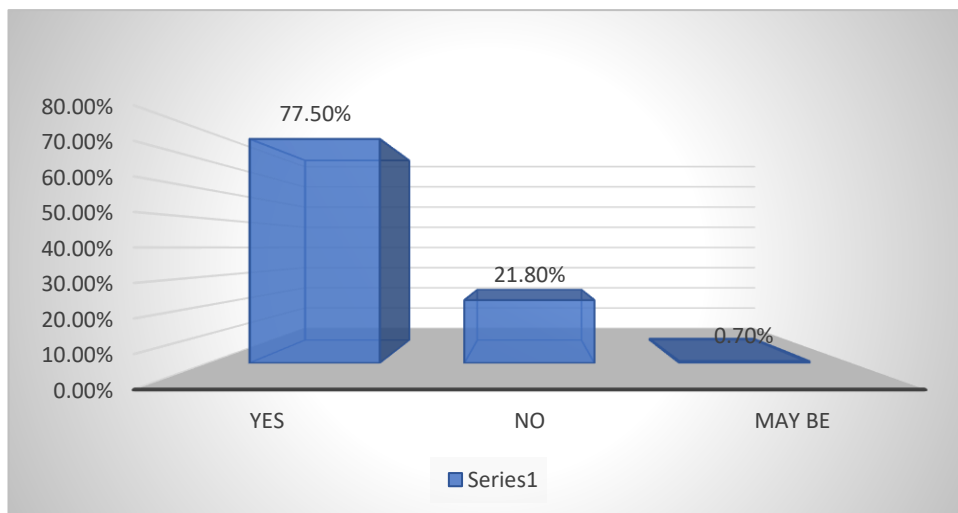


Fig.6 Future entry in e-commerce

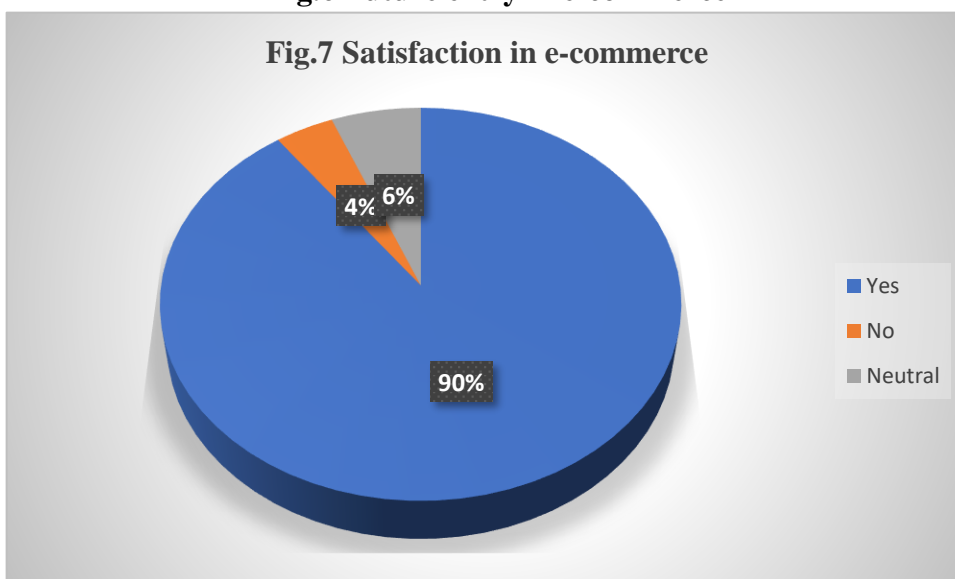


Figure 4 says that 80% Indian sellers are aware of e-commerce. As per fig.5, 68% of Indian sellers are selling their products online. Sellers were asked whether they have plan to enter in e-commerce in future. This data is represented in figure 6. It is noticed that 77.5% sellers are interested to enter in e-commerce in near future. 21.8% sellers have no interest in e-commerce and 0.7% sellers have not yet sure about their entry in e-commerce. Fig.7 represents satisfaction level of sellers in e-commerce. It is found that 90% Indian sellers are satisfied with online selling. 4% are not satisfied in e-commerce. They are comfortable in offline selling and 6% respondents are neutral about this question.

Conclusion:

E-commerce is on rise in India. Customers are giving positive response for online selling. As online buyers are increasing, number of sellers are entering in online commerce to satisfy buyers. Some of the Indian sellers have already entered in online market whereas, some have future plans. Sellers have realised that to survive in competition, it is necessary to operate in online market. In personal interviews, researcher came to know that sellers faced barriers in initial stage but after a practice, they became aware of techniques of online trade. They do not have any regrets about switching from offline to online market. They are satisfied with the benefits of e-commerce. Few sellers are still stuck to traditional brick and mortar concept. Some programmes need to be arranged for such sellers. They should think from future point of view. Overall, Indian sellers have positive perception towards e-commerce.

References:

1. Thompson S. H. (2022), Attitude towards online shopping and internet, Behaviour and Information Technology, vol.21(4), 259-271.
2. Niranjnamurthy M, Kavyashree N, et al. (2013), Analysis of E-Commerce and M-Commerce: Advantages, Limitations and Security issues, International Journal of Advanced Research in Computer and Communication Engineering Vol. 2(6), 2360-2370.
3. S. Burt, L. Sparks (2003), E-commerce and the retail process: a review, Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services (10) 275–286
4. Scott Hamilton (1997), E-commerce for the 21st century, IEEE, 44-47.