

Post-Pandemic Consumer Behavior Analysis: A Case Study of Product Purchases in India with Amazon Data

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the fascinating topic of consumer behavior in India's post-pandemic environment, paying particular attention to the trends and variables affecting product purchasing. Consumer interests and preferences have undergone substantial alteration as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Businesses looking to adapt and flourish in the changing industry must comprehend how these shifts show up in consumer decisions. The research uses a thorough methodology to examine the nuances of customer behavior by fusing quantitative and qualitative techniques.

In order to better understand post-pandemic consumer decisions, the research looks at psychological and socioeconomic aspects such as brand loyalty, safety concerns, and shifting economic conditions. Recognizing customer behavior is crucial for firms looking to customize their goods to address new requirements as India struggles with the pandemic's repercussions. In addition to adding to the body of knowledge on consumer behavior in academia, the research's conclusions can help firms in India navigate the challenging post-pandemic market environment. This study aims to clarify the complex relationship between market dynamics and consumer psychology, providing insight into the changing trends that define the Indian consumer environment in the post-pandemic age.

Using data from Amazon, this study examines post-pandemic consumer behavior in India with an emphasis on goods purchases. Businesses and politicians need to understand how consumer behavior has changed as the globe recovers from the COVID-19 epidemic. Using information from Amazon, one of the top online retailers in India, this study looks into trends in product purchases, changes in customer preferences, and how the epidemic has affected consumers' purchasing habits. Through an analysis of patterns and insights obtained from Amazon data, this study offers significant insights into the evolving consumer behavior environment in post-pandemic India, assisting businesses and governments in making strategic decisions.

Keywords: Consumer Behavior, COVID-19, Pandemic, Consumer Psychology, Socioeconomic, Brand loyalty, Safety concerns, Market dynamics, Post-pandemic,

INTRODUCTION

India is not an exception to how the COVID-19 epidemic has profoundly altered consumer behavior throughout the world. Businesses hoping to prosper in this changing environment must understand the

complex mechanics of customer behavior as the nation struggles to deal with the pandemic's repercussions. This research explores the domain of consumer behavior in India following the epidemic, illuminating the patterns and factors affecting decisions to buy products.

A recent development related to consumer behavior in India post-pandemic is the shift towards online shopping for a wide range of products. This change has been driven by the need for contactless transactions and the convenience of shopping from home. Companies are adapting their marketing strategies to cater to this trend, focusing more on e-commerce platforms and digital advertising. Additionally, there is a growing emphasis on health and safety features in products, with consumers showing a preference for items that promote well-being. This shift in consumer behavior is reshaping the retail landscape in India, with businesses investing more in their online presence and delivery services to meet the evolving demands of customers.

The most significant aspect of this transforming consumer environment is the rapid growth of e-commerce. As a result of lockdowns and other social distancing measures, the pandemic accelerated the spread of e-commerce by forcing customers to turn to internet platforms for their buying requirements. E-commerce has become a popular and safer substitute for conventional brick-and-mortar retailers as a result of regulations and safety concerns.

The worldwide pandemic hit in e-commerce activity highlights the importance that it is to comprehend how digital channels have changed customer preferences and purchase behaviors. The purpose of this study is to investigate how the pandemic has affected the uptake of e-commerce in India by looking at how the country's shifting consumer mindset, safety concerns, and economic circumstances have all impacted the trend toward online buying.

The research presented here uses a comprehensive approach that combines both qualitative and quantitative techniques to try to understand the intricacies of consumer behavior following the epidemic. In order to help businesses navigate the obstacles of the post-pandemic market climate, this study explores psychological and socioeconomic issues such as brand loyalty and safety considerations.

Other than that, the research findings not only enrich the scholarly awareness of consumer behavior but also hold practical significance for Indian firms. Businesses could modify their goods and approaches to meet the shifting requirements and tastes of Indian customers in the post-pandemic age by developing a deeper awareness of the changing consumer environment.

In this regard, the pandemic's breakthrough effect on consumer behavior can be seen clearly in the exponential rise of e-commerce. Through an analysis of the variables influencing the surge in e-commerce, this research seeks to clarify the more general patterns influencing the Indian consumer landscape following the COVID-19 outbreak.

Global consumer behavior has changed dramatically as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in the area of e-commerce. Businesses and governments alike must grasp how consumer tastes and purchase habits have changed as societies adjust to new norms and negotiate the complexity of the post-pandemic world. Using information from Amazon, one of the top e-commerce sites in the nation, this study examines how Indian consumers behaved while making goods purchases after the epidemic.

India is a dynamic e-commerce industry due to its large and diversified population, quick adoption of digital technology, and changing customer tastes. The COVID-19 epidemic hastened this shift in consumer behavior toward digital platforms, since social isolation and lockdowns have forced people to spend more and more online. Given this context, it is critical for e-commerce stakeholders looking to modify their tactics in response to changing market needs to analyze the subtleties of post-pandemic customer behavior.

By leveraging data from Amazon, this study aims to provide insights into the post-pandemic consumer landscape in India. Through an analysis of product purchases, we seek to uncover trends, preferences, and determinants influencing consumer decision-making. Additionally, the study intends to shed light on the role of factors such as convenience, safety, and digital experience in shaping consumer behavior in the aftermath of the pandemic.

The findings of this research hold significant implications for e-commerce businesses, policymakers, and marketers, offering valuable insights into strategies for market positioning, customer engagement, and service enhancement. By understanding the intricacies of post-pandemic consumer behavior, stakeholders can better adapt their offerings to meet the evolving needs and preferences of Indian consumers in the digital age.

Literature Review

In the past couple of years, researchers from a wide range of social scientific fields have been dedicating close attention to consumer behavior, gaining an understanding of the manner in which individuals make decisions about the purchase, utilization, and eventual disposal of products and services. (MacInnis & Folkes, 2010). The substantial amount of literature dedicated to understanding various aspects of customer behavior is proof of this growing interest. (Arndt, 1986; Battalio et al., 1974; Belk et al., 2012; Hameed et al., 2014; Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2009; Howard & Sheth, 1968; . Consumer behavior is subject to constant change in the sociological, economic, and technical landscapes. Consequently, research initiatives in this domain undergo constant changes in emphasis, methodology, and subject matter.

A comprehensive examination of the dynamic area of consumer behavior research is essential for directing future research and assuring the subject's ongoing development. (Williams & Plouffe, 2007). By scrutinizing academic literature, scholars acquire insights into the intellectual trajectory of the field, finding significant works, developing trends, and unfilled gaps in knowledge. (Pasadeos et al., 1998). Peer-reviewed journals, as key repository of intellectual discourse, are essential tools for undertaking extensive assessments of consumer behavior research. (Üsdiken & Pasadeos, 1995; Williams & Plouffe, 2007).

Content analysis is a strong technique for methodically examining the thematic, methodological, and theoretical components of consumer behavior literature.(Sattari, 2012). By systematically evaluating message content from various media, content analysis highlights areas that need more research in addition to highlighting recurring themes and investigating aims. (Kolbe & Burnett, 1991; Vallet-Bellmunt et al., 2011). The investigation of content helps to provide a more nuanced picture of the changing landscape of consumer behavior research by distinguishing chronological, methodological, and philosophical patterns of behavior. (Cokley et al., 2001).

Examination of journal papers in the field of consumer behavior yields important insights into the challenges that are emerging as well as the current patterns and essential contributions that are shaping the field. (Buboltz et al., 1999; Cokley et al., 2001). Researchers can discover important subjects, methodological trajectories, and theoretical frameworks for consumer behavior research by evaluating the systematically focuses of published publications. These assessments help to clarify the field's intellectual past and set the direction for future study by pointing forth fresh directions for scholarly investigation. (Pasadeos et al., 1998).

By outlining novel avenues for academic inquiry, these evaluations contribute to the clarification of the field's intellectual history and establish the course for upcoming research. (Kassarjian, 1977; Helgeson et

al., 1984). In order to fill this vacuum, this literature review methodically examines consumer behavior studies that were published in five eminent business publications during a 12-year time frame. This study attempts to give a descriptive overview of dominant topics, methodological methods, and citation trends in the field of consumer behavior research by integrating ideas from over 1,000 papers. By this effort, we hope to provide a thorough grasp of the changing field of consumer behavior scholarship, which will help guide future studies and tactical promotional strategies.

Dixit, S. K. (2017). *The Routledge Handbook of Consumer Behaviour in Hospitality and Tourism*. In *Routledge eBooks*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315659657>

The essential influence of consumer behavior on the development of the travel and hospitality sectors is discussed in the book. It covers a wide range of topics, including online behavior, customer happiness, service quality, consumer decision-making, and new paradigms, in six thorough sections. The handbook, which fills a vacuum in the conceptual literature, is an excellent resource for scholars, researchers, and students studying hospitality, tourism, marketing, international business, and consumer behavior. It offers both theoretical insights and practical applications.

Objective of research

By the following objectives we can prove that the COVID-19 Pandemic played an important role in shifting the consumer behavior in INDIA

Q,1. Has the COVID-19 pandemic increased online shopping in India?

Q,2. The adoption of e-commerce in India during the epidemic is driven by psychological elements such as perceived safety and convenience, as well as socioeconomic aspects such as income and job position.

Research Methodology

Using Amazon as a focal point, this study intends to investigate the patterns of consumer behavior in the Indian e-commerce business. In order to assess the trends and factors impacting consumer purchase decisions, the study uses a descriptive technique with secondary data. Through an analysis of many factors including psychographics, buying behavior, and demography, this study aims to provide light on how internet shopping is changing in India in the context of the COVID-19 epidemic.

So let's take a look on "the Demographic Details of Online Buyers in India"

E-commerce refers to the market that involves the online selling of goods and/or services to a private user (B2C). Various digital devices such as desktops, laptops and mobile handsets are used as mediums of transaction in such businesses. However, it is important to mention here that e-commerce does not include the following:

- Downloads or streaming of digital media content (e.g. music downloads, eBooks)
- Services that are digitally distributed
- Digital distribution of goods in B2B markets
- Resale or purchase of any used, defective and repaired items (reCommerce)
- Sales between private persons – C2C markets

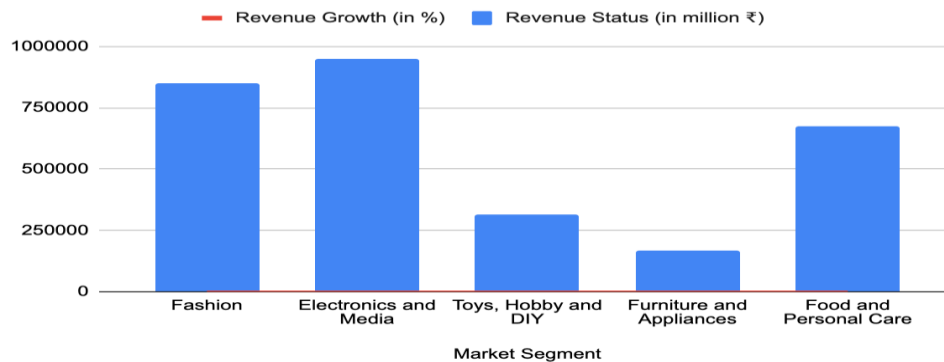
Revenue Status of E-Commerce in India

In 2020, the projective revenue output in the e-commerce market is tipped to scale INR 2,958,072 million with the Average Revenue per User (ARPU) being approximately INR 5,392.54 per user. A growth rate (CAGR 2020-2024) of 11.1% in revenue generation by e-commerce is, therefore, anticipated this year. This is expected to result in the projected market volume of INR 4,502,790 million by the year 2024.

The table below reflects the current (2020) Revenue Status and Growth figures in different market segments:

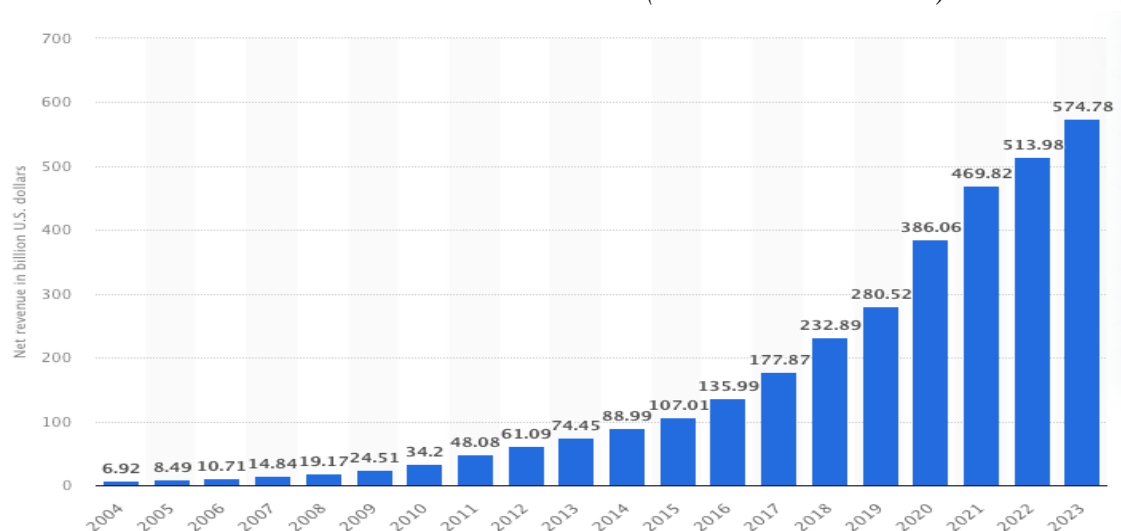
Market Segment	Revenue Status (in million ₹)	Revenue Growth (in %)
Fashion	848,196.8	39.49
Electronics and Media	950,374.6	31.17
Toys, Hobby and DIY	314,987.3	29.62
Furniture and Appliances	168,932.9	29.88
Food and Personal Care	675,580.1	55.41

Revenue Status (in million ₹) and Revenue Growth (in %)



The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in the country and around the world has changed the buying habits of people significantly. With lockdowns imposed to contain the contagion, a sharp rise has been noticed in the number of first-time e-commerce users in India. Earlier, these users had remained reticent with the idea of online shopping. A significant number of people are now using digital payment modes to purchase groceries, medicines and other essentials. This new wave of digital shoppers has nearly doubled the revenue income of leading consumer brands in India.

Annual net sales revenue of Amazon from 2004 to 2023 (in billion U.S. dollars)



From 2004 to 2023, the net revenue of Amazon e-commerce and service sales has increased tremendously. In the last reported year, the multinational e-commerce company's net revenue was almost 576 billion U.S. dollars, up from 514 billion U.S. dollars in 2022.

Amazon.com, a U.S. electronic commerce company originally founded in 1994, is the world's largest online retailer of books, clothing, electronics, music, and many more goods. As of 2022, the company generates the majority of its net revenues through online retail product sales, followed by third-party retail seller services, cloud computing services, and retail subscription services including Amazon Prime.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, Amazon has experienced dynamic growth in its operations, marked by a significant increase in both revenue and market penetration. This growth trajectory is vividly depicted in the bar chart, showcasing a steep upward trend in key performance indicators such as sales volume and customer engagement. As the pandemic spurred a shift towards online shopping, Amazon swiftly adapted its strategies to meet the escalating demand for goods and services. With consumers increasingly relying on e-commerce platforms for their purchasing needs, Amazon's expanded product offerings, streamlined delivery services, and enhanced user experience have positioned it as a dominant player in the market. Consequently, this surge in Amazon's prominence has exerted a profound impact on consumer behavior, shaping preferences, habits, and expectations in the e-commerce landscape through 2023. As consumers continue to prioritize convenience, reliability, and accessibility, Amazon's continued growth trajectory underscores its enduring influence on the evolving dynamics of consumer behavior in the post-pandemic era.

According to the shown data there is a relation between the consumer and their behavior towards the buying of goods in online platforms rather than offline shops because of pandemic and lockdown over the globe. The time period of lockdown helps to grow an online market (e-commerce Market) like "Amazon, flipkart, walmart, meshow, etc." as the result they acquired the whole market throughout the scenario.

The adoption of e-commerce in India during the epidemic is driven by psychological elements such as perceived safety and convenience, as well as socioeconomic aspects such as income and job position.

The epidemic-related uptake of e-commerce in India may be ascribed to a combination of socioeconomic and psychological elements that have shaped consumer behavior. First, during the COVID-19 pandemic, people prioritized contactless shopping experiences in order to reduce their chance of contracting the virus. This indicates that they regarded perceived safety as their top concern. To ease the anxiety associated with in-person shopping, e-commerce platforms such as Amazon provided a solution by allowing customers to explore and buy a wide selection of items from the comfort and safety of their homes. Customers' tastes were greatly impacted by this perceived safety factor, which led to an increase in online buying.

Furthermore, during the pandemic, convenience was a major factor in the development of e-commerce in India. With mobility limitations and social distancing policies in place, customers looked for easy substitutes for conventional brick-and-mortar establishments. E-commerce platforms accommodated the changing demands and tastes of consumers limited by time and mobility by offering a hassle-free, 24/7 buying experience with doorstep delivery and easy returns. Convenience played a key role in both the shift to online buying and the long-term behavioral changes that resulted from customers appreciating the speed and simplicity of doing business online.

Moreover, throughout the pandemic, socioeconomic variables like employment status and income had a big impact on e-commerce adoption. People in a range of income ranges looked for economical and frugal ways to purchase as the pandemic altered customary work patterns and created economic instability. Customers trying to stretch their budgets in the face of financial restraints found online shopping to be an appealing alternative because to e-commerce platforms' competitive pricing, discounts, and promotional offers. Furthermore, the pandemic's incitement of remote labor and digital entrepreneurship gave people more freedom and flexibility, which increased the number of prospective e-commerce customers from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds.

In conclusion, a complex interaction between socioeconomic factors like money and employment status and psychological factors like perceived ease and safety drove the adoption of e-commerce in India during the pandemic. E-commerce giants like Amazon were able to effectively take advantage of the extraordinary conditions created by the epidemic by catering to these diverse customer requirements and tastes, which in turn caused a paradigm change in consumer behavior toward online buying.

What Is the Amazon Effect?

Fundamentally, the Amazon effect is characterized by a desire for ease, quickness, and customized buying. For more than ten years, the Amazon effect has raised consumer expectations, and the epidemic amplified its effects. Today's consumers demand quick shipping, simple returns, and a wide selection of products at their fingertips—all of which Amazon has perfected. Amazon has raised the standard for user-friendliness with services like one-click buying, free two-day shipping for Prime members, and immediate customer support replies. Consumers are irritated when they purchase somewhere else and have to pay for delivery since they are so accustomed to receiving free shipment.

According to CMSWire, John Nash, CMO at Redpoint Global, a company that offers customer data management and engagement strategies, the Amazon effect has had a significant impact on marketers who aim to give customers a personalized, omnichannel customer experience (CX) that lives up to their expectations as well as on how consumers interact with brands.

Amazon wants to be the easiest, most cheap, most user-friendly place to purchase. For instance, millions of things are eligible for free two-day delivery for Amazon Prime members, so customers can purchase anything now and have it delivered to their home in just two days without having to pay additional shipping costs. This raises expectations for prompt, cost-free delivery.

Amazon negotiates excellent prices from suppliers using its size and scope, then passes those savings forward to customers. Customers may also examine evaluations left by previous users on the website to aid in their decision-making. The system leverages the browsing and purchasing history of its consumers to offer tailored and pertinent suggestions for further goods that they might find appealing.

According to Nash, customers increasingly anticipate that a company to be aware of their individual preferences across all platforms, partly because of Amazon. According to Nash, "knowing color, size, and style preferences, for example, are now the tip of the iceberg in retail." Which delivery option is best, and where should the gift be left? Does the consumer act as a kind of way station using an online shopping cart? Has the client consented to receive SMS alerts? Consumers now assume that brands are aware of these information and won't need to reiterate them.

Personalization has come to be an expected feature that ecommerce brands provide to customers today. A 2020 Harris Poll survey sponsored by Redpoint revealed that 63% of consumers said that personalization

is now considered a standard service, and 42% defined personalization as a brand knowing they are the same customer across all touchpoints (in-store, email, online, mobile, social media, call center, etc.).

What customers anticipate from an online shopping experience has been fashioned by Amazon: an unmatched assortment and ease of use, quick and free shipping, simple pricing comparisons, a customized, user-friendly interface, and prompt, helpful customer care. Customers' shopping habits have altered as a result, and all shops are under pressure to maintain these high standards.

There are times when the Amazon effect is detrimental. According to CMSWire, Jeff Rose, the creator and CFP of the wealth-building methods site Good Financial Cents, individuals no longer search for certain brands; instead, they frequently go straight to Amazon for any kind of need. The fact that more people are making purchases online has not only hurt traditional retailers but also made it extremely difficult for smaller internet retailers to stay competitive. Amazon's sales increased by 37% and its earnings quadrupled during the epidemic. Their astounding 76% share of e-commerce ad expenditure put them in the lead. This is dominance at a level that calls into question the fairness of the market and the amount of competition, not merely success."

##How Has the Amazon Effect Impacted Customer Expectations?

Customers' expectations have significantly changed as a result of the widespread impact of the Amazon effect, particularly because they were accustomed to purchasing on Amazon during the pandemic as a result of social distance, lockdowns, and company closures. Because of Amazon's success, customers now expect and perceive services from businesses in a different way. Notably, there is a greater need for prompt order fulfillment everywhere due to the emphasis on dependable and quick deliveries, as seen by programs like Amazon Prime.

Customers now demand individualized choices for products and content delivery, thanks to Amazon's AI-powered recommendation engine, which has made personalized shopping experiences possible. According to CMSWire, Mike Anderson, the founder and chief technology officer of Tealium, a company that provides consumer data platforms, customers will not accept mediocre experiences, particularly when making multi-session transactions.

"For example, For instance, consider a scenario where an e-commerce platform notices a trend of customers abandoning their shopping carts right before completing their purchases. Upon further analysis," it becomes apparent that a significant number of these abandoned carts belong to customers who were hesitant to proceed due to concerns about shipping costs. In response, the platform decides to implement a dynamic shipping cost calculation feature, wherein shipping fees are adjusted based on factors such as order value, customer location, and delivery speed preferences. This proactive approach not only addresses the specific pain point of customers but also enhances the overall shopping experience by providing transparency and flexibility in shipping options. Additionally, by closely monitoring the impact of this feature on conversion rates and customer satisfaction metrics, the platform can continuously refine its shipping strategy and optimize performance in alignment with consumer preferences.

The retail ecommerce landscape has changed due to the impact of the Amazon effect, which has raised customer expectations and redefined industry standards. Even though it will be extremely difficult to fulfill Amazon's criteria, businesses are actively responding to the changing market with initiatives like supply chain efficiency and AI integration. In the end, Amazon has sparked a revolution around the customer, reminding companies that putting customers first is essential to their success.

Conclusion

India is not an exception to the global pattern of significant changes in consumer behavior brought about by the COVID-19 epidemic. This study has clarified how the epidemic has changed Indian consumers' purchasing habits, especially when it comes to e-commerce. Businesses must grasp the intricate workings of consumer behavior in order to modify their strategy as they traverse the difficulties brought on by the pandemic's effects. Driven by issues like convenience and safety concerns, the move towards internet buying has emerged as a key trend following the epidemic. Due to this change, companies are now realigning their marketing strategies to focus more on product safety and health features and e-commerce platforms and digital channels. The rapid expansion of e-commerce, as seen by sites such as Amazon, highlights how the Indian consumer environment is changing. Through the use of an extensive approach that blends qualitative and quantitative methodologies, this study has yielded insightful information on the dynamics of consumer behavior following the epidemic. The practical implications of these findings are noteworthy for Indian enterprises that want to effectively manage the obstacles and prospects posed by the evolving consumer landscape. Businesses may adapt their products and strategies to suit the changing demands and tastes of Indian customers by studying the subtleties of consumer behavior. This will help them expand sustainably in the post-pandemic period. In summary, the COVID-19 pandemic has sparked a paradigm change in consumer behavior and brought attention to the value of creativity and adaptation in the face of extraordinary difficulties.

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