

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTION TOWARDS WEBSITE FEATURES AND E-LOYALTY IN HYDERABAD

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this article is to examine the gender related perceptions towards website design features and loyalty towards online shopping site in various genders. The population of this study is online shoppers in Hyderabad. Respondents were selected from both genders with a condition of internet shopping experience. A pre-structured questionnaire was used with five point Likert rating scale to measure influence of gender on website design features and e-loyalty. Purposive random sampling was used to collect data from sampled respondents. Statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation and t-test are used for this study. Study reports that there is significant difference between gender towards website design preferences and loyalty in online shopping.

KEYWORDS: B2C Ecommerce, Gender, Loyalty, Website design.

1. INTRODUCTION

Business to consumer e-commerce market in India is growing rapidly for the last two decades. Researchers are constantly striving to improve insights into consumer behavior in e-commerce.

According to Gunter and Furnham (1998), online shopping has become an important marketing medium. It has become popular among adolescents to express their identity and independence. Few surveys on online shopping research indicated that male internet users outnumbered female counterparts as internet was regarded as a masculine domain. But recent surveys point out that the gender gap has been disappearing, rather the numbers of male and female internet users are equal as per the survey conducted by Pew Internet and American Life(2003). In another research paper, Jackson et al. (2001) stated that though young women and men use the internet equally often, they use it differently, and this may influence the motivations of buying online. Therefore, it is interesting to further discuss sex differences in online consumption. Early researchers tended to explore demo-graphic profiles of internet buyers and functional advantages of online shopping, few stressed gender differences in online shopping behaviour.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Jansen and Resnick (2006), in their article investigated the effect of sponsored links on ecommerce information seeking on the web. They have collected data from 56 respondents each engaged in six ecommerce web searching tasks. They also investigated the relationship between searching self-efficacy, searching experience, types of ecommerce information needs, and the order of links on the viewing of sponsored links. They study found a strong preference for non sponsored links, with searchers viewing these results first more than 82 percent of the time. Searching self-efficacy and experience does not increase the likelihood of viewing sponsored links, and the order of the result listing does not appear to affect searcher evaluation of sponsored links.

Dittmar et al (2004) examined gender differences in attitude toward conventional buying and on-line buying with both qualitative study and quantitative survey. They have included functional, emotional – social,

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and identity related motivations in both environments. They found that women online shopping online are gradually increasing.

Anderson and Srinivas (2003) investigated the impact of satisfaction on loyalty in the context of electronic commerce. They found that there is an existence of relationship between e-satisfaction and e-loyalty. They also found that this relationship is moderated by consumers' individual level factors such as convenience, motivation, purchase size and firms' business level factors such as trust and perceived value.

According to Garrett (2003) website parameters are classified into six categories based on user experience. They are visual design, information architecture, information design, navigation design, and content and interaction design).

Agarwal R. and Venkatesh, V. (2002) tested an instrument in a heuristic evaluation study where 1,475 users rated multiple web sites from airlines, online bookstores, automobile manufacturers, and car rental agencies. They suggest that the evaluation procedure, the instrument as well as the usability metric exhibit good properties.

Jonathan W. Palmer (2002) has tested Web site usability, design and performance metrics, including download delay, navigability, site content, interactivity, and responsiveness. Researcher collected data from corporate website, through third party ratings, jury and software agent. The research found that website success is significantly associated with website download delay (speed of access and display rate within the website), navigation (organization, arrangement, layout, and sequencing), content (amount and variety of product information), interactivity (customization and interactivity) and responsiveness (feedback options and FAQs).

Jarvenpaa and Todd (1997) in their study states that value-added information existence at a commercial website can act as an important incentive for people to shop online. They suggested that specific information available to support consumer search and multiple search, mechanisms with a positive challenge will increase shopping enjoyment.

3. OBJECTIVES : The research has following objectives.

1. To study perceptual difference between males and females towards different website design parameters in online shopping in B2C perspective of E-Commerce in Hyderabad.
2. To identify whether males and females differs in loyalty in online shopping in B2C perspective of E-Commerce in Hyderabad.

4. HYPOTHESES

Hypotheses 1: There is a significant difference between men and women regarding perception towards website design features when shopping online.

Hypotheses 2: There is a significant difference between men and women regarding loyalty towards online shopping.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study involves online shoppers both male and female in Business to Consumer (B to C) market segment. The respondents involved in this research study were selected from the Hyderabad with the condition of having had experience in online shopping in various products.

5.2 POPULATION AND SAMPLE SIZE

The population of this study includes online shoppers in Hyderabad who have purchased different

products from online shopping sites. It involves a sample size of 150 online shoppers.

5.3 DATA COLLECTION

The current study understands perceptions of both male and female online shoppers towards website design has used self administered questionnaire from online shoppers in Hyderabad. Snow ball sampling technique was used to identify people having internet shopping experience. Articles were collected from online journals related to shopping.

5.4 SURVEY INSTRUMENT

A structured questionnaire was developed with five point rating scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree on website design and loyalty towards online shopping. It was developed with discussion of experts and online shoppers and review of literature.

5.5 STATISTICAL TOOLS

Data analysis was done using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 17.0 for the data gathered through structured questionnaire. Mean, standard deviation, and t-test were used as statistical tools.

6. DATA ANALYSIS

6.1 SAMPLE PROFILE :

Online buyers' demographics are the basis of the online marketing strategy. As they will influence business strategy decisions. Hence demographic features of online buyers in Hyderabad are exhibited in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Sample Profile

Demographic variables	Categories	Count	Percentage
GENDER	Male	114	76%
	Female	36	24%
AGE	20 - 30 years	118	78%
	31 - 40 years	20	13%
	41 - 50 years	12	8%
MARITAL STATUS	Single	103	69%
	Married	47	31%
EDUCATION	Under Graduate	3	2%
	Graduate	72	48%
	Post Graduate	75	50%
OCCUPATION	Student	17	11%
	Faculty	9	6%
	Corporate Executive	93	62%
	Professionals	31	21%
INCOME PER MONTH	5,000 – 10,000	23	15%
	10,001 – 20,000	34	23%
	21,001 – 30,000	46	31%
	31,001 – 40,000	9	6%
	41,001 – 50,000	5	3%
	Above 50,000	8	5%
	Missing Values	25	17%

(Source: Primary Data)

6.2 GENDER DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTION TOWARDS WEBSITE FEATURES :

In this section first research objective is discussed. In order to compare perceptions of male and female online buyers towards website variables, t-test and comparison of the mean values of the variables, were performed. Data on website variables was collected on a Likert scale ranging from strongly agree-5 to strongly disagree-1. Mean scores, Standard deviation and T-test results for each design element are mentioned below.

Table 1 : Gender Differences in Perception towards Website Variables

Demographic variables	Male		Female		t-test	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	S. D.	Mean	S. D.			
Security	3.36	1.001	3.08	.996	40.088	148	.000
Privacy	3.70	.858	3.64	1.046	49.568	147	.000
Third-party seal	3.35	.891	3.50	1.056	44.057	146	.000
Information download	3.41	1.099	3.17	1.124	36.610	145	.000
Site navigation	3.56	.918	3.64	.990	46.682	147	.000
Quick completion transaction	3.54	.967	3.58	1.052	43.805	147	.000
Logging at any time	3.55	.926	3.39	1.202	42.957	148	.000
In depth information	3.50	.927	3.44	.939	45.945	148	.000
Accuracy of content	3.39	1.011	3.42	1.025	40.725	146	.000
Fast customer service	3.56	.990	3.53	1.134	42.365	148	.000

Note: significance at 0.05

(Source: Primary Data)

A series of T-tests tests were performed to test the difference in perception of the gender for website variables. As Table 2 showed, website variables; i.e. Security (Sig.=.000), Privacy (Sig.=.000), Third-party seal (Sig.=.000), Information download (Sig.=.000), Site navigation (Sig.=.000), Quick completion transaction (Sig.=.000), Logging at any time, (Sig.=.000), In depth information (Sig.=.000), Accuracy of content (Sig.=.000), Fast customer service (Sig.=.000) showed significant differences between male and female online consumers at a 95% confidence level. This indicated that the male and female online shoppers perceived website variables differently.

6.3 PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS WEBSITE VARIABLES AND LOYALTY IN MALE AND FEMALE ONLINE BUYERS :

In this section second research objective is discussed. t-test and comparison of the mean values of the variables, were performed to compare e-loyalty of male and female online buyers. Data on e-loyalty between men and women was collected done on a Likert scale ranging from strongly agree-5 to strongly disagree-1. Mean scores for each design element and loyalty are mentioned above.

TABLE 2: GENDER DIFFERENCES IN LOYALTY TOWARDS ONLINE SHOPPING

Factor	Website Variables	Male		Female		t-test	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.			
E-Loyalty	Recommend others	3.61	.822	3.42	.967	50.219	146	.000
	Repurchase	3.68	.862	3.42	.996	48.868	147	.000

Note: significance at 0.05

(Source: Primary Data)

T-test is performed to test the difference in perception of the gender for E-loyalty. As Table 3 showed, website variables; i.e. Recommend others (Sig. =.000), Repurchase (Sig. =.000) showed significant differences between male and female online consumers at a 95% confidence level. This indicated that the male and female online shoppers differ in e-loyalty.

INTERPRETATION FOR HYPOTHESIS

Hypothesis 1

In Table 2, T-test scores, Mean and Standard deviation are presented for perception towards website design features in male and female online shoppers. In this study statistically significant differences are found between men and women with respect to website design preferences. Hence, Hypothesis 1 is supported.

Hypothesis 2

In case E-loyalty, also there is significant difference between men and women with respect to the repurchase and recommendation to others. Hence, Hypothesis 2 is also accepted.

DISCUSSIONS

The study explored gender differences among 150 online shoppers towards website design preferences and e-loyalty in Hyderabad. In case of website variables such as security, privacy, information download, logging at any time, in-depth information and fast customer service men were more satisfied than women. While in website variables such as third party seal, site navigation, and accuracy of content, quick completion of transaction women were more satisfied than men. Finally, in the loyalty towards internet shopping, men were more loyal to shopping site as compared to females.

LIMITATIONS

There are some limitations in the present study. First, the present study is limited to online shoppers sample from Hyderabad. Another limitation is respondent's selection, which is based on convenience. Finally, results are subjected to common limitation of accuracy of response.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings of study provide some directions to future. First of all, one of the important area for future research is to explore gender differences concerning trust in web-based based shopping by culture. Second, future research could investigate differences of shopping values based on different consumer market segments based on other variables such as age, education, income. Finally, differences of shopping values based on traditional and web based shopping channels.

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