



Factors and preferences of e-marketing: A case study of college and university students in Himachal Pradesh

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Abstract

E-market has become popular in the recent times particularly due to the initiatives taken by the Government towards green sources and the precarious situation of pandemic which compelled the humanity to maintain social distances and to opt for the modes of meeting out subsistence needs which have minimal human direct contacts. E-marketing has however influenced by the age and other considerations where it has been assumed that the elderly aged persons and some other variables emerged as the hurdles in frequent adoption of the initiative. At this juncture, youth has been considered as the most vulnerable strata which has gone for opting the E-marketing. College and university students have diversified kinds of marketing demands and the study is endowed to examine the factors motivating youth for e-marketing and the products they prefer through e-marketing.

Keywords: vulnerable, e-marketing, college, university students

Introduction

Himachal Pradesh is one of the highly literate states of India. The state could achieve high level of literacy due to the web of colleges and universities across the State. The State has one academic university i.e. Himachal Pradesh University which was established in 1971 as the single University of the State. However, now other universities and institutions in the government and private sector have been established. The contribution of the state government and the educational institutions has reflected in the form of leading the state in terms of high level of literacy due to which, the pattern of living has changed. The literate people are expected to follow the innovative techniques of living. With the initiation of computerization and electronic system, since all activities are being performed through electronic mode, it is expected that the literate society of the State is following the electronic mode though, youth is the most vulnerable group of the society to go for it. E-market has become popular in the recent times particularly due to the initiatives taken by the Government towards green sources and the precarious situation of pandemic which compelled the humanity to maintain social distances and to opt for the modes of meeting out subsistence needs which have minimal human direct contacts. E-marketing has however influenced by the age and other considerations where it has been assumed that the elderly aged persons and some other variables emerged as the hurdles in frequent adoption of the initiative. At this juncture, youth has been considered as the most vulnerable strata which has gone for opting the E-marketing. College and university students have diversified kinds of marketing demands and the study is endowed to examine the factors motivating youth for e-marketing and the products they prefer through e-marketing.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the motivational factors of E-marketing for college and university students
- To analyze the products preferred by college and university students through E-marketing

Sampling and Research Methodology

The research is conducted on college and university students of Himachal Pradesh. Out of twelve districts of the State, Shimla district has been selected. Shimla is the capital of the State. Himachal Pradesh University which is the oldest single university of the State, is in Shimla. Apart from it, in Shimla city itself, there is private College for girls which is renowned in the Country. There is one Centre of Excellence College, there is college for performing art, one college for Sanskrit and two other colleges. The student strength of these institutions is more than twenty thousand. Having such a large chunk of youth getting education from Shimla city, to examine E-marketing in context to youth particularly literate people, Shimla city has been chosen. The sample of 150 respondents has been taken on quota basis by selecting 50 respondents from Himachal Pradesh University, 25 each from St. Bedes' College, Centre of Excellence, Sanjauli, Government College Kotshera and R.K.M.V. Shimla.

Questionnaire was framed to collect primary data from the respondent students. Data has been analyzed by applying statistical tools including descriptive and inferential tools of research analysis. The results have been

accordingly explained on the basis of which, conclusion and findings have been drawn and measures have been recommended.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Responses Regarding Motivational Factors of E-marketing

N= 150

	High Motivation	Motivation	Neutral	Low Motivation	No Motivation	Mean	Standard Deviation	SKW	Chi Square	P Value
Wide choice of products	51	87	3	9	0	4.20	.752	-1.221	82.400	.000
Time Saving	63	57	27	3	0	4.20	.804	-.619	41.440	.000
Timely delivery of goods	42	51	45	12	0	3.82	.936	-.233	16.660	.001
Non-availability of products nearby	18	60	39	18	15	3.32	1.145	-.576	33.200	.000
Discounts	66	48	15	12	9	4.00	1.189	-1.177	58.000	.000

Source: Data collected through questionnaire.

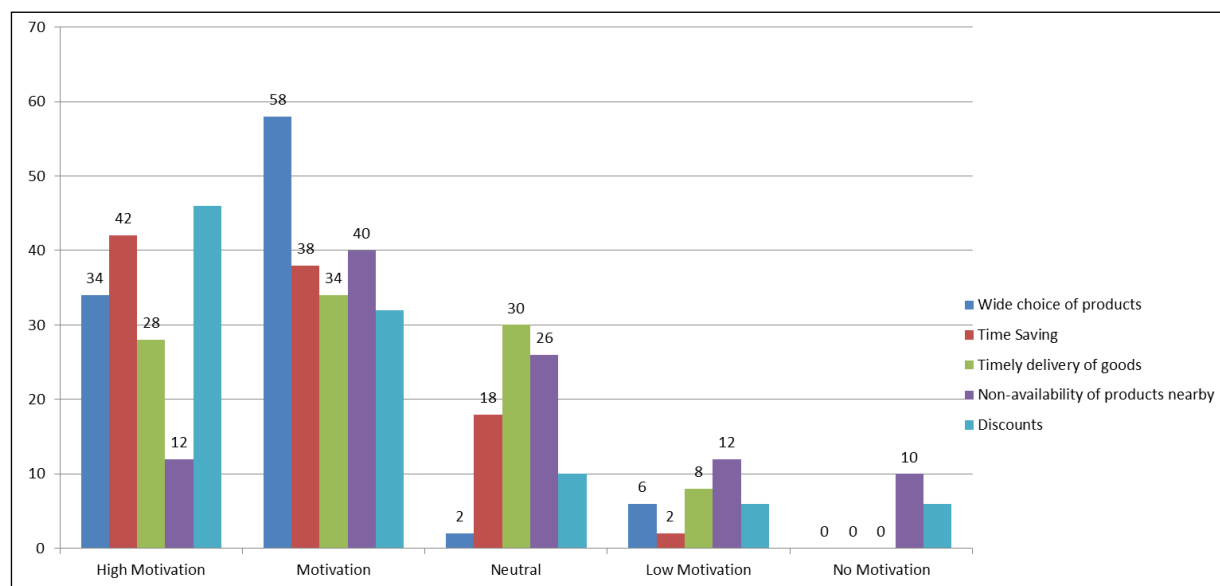


Fig 1

From the above table and its graphical representation we can conclude that respondents have different motivation factors to purchase products online. 87 respondents feel motivated by the wide choice of products that E-market offers. Time Saving is the high motivation factor for 63 respondents who purchase online. Timely delivery of products gives 51 respondents motivation while non-availability of products nearby the local markets also motivates 60 respondents for buying products over E-markets. Discounts were the high motivating factor for 69 respondents.

Wide choice of products: The mean value of responses is 4.20 which is more than average mean standard value 3 on 5 point Likert Scale. Thus, it shows that responses are towards Motivation to High Motivation. The variation in the opinion is noted as .752. The calculated value of SKW is -1.221 which is negative and shows that majority of the respondent lies towards higher side of the mean. The calculated value of Chi-Square is 82.400 is more than the table value at 5% level of significance. The p value is also less than 0.05 at 5% level of significance as it is .000. Therefore it rejects the null hypothesis which states that responses of respondents are not equally distributed over 5 point Likert Scale. In overall, we can say that respondents feel motivated by the wide choices of products that are offered on e-market.

Time saving: The second content of table shows that the mean value of responses is 4.20 which is more than average mean standard value 3 on 5 point Likert Scale. Thus, it shows that responses are towards motivated to highly motivated. The variation in the opinion is noted as .804. The calculated value of SKW is -.619 which is negative and shows that majority of the respondents lies towards higher side of the mean. The calculated value of Chi-Square is 41.440 is more than the table value at 5% level of significance. The p value is also less than 0.05 at 5% level of significance as it is .000. Therefore it rejects the null hypothesis which states that responses of

respondents are not equally distributed over 5 point Likert Scale. In overall we can say that respondents feel motivated by the time saving feature that e-market offer.

Timely delivery of goods: The third content of table shows that the mean value of responses is 3.82 which is more than average mean standard value 3 on 5 point Likert Scale. Thus, it shows that responses are towards Neutral to Motivation. The variation in the opinion is noted as .936. The calculated value of SKW is -.233 which is negative and shows that majority of the respondents lies towards upper side of the mean. The calculated value of Chi-Square is 16.660 is more than the table value at 5% level of significance. The p value is also less than 0.05 at 5% level of significance as it is .001. Therefore it rejects the null hypothesis which states that responses of respondents are not equally distributed over 5 point Likert Scale. In overall we can say that respondents feel motivated about timely delivery of goods from e-markets.

Non-availability of products nearby: It motivates respondents to some extent as it is clear from the table 1 which shows that the mean value of responses is 3.32 which is more than the average mean standard value 3 on 5 point Likert Scale. Thus, it shows that responses are giving motivation. The variation in the opinion is noted as 1.145. The calculated value of SKW is -.576 which is negative and shows that majority of the respondents lies towards higher side of the mean. The calculated value of Chi-Square is 33.200 is more than the table value at 5% level of significance. The p value is also less than 0.05 at 5% level of significance as it is .000. Therefore it rejects the null hypothesis which states that responses of respondents are not equally distributed over 5 point Likert Scale. In nutshell we can say that respondents feel that the non-availability of products nearby give them motivation to some extent.

Discounts: The last content of table 1 show the mean value of 4.00 which shows that discounts that are given to buyers on e-markets give respondents motivation. The calculated score of standard deviation means that there is variation of 1.189 on an average to the mean. The value of skewness stands at -1.177 which shows that opinion of respondents are towards higher side of the mean i.e. towards motivation. The computed value of chi square at 5 percent level of significance is 58.000 which further support the above findings of the study that the opinion of the respondents differ significantly regarding discounts on products from e-market.

Table 2: Respondents preferences for Different Types of Products

N=150

	Highly Preferred	Preferred	Neutral	Least Preferred	Not Preferred	Mean	Standard Deviation	SKW	Chi Square	P Value
Clothes	33	51	36	21	9	3.52	1.159	-.487	22.400	.000
Electronics	24	39	57	12	18	3.26	1.186	-.373	29.200	.000
Eatables	0	15	45	27	63	2.08	1.061	.356	23.520	.000
Banking	48	75	12	9	6	4.00	1.005	-1.340	82.800	.000
Books	48	69	9	18	6	3.90	1.106	-1.080	66.800	.000
Others	9	21	72	30	18	2.82	1.019	.020	54.000	.000

Source: Data collected through questionnaire.

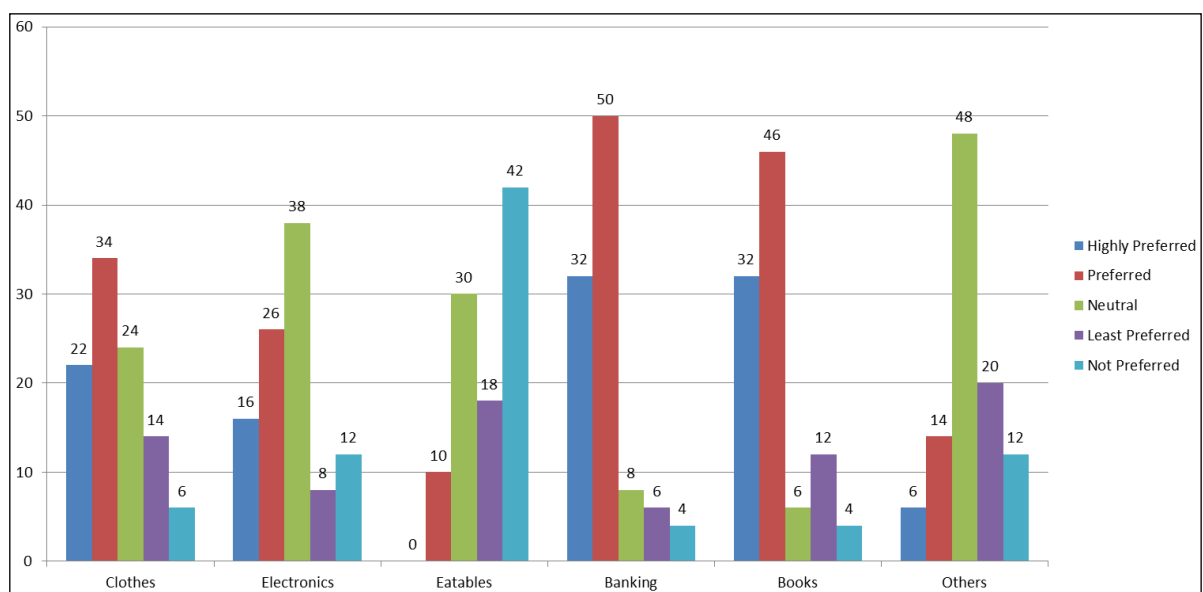


Fig 2

From the above table and its graphical representation it can be concluded that respondents have different preference for different products on online products over traditional products. Here we can say that respondents prefer clothes on e-markets over traditional markets i.e. 51 respondents. Where for electronic products respondents are neutral in nature i.e. 57 respondents and for eatables respondents prefer to go to traditional shops over online market. Respondents (75) prefer banking for performing online transactions rather than going to bank, same were the case with books respondents i.e. 69 prefer buying books online.

Clothes: The mean value of responses is 3.52 which is more than average mean standard value 3 on 5 point Likert Scale. Thus, it shows that responses are towards Neutral to Agree. The variation in the opinion is noted as 1.159. The calculated value of SKW is -.487 which is negative and shows that majority of the respondents lies towards higher side of the mean. The calculated value of Chi-Square is 22.400 is more than the table value at 5% level of significance. The p value is also less than 0.05 at 5% level of significance as it is .000. Therefore it rejects the null hypothesis which states that responses of respondents are not equally distributed over 5 point Likert Scale. In overall we can say that respondents prefer clothes to buy on E-Markets over traditional shopping.

Electronics: The second content of table 2 shows that the mean value of responses is 3.26 which is more than average mean standard value 3 on 5 point Likert Scale. Thus, it shows that responses are towards Neutral to Agree. The variation in the opinion is noted as 1.186. The calculated value of SKW is -.373 which is negative and shows that majority of the respondents lies towards higher side of the mean. The calculated value of Chi-Square is 29.200 is more than the table value at 5% level of significance. The p value is also less than 0.05 at 5% level of significance as it is .000. Therefore it rejects the null hypothesis which states that responses of respondents are not equally distributed over 5 point Likert Scale. In overall we can say that respondents prefer electronic appliances to buy from the E-Markets over traditional shopping.

Eatables: The third content of table shows that the mean value of responses is 2.08 which is less than average mean standard value 3 on 5 point Likert Scale. Thus, it shows that responses are towards Disagree to Neutral. The variation in the opinion is noted as 1.061. The calculated value of SKW is .356 which is positive and shows that majority of the respondents lies towards lower side of the mean. The calculated value of Chi-Square is 23.520 is more than the table value at 5% level of significance. The p value is also less than 0.05 at 5% level of significance as it is .000. Therefore it rejects the null hypothesis which states that responses of respondents are not equally distributed over 5 point Likert Scale. In overall we can say that respondents preferred least that eatables shouldn't be purchased from E-Markets.

Banking: The fourth content of table 2 shows that the mean value of responses is 4.000 which is more than the average mean standard value 3 on 5 point Likert Scale. Thus, it shows that responses are preferred. The variation in the opinion is noted as 1.005. The calculated value of SKW is -1.340 which is negative and shows that majority of the respondents' lies towards higher side of the mean. The calculated value of Chi-Square is 82.800 is more than the table value at 5% level of significance. The p value is also less than 0.05 at 5% level of significance as it is .000. Therefore it rejects the null hypothesis which states that responses of respondents are not equally distributed over 5 point Likert Scale. In nutshell we can say that respondents prefer e- banking over traditional banking.

Books: The fifth content of table 2 which is books shows that the mean value of responses is 3.90 which is more than the average mean standard value 3 on 5 point Likert Scale. Thus, it shows that responses are towards neutral to preferred. The variation in the opinion is noted as 1.106. The calculated value of SKW is -1.080 which is negative and shows that majority of the respondents lies towards higher side of the mean. The calculated value of Chi-Square is 66.800 is more than the table value at 5% level of significance. The p value is also less than 0.05 at 5% level of significance as it is .000. Therefore it rejects the null hypothesis which states that responses of respondents are not equally distributed over 5 point Likert Scale. In nutshell we can say that respondents are inclined towards preference they are giving to e-market over traditional markets for books.

Others: The last content of table 2 show the mean value of 2.82 which shows that other products to be purchased on e-market has least preference. The calculated score of standard deviation means that there is variation of 1.019 on an average to the mean. The value of skewness stands at .020 which shows that opinion of respondents is towards lower side of the mean i.e. towards least preferred. The computed value of chi square at 5 percent level of significance is 54.000 which further support the above findings of the study that the opinion of the respondents differ significantly regarding reason to buy other products from e-market.

Conclusion and Recommendations

1. The study finds that the expectation of the literate youth is to get the e-marketed product at the suitable place and in time.
2. The role of e-marketing for youth is not much high of eatables and electronic products.

3. It was found during the study that 50 percent of the respondents purchase fashion products through E-markets followed by the 44 percent of the respondents who use E-market for recharge their phones and paying their bills.
4. Regarding the purchase of goods from E-markets, the standard deviation among the responses of the respondents about all type of products except eatables is distributed more towards the upper side of the mean. Respondents feel that eatables should be least preferred on E-markets.
5. Regarding the features that E-market offers and motivation that respondents feel by these features, 58 percent of the respondents feel motivated by the wide choice of products that E-market offers. 44 percent of the respondents feel highly motivated by the discounts they get by purchasing from E-markets.
6. The motivation of the respondents regarding wide choice of products and time saving feature of E-marketing is on positive side. The mean value is 4.20, which is distributed towards higher side of mean standard score.

Based upon the findings of the research, the following measures are recommended

1. The E-marketing facilitators must focus upon timely delivery and providing services as per the suitability of the buyer.
2. Emphasis needs to be made upon enveloping all kinds of services and products to captivate customers by facilitating them as per their expectations.
3. The customers should be able to contact and interact with important persons doing the marketing activities like seller, manager of electronic shop, reference group and old customers. So that they can clear their doubts about products.

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