What Women Want? An Analysis of Demographics and Different Factors Influencing Online Shopping in India

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Electronic commerce is significantly altering the way consumers shop and purchase products and services. In this dynamic electronic marketplace, the consumers have learnt the nuances of how to shop online. Similar to any diffusion of innovation, there is a learning curve for a good number of consumers to act in the e-commerce arena in a manner in which they feel the most satisfied. For some consumers, online shopping has become a part of their everyday life, whereas for others they are at the edge of taking the big leap into it. The focus of this study is to identify what factors influence female shoppers to buy or not to buy online, and how frequently they make such purchases. It also examines how demographics like age, income and education influence the frequency to shop online. A survey was conducted in 13 states of India and uses empirical analysis to ascertain the findings. This is a novel effort in identifying the female consumers' online shopping behavior in terms of shopping frequency in the Indian context.

Keywords: Female buying behavior, online shopping frequency, purchase intention, women consumers, demographics, online shopping factors, e-commerce in India.

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Introduction

There are a number of factors that affect the rapid development of online shopping in India. With a $2.264 trillion GDP in 2016 rising at a yearly rate of 6.8%, India is one of the fastest emerging economies in the world and globally the third largest economy in terms of purchasing power parity (World Bank, 2016).

The government of India has been immensely encouraging of investments in the telecommunication sector in recent years with the penetration of smart phones growing from 21% in 2014 to an estimated projection of 39% in 2019. Fixed broadband subscribers grew from 0.05 million in 2001 to 17.12 million in 2015. Similarly, the total number of mobile wireless subscribers in India increased from 635 million in 2010 to 1.035 billion in 2015 (Statista, 2015). But the penetration of internet is only 36.5% of the population in 2016 which is very low when compared to the world average of 50.1% (Internet World Stats, 2017), thus indicating a growth possibility in the Indian market. Electronic payment in India is also steaming up owing to a large young population with rising disposable incomes. The increasing acceptance of e-payments in India is also abetted by the improvement in the adoption levels of financial cards. In 2013, the number of debit cards in circulation was 374.18 million while credit cards stood at 18.57 million. During the period 2013 to 2015, debit and credit cards witnessed a mammoth growth of 64% and 23% respectively and by the end of 2015, the total number of credit cards rose to 22.74 million while debit cards increased to 636.85 million in the country (Reserve Bank of India, 2016). The Government's Digital India vision and arrival of big business groups such as Reliance Industries in the telecom sector has supported an unparalleled development in Internet penetration in India. It is estimated that in the next five years, India will double its internet user base from 300 million in 2015 to 600 million by 2020. It is also anticipated that half of those 600 million internet users will transact through the digital medium and the total payments using digital payment instruments will be close to $500 billion by 2020, which is 10 times the present levels in India (IMAP, 2016).

The e-commerce market is one of the fastest blooming retail markets in India and the development continues to be propelled by different supply and demand side factors. The rising penetration of internet and smart phones across the country; increase in the number of city homes; effortless payment mechanism; persuasive prices and discounts together with the convenience, access and assortment that online shopping presents, serve as market drivers. In 2016, the e-commerce market in India was pegged at around $27.5 billion, and was projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 31% to reach $80 billion by 2020 (KPMG-Snapdeal, 2016). The online travel industry captures around 61% of the e-commerce industry in India which includes travel and e-ticketing websites. The Government-owned Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has become one of the largest online websites, engaging about 45% of all visitors

to travel websites in India and 19% of the total internet users (IAMWIRE, 2011). The growth in online shopping in the coming years will be fueled by people in rural areas and tier II and III cities. The predominant reason is that online shopping sites offer a broad assortment of Indian and global brands which may not otherwise be easily available. Also, these sites dole out deals and discounts throughout the year, which is not the case with the traditional retail outlets. Tier II and III cities already account for around 55% of the online orders (KPMG-CII, 2016).

Conventionally, shopping is seen as an activity primarily dominated by women. It is women who are generally responsible for household purchasing, and in comparison to men, have a more positive attitude towards traditional store and catalogue shopping (Alreck & Settle, 2002). The female internet user base in India is growing at a phenomenal rate of 46% and stood at around 109 million in 2015 (IAMAI, 2015). As the e-commerce industry is witnessing a remarkable growth, the number of female shoppers purchasing online is bound to increase. The total number of online shoppers in India is anticipated to reach 175 million by 2020, from about 50 million in 2015. It is also expected that there will be a fivefold rise in the number of female shoppers by 2020 (A.T.Kearney, 2016). A lot of studies related to online shopping behavior has been and are being done in western countries but very little research in this area is attempted in other parts of the world (Stafford, Turan, & Raisinghani, 2004). Moreover, studies pertaining to the Indian online shopping industry is even less. And comparatively very little is known about the various facets of Indian consumer behavior (Gehrt et al., 2012). In addition, female online shopping behavior in India is pretty much under researched and only a handful of established research works are available (Kumar & Singh, 2014). This study intends to address this knowledge gap by empirically examining the variables and factors affecting the Indian female consumers' online shopping frequency (OSF).

Purpose of Study

The first wave of the Indian e-commerce market revolved around heavy discounting which gave an early impetus to e-commerce players. However, the industry is developing quickly, and so are the consumers. The new digital consumers are becoming street-smart, more knowledgeable, more ambitious and intolerant of shoddy goods and services. Therefore it is essential for e-commerce players to comprehend their buying behavior and gain better insights for making superior business decisions. Companies will have to be agile and swift to address the rapidly changing market situations and requirements of tomorrow to maintain the momentum.

The following parts of the study comprise a brief literature review related to demographic variables and factors affecting online shopping followed by a sequence of

research questions, an overview of the research methodology, analysis of the survey data, results and finally the importance and managerial implications of these results.

Literature Review

Empirical based research studies on online shopping in India are very much skewed. There are certain studies that showcase the factors affecting the online shopping of Indian consumers like accurate information about product features, product warranties, and mechanism to address customers' feedback (Kiran, Sharma, & Mittal, 2008). Some studies examine the demographic variables and their influences (Prasad & Aryasri, 2011).

The review has been divided into two categories 1) Factors influencing consumers' online shopping and 2) Consumer demographics.

Factors Influencing Consumers' Online Shopping

Product

One of the most important factors which leads to the increase in purchase frequency and acceptance of online shopping is the type of product available on the internet (Liang & Huang, 1998). In fact some researchers (Lohse & Spiller, 1998) and (Ho & Wu, 1999) found that enhanced product lists and pictures of the product with accurate descriptions had a significant influence not only on the sales but also on the satisfaction levels of the consumers. The satisfaction level of the consumers increases even more if the quality of the products offered online is very good. A study done by Wambui (2010) on college students evaluated the factors behind adoption and non-adoption of online shopping as an alternate channel for their needs. Many of them adopted online shopping because of its capacity to offer an extensive range of products in one place. Product quality in online shopping generally refers to the actual utility and benefits the product offers, and the equivalence between the quality specifications mentioned on the website and the real quality of the physical product actually delivered. If the product quality meets the consumers' expectations, then the frequency to shop online also increases which is one of the ''fundamental objectives'' for online shoppers (Keeney, 1999).

Trust

Trust is defined as the faith that an online shopper has on an e-commerce vendor who is prepared to get involved in an online transaction in spite of the possibility of incurring a loss, based on the anticipation that the vendor will deal in a fair manner, and is capable of delivering the assured products and services on time (Mayer, Davis, &

Schoorman, 1995). Trust plays an imperative role in building long-term relationships (Eisingerich & Bell, 2007). Paucity of trust is one of the main reasons for consumers not indulging in online shopping (Lee & Turban, 2001) and they will be apprehensive of buying from a vendor who is not perceived as trustworthy (Hume, 2008). As this channel of shopping has recently come into existence and a large consumer base has a limited experience of using it, shopping online becomes a challenge for many of the consumers. The traditional shopping environment has a salesperson who acts as the source of trust for the consumers (Doney & Cannon, 1997). On the other hand, in online shopping, the salesperson is substituted by help buttons and search tools, as a result removing the very foundation of consumer trust in the shopping experience (Lohse & Spiller, 1998). Moreover, there is some amount of risk involved in online shopping. The first and foremost risk is the inability to manually check the quality of the product and second to ascertain the safety and security of sharing information which is personal and financial in nature (Lee & Turban, 2001). This situation develops a feeling of powerlessness among online shoppers. Hence trust has a crucial influence on the relationship between the consumers' attitude toward online shopping and purchasing frequency as also suggested by earlier research (Roman, 2007; Law & Bai, 2008) that trust acts as a vital ingredient in influencing customers to increase shopping frequency.

Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction holds a significant place in marketing theory and practice (Churchill & Surprenant, 1982). It plays a major role in influencing consumer OSF as it helps in the realization of earlier unmet needs (Bearden & Teel, 1983; DeLone & Mclean, 1992; Bhattacherjee, 2001). Consumers' intention to shop in the future is strongly connected to customer satisfaction (Patterson & Spreng, 1997; Durvasula et al., 2004). It is therefore a strong predictor of continuance i.e. consumer's prolonged usage of online shopping (Bhattacherjee, 2001; Devaraj, Fan, & Kohli, 2003). Acquisition of new customers is becoming a great challenge for online vendors and hence the focus is now on retaining existing customers and increasing their OSF. A satisfied customer is more likely to buy again or buy more in the future than an unsatisfied customer (Reichheld, 1996; Hill & Alexander, 2000; Johnson et al., 2001). While shopping online, consumers not only assess the product variety and offers, but also the manner in which an online retailer realizes their expectations through offline support (Wolfinbarger & Gilly, 2003). For instance, receiving the right product at the right time and at an agreed upon condition, influences the degree of satisfaction for customers (Collier & Bienstock, 2006). Previous research also reveals that on time delivery of product and easy mechanism to return the product considerably improves customers' positive experiences and augments their level of enjoyment and fun thereby justifying their decision to purchase a product online (Ha & Stoel, 2009).

Promotion

A major motivating factor for consumers to increase their shopping frequency is the attractive promotional offers available online. It is not certain that once a consumer adds a product to his/her cart, whether the product will eventually be bought. There are a few other motivational factors that lure the consumers to make that final click and purchase. These factors are nothing but the promotional schemes – be it based on price or any kind of a bundle/combo offer. Some of the consumers in fact define value shopping as being able to search for discounts, sales, or hunt for the best prices available (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003). These kinds of monetary inducements allow the consumers to experience cost savings and attain a superior level of economic control, and as a result, demonstrate considerable positive correlations towards online shopping and shopping frequency (Charney & Greenberg, 2001; Flanagin & Metzger, 2001; Wolin & Korgaonkar, 2003). Consumers who add the shortlisted products to their online shopping carts are sometimes there to take advantage of the online retail offers, such as deals, sales promotions, price promotions, free shipping etc. Online shoppers thus expect online retailers to provide price promotions or at least have lower prices of the products as compared to traditional retailers (Maxwell & Maxwell, 2001).

Convenience

A plethora of studies mostly empirical in nature confirms that consumers have a propensity to be more oriented towards convenience (Donthu & Garcia, 1999; Korgaonkar & Wolin, 1999; Li, Kuo, & Rusell, 1999; Swaminathan, Lepkowska-White, & Rao, 1999). The main features of convenience revolve around the prospect of anytime, anyplace shopping, the availability of robust search engines and easy price comparisons (Korgaonkar & Wolin, 1999; Swaminathan, Lepkowska-White, & Rao, 1999; Schaupp & Bélanger, 2005). The reason behind the increase in the frequency of online shopping is because the consumers tend to give more importance to convenience in shopping (Li, Kuo, & Rusell, 1999). Seiders et al. (2007) revealed that convenience helps in enhancing customer satisfaction levels and leads to future re-purchase intentions thereby boosting the frequency to shop online. Also while shopping online, location becomes immaterial and the consumer is motivated by convenience of ordering products from home, office etc. at any time of the day (Swaminathan, Lepkowska-White, & Rao, 1999).

Price

Another central factor that entices the consumers to shop online is the aggressively competitive prices offered by online retailers. Koyuncu and Bhattacharya (2004) mention in their research that consumers wish to purchase more from online retailers to get better

products at reasonable prices. Bulkeley and Carlton (2000) established in their research that online shoppers tend to buy products for the first time based on the convenience factor. To encourage these shoppers to visit again and increase the frequency of shopping online, online vendors need to better the facilities offered by them and bring down the price of their products to persuade shoppers to buy on a regular basis. A major incentive for shoppers to frequently visit online websites and buy products is to save money and as compared to traditional outlets, online vendors offer relatively lower prices. A study in fact suggests that 85% of the consumers look for price information and lower prices while shopping online (Reed, 1999).

Customer services

In the online shopping context, timely delivery is one of the primary expectations from the online vendors (Smith, Bailey, & Brynjolfsson, 2000). Faster delivery services and easy product returns constitutes a significant part of customer services. Consumers tend to place orders from their offices or homes expecting faster delivery of products in comparison to offline purchasing. Moreover, they expect the product to be delivered at their time of convenience. Due to the spatial and temporal discrepancies among purchasers and sellers in online markets, exchanges of money and product are not concurrent, so the delivery risk is of a specific concern to the consumers (Smith, Bailey, & Brynjolfsson, 2000). The satisfaction experienced by the consumers through timely and reliable delivery makes them visit again and again to shop online. But on the flip side, consumers may opt for the traditional brick-and-mortar shops if the delivery time is delayed or set too far away (Keeney, 1999). A failure in the services offered by an online vendor may have a detrimental effect on the credibility and the profits of the company. Customer dissatisfaction due to a service failure will result in a negative word-of-mouth buzz and a downbeat feeling towards the concerned service provider (Bitner, Brown, & Meuter, 2000).

Enjoyment

A lot of previous research studies suggest that consumers derive enjoyment from the shopping process. There are certain consumer segments which find shopping to be hedonic, exciting, and pleasurable (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). Babin, Darden, & Griffin (1994) also describe this activity as entertaining, fantasy oriented, exciting, stimulating, and enjoyment seeking. In the online context, consumers tend to evaluate an online website on two important parameters: 'informativeness' and 'entertainment' (Ducoffe, 1996; Richard, 2005). It is also acknowledged that those consumers who have a positive attitude towards websites which are high on entertainment value are more likely

to shop again. An enjoyable or exciting experience of shopping online will have a hangover effect (Menon & Kahn, 2002; McMillan, Hwang, & Lee, 2003).

Social influence

Social influence generally comprises reference groups, family, friends etc. (Wu, 2003; Armstrong & Kotler, 2005). A reference group consists of all those people who have either a direct or an indirect influence on the attitude or behavior of a person (Kotler, Saliba, & Wrenn, 1991; Armstrong & Kotler, 2005). Family is regarded as the most important social factor and has been extensively scrutinized (Armstrong & Kotler, 2005). Friends also act as an important referent influence in online shopping (Limayem, Khalifa, & Frini, 2000; Foucault & Scheufele, 2002). But there are varied findings on the influence of friends on an individual. In some cases it was noticed that while the influence of friends was quite insignificant otherwise (Limayem, Khalifa, & Frini, 2000), it was significant in cases pertaining to online purchasing of books (Foucault & Scheufele, 2002). These outcomes imply that the degree of social influence may vary with different product categories. Online recommendations and online reviews are also becoming an important medium of influencing a consumer. There are human experts and dedicated expert systems known as recommending systems that influence the decision making of consumers. It is also very likely that the online shopper looks at reviews and ratings from unknown customers or professionals as a source of correct and unprejudiced information about a particular product. Besides this, the online consumer also hunts for reviews from friends as a source of emotional, maybe undiscriminating assistance and support in the decision making process. Yadav et al. (2013) mention that the social setting acts as a significant factor in influencing and shaping perceived needs. Sometimes, watching other people buying and using the product entices consumers to adopt the same products and services.

Risk

Risk is closely associated with the term privacy. In the online context, privacy is defined as the consumer's ability to be in charge of the conditions in which his personal details are gathered and utilized (Flavián & Guinalíu, 2006; Lee, Eze, & Ndubisi, 2011). There is a perception among consumers that online companies misuse the collected data (Carlos Roca, José García, & José de la Vega, 2009) and so the risk of losing personal information on the internet is one of the most significant factors that inhibits consumers from shopping online (Cho, Rivera-Sánchez, & Lim, 2009; Carlos Roca, José García, & José de la Vega, 2009; Zorotheos & Kafeza, 2009). In fact, risk associated with privacy also impacts consumers' trust of online vendors (Pan & Zinkhan, 2006). In a few of the research studies it is established that issues related to privacy act as a major impediment towards

the growth of online shopping (Culnan, 1993; Chang & Chen, 2009; Lee, Eze, & Ndubisi, 2011). But there are some contrary opinions as well and one such was the study done by Jarvenpaa & Todd (1997) who stated that risk plays a trivial role in the adoption of online shopping. As far as most research studies are concerned, risk concerns of consumers in online shopping are mostly associated with the aspects of privacy and security of personal information.

Demographic Variables

Consumer demographics are the most frequently studied segment in a majority of online shopping studies. There are a lot of studies which establish that demographics such as age, income, and education are correlated to online shopping activities (Liebermann & Stashevsky, 2009), but there are also some existing empirical studies that suggest quite a few conflicting outcomes as well.

Age

The age of the consumer has always been an intriguing part of any study. Existing literature also emphasizes the significance of users' age in the study of their behavior (Harrison & Rainer, 1992; Hubona & Kennick, 1996). The studies done in the Information Technology domain have established that computer skills are effortlessly picked up by younger adults (Czaja et al., 1989; Hubona & Kennick, 1996). Additionally, younger adults generally have superior knowledge and understanding of the internet, and features such as utility and attitude attain greater meaning for them, whilst older people observe larger risks, have complexity in executing syntactically difficult instructions and hence place more significance on the perception of self-efficacy (Morris & Venkatesh, 2000; Trocchia & Janda, 2000). As a result, some studies have incorporated age as a pertinent variable in the interpretation of online shopping behavior (Zhang, 2009).

According to a study done by Trocchia and Janda (2000), there are three barriers for older people to shop online: 1) Dearth of knowledge and familiarity with Information Technology (IT) 2) Reluctance to change 3) Insistence on trying out the product prior to purchase. Hence, age is positively correlated to the complexity in processing stimuli (Morris & Venkatesh, 2000) and also strongly correlated to the duration of time inexperienced users need to get acquainted with computers (Gomez, Egan, & Bowers, 1986). The reason why older people find it difficult to participate in online shopping is because of their lower levels of experience of transacting online. On the contrary, some researchers believe that age has no considerable affiliation with Information Technology (IT) use, and assuming that younger adults already know about the internet and that older people are opposed to it is inaccurate (Smith & Comstock, 1995; Zhang, 2005; Roussos, 2007). A study done by McCloskey (2006) states that while age may influence the primary

decision concerning whether to buy on the internet or not, but not the consequent behavior of online consumers, like the frequency to buy or the spending amount.

Income

Income is another important demographic variable that can push or thwart the use of e-commerce. It has attracted substantial research interest in the domain of technology adoption (Serenko, Turel, & Yol, 2006; Allard, Babin, & Chebat, 2009; Shin, 2009). In fact, numerous research works have included income as an explanatory variable for shopping behavior, but still the outcomes pertaining to its significance are conflicting (Miyazaki & Fernandez, 2001; Raijas & Tuunainen, 2001; Lu et al., 2003; Al-Somali, Gholami, & Clegg, 2009).

Education

Education also plays a significant role in consumers' attitude toward online shopping. Consumers who are well educated feel confident using the Internet for online shopping (Burke, 2002). This is due to the fact that consumers with higher levels of education are able to find products more frequently online that best meet their needs (Punj, 2011) and hence education is positively associated with a person's level of Internet literacy (Li, Kuo, & Rusell, 1999).

Methodology

Questionnaire Development

The questionnaire was prepared using items acquired and adopted from the literature on online shopping (Lee & Joshi, 2007; Ho & Wu, 1999). The questionnaire was divided into 3 parts:

Part1: Demographic details

The first section of the questionnaire encapsulated the information related to respondents' demographic variables like age, education, income etc.

Part 2: Factors influencing consumers to shop online

The second section of the questionnaire featured questions related to factors influencing consumers to shop online. Respondents were requested to answer the

questions keeping in mind a set of product categories like clothes, footwear, cosmetics, home furnishings (curtains, furniture etc.), electronic gadgets (mobiles, laptops etc.), home appliances, accessories (hand bags, jewelry etc.) and gift items (watches, bouquets, cakes, soft toys etc.). There were a total of 33 statements in this section pertaining to factors influencing consumers' online shopping behavior. They were measured on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree), 3 (neutral) to 5 (strongly agree).

Part 3: Consumers' behavior and motivation to go shopping online

The third part of the questionnaire sought information associated with the behavior and motivation of the consumers to shop over the internet. Respondents were requested to indicate the type of products they had purchased online and their OSF.

Data was collected from thirteen states of North India. Data collection via online/physical distribution of questionnaire was done during the period January 2014 to October 2015. Invitations to participate in the research were directly sent to 1,500 random respondents through e-mail/questionnaire. A total of 950 filled up questionnaires (online/physical) were received, of which 41 were rejected due to partial responses. The final respondents for the research numbered 909. A large number of responses came from the state of Rajasthan (15.4%), Uttar Pradesh (12.8%) and New Delhi (12.2%). The least number of responses were received from the state of Jammu and Kashmir (2.2%). Online shopping in India has become viral and a good number of online shoppers belong to younger age groups. These consumers are thus intense users of the internet. The respondents belonged mainly to the younger age group (See Table 1) i.e. 20-30 years (75.2%).

Table 1. Description of the sample

Group	Percentage
Age	
Below 20 years	6.9
20 - 30 years	75.2
30 - 40 years	11.9
Above 40 years	5.9
Education Level	
Undergraduates and Below	27.4
Post-Graduates and Above	72.6
Income Level (per month)	
Below Rs. 30,000	75.2

Above Rs. 30,000	24.8
Internet experience	
Less than 1 year	0.7
1 – 3 years	14.5
3 – 5 years	21.5
Above 5 years	63.4
Internet Proficiency	
Not skillful	7.6
Somewhat skillful	18.5
Skillful	52.5
Very skillful	21.5
Internet Usage frequency (per week)	
Less than 5 hours	24.1
5 - 10 hours	24.8
10 - 20 hours	21.1
Above 20 hours	30
Primary use of internet	
Information, product search and purchasing	42.9
E-mail / E-card / Other communication	27.1
Game / Music / Downloading / Entertainment	25.7
Online banking / Pay bills	4.3

Data Analysis

The analysis involved employing different techniques. Factor analysis was applied to explore the core shopping parameters. The normality of data was checked, explaining the reliability test and validity test findings of the questionnaire. Subsequently, the Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA) technique was used to explore the relationship between demographics and factors affecting online shopping.

Responses to the 33 statements encapsulating the factors influencing online shopping were analyzed. The percentage of variance, eigenvalues and scree plot was considered to ascertain the number of factors to be interpreted. Factor loadings greater than 0.50 are deemed to be reasonably significant and loadings that are greater than 0.70 are considered to be extremely significant (Hair et al., 2010). The factor analysis was done using the varimax procedure for orthogonal rotation. A varimax solution produces outcomes which make it simple to classify each variable with a particular factor (Kim & Mueller, 1982). Orthogonal rotation was used because the factor matrix was to be subjected to successive data analysis (Hair et al., 2010). Cronbach's alpha was measured to evaluate the reliability of each factor.

Multiple regression is an enhancement of simple linear regression. It is used to predict the value of a variable based on the value of two or more other variables. It also helps in determining the overall fitness of the model and the relative contribution of each of the predictors to the total variance explained. Before conducting an in depth analysis, there was a need to check whether the data can actually be analyzed using multiple regression. In researches where large variance (i.e. above 25%) is likely to be explained, a sample size of 80 is considered to be adequate for a regression model having up to 20 predictors (Fields, 2005).

Results

Factor Analysis: Factors Influencing Online Shopping

Factor analysis of the 33 statements yielded 8 components with an eigenvalue > 1.00 but 2 more components were also included by analyzing the scree plot. So a total of 10 components were identified, as shown in Table 2. The procedure yielded factors with Cronbach coefficient reliabilities ranging from 0.82 to 0.91 (above the minimum recommended 0.70 critical value) with 76% of variance explained (above the minimum recommended 60% critical value) (Hair et al., 2010). The solution's KMO measure of sampling adequacy was 0.887, with measures> 0.80 being considered as "Great" (Field, 2000). Bartlett's test of sphericity was also observed to be significant (p = 0.000; df = 528) signifying that the assumption of multivariate normality was met (Norusis, 2004). Table 2 shows that the interpretation of the factors was uncomplicated. The variables that group on a similar component implies that component 1 represented *Product*, component 2 represented *Risk*, component 3 represented *Convenience*, component 4 represented *Trust*, component 5 represented *Social Influence*, component 6 represented *Satisfaction*, component 7 represented *Price*, component 8 represented *Customer Services*, component 9 represented *Promotions* and component 10 represented *Enjoyment*.

Product: The six statements that load on the first factor clearly suggest the features related to the product like product variety, quality and description. These include "Internet shopping provides more variety of products", "I would be more likely to shop online if more extensive descriptions of items were included", "Online shopping provides a better quality product". The Cronbach reliability coefficient for the Product component was 0.90 and the factor explained 32% of the variance.

Risk: The five statements that load on the second factor suggest a "Risk" component. The component includes statements that clearly reflect a risk theme (i.e. "I am willing to give my personal information when shopping on the Internet", "Online shopping is safe for credit / debit card use." and "I am not concerned about possible interception of financial information by an unidentified third party"). The

Cronbach reliability coefficient for the Risk component was 0.91 and the factor explained 9.5% of the variance.

Convenience: Four statements loaded on the "convenience component" include "Shopping through the internet makes ordering items convenient" and "I shop online because I can reduce my efforts in traveling, walking, parking, waiting etc". The convenience component had a Cronbach reliability coefficient of 0.86 and the factor explained 8% of the variance.

Trust: There were four statements that loaded on the "Trust component". These included "I trust the online retailers privacy policies mentioned on their Web sites" and "When the online retailers are well known, I am not worried about their reliability" reflecting a theme of Trust. The Cronbach reliability coefficient for the reputation with Trust component was 0.84 and the factor explained 6% of the variance.

Social influence: The three statements that load on the fifth factor reflect the "Social Influence" theme. These include "The opinions and experiences of my friends affect my purchasing decision", "The opinions and experiences of my family affect my purchasing decision" and "The opinions and experiences discussed in online forums affect my purchasing decision". The Cronbach reliability coefficient for the Social Influence component was 0.83 and the factor explained 5.3% of the variance.

Satisfaction: The three statements that load on the sixth factor suggest a "Satisfaction" component. The component includes statements that clearly reflect a satisfaction theme (i.e. "When shopping on the Internet, I am satisfied with the delivery system and "I am satisfied with the return policy of Internet shopping."). The Cronbach reliability coefficient for the Satisfaction component was 0.80 and the factor explained 3.8% of the variance.

Price: Two statements loaded on the "Price component" include "Shopping online permits me to buy an item at a relatively lower price" and "Online shopping helps me in saving money". The Price component had a Cronbach reliability coefficient of 0.85 and the factor explained 3.7% of the variance.

Customer services: There were two statements that loaded on the "Customer Services component". These include "I would be more likely to shop online if product returns were easier" and "I would be more likely to shop online if faster delivery was ensured." reflecting the theme of Customer Services. The Cronbach reliability coefficient for the reputation with Customer Services component was 0.87 and the factor explained 3% of the variance.

Table 2. Factors influencing online shopping

Factors Identified	Product	Risk	Convenience	Trust	Social Influence	Satisfaction	Price	Customer Services	Promotion	Enjoyment
Reliability	**0.904**	**0.911**	**0.863**	**0.844**	**0.834**	**0.806**	**0.852**	**0.871**	**0.816**	**0.829**
Internet shopping provides more variety of products.	0.882									
I would be more likely to shop online if more extensive descriptions of items were included.	0.851									
Online shopping provides a better quality product.	0.846									
I would be more likely to shop online if the pictures of the items were clearer.	0.836									
When shopping on the Internet pictures and colors are clear and representative of the products.	0.766									
I do not prefer to compare the products by seeing and touching them before buying.	0.457									
I am willing to give my personal information when shopping on the Internet.		0.887								
Online shopping is safe for credit / debit card use.		0.858								
I trust the security of online payment methods such as credit / debit cards etc.		0.834								
I would be more likely to shop on the Internet if adequate security measures are taken for credit / debit cards.		0.815								
I am not concerned about possible interception of financial information by an unidentified third party.		0.749								

Shopping through the internet makes ordering items convenient	0.837				
I shop online because I can reduce my efforts in traveling, walking, parking, waiting etc.	0.808				
I would be more likely to shop on the Internet if the Web site was easy to use.	0.677				
I like to shop on the Internet because it is easy to compare many products.	0.674				
When the online retailers are well known, I am not worried about their reliability.		0.860			
When shopping on the Internet, the store's reputation does not concern me.		0.810			
I trust the online retailers privacy policies mentioned on their Web sites.		0.760			
I do not want to see and touch the products before I buy them.		0.590			
The opinions and experiences of my friends affect my purchasing decision.			0.867		
The opinions and experiences of my family affect my purchasing decision.			0.855		
The opinions and experiences discussed in online forums affect my purchasing decision			0.694		
When shopping on the Internet, I am satisfied with the delivery system.				0.761	
I am satisfied with the return policy of Internet shopping.				0.755	
I get better service when shopping on the Internet than traditional retail store.				0.753	
Shopping online permits me to buy an item at a relatively lower price.					0.802

Online shopping helps me in saving money.	0.799			
I would be more likely to shop online if product returns were easier.		0.792		
I would be more likely to shop online if faster delivery was ensured.		0.661		
I usually watch online advertisements for discounts and sales deals.			0.759	
Marketing initiatives or promotions such as banner advertisement, sales, or free gifts allow me to access great deals on the Internet.			0.715	
Online shopping is a part of my leisure time activity.				0.853
I enjoy shopping on the Internet.				0.620

Promotions: The two statements that load on the ninth factor clearly advocate the factors related to promotions like deals etc. These include "I usually watch online advertisements for discounts and sales deals" and "Marketing initiatives or promotions such as banner advertisement, sales, or free gifts allow me to access great deals on the Internet". The Cronbach reliability coefficient for the Promotion component was 0.81 and the factor explained 2.6% of the variance.

Enjoyment: The two statements that load on the tenth factor imply an "Enjoyment" component. The component includes statements that clearly reflect a leisure and enjoyment theme (i.e. "Online shopping is a part of my leisure time activity" and "I enjoy shopping on the Internet."). The Cronbach reliability coefficient for the Enjoyment component was 0.82 and the factor explained 2.5% of the variance.

Multiple Regression: Demographics and OSF

The six suppositions for regression analysis have to be dealt with before moving to regression analysis. Fields (2005) describes the assumptions as follows:

- Normality
- Linearity
- Independence of error term
- Nonexistence of multicollinearity
- Nonappearance of heteroscedasticity and
- Absence of outlier and influential observations

The histogram resulted in the symmetric distribution of residuals and a unimodal distribution of values satisfying the normality postulation. The scatter plot showed no heteroscedasticity and the distribution was linear in nature.

The value of Durbin-Watson was 1.4 which was relatively nearer to 2, showing the independence of error term. There was no multicollinearity in the data, as the tolerance statistics were all above 0.2 and VIF values below 5. A value of 10 has been suggested as the highest level of Variance inflation factors (VIF) (Marquaridt, 1970; Neter, Wasserman, & Kutner, 1989; Kennedy, 1992; Hair et al., 1995) and a value of .10 is suggested as the lowest level of tolerance (Tabachnick, Fidell, & Osterlind, 2001). The normal p-p plot analysis showed a consistent spread around the normal probability plot of a straight line when mapped against the predicted values and hence confirmed the absence of outlier and any prominent observations.

Multiple linear regression was conducted to determine the structure of association between the independent variables namely Product, Risk, Convenience, Trust, Social Influence, Satisfaction, Price, Customer Services, Promotions and Enjoyment and the

impact of demographic variables like Age, Income and Education on the dependent variable OSF.

Age: For the age group of below 30 years, Product, Convenience, Social Influence, Promotions and Enjoyment have a significant impact on the OSF. The consumers in this category are influenced significantly by the Product and Enjoyment factor as the p-value is less than 0.05. In contrast, consumers from the above 30 years categories are persuaded only by factors like Social Influence, Satisfaction and Customer Services. Respondents below 30 years are more influenced by the Enjoyment factors like leisure and pleasure whereas respondents belonging to above 30 years category are significantly affected by Customer Services such as easy product returns and faster delivery services. See Table 3.

Regression equations

If all Age groups are considered

OSF = 1.690 + 0.095 (Product) + 0.010 (Risk) + 0.066 (Convenience) + 0.026 (Trust) - 0.136 (Social Influence) + 0.002 (Satisfaction) + 0.012 (Price) + 0.064 (Customer Services) + 0.077 (Promotions) + 0.104 (Enjoyment)

For Age below 30 years

OSF = 1.644 + 0.122 (Product) + 0.029 (Risk) + 0.108 (Convenience) + 0.024 (Trust) - 0.092 (Social Influence) - 0.021 (Satisfaction) + 0.012 (Price) + 0.028 (Customer Services) + 0.115 (Promotions) + 0.128 (Enjoyment)

For Age above 30 years

OSF = 2.014 - 0.030 (Product) + 0.082 (Risk) + 0.060 (Convenience) + 0.067 (Trust) - 0.178 (Social Influence) + 0.277 (Satisfaction) - 0.078 (Price) + 0.306 (Customer Services) + 0.024 (Promotions) + 0.021 (Enjoyment)

Table 3. Results of multiple linear regression analysis with Age as controlling variable

Model Summary											
All Ages				Below 30 years				Above 30 years			
R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.312[a]	0.097	0.087	0.709	.361[a]	.130	.118	.674	.513[a]	.263	.214	.741

a. Predictors: (Constant), Enjoyment, Promotions, Services, Price, Satisfaction, Social, Trust, Convenience, Risk, Product

ANOVA[a]															
Model	All Ages					Below 30 years					Above 30 years				
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	48.688	10	4.869	9.677	0.000[b]	49.903	10	4.990	10.995	0.000[b]	29.618	10	2.962	5.396	0.000[b]
Residual	451.827	898	0.503			334.049	736	0.454			82.882	151	0.549		
Total	500.515	908				383.952	746				112.500	161			

a. Dependent Variable: How often do you go shopping online?

b. Predictors: (Constant), Enjoyment, Promotions, Services, Price, Satisfaction, Social, Trust, Convenience, Risk, Product

Coefficients															
Factors	All Ages					Below 30 years					Above 30 years				
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			B	Std. Error	Beta			B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.69	0.024		71.823	0.000	1.644	.025		65.443	0.000	2.014	.077		25.987	0.000
Product	0.095	0.024	0.128	4.028	0.000	.122	.024	.175	5.045	0.000	-.030	.075	-.031	-.402	0.688
Risk	0.01	0.024	0.013	0.413	0.680	.029	.025	.041	1.179	0.239	.082	.069	.091	1.183	0.239
Convenience	0.066	0.024	0.088	2.785	0.005	.108	.026	.146	4.196	0.000	.060	.059	.079	1.016	0.311
Trust	0.026	0.024	0.035	1.092	0.275	.024	.025	.033	0.958	0.338	.067	.062	.083	1.074	0.284
Social Influence	-0.136	0.024	-0.183	-5.773	0.000	-.092	.026	-.121	-3.470	0.001	-.178	.055	-.245	-3.211	0.002
Satisfaction	0.002	0.024	0.003	0.105	0.916	-.021	.025	-.029	-.845	0.398	.277	.065	.324	4.255	0.000
Price	0.012	0.024	0.016	0.52	0.603	.012	.025	.017	0.488	0.625	-.078	.070	-.089	-1.110	0.269
Customer Services	0.064	0.024	0.086	2.726	0.007	.028	.025	.038	1.105	0.269	.306	.062	.363	4.905	0.000
Promotions	0.077	0.024	0.104	3.289	0.001	.115	.024	.163	4.735	0.000	.024	.068	.026	0.354	0.724
Enjoyment	0.104	0.024	0.14	4.423	0.000	.128	.026	.173	5.007	0.000	.021	.056	.028	0.380	0.705

Dependent Variable: How often do you go shopping online?

Income: Female customers with an income below Rs. 30,000 are influenced by factors such as Product, Risk, Convenience, Trust, Social Influence, Satisfaction, Promotions and Enjoyment. These factors have a significant impact on their OSF. In comparison, women consumers in the above Rs. 30,000 income level are influenced only by Satisfaction and Customer Services. For women consumers at lower income levels, social influence acts as a significant factor to opt for shopping online. Social Influence from family, friends and online discussion forums has a negative effect on female consumers. Female consumers in the higher income group are more concerned with the kind of services provided by online vendors and that determines their OSF. See Table 4

Regression equations

If all Income groups are considered

OSF = 1.690 + 0.095 (Product) + 0.010 (Risk) + 0.066 (Convenience) + 0.026 (Trust) - 0.136 (Social Influence) + 0.002 (Satisfaction) + 0.012 (Price) + 0.064 (Customer Services) + 0.077 (Promotions) + 0.104 (Enjoyment)

For Income below Rs. 30,000

OSF = 1.611 + 0.098 (Product) + 0.064 (Risk) + 0.107 (Convenience) + 0.085 (Trust) - 0.138 (Social Influence) - 0.059 (Satisfaction) + 0.015 (Price) + 0.025 (Customer Services) + 0.088 (Promotions) + 0.12 (Enjoyment)

For Income above Rs. 30,000

OSF = 2.008 + 0.004 (Product) + 0.008 (Risk) + 0.013 (Convenience) - 0.031 (Trust) - 0.096 (Social Influence) + 0.282 (Satisfaction) - 0.047 (Price) + 0.304 (Customer Services) + 0.091 (Promotions) + 0.082 (Enjoyment)

Table 4. Results of multiple linear regression analysis with Income as controlling variable

Model Summary											
All income levels				Below Rs. 30,000				Above Rs. 30,000			
R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.312[a]	0.097	0.087	0.709	.409[a]	.168	.155	.625	.466[a]	.217	.180	.797

a. Predictors: (Constant), Enjoyment, Promotions, Services, Price, Satisfaction, Social, Trust, Convenience, Risk, Product

ANOVA[a]															
Model	All income levels					Below Rs. 30,000					Above Rs. 30,000				
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	48.688	10	4.869	9.677	0.000[b]	52.952	10	5.295	13.551	0.000[b]	37.713	10	3.771	5.932	0.000[b]
Residual	451.827	898	0.503			262.982	673	0.391			136.047	214	0.636		
Total	500.515	908				315.934	683				173.760	224			

a. Dependent Variable: How often do you go shopping online?

b. Predictors: (Constant), Enjoyment, Promotions, Services, Price, Satisfaction, Social, Trust, Convenience, Risk, Product

Coefficients															
Factors	All income levels					Below Rs. 30,000					Above Rs. 30,000				
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			B	Std. Error	Beta			B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.69	0.024		71.823	0.000	1.611	.025		64.908	0.000	2.008	.068		29.474	0.000
Product	0.095	0.024	0.128	4.028	0.000	.098	.024	.150	4.159	0.000	.004	.068	.004	.064	0.949
Risk	0.01	0.024	0.013	0.413	0.680	.064	.024	.094	2.648	0.008	.008	.060	.008	0.127	0.899
Convenience	0.066	0.024	0.088	2.785	0.005	.107	.025	.153	4.290	0.000	.013	.053	.016	0.245	0.807
Trust	0.026	0.024	0.035	1.092	0.275	.085	.025	.120	3.368	0.001	-.031	.054	-.037	-0.567	0.572
Social Influence	-0.136	0.024	-0.183	-5.773	0.000	-.138	.027	-.187	-5.142	0.000	-.096	.051	-.125	-1.881	0.061
Satisfaction	0.002	0.024	0.003	0.105	0.916	-.059	.025	-.086	-2.398	0.017	.282	.058	.320	4.871	0.000
Price	0.012	0.024	0.016	0.52	0.603	.015	.024	.022	0.622	0.534	-.047	.061	-.053	-0.773	0.440
Customer Services	0.064	0.024	0.086	2.726	0.007	.025	.024	.037	1.043	0.297	.304	.056	.334	5.429	0.000
Promotions	0.077	0.024	0.104	3.289	0.001	.088	.024	.131	3.704	0.000	.091	.056	.102	1.626	0.105
Enjoyment	0.104	0.024	0.14	4.423	0.000	.120	.025	.171	4.764	0.000	.082	.054	.098	1.534	0.126

Dependent Variable: How often do you go shopping online?

Education: Female consumers with an education level of graduation and below are significantly impacted by factors like Product, Promotions and Enjoyment. Women consumers in this category are highly influenced by Product and Enjoyment factors. These consumers are also on the lookout for promotional offers like deals and discounts and hence Promotions as a factor becomes significant. In contrast, female consumers with an education level of Post-Graduation and above are influenced by Product, Convenience, Social Influence, Customer Services, Promotions and Enjoyment. Social Influence and Customer services act as major influencers towards their OSF. Social Influence has a negative impact on their OSF. This indicates that women consumers at this level are more concerned about the feedback received from friends, family etc. and are guided by their opinions. See Table 5.

Regression equations

If all Education levels are considered

OSF = 1.690 + 0.095 (Product) + 0.010 (Risk) + 0.066 (Convenience) + 0.026 (Trust) - 0.136 (Social Influence) + 0.002 (Satisfaction) + 0.012 (Price) + 0.064 (Customer Services) + 0.077 (Promotions) + 0.104 (Enjoyment)

For Education level Graduation and below

OSF = 1.713 + 0.158 (Product) - 0.086 (Risk) - 0.055 (Convenience) - 0.043 (Trust) + 0.039 (Social Influence) + 0.053 (Satisfaction) - 0.001 (Price) - 0.074 (Customer Services) + 0.129 (Promotions) + 0.151 (Enjoyment)

For Education level Post-Graduation and above

OSF = 1.706 + 0.089 (Product) + 0.039 (Risk) + 0.099 (Convenience) + 0.031 (Trust) - 0.210 (Social Influence) + 0.014 (Satisfaction) + 0.015 (Price) + 0.129 (Customer Services) + 0.067 (Promotions) + 0.098 (Enjoyment)

Table 5. Results of multiple linear regression analysis with Education as controlling variable

Model Summary											
All education levels				Graduates and below				Post Graduates and above			
R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.312[a]	0.097	0.087	0.709	.338[a]	.115	.077	.698	.401[a]	.161	.148	.690

a. Predictors: (Constant), Enjoyment, Promotions, Services, Price, Satisfaction, Social, Trust, Convenience, Risk, Product

ANOVA[a]															
Model	All education levels					Graduates and below					Post Graduates and above				
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	48.688	10	4.869	9.677	0.000[b]	15.007	10	1.501	3.078	0.001[b]	59.356	10	5.936	12.468	0.000[b]
Residual	451.827	898	0.503			116.053	238	0.488			308.976	649	0.476		
Total	500.515	908				131.060	248				368.332	659			

a. Dependent Variable: How often do you go shopping online?

b. Predictors: (Constant), Enjoyment, Promotions, Services, Price, Satisfaction, Social, Trust, Convenience, Risk, Product

Coefficients															
Factors	All education levels					Graduates and below					Post Graduates and above				
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			B	Std. Error	Beta			B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.690	0.024		71.823	0.000	1.713	.052		32.830	0.000	1.706	.027		62.208	0.000
Product	0.095	0.024	0.128	4.028	0.000	.158	.051	.197	3.076	0.002	.089	.026	.123	3.406	0.001
Risk	0.010	0.024	0.013	0.413	0.680	-.086	.052	-.104	-1.645	0.101	.039	.026	.054	1.500	0.134
Convenience	0.066	0.024	0.088	2.785	0.005	-.055	.055	-.064	-0.999	0.319	.099	.026	.139	3.844	0.000
Trust	0.026	0.024	0.035	1.092	0.275	-.043	.049	-.057	-0.874	0.383	.031	.027	.042	1.146	0.252
Social Influence	-0.136	0.024	-0.183	-5.773	0.000	.039	.048	.051	0.811	0.418	-.210	.027	-.278	-7.714	0.000
Satisfaction	0.002	0.024	0.003	0.105	0.916	.053	.050	.069	1.054	0.293	.014	.027	.019	.513	0.608
Price	0.012	0.024	0.016	0.52	0.603	-.001	.043	-.001	-0.013	0.989	.015	.028	.020	0.548	0.584
Customer Services	0.064	0.024	0.086	2.726	0.007	-.074	.045	-.105	-1.656	0.099	.129	.027	.171	4.727	0.000
Promotions	0.077	0.024	0.104	3.289	0.001	.129	.049	.167	2.652	0.009	.067	.027	.091	2.534	0.012
Enjoyment	0.104	0.024	0.140	4.423	0.000	.151	.046	.206	3.245	0.001	.098	.027	.132	3.642	0.000

Dependent Variable: How often do you go shopping online?

Discussion and implications

Identification of Components

Female consumers in India are influenced by numerous factors while shopping online. The analysis of the 33 items comprising the different facets of online shopping in this study suggests that female consumers are impacted by 10 unique components which have a considerable effect on their online buying behavior. These are: Product, Risk, Convenience, Trust, Social Influence, Satisfaction, Price, Promotions and Enjoyment. All the ten components have their own unique characteristics associated with the online shopping industry in India.

According to the study, *Convenience* acts as a major influencing factor to shop online. A factor loading of 0.987 suggests that the consumers tend to shop more on the internet because of the convenience of ordering the product from home thus reducing the effort of travelling and standing in queues; easy use of websites and the opportunity to compare many products at one place. This finding is similar to the previous research done by (Kunz, 1997; Taylor & Cosenza, 1999; Wolhandler, 1999) who also believed that it was comfort and ease that motivated the people to go online shopping. With a factor loading of 0.985, *Customer Services* emerges as the next significant factor. Schneider and Bowen (1999) also confirm in their study that as there is no direct contact between the consumer and the retailer, good customer services act as a crucial factor in the success of internet shopping. The study also reveals that *Enjoyment*, with a factor loading of 0.983, operates as the third most important component in predicting female consumers' attitude towards online shopping. This is comparable to the research done by Menon and Kahn (2002) who also believed that consumers who relish their online buying activities have a positive approach towards it, and are expected to shop again. Online advertisements offering discounts and sales deals as well as marketing initiatives related to giving away of free gifts etc. considerably affect female consumers' buying frequency hence *Promotions* have a positive effect. This is similar to the study done by Walters and Jamil (2003) who also considered product promotion as a factor influencing buying behavior. *Satisfaction*, with a factor loading of 0.982 suggests that consumers consistently look for a timely and undamaged product delivery system and, in case of product replacement, a hassle free product return process and finally, the overall service satisfaction provided by online stores. Collier and Bienstock (2006) also mention in their study that receiving the exact product at the stipulated time and at an agreed upon condition influences the degree of satisfaction of the customers and the frequency to shop online increases when a customer is satisfied. *Trust* has a factor loading of 0.970 and consumers are influenced by the credibility of online vendors, their online reputation, and the privacy policies mentioned on their websites and how much they trust the products sold by them. **Hume (2008)** also suggests that deficiency of trust in consumers can decrease the possibility of online

shopping as they will be apprehensive of buying from a vendor who is not trustworthy. Hence, lack of trust might decrease the frequency to shop online. A striking finding of the study is that *Social Influence* has a negative impact on predicting online female buying behavior. This component has a factor loading of 0.969 and the finding is similar to earlier research done by Qiu, Pang, and Lim (2012), who believed that negative online reviews are often assumed to have a strong influence on a buyer's behavior as compared to positive ones. Female consumers generally hop onto online shopping as they believe that they can purchase any product at a relatively low price as compared to a brick and mortar store. With a factor loading of 0.968, *Price* has a significant impact on OSF. Koyuncu and Bhattacharya (2004) also revealed in their research that the reason consumers prefer to buy more from online stores is that they offer better prices. The second last significant factor that influences female consumers to shop more online is the *Product* component which has a loading of 0.964. Female consumers are influenced by the variety of products available online, accurate product description, reasonably good quality of the product, and the prospect of comparing different types of products at one place. It acts as a significant factor in affecting OSF. A similar study conducted by Wambui (2010) among university students evaluated the factors leading to adoption or non-adoption of online shopping as an alternative channel for shopping and one of the major reasons for adopting online shopping was its ability to provide a wide variety of products at one place. And last but not the least; risk involved in online shopping also acts as an important component for female consumers. The study observed that the *Risk* component, with a factor loading of 0.948, has a significant influence on OSF. Consumers tend to check whether the personal information being shared is not misused, that details of credit and debit cards are not compromised by online vendors, and the financial security methods followed by the vendors are fool proof and there will not be any interception of financial details by an unknown third party. Fram and Grady (1997) also felt that the details of personal information a consumer submits regarding credit card etc. may create doubts that there may be a leakage of data which may possibly lead to fraudulent payment.

Demographics and OSF

Age

Age plays an important part in online shopping. The preferences of younger female consumers are different from older consumers. The findings of this study suggest that people of different age groups behave differently when encountering different factors affecting online shopping. See Table 6. A large number of consumers below the age group of 30 years are regular online shoppers. They are more comfortable using the latest technology and are greater risk takers. They look for different promotional and discount offers and enjoy the time spent on the internet. Girard, Korgaonkar, and Silverblatt (2003) also mentioned in their study that demographic variables like age, income, gender etc.

have an important relationship with a customer's preference to shop online. Wood (2002) in a similar study also evaluated that the influence of age is visible for those below 25 years, as they are more fascinated by the latest equipment and technology, such as the Internet, to look for new products and information, and identify the best options, as compared to older age group customers.

Table 6. Influence of Age

Factors	Age	
	Below 30 years	**Above 30 years**
Product	Positive Effect	No Effect
Convenience	Positive Effect	No Effect
Social Influence	Negative Effect	Negative Effect
Satisfaction	No Effect	Positive Effect
Customer Services	No Effect	Positive Effect
Promotions	Positive Effect	No Effect
Enjoyment	Positive Effect	No Effect

Income

The income of an individual has a significant impact on online buying behavior. The results of the study suggest that consumers who come from an income level of below Rs. 30,000 are more concerned about the product. See Table 7. They look for different varieties of product and the ease with which the products can be compared online. There is a perception that a lower income discourages online transactions, and consumers tend to be a little cautious while sharing any personal information on the internet and anticipate that shopping online might lead to a possible financial loss. But the study reveals that these consumers do have a positive outlook towards buying online. In comparison, consumers at a higher income level tend to focus more on satisfaction and customer services. They look for satisfaction related to delivery or how easily a product can be returned. Higher income also makes consumers perceive online shopping as a lower risk proposition. Customers earning less than Rs. 30,000 believe that there is a negative influence from family and friends to go online and shop but they do get influenced by deals and discounts offered by online retailers which makes shopping online an enjoyable experience.

Table 7. Influence of Income

Factors	Income

	Below Rs. 30000	Above Rs. 30000
Product	Positive Effect	No Effect
Risk	Positive Effect	No Effect
Convenience	Positive Effect	No Effect
Trust	Positive Effect	No Effect
Social Influence	Negative Effect	No Effect
Satisfaction	Negative Effect	Positive Effect
Customer Services	No Effect	Positive Effect
Promotions	Positive Effect	No Effect
Enjoyment	Positive Effect	No Effect

Education

The study reveals that education significantly affects the online shopping and spending intention of female consumers. The behavior of a consumer changes with the change in the education level. The study reveals that consumers at the level of post-graduation and above are significantly influenced by others. They are guided by the opinions of family, friends and colleagues. Also for these consumers, convenience comes first and they give priority to comfort and ease of ordering online which makes online shopping a pleasurable experience. See Table 8. In contrast, female consumers at the undergraduate levels are not influenced by others' opinions. They are in fact well versed with the product offerings and have the requisite information to decide whether to buy a particular product or not.

Table 8. Influence of Education

Factors	Education	
	Graduates and below	Post Graduates and above
Product	Positive Effect	Positive Effect
Convenience	No Effect	Positive Effect
Social Influence	No Effect	Negative Effect
Customer Services	No Effect	Positive Effect
Promotions	Positive Effect	Positive Effect
Enjoyment	Positive Effect	Positive Effect

The objective of this study has been to demonstrate that demographic variables like age, education and income have a significant effect in the explanation of the behavior of online female shoppers. These variables, combined with the factors influencing online

shopping, help to identify the OSF of female consumers. The results obtained have affirmed that the demographic variables along with the 10 factors identified, influence the behavior of female consumers and in turn affect the shopping frequency.

Limitations and Future Research

There are some limitations to the current study. First, the sample is India-focused, with 100 per cent of the respondents residing in India. The respondents in this study may have traits and behaviors that vary from those in other parts of the world. Future research can incorporate comparative studies. Comparisons between emerging economies such as India and developed economies such as the USA, China etc. will reveal some noticeable disparity among female consumers in the domestic markets as well as foreign markets (Gehrt et al., 2007). In addition, the sample is skewed to a particular age group with 82%of the respondents being less than 30 years old. This may have accounted for the relatively low income levels of the respondents. In this study, we identified ten factors affecting female consumers' online shopping behavior but there may be other factors as well. Future studies can examine the respondents who are older and have higher income levels and who might be more likely to make a big ticket transaction online than younger consumers.

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