

Factors Affecting Online Shopping Behavior: An Empirical Study of Rural Area in Bilaspur, Himachal Pradesh With Reference to Flipkart

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Abstract:

Online shopping is a platform that enables people to purchase goods and services via the internet. It allows customers to buy products directly from sellers through websites or mobile applications, making the shopping experience more convenient and accessible. This mode of shopping is also known as e-shopping. The internet has simplified and revolutionized modern life by facilitating online business and trade, making transactions faster and more efficient. It provides new opportunities for remote business operations, with websites becoming the cornerstone of e-commerce by showcasing products and services. The internet also brings together competitors and consumers in one digital marketplace, creating new avenues for promoting and advertising goods and services. The growing number of internet users in India presents a promising future for online shopping. As one of the latest trends in the Indian market, online shopping has significantly influenced consumer behavior. This study is empirical in nature, with primary data collected through a structured questionnaire. A sample size of 120 respondents from rural area Bilaspur district, Himachal Pradesh, was selected using judgment and convenience sampling methods. Our research aims to identify the key factors influencing consumer shopping behavior on Flipkart.

Keywords- Online shopping, shopping, internet, business, behaviour, consumer

1. Introduction

In today's digital era, the internet has become an essential part of daily life. While it was initially used primarily for information sharing, it has now become indispensable for various aspects of modern living, including business, social interactions, and shopping. The rapid advancement of technology has transformed lifestyles, shifting traditional activities into digital formats—one of the most significant being the transition from conventional shopping to online shopping. Online shopping refers to the process of purchasing goods directly from a seller via the internet, eliminating the need for intermediaries. It can also be described as the buying and selling of goods and services through online platforms. One of the key advantages of online shopping is the vast range of products and services available to customers. Shoppers can easily compare different deals, evaluate product features, and choose the best offers that suit their needs.¹

Online shopping is a form of electronic commerce that allows consumers to purchase goods or services directly from sellers over the Internet using a web browser or mobile application. Consumers can find products of interest by visiting a retailer's website directly or by using a shopping search engine, which compares product availability and pricing across multiple e-

retailers. Customers can shop online using a variety of devices, including desktop computers, laptops, tablets, and smartphones. Online stores function similarly to traditional brick-and-mortar retailers or shopping centers, providing a digital alternative for purchasing products and services. This process is known as **business-to-consumer (B2C) online shopping**. Additionally, when an online store facilitates transactions between businesses, it is referred to as **business-to-business (B2B) online shopping**. A typical online store allows customers to browse a wide range of products and services, view images, check product specifications, and compare features and prices, offering a seamless and convenient shopping experience.²

Definition and Meaning :

What is shopping?

Shopping is the activity of browsing and selecting goods or services from one or more retailers with the intent to make a purchase.

What is online shopping?

Online shopping is a branch of e-commerce that allows consumers to purchase goods or services directly from sellers over the Internet using a web browser. Consumers can search for a product of interest either by visiting a seller's website directly or by using a shopping search engine, which compares the availability and pricing of the same product across multiple e-retailers.

Online shopping can be conducted through various devices, including desktop computers, smartphones, laptops, and tablets, making it a convenient and accessible option for consumers.

Advantages of Online Shopping

- ❖ Convenience – Online shopping allows consumers to purchase products anytime, anywhere, without the need to visit a physical store.
- ❖ Wider Selection – Online stores offer a vast range of products from different brands and sellers, often with more variety than traditional stores.
- ❖ Price Comparisons – Customers can compare prices across multiple e-retailers using shopping search engines or price comparison websites to find the best deals.
- ❖ Discounts and Offers – Many online platforms provide exclusive discounts, promotional offers, and seasonal sales that may not be available in physical stores.
- ❖ Time-Saving – Shopping online eliminates the need for travel, standing in queues, and spending time searching for products in a crowded store.
- ❖ Access to Reviews – Customers can read product reviews and ratings from other buyers to make informed purchasing decisions.
- ❖ Home Delivery – Online shopping provides the convenience of doorstep delivery, often with multiple shipping options, including express and free delivery.
- ❖ Easy Return and Refund Policies – Most e-commerce platforms have hassle-free return and refund policies, making it easier for customers to shop with confidence.
- ❖ No Geographical Limitations – Consumers can buy products from international sellers, gaining access to a global marketplace.

- ❖ **Secure Payment Options** – Online shopping offers various payment methods, including credit/debit cards, digital wallets, and cash on delivery, ensuring a smooth transaction experience.

Disadvantages of Online Shopping

- ❖ **Lack of Physical Inspection** – Customers cannot physically examine or try products before purchasing, which may lead to dissatisfaction.
- ❖ **Shipping Costs and Delays** – Some online stores charge high delivery fees, and shipments can take longer than expected, especially for international orders.
- ❖ **Risk of Fraud and Scams** – Online shopping increases the risk of fraudulent websites, counterfeit products, and payment security issues.
- ❖ **Complicated Return and Refund Process** – While many sites offer return policies, some have complex procedures, restocking fees, or non-refundable items.
- ❖ **Possibility of Receiving Wrong or Damaged Items** – There is a chance of receiving incorrect, defective, or damaged products, leading to inconvenience.
- ❖ **Internet Dependency** – A stable internet connection is required for shopping, making it difficult for those with poor connectivity.
- ❖ **Hidden Costs** – Additional charges such as taxes, shipping fees, and customs duties may increase the final cost of the product.
- ❖ **Lack of Personal Assistance** – Unlike physical stores, online shopping lacks face-to-face customer service, making it harder to get immediate help or advice.
- ❖ **Cyber security Concerns** – Customers are vulnerable to hacking, identity theft, and data breaches if they shop on unsecured websites.
- ❖ **Over-Reliance on Product Descriptions** – Buyers have to rely on written descriptions and images, which may sometimes be misleading or exaggerated.³

Online Shopping Players in India

- ❖ **Amazon:** Amazon was founded by Jeff Bezos in 1994, with its headquarters in Seattle, Washington. Originally, the company was named **Cadabra.com**, but it was later changed to **Amazon** because "Cadabra" sounded too similar to "cadaver." The name **Amazon** was inspired by the world's second-longest river, symbolizing vastness and variety. Initially, Amazon started as an online bookstore but later expanded to sell a wide range of products, including movies, games, DVDs, music CDs, computer software, electronics, and more. Today, it is the largest online retailer in the world, offering millions of products and services across various categories.
- ❖ **Flip kart:** Flip kart is a leading e-commerce company based in Bangalore, India. It was founded in 2007 by Sachin Bansal and Binny Bansal. Initially, the company focused on selling books before expanding into other product categories, including consumer electronics, fashion, and lifestyle products. As of March 2017, Flip kart held a 39.5% market share in India's e-commerce industry. It dominates the apparel segment and competes closely with Amazon in the electronics and mobile phone markets. In addition to its e-commerce business, Flip kart owns Phone Pe, a mobile payments service based on

the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), further strengthening its presence in India's digital economy.

- ❖ **Shop Clues.com:** Shop Clues is an online marketplace headquartered in Gurgaon, India. The company was founded in Silicon Valley, California, in 2011 and later expanded its operations to India. Shop Clues has a vast network of over 12,000 registered retail merchants and offers more than 200,000 products to its customers. The platform attracts over 42 million visitors annually and serves 9,500 locations across the country. Entering the Indian e-commerce market as the 35th player in 2011, Shop Clues has grown significantly. The company employs approximately 700 people across various locations.
- ❖ **Snap deal:** Snap deal is an Indian e-commerce company headquartered in New Delhi, India. It was founded in February 2010 by Kunal Bahl, a Wharton graduate from the M&T Engineering and Business program at the University of Pennsylvania, and Rohit Bansal, an alumnus of IIT Delhi. Snap deal has a vast network of 275,000 sellers, offering over 30 million products across various categories. The platform has a wide reach, serving customers in 6,000 towns and cities across India.
- ❖ **Myntra:** Myntra is an Indian fashion e-commerce company headquartered in Bangalore, India. It was founded in 2007 by Mukesh Bansal, along with Ashutosh Lawania and Vineet Saxena. In its early years, Myntra specialized in selling on-demand personalized gift items and primarily operated on a business-to-business (B2B) model. Over time, it transitioned into a leading online fashion retailer, offering a wide range of clothing, accessories, and lifestyle products.
- ❖ **eBay:** eBay is a multinational e-commerce corporation that facilitates consumer-to-consumer (C2C) and business-to-business (B2B) sales. The company is headquartered in San Jose, California and was founded by Pierre Omidyar in 1995. Today, eBay operates as a multi-billion-dollar business with a presence in about 30 countries. It manages eBay.com, an online auction and shopping platform where individuals and businesses can buy and sell a wide variety of goods and services worldwide. In addition to its traditional auction-style sales. Previously, eBay also offered online money transfers via PayPal, which was a wholly owned subsidiary of eBay from 2002 to 2015.⁴

2. Review of Literature

Binoy Mathew, (2015)⁵ A study was conducted on the changing trends in online apparel shopping among Indian consumers. The primary objective of the research was to analyze emerging trends in India's online apparel market. The researcher found a significant relationship between youth preferences and evolving trends in online shopping. The study concluded that several factors, including convenience, time efficiency, pricing, and flexibility, play a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior in online apparel shopping. These factors not only influence purchasing patterns but also have a strong impact on the country's economy.

Hemanth kumars, (2018)⁶ This study highlights how the internet has made the world more interconnected, providing users with increasing options for purchasing products through online B2C (business-to-consumer) retailers. Many consumers perceive online shopping as a sign of

advancement, as it offers convenience, variety, and accessibility, making their shopping experience more efficient and modern.

A, C(2019)⁷The purpose of this study is to analyze consumer awareness and identify the challenges faced in online shopping in Bangalore City. The study found that most online shoppers belong to the age group of 20 to 30 years. Among the various e-commerce platforms, Amazon emerged as the most preferred shopping site among the respondents.

Veena p, (2019)⁸ The objective of this study is to analyze the demographic profile of college students and the factors influencing their online shopping behavior. The findings reveal that 58% of students shop online, spending less than an hour on their purchases. Among various e-commerce platforms, Flip kart is the most preferred choice for online shopping. The study concludes that college students prefer online shopping as it offers convenience, a wider range of choices, no need for bargaining, and saves both time and money while allowing them to explore multiple brands without visiting physical stores.

Muhammed Muntaqheem, (2019)⁹ This research aims to compare online shopping with physical store shopping. The primary objective of the study is to conduct a comparative analysis of both shopping methods, examining their advantages, disadvantages, and consumer preferences.

G Anuradha, (2021)¹⁰ The purpose of this study is to analyze the risks involved in online shopping and to understand customer attitudes and satisfaction levels toward e-commerce. The findings reveal that 50% of customers aged 20-50 years actively engage in online shopping. The majority of customers identified key risks associated with online shopping, including the inability to touch and feel the product, technical issues, and the presence of fake online stores.

HD Nandisha, (2021)¹¹ The purpose of this study is to analyze consumer habits, culture, lifestyle, behavior, and expectations regarding online shopping. The findings reveal that individuals who face difficulties in visiting physical markets prefer online shopping as a convenient alternative. Additionally, around 50% of consumers consider online shopping easier and more accessible for their purchasing needs.

Vaibhavi j mehta, (2022)¹²The purpose of this study is to highlight the growing importance of online shopping in the modern business environment and to identify the factors influencing consumer behavior. The findings reveal that online shopping is the third most popular activity on the internet, following email usage and web browsing.

2.1 Objectives of Study

- ❖ To analyze consumer preferences toward Flip kart.
- ❖ To identify challenges faced by consumers while using Flip kart.
- ❖ To examine key factors that influence consumers to shop online.
- ❖ To assess consumer satisfaction with Flip kart services.

Hypothesis of the Study

- ❖ Null Hypothesis (H₀): There is no significant relationship between the frequency of online shopping and the gender of respondents.
- ❖ Null Hypothesis (H₀): There is no significant relationship between the satisfaction level of online shopping and the age of respondents.

Research Methodology

For this study, both primary and secondary data have been used. Secondary data sources include research articles, journals, books, websites, newspapers, and reports.

Sampling Methodology

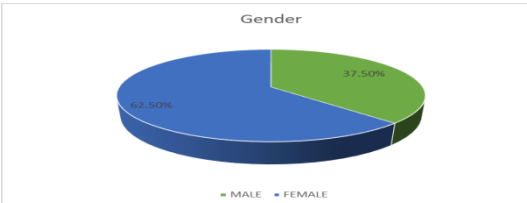
This study aims to examine consumer preferences, factors influencing shopping behavior, and satisfaction levels. The sampling unit consists of individuals from rural areas of the Sadar block in Bilaspur, Himachal Pradesh. A representative sample of 120 respondents was selected using a convenience, random, and judgment/stratified sampling method.

3: Data Analysis and Interpretation

3.1 : Gender

Table 3.1 Pie Chart 3.1

Sr No	Gender	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	MALE	45	37.5%
2	FEMALE	75	62.5%
	Total	120	100.0%



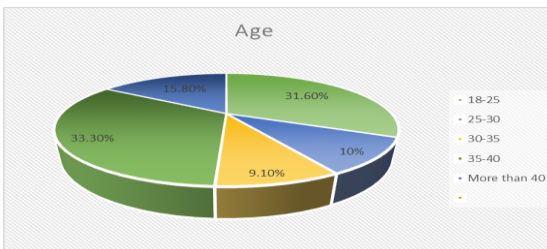
Source of Data : Primary Data

Table 3.1, which presents the demographic characteristics of the study, shows that 37.5% of the respondents are male, while 62.5% are female. This indicates that female respondents outnumber male respondents.

3.2 Classification of Respondents by Age

Table 3.2 Pie Chart 3.2

Sr No	Age	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	18-25	38	31.6%
2	25-30	12	10%
3	30-35	11	9.1%
4	35-40	40	33.3%
5	More than 40	19	15.8%
	Total	120	100%



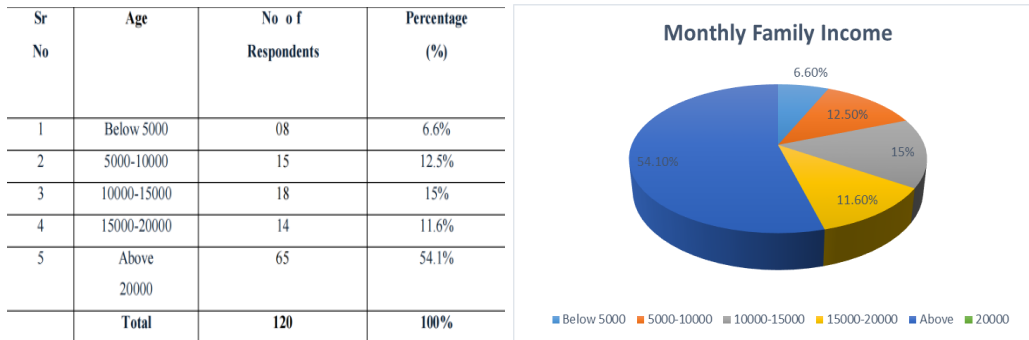
Source of Data : Primary Data

Table 3.2 presents the age distribution of respondents to provide demographic insights for the study. The data reveals the following breakdown: 31.6% of respondents belong to the 18–25

age group, 10% fall within the 25–30 age group, 9.1% are in the 30–35 age group, 33.3% belong to the 35–40 age group and 15.8% are above 40 years old

3.3: Classification of Respondents by Monthly Family Income

Table 3.3 Pie Chart 3.3

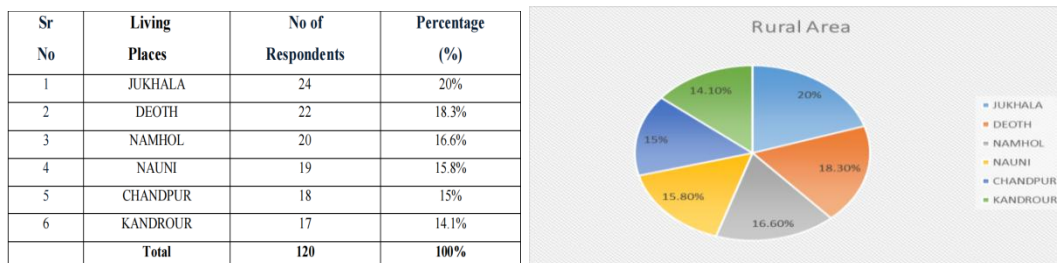


Source of data : Primary Data

Table 3.3 presents the monthly income distribution of respondents as a key demographic characteristic of the study. The data reveals the following breakdown: 6.6% of respondents earn below 5,000, 12.5% fall within the 5,000–10,000 income range, 15% earn between 10,000–15,000, 11.6% have an income between 15,000–20,000, and The largest group, 54.1%, consists of respondents earning above 20,000.

3.4 Classification of Respondents by Living Place

Table 3.4 Pie Chart 3.4



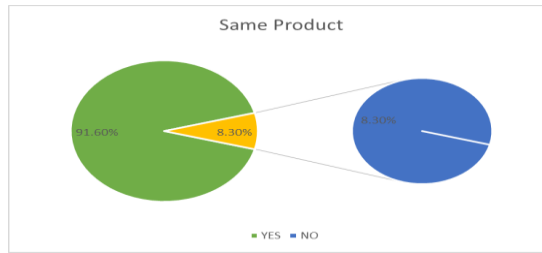
Source of Data : Primary Data

Table 3.4 presents the geographical distribution of respondents from various rural areas. The data indicates that Jukhala accounts for 20% of the respondents, Deoth represents 18.3%, Namhol contributes 16.6%, Nauni makes up 15.8%, Chandpur comprises 15%, and Kandroure accounts for 14.1%.

3.5 Whatever you search Flip kart shows you same product/thing

Table 3.5 Pie Chart 3.5

Sr.No	Types of Products	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	YES	110	91.6%
2	NO	10	8.3%
3	Total	120	100%



Source of Data : Primary Data

Table 3.5 represents the responses of respondents regarding whether Flip kart shows the same search results repeatedly. The majority, 91.6% of respondents, answered "Yes", indicating that they frequently encounter the same products in their searches. In contrast, only 8.3% of respondents said "No", suggesting they do not experience this issue.

3.6 Product delivery on time on Flip kart

Table 3.6 Pie Chart 3.6

Sr.No	Responses	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	YES	115	95.83%
2	NO	5	4.16%
	Total	120	100%



Source of data : Primary Data

Table 3.6 presents respondents' feedback on timely product delivery by Flip kart. The data reveals that 95.8% of respondents stated that Flip kart delivers products on time. Only 4.1% of respondents reported experiencing delays in product delivery.

3.7 Flip kart provides more varieties of products

Table 3.7 Pie Chart 3.7

Sr.No	Response	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Agree	85	70.8%
2	Strongly Agree	14	11.6%
3	Undecided	7	5.8%
4	Disagree	9	7.5%
5	Strongly Disagree	5	4.1%
	Total	120	100%

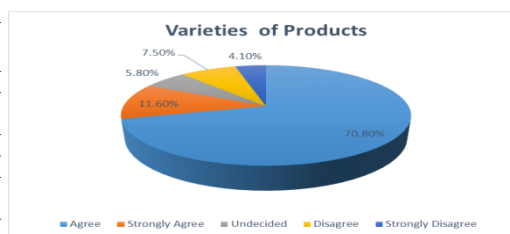


Table 3.7 presents respondents' opinions on a specific aspect of the study. The data reveals the following distribution 58.9% of respondents agree, 10.5% strongly agree, 9.5% remain undecided 6.4% disagree, and 14.7% strongly disagree

3.8 Flip kart shopping saves your lot of time

Table 3.8 Pie Chart 3.8

Sr No	Responses	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	YES	105	87.5%
2	NO	05	4.16%
3	NEUTRAL	10	8.33%
	Total	120	100%



Source of Data : Primary Data

Table 3.8 presents respondents' views on whether online shopping on Flip kart saves time. The data shows that 87.5% of respondents answered "Yes", indicating they find Flip kart time-saving. 8.3% of respondents chose "Neutral", suggesting they have a mixed opinion. 4.1% of respondents answered "No", meaning they do not find Flip kart time-efficient.

3.9 .Do you feel online markets are providing competitive price

Table 3.9 Pie Chart 3.9

Sr No	Responses	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	100	83.3%
2	No	20	16.6%
	Total	120	100%



Source of Data : Primary Data

Table 3.9 presents respondents' views on whether online shopping on Flip kart saves time. The data indicates that 83.3% of respondents answered "Yes" and opinion. 16.6% of respondents answered "No", meaning they do not perceive Flip kart as time-efficient.

3.10 Do you get the best discount on all the products on Flip kart

Table 3.10 Pie Chart 3.10

Sr No	Responses	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	109	90.8%
2	No	11	9.16%
	Total	120	100%



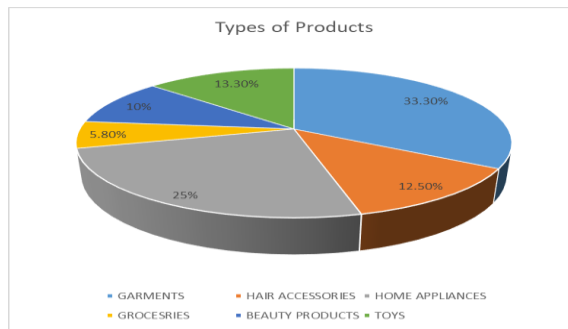
Source of Data : Primary Data

Table 3.10 presents respondents' views on whether they receive the best discounts on all products while shopping on Flip kart. The data indicates that 90.8% of respondents answered "Yes", suggesting that they believe Flip kart offers the best discounts. 9.1% of respondents answered "No", indicating they do not feel Flip kart provides the best discounts.

3.11 Which type of products do you purchase on Flip kart

Table 3.11 Pie Chart 3.11

Sr.No	Types of Products	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	GARMENTS	40	33.3%
2	HAIR ACCESSORIES	15	12.5%
3	HOME APPLIANCES	30	25%
4	GROCESRIES	7	5.8%
5	BEAUTY PRODUCTS	12	10%
6	TOYS	16	13.3%
	Total	120	100%



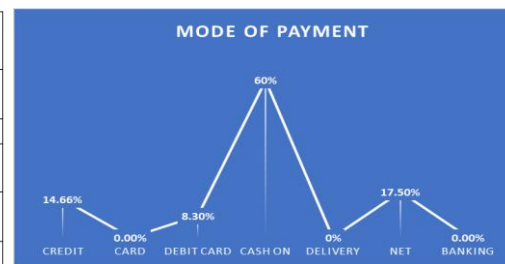
Source of Data : Primary Data

Table 3.11 presents the types of products purchased by respondents on Flip kart. The data indicates the following distribution 33.6% of respondents purchase garments on Flip kart.25% of respondents buy home appliances.13.3% of respondents purchase toys.

3.12 Mode of payment you usually prefer the most for the most for online shopping on Flip kart

Table 3.12 Pie Chart 3.12

Sr No	Responses	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	CREDIT CARD	17	14.66%
2	DEBIT CARD	10	8.3%
3	CASH ON DELIVERY	72	60%
4	NET BANKING	21	17.5%
	Total	120	100%



Source of Data : Primary Data

Table 3.12 presents the preferred modes of payment used by respondents on Flip kart. The data indicates the following distribution 60% of respondents prefer Cash on Delivery (COD).17.5% prefer Net Banking.14.6% prefer using a Credit Card.8.3% prefer using a Debit Card.

3.13 Satisfaction with variety of mode of payment on Flip kart

Table 3.13 Pie Chart 3.13

Sr.No	Response	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Agree	85	70.8%
2	Strongly Agree	14	11.6%
3	Undecided	7	5.8%
4	Disagree	9	7.5%
5	Strongly Disagree	5	4.1%
	Total	120	100%



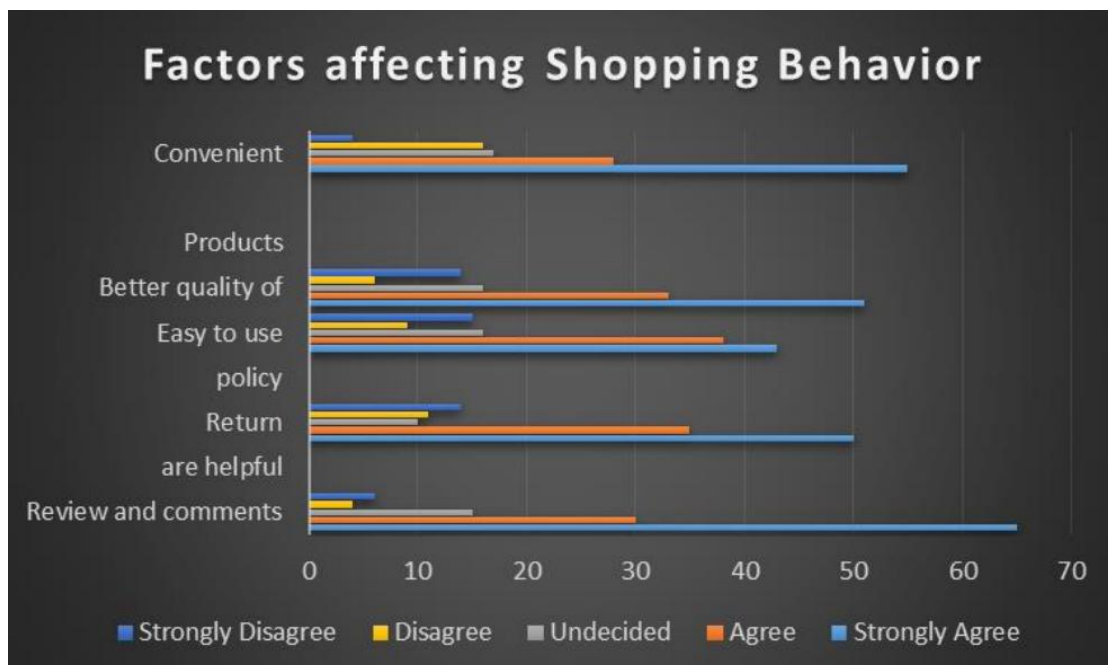
Source of data : Primary Data

Table 3.13 presents respondents' opinions on a specific aspect of the study. The data indicates the following distribution 70.8% of respondents agree.4.1% of respondents strongly agree.7.5% remain neutral.5.8% of respondents disagree.11.6% of respondents strongly disagree.

3.14 Factors that affect online shopping behavior

So No	Factors	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Review and comments are helpful	65	30	15	4	6
2	Return policy	50	35	10	11	14
3	Easy to use	43	38	16	9	15
4	Better quality of Products	51	33	16	6	14
5	Convenient	55	28	17	16	4

Bar Diagram 3.14



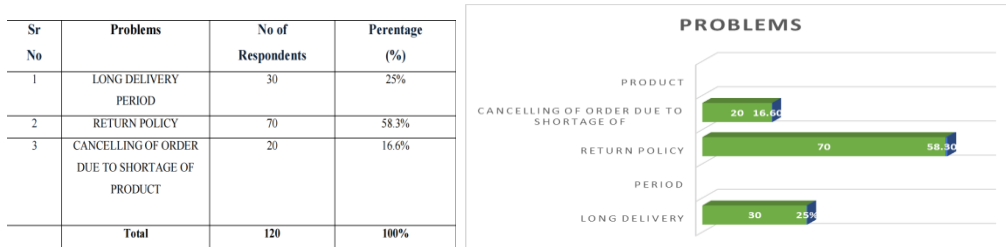
Source of Data : Primary Data

Bar Diagram 3.14 presents respondents' opinions on various aspects of Flipkart's services. The data indicates the following:16.6% of respondents disagree regarding the better quality of products.20.8% of respondents agree with Flip kart return policy.20% of respondents agree

that Flip kart is easy to use.8.3% of respondents strongly agree and 8.3% strongly disagree that Flip kart reviews and comments are helpful.

3.15 Which problem do you face while shop online on Flip kart

Table 3.15 Pie Chart 3.15



Source of data : Primary Data

Table 3.15 presents the problems faced by respondents while shopping online on Flip kart. The data indicates the following issues:58.3% of respondents face difficulties with the return policy.25% of respondents experience a long delivery period.16.6% of respondents face challenges in canceling orders due to product shortages.

Suggestions :

- ❖ Enhance Product Quality – Improving the overall quality of products will lead to higher customer satisfaction and build trust in the brand.
- ❖ Faster Delivery – Since quick delivery has become a standard in e-commerce, Flip kart can differentiate itself by ensuring even faster and more reliable deliveries than competitors.
- ❖ Simplified Order Cancellation – Customers sometimes face difficulties while canceling their orders. Implementing a smoother and more user-friendly cancellation process will enhance customer satisfaction.
- ❖ Accurate Product Delivery – Ensuring that customers receive exactly what they ordered is crucial. Any mismatch can lead to dissatisfaction and harm Flip kart's reputation.
- ❖ Expand Product Variety for Comparison – Providing a wider range of products for comparison will reduce the chances of customers switching to competitors for better options.

Conclusion :

Flip kart offers customers the best deals, discounts, a wide variety of products, and detailed product information, making online shopping convenient anytime and anywhere. With a strong delivery system, Flip kart ensures that customers receive their orders efficiently.Beyond just selling products, Flip kart operates as a customer-focused service, prioritizing customer satisfaction and privacy. It safeguards credit card details and provides multiple payment options for a seamless purchasing experience.One of Flip kart's standout features is its return and cancellation policy, which is rarely found in traditional retail stores. Customers have the

flexibility to return or even cancel orders, enhancing their shopping confidence. While most customers are satisfied with Flipkart offerings, many have suggested improvements in product quality. In today's competitive market, customers are drawn to unique services and features. If Flipkart continues to evolve based on customer preferences, it has the potential to expand its customer base and achieve even greater success.

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