



EXPLORING THE PERCEPTION OF GUJARAT'S WORKING WOMEN ON E-COMMERCE PLATFORMS

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ABSTRACT

E-commerce has emerged as a transformative force in India's retail landscape, revolutionizing the way consumers shop and businesses operate. With the advent of affordable smartphones, widespread internet penetration, and digital payment solutions, India has become one of the fastest-growing e-commerce markets globally. Platforms like Amazon India, Flipkart, and Nykaa, among others, have made shopping convenient and accessible, catering to the diverse needs of a digitally connected population. For consumers, e-commerce offers significant advantages such as 24/7 accessibility, a wide range of products, competitive pricing, and home delivery services. It has particularly empowered working professionals, including women, by addressing time constraints and providing flexible shopping options. Additionally, e-commerce has created new opportunities for small businesses, artisans, and entrepreneurs by enabling them to reach a larger audience. The rapid growth of e-commerce in India has transformed consumer behaviour, providing unparalleled convenience, variety, and accessibility. This study focuses on exploring the perception of working women in Gujarat towards e-commerce platforms, a demographic with unique preferences and challenges. By analysing their attitudes and behaviours, the research aims to provide insights into how these platforms align with their expectations. Furthermore, the study examines the association between the demographic profiles of working women and their perceptions of e-commerce. Data was collected from a sample size of 253 working women across Gujarat using a structured questionnaire. The findings highlight the factors influencing their satisfaction, trust, and preferences, providing valuable insights for e-commerce businesses to enhance user experience and target marketing strategies effectively.

KEYWORDS: E-Commerce, Working Women, Gujarat, Consumer Perception, Online Shopping, Digital Retail

1. INTRODUCTION

India's e-commerce industry has witnessed explosive growth over the past decade, driven by increasing internet penetration, affordable smartphones, and a tech-savvy younger population. E-commerce platforms have fundamentally transformed the retail landscape, offering consumers access to a wide range of products and services with just a few clicks. Market leaders such as Amazon India, Flipkart, and emerging players like Meesho and Nykaa have capitalized on these trends, catering to a diverse and growing consumer base. The success of e-commerce platforms in India can be attributed to their ability to offer convenience, competitive pricing, and a vast selection of products. Platforms provide a seamless shopping experience with features like secure payment gateways, quick delivery options, and user-friendly interfaces. Additionally, innovations such as personalized recommendations, voice-assisted shopping, and vernacular language support have helped platforms cater to India's linguistically and culturally diverse population.

One of the standout features of India's e-commerce platforms is their ability to penetrate rural and semi-urban markets. Companies like Flipkart and JioMart have invested heavily in logistics infrastructure and local delivery networks, making online shopping accessible to regions that were traditionally underserved. Cash-on-delivery (COD) options and regional language support have further boosted adoption in these areas,

breaking down barriers of trust and accessibility. E-commerce platforms in India are not limited to retail goods. The rise of specialized platforms such as Zomato, Swiggy, and Urban Company has expanded the scope to include food delivery, personal services, and more. Similarly, platforms like Myntra focus on fashion, Nykaa on beauty and wellness, and BigBasket on groceries, demonstrating how niche markets within the e-commerce ecosystem are flourishing. These platforms are also leveraging technology such as AI, AR, and machine learning to enhance user engagement and optimize operations.

Another critical development is the focus on fostering small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs). Platforms like Amazon's "Local Shops" and Flipkart's "Samarth" initiative aim to bring traditional artisans, craftsmen, and small businesses online, contributing to their digital transformation. Such programs not only enhance the product diversity available to consumers but also empower entrepreneurs by providing them with a larger market reach.

Despite its impressive growth, India's e-commerce sector faces challenges such as regulatory hurdles, concerns over data privacy, and issues related to counterfeit products. The implementation of policies like the Consumer Protection (E-Commerce) Rules, 2020, aims to address some of these concerns by enforcing transparency and protecting consumer interests. Additionally, the competition from unorganized retail

and kirana stores, which remain an integral part of India's shopping culture, continues to push e-commerce platforms to innovate and create hybrid models. Looking ahead, the e-commerce sector in India is poised for further growth, fuelled by advancements in technology, increased consumer trust, and government initiatives like "Digital India" and "Make in India." With the integration of emerging technologies like blockchain for secure transactions and the adoption of sustainable practices, e-commerce platforms are set to play a pivotal role in shaping India's digital economy.

2. NEED OF THE STUDY

E-commerce has revolutionized the way consumers shop, offering convenience, variety, and competitive pricing. With increasing internet penetration and the widespread use of smartphones, online shopping has become a significant part of consumer behavior in India. Gujarat, being one of the fastest-developing states in the country, is witnessing a rapid shift towards digital commerce. Among various consumer groups, working women form a unique demographic that significantly influences e-commerce trends due to their distinct needs, preferences, and time constraints. This study seeks to explore their perception of e-commerce platforms, highlighting their shopping behaviours, challenges, and satisfaction levels.

The dual role of working women as professionals and homemakers often makes online shopping an attractive option due to its convenience and time-saving features. However, their perceptions are shaped by factors such as product quality, payment security, ease of navigation, and delivery efficiency. By analysing these aspects, the study aims to identify how e-commerce platforms cater to the needs of working women and where there is room for improvement. This understanding is crucial for businesses to design better marketing strategies and improve user experience.

The study also seeks to examine the challenges faced by working women in Gujarat while shopping online. Issues such as lack of trust in product authenticity, data privacy concerns, or challenges in returns and refunds can significantly impact their perception of e-commerce platforms. Understanding these challenges can provide valuable insights for e-commerce companies to build stronger customer relationships and foster trust. Furthermore, working women contribute significantly to household purchasing decisions, making their online shopping behaviour an essential area of research for understanding broader consumer trends. Their preferences and choices often influence the adoption of e-commerce within their households, potentially driving the growth of the sector. Studying their perceptions can help businesses identify emerging trends and develop targeted solutions for this influential demographic.

Lastly, Gujarat's diverse cultural and economic landscape offers an interesting backdrop for this study. Working women in urban areas such as Ahmedabad or Surat may have different perceptions compared to those in smaller towns or semi-urban areas. Exploring these differences can shed light on how e-commerce platforms can customize their offerings to meet the diverse needs of working women across the state, contributing

to more inclusive digital growth. This study not only aims to fill a gap in the existing literature on consumer behaviour but also aspires to provide actionable insights for e-commerce businesses, policymakers, and stakeholders striving to enhance the online shopping experience for working women in Gujarat.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Kumar (2020) conducted a study on the perception of working professionals towards e-commerce platforms in India. The research revealed that convenience, time-saving, and the availability of a wide range of products were the primary reasons for the preference towards online shopping among working professionals. Kumar noted that professionals often have limited time due to their busy schedules, and e-commerce platforms provide a solution by offering the flexibility to shop at any time. The study also highlighted that working professionals valued the ease of comparing prices and products online, which facilitated informed purchasing decisions.

Mehta and Sharma (2021) explored the trust factors influencing the use of e-commerce platforms by working professionals. Their findings indicated that secure payment options, reliable delivery services, and positive past experiences were crucial in building trust among this demographic. The study emphasized that working professionals are likely to become repeat customers if they encounter a seamless and trustworthy shopping experience. Mehta and Sharma also pointed out that negative reviews and social media feedback could significantly impact the perception of e-commerce platforms among working professionals.

Nair et al. (2021) focused on the role of promotional offers and discounts in shaping the perception of working professionals towards e-commerce platforms. The research found that special deals, discounts, and cashback offers were significant motivators for this group. The study revealed that working professionals often wait for sales events such as Black Friday, Diwali, or end-of-season sales to make bulk purchases. Nair et al. noted that these promotional strategies not only attract new customers but also help in retaining existing ones by enhancing their overall shopping experience.

Chatterjee and Roy (2022) examined the impact of user-friendly interfaces and mobile applications on the perception of e-commerce platforms by working professionals. Their study found that intuitive and easy-to-navigate websites and apps significantly enhanced user satisfaction. The researchers highlighted that working professionals preferred platforms that provided a smooth and hassle-free shopping experience, with features such as personalized recommendations, one-click checkout, and efficient customer support. Chatterjee and Roy concluded that investing in technology to improve user experience is essential for e-commerce platforms to attract and retain working professionals.

Banerjee and Gupta (2022) investigated the factors affecting the loyalty of working professionals to e-commerce platforms. Their research indicated that consistent quality of products, timely delivery, and effective customer service were the main determinants of loyalty. The study found that working

professionals are more likely to remain loyal to a platform that offers reliable services and addresses their concerns promptly. Banerjee and Gupta suggested that e-commerce platforms should focus on maintaining high standards of service and quality to build long-term relationships with working professionals.

Rao and Patel (2023) studied the impact of social media marketing on the perception of e-commerce platforms by working professionals. Their findings showed that social media presence and influencer endorsements played a significant role in shaping positive perceptions. The study revealed that working professionals often rely on social media for product reviews and recommendations, and platforms with a strong social media presence were perceived as more credible and trustworthy. Rao and Patel emphasized that engaging with customers on social media and leveraging influencer marketing can enhance the perception of e-commerce platforms.

Singh and Kaur (2023) explored the challenges faced by working professionals in adopting e-commerce platforms. The research identified issues such as concerns over data privacy, delivery delays, and the authenticity of products as major barriers. Singh and Kaur found that despite these challenges, the overall perception of e-commerce platforms among working professionals was positive, owing to the convenience and variety offered. The study recommended that e-commerce platforms address these challenges by enhancing security measures, ensuring timely deliveries, and verifying the authenticity of products.

Desai et al. (2024) focused on the impact of customer reviews and ratings on the perception of e-commerce platforms by working professionals. The study found that positive reviews and high ratings significantly influenced the decision-making process of this demographic. Desai et al. noted that working professionals are likely to trust platforms with transparent review systems and a high number of positive customer feedback. The research suggested that e-commerce platforms should encourage satisfied customers to leave reviews and ratings to build credibility and attract more working professionals.

Mishra and Verma (2024) examined the role of personalized shopping experiences in shaping the perception of e-commerce platforms among working professionals. Their study revealed that personalized recommendations based on past purchases and browsing history significantly enhanced customer satisfaction. Mishra and Verma found that working professionals appreciated platforms that offered tailored shopping experiences, as it saved time and made the process more efficient. The study concluded that personalization is a key factor in creating a positive perception of e-commerce platforms among working professionals.

4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To analyse the perception of working women towards e-commerce platform.
2. To find out association between demographic profiles of the working women and their perception towards e-commerce

platform.

5. SAMPLE SIZE

In this study 253 working women from Gujarat have been targeted.

6. DATA ANALYSIS

1. H0: Working women do not believe that online shopping gives me more flexibility in managing time.

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
online shopping gives me more flexibility in managing time.	23.145	252	0.000	0.007	0.214	0.314

As per the above table it is seen that significance value is 0.000 which is lower than standard value 0.05, So Null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that Working women believe that online shopping gives me more flexibility in managing time.

2. H0: Working women do not believe that E-commerce platforms provide a wide range of product options.

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
E-commerce platforms provide a wide range of product options	5.014	252	0.009	0.220	0.261	0.761

As per the above table it is seen that significance value is 0.009 which is lower than standard value 0.05, So Null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that Working women believe that E-commerce platforms provide a wide range of product options

3. H0: Working women do not believe that E-commerce platforms provide adequate tracking information for orders

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
E-commerce platforms provide adequate tracking information for orders	33.249	252	0.040	0.012	0.708	1.208

As per the above table it is seen that significance value is 0.040 which is lower than standard value 0.05, So Null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that Working women believe that E-commerce platforms provide adequate tracking information for orders

4. H0: Working women do not satisfied with the delivery timelines of e-commerce platforms

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
E-commerce platforms provide adequate tracking information for orders	33.249	252	0.040	0.012	0.708	1.208

As per the above table it is seen that significance value is 0.031 which is lower than standard value 0.05, So Null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that working women satisfied with the delivery timelines of e-commerce platforms

5. H0: There is no significant association between demographic profiles of the working women and their perception towards e-commerce platform.

Variable- 1	Variable-2	Pearson Chi-Square	P Value	Decision

Age	Online shopping gives me more flexibility in managing my time	48.640	0.000	There is Significant Association
	E-commerce platforms provide a wide range of product options	65.640	0.017	
	E-commerce platforms provide adequate tracking information for my orders	72.860	0.010	
	I am satisfied with the delivery timelines of e-commerce platforms	46.110	0.029	
Occupation	Online shopping gives me more flexibility in managing my time	25.430	0.001	
	E-commerce platforms provide a wide range of product options	27.610	0.015	
	E-commerce platforms provide adequate tracking information for my orders	80.230	0.004	
	I am satisfied with the delivery timelines of e-commerce platforms	21.430	0.000	
Monthly Income	Online shopping gives me more flexibility in managing my time	31.020	0.005	
	E-commerce platforms provide a wide range of product options	53.200	0.010	
	E-commerce platforms provide adequate tracking information for my orders	52.460	0.035	
	I am satisfied with the delivery timelines of e-commerce platforms	87.330	0.002	

7. CONCLUSION

The study reveals that e-commerce platforms are highly valued by working women in Gujarat for their ability to provide flexibility and convenience, which is particularly important for managing time amidst professional and personal commitments. The availability of a wide range of product options on these platforms further enhances their appeal, enabling women to access diverse choices without the constraints of physical shopping. Additionally, the efficiency of delivery timelines and the provision of adequate tracking information contribute significantly to the overall satisfaction of working women. These features instill confidence in the reliability of e-commerce platforms and play a crucial role in building trust. The analysis also highlights a significant association between the demographic profiles of working women—such as age, occupation, and monthly income—and their perceptions of e-commerce platforms. This indicates that personal and professional characteristics influence how women engage with

and evaluate online shopping experiences. Overall, the findings underscore the importance of tailoring e-commerce strategies to meet the specific needs and preferences of working women, taking into account their demographic diversity. By continuing to enhance convenience, product diversity, and reliability, e-commerce platforms can further strengthen their position as a preferred shopping medium for this key consumer segment.

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