



IMPACT OF EMPLOYMENT STATUS ON ONLINE SHOPPING PREFERENCES: A CASE STUDY OF WOMEN IN RAWALPINDI

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Abstract

This research study explores the online shopping habits of working and non-working women in the urban area of Rawalpindi district. It highlights the growing popularity of online shopping and its convenience for consumers, especially housewives who often face time constraints and travel burdens. The study focuses on online shopping as a non-traditional form of purchasing goods. Online shopping offers numerous conveniences, including time-saving, reduced travel expenses, and wider product availability. The study specifically mentions the benefits of online shopping for housewives who often face time limitations due to their responsibilities. The study aims to compare the online shopping habits of working and non-working women in Rawalpindi. A t-test is used to analyze the collected data from a sample of 120 women (72 working and 48 non-working). Statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$) are found between the two groups regarding who shops online and the amount spent. No statistically significant difference is observed in the types of clothing purchased by working and non-working women. A 5% level of significance indicates a statistically significant difference in the challenges faced by both groups regarding online shopping. This study offers valuable insights into the online shopping behaviour of working and non-working women in Rawalpindi. It highlights the importance of convenience for consumers, particularly for housewives. While no difference is observed in clothing preferences, the study reveals significant variations in online shopping frequency, spending patterns, and challenges faced by both groups.

Keywords: Convenience, Non-working women, online shopping habits, working women, Rawalpindi.

Introduction

For many customers, shopping online has become a routine aspect of their lives. Since more and more people are using the Internet to shop every day, marketers need to be aware of the kinds of consumers who use this medium and how they shop (Çebi Karaaslan, 2022). Buying groceries from their workplaces is a regular activity for a great number of customers. A consumer is a person who purchases or makes use of a good or service. He is sometimes referred to as the end user because he is the last stop and



typically doesn't exchange or transfer the item to another individual. A buyer who is also a consumer is an adolescent who purchases and plays a video game. A buyer does not always have to be a client; take the case of a woman buying cereal for her family. "Each family member is a product consumer." A person is not always a user or customer just because they purchase a good or service.

Shopper behaviour study has focused on individuals and the factors that affect their decisions to allocate their resources towards consumption-related items. Theories and concepts surrounding consumer behaviour have been influenced by a wide range of academic fields, including economics, sociology, psychology, social psychology, and cultural anthropology. According to Kotler, Keller, Koshy, and Jha (2012), consumer shopping behaviour is the study of consumer purchasing behaviour (Li & Hou, 2019).

Finding the proper product is one of the main problems with internet shopping. It is possible that you will realise you ordered the wrong item after receiving the product. It's possible that you choose the wrong size or that it doesn't fit your needs. Purchasing products and services from online retailers is known as online shopping. Merchants have tried to sell to internet users ever since the internet first started. Customers can visit online stores while lounging in their homes or while seated in front of a computer (Chmielarz et al., 2022).

Due to its convenience, online shopping is preferred by many consumers. If she were to shop at a physical store, for instance, she would have to get there, park, and then explore the store until she finds what she wants. She may have to wait in lengthy queues at the cash register after finding the products she wants to purchase. On the other hand, customers can avoid these disadvantages when they purchase online. A person who is connected to the Internet visits the store's website, makes her selections, and puts them in an electronic shopping basket until she is ready to go shopping. The surgery might be done late at night or early in the morning. Online looking is available and accessible around-the-clock. To make sure that clothing fits properly, a consumer must use body measurements; if the clothing is too small when it arrives at the mall, the customer must return it. Some customers could find this to be an annoyance that they would prefer not to deal with.

Research Objectives

Following are the research objectives of the current research study:

- i. To comprehend the ladies who were chosen and their socioeconomic characteristics.
- ii. To learn about the women who were chosen to purchase online.
- iii. To compare women who work and those who do not when it comes to online buying.

Literature Review

Reviewing pertinent literature saves time and effort, points out advantages and disadvantages of earlier research, and directs the creation of new studies. It helps the researcher to comprehend how to approach the frontier of the investigation.

According to Best (1982), a summary of previous research and the works of recognised specialists provides evidence that the researcher is knowledgeable about what is known and what is still up for debate. Since excellent research is based on existing knowledge, this step helps to eliminate redundancy and provides valuable ideas and suggestions for recognising studies that show great agreement and those that seem to provide conflicting conclusions. Additionally, it helps define and refine the body of



knowledge already known about the problem, which forms the basis of a research effort. The gender gap in online shopping was also discussed by Stafford, Turan, and Raisingani (2004).

Bakewell and Mitchell (2006) assert that when it comes to what constitutes "successful" purchase, men and women have entirely different values. They also noticed differences in the behaviour of male and female consumers. Pramugha Mangain (2007) states that the net gain for the virtual world is high because electronic devices, like phones and iPads, typically involve an individual's choice as opposed to products that meet the needs of the entire family. The growing internet of the net survey people online shopping parcel is witnessing a whopping 200 percent growth in the sale of electronic items every year. Since females appreciated the opinions of their friends and peers, Kotwal et al. (2008) found that friends and peers had the greatest influence (60 percent) on clothing purchases. Additionally, they found that 40% of respondents ranked boutiques as the second most important factor when choosing clothing. In their study, Seock, Yoo, and Bailey (2008) presented seven criteria of purchasing attitudes: purchasing, time efficiency, in-home shopping, fashion and price sensitivity, and brand/store/site loyalty. It has been demonstrated that women are more driven for hedonistic reasons when it comes to shopping, brand knowledge, enjoyment, and cost.

The 2009 study by Kristen Wiig and Chery Smith examined the variables influencing the food preferences of low-income women. In the midst of a paradox between hunger and obesity, the current study set out to assess the grocery shopping habits and food stamp use of low-income women who had children in order to identify variables influencing their dietary decisions on a tight budget (Coffino et al., 2020). According to Craik (2009), women like shopping over males, and they also have a more positive attitude towards browsing and the social interaction that takes place frequently during the purchasing process. For women, shopping is a leisure activity that has symbolic, emotional, and psychological significance. In addition, women are the most frequent window shoppers and spend twice as much time in stores than men. The study conducted by Sharma and Babel (2009) found that the participants bought clothing based on their personal preferences and budget. They also noticed that the participants favoured buying clothing at discounts and through sales of special gifts that were associated with certain brands and product quality.

Sharma and Babel (2010) found that most participants planned a budget for branded clothing purchases. Family grocery shopping was once considered a woman's domain, but contemporary social and demographic changes are challenging traditional gender roles within the family structure (Garry Mortimer, 2011). Although males went grocery shopping more frequently and with greater freedom than women, it is still possible to study the specifics of men's shopping attitudes and behaviour. This research examines certain characteristics of the shop, assesses the perceived importance of those attributes, and looks into any potential differences in age, gender, or income. Reliability judgements on the majority of retail features indicated significant statistical differences between genders (Berkowitz et al., 2021). Generally speaking, male grocery shoppers gave supermarket store qualities a lower ranking than did female shoppers. Income had little effect on shoppers' degrees of related relevance; respondents' views of price, promotions, and cleanliness were influenced by factors such as age, education, and occupation (Berkowitz et al., 2021).

In order to evaluate the shopping habits of working and non-working women and to analyse changing viewpoints, Sriparna Guha (2013) conducted a study in urban Pakistan. It has been discovered



that the numerous responsibilities women have affect the shopping habits of both themselves and their families (Asghar et al., 2021). The survey also found that working women are typically swayed by others when buying purchases and worry about brand, quality, and price. Chaing and Dholakia (2014) state that when customers switched from online to offline purchasing, they had problems with their purchases.

Research Methodology

To accomplish the research objectives, a number of factors must be considered; these methodological factors are all specifically outlined under the following procedure:

- a) Selection of the local
- b) Selection of the Sample
- c) Research Instruments
- d) Variables under consideration
- e) Data Collection Process
- f) Results and Discussion
- g) Conclusion

a) Selection of the local

The Rawalpindi District's metropolitan area served as the study's location.

b) Selection of the Sample:

Sampling is the most important component of every study. It also goes by the name "the basis of the research project". According to Gupta (2002), "A sample is the part of the universe, which we select for the purpose of investigation; the sample should exhibit the characteristics of the universe that it should be micros (small universe)".

A multistage stratified sampling strategy was employed to select the samples for the current inquiry. In the initial phase, the researchers purposefully chose the Rawalpindi district since it was handy for them. The Rawalpindi district is separated between urban and rural parts; the urban portion was once more specifically chosen for the study.

There were one hundreds of towns in the Rawalpindi division area. Rawalpindi division comprised upon the different tehsils, namely: Kahuta Tehsil, Kotli Sattian Tehsil, Gujar Khan Tehsil, Murree Tehsil, and Taxila Tehsil. They are further divided into numerous towns. In the current study, researchers choose on Rawalpindi tehsil for data collection due to time and resources constraints.

c) Research Instruments

With the assistance of a colleagues and subject matter expert, a research instrument was created circulated in the urban area of Rawalpindi district. There are two sections of the research instruments: demographics and online purchasing pattern.

(1) Demographics: This section included the selected respondents' name, place of residence, age, gender, education, family type, occupation, number of family members, and monthly family income.

(2) Online shopping. The respondents' questions about online buying were in this section.

d) Variables under considerations:



Dependent Variable: The independent variables have an impact on the dependent variable. In this study, the respondents' online buying behaviour served as the dependent variable.

Independent Variable: Age, gender, and level of education are the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents in the current study. The independent variables in the study were family type, occupation, number of family members, and family monthly income.

e) Procedure of Data Collection

Once the respondents were chosen, the investigator went to their home to identify her and give them an explanation of why she was there. The investigator gave them the assurance that the information they provided would be kept private. Using the proven schedule as a guide, the investigator conducted interviews with the chosen respondents; all data was recorded. About 30 minutes were spent on each interview, and the survey was finished in a month.

Results and Discussion

The present study titled "A comparative study online shopping among the working and non-working women in the urban area of Rawalpindi district" yielded results. The study's objectives were addressed and the findings were contextualised within the framework of previous research endeavours conducted by other academics. Items:

- a) To comprehend the ladies who were chosen and their socioeconomic characteristics.
- b) To learn about the women who were chosen to purchase online.
- c) To compare women who work and those who do not shop online.

Table 1

Education

Educations	Respondents	
	Number	percentage
Up to Intermediate	15	12.5
Graduate	73	61
Post Graduate	32	26.5
Total	120	100.0

The educational backgrounds of the respondents were gathered and are shown in table 1 above. Sixty percent of the respondents had graduated from graduate school, compared to thirty-four percent who had completed their study at the post-graduate level and just six percent who had finished their education at the intermediate level. Agarwal and Kulshreshta (2015) found that most of the participants had some level of education.

Table 2

Family Income Distribution

Monthly family income in Rs.	Respondents	
	Number	Percentage
Up to 25000	42	35
25000-50000	42	35
50000 and Above	36	30



Total	120	100.0
Mean	31563	
SD	15877	

Table 2 displays the respondents' distribution based on their family's monthly income. Monthly family income in Rs this column lists the income range intervals used for categorization. This column shows the number of respondents who fall within each income range. This column displays the raw count of respondents within each income range. This column shows the percentage of respondents within each income range, providing a relative distribution of income across the sample. This section summarizes the total number of respondents (120) and the total percentage (100%). The mean value (31563) indicates the average monthly family income across all respondents. The standards deviation (SD) (15877) represents the standard deviation of monthly family income, indicating the variation in income levels across the sample.

The majority of respondents (70%) fall within the middle-income range of 25,000 to 50,000 rupees per month. A significant number of respondents (35%) belong to the lowest income range of up to 25,000 rupees per month. Fewer respondents (30%) fall into the highest income category of exceeding 50,000 rupees per month. The mean income suggests that on average, families in this sample earn approximately 31,563 rupees per month. The standard deviation indicates a moderate spread of income levels around the mean, suggesting both lower and higher income households within the sample.

Table 3

Branded clothes purchasing

Online shopping	Respondents	
	Number	percentage
Yes	99	82.5
No	21	17.5
Total	120	100.0

Table 3 displays the brands that respondents preferred to buy. In the current study, the majority of respondents (86.0%) enjoyed buying branded clothing, while just a small percentage (14.0%) disliked doing so.

Table 4

Problems during online shopping

Online shopping	Respondents	
	Number	percentage
Yes	14	11.6
No	106	88.4
Total	120	100.0

Problems with online purchasing were reported by the respondents in Table 4 above. Of the total respondents chosen for this study, the majority (88.4%) had no problems, while the rest (11.6%) had problems internet-based purchasing.



Table 5

Online products type purchasing

Monthly family income in Rs.	Respondents	
	Number	Percentage
Family Products	31	25.83
Clothing's	52	43.33
Electronics	37	30.83
Total	120	100.0

Table 5 above asks respondents about their preferences for online shopping and shows those preferences. Of the respondents, 43.33% preferred buying clothes online, 25.83% preferred buying family products, and just 30.83% preferred buying electronics online.

Table 6

Beneficial Online Shopping

Online shopping	Respondents	
	Number	Percentage
Yes	84	70
No	36	30
Total	120	100.0

Table 6 above asks about and displays the respondents' benefits from online buying. The vast majority of respondents (70%) said they felt that purchasing online was helpful to them, while the remaining respondents (30%) said the opposite opinion. To compare online shopping between working and % and non- working women.

Table 7

Comparison the online shopping for whom between working % and non working women.

Online Shopping	Respondents					
	Non working		working		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Self	14	29	16	30	30	25
children	24	50	42	58.33	66	55
Family members	10	21	14	19.44	24	20
Total	48	40	72	60	120	100

$X^2 = 4.231, df = 2, p < 0.05.$

The comparison of online buying habits between working and non-working women is displayed in Table 7. Of the respondents who were chosen in total, 25% were buying online for themselves, 20% were shopping for family members, and the minimum of 55% were shopping for kids.

Of the women who were not employed, the majority (50%) were shopping online for their kids, followed by 29% for themselves, and the lowest percentage (21%) for family members. While the majority of working women (58.33%) were purchasing online.



The chi-square value (X2) of 4.231 with 2 degrees of freedom (df) and a p-value less than 0.05 indicates statistically significant differences in the online shopping reasons between working and non-working women. This data suggests that working women are more active online shoppers than non-working women, especially for themselves and their children. This difference could be due to factors such as limited time or accessibility for working women compared to non-working women.

Table 8

Comparison the facing problems of online shopping between working and non-working women.

Problem during online shopping	Respondents					
	Non -working		working		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Yes	12	40.00	11	15.27	23	19.16
No	36	60.00	61	84.73	97	80.84
Total	48	40	72	60	100	100.0

p < 0.05, df = 1, X2 = 3.112,

Table 8 compares the issues that working and non-working women encounter when they shop online. Problem during online shopping: This column indicates the two categories: "Yes" and "No," referring to whether the respondents encountered problems while shopping online. This column lists the respondent categories, either "Non-working" or "Working" women. This table shows the number of women within each respondent category who reported encountering problems (Yes) or not (No) during online shopping. This table displays the percentage of women within each respondent category who reported encountering problems or not encountering problems while shopping online.

Significantly more non-working women (40%) reported facing problems during online shopping compared to working women (15.27%). The majority of both working (84.73%) and non-working (60%) women reported not experiencing any problems during online shopping. Overall, non-working women are more likely to encounter problems while shopping online compared to working women.

The p-value less than 0.05 and X2 value of 3.112 with 1 degree of freedom (df) indicate statistically significant differences in the online shopping experiences between working and non-working women. This difference in online shopping experiences could be attributed to various factors. Working women might be more accustomed to online shopping due to its convenience and time-saving benefits, potentially leading to better navigation and fewer issues (Anzak & Sultana, 2020). Working women might possess better technical skills and familiarity with online platforms, leading to smoother online shopping experiences. Working women might prefer established and reputable online stores with efficient systems, reducing the risk of encountering problems.

Conclusion

Compared to women who are not employed, working women made more use of online purchasing. There were statistically significant disparities between working and non-working women in terms of who shops online and how much it costs (p<0.05). At a five percent significance level, there was no discernible difference in the kind of clothes that working and non-working women purchased, but there were differences in benefits, dealing with issues, returning merchandise, and the nature of the goods. Working



women engaged in online shopping more frequently than non-working women. This suggests that employment status plays a significant role in online shopping habits (Zheng et al., 2020).

Statistically significant differences were observed between working and non-working women in both who shops online and the amount spent on purchases (p -value < 0.05). This suggests that factors beyond employment status likely influence these aspects of online shopping behaviour. Interestingly, the types of clothing purchased online did not show any statistically significant differences between the two groups ($p > 0.05$). This implies that factors other than employment status may influence clothing preferences (Ghai & Tripathi, 2019).

Significant Differences in Other Areas: However, significant differences were observed in other aspects of online shopping. Benefits sought: Working and non-working women may prioritize different benefits from online shopping, such as convenience, price, or product variety. The two groups may differ in how they approach and resolve issues encountered during online shopping. Differences may exist in the frequency and reasons behind returning merchandise between working and non-working women. While clothing choices may not differ, the types of other products purchased online might vary between the two groups. This study provides valuable insights into the influence of employment status on online shopping behaviours and highlights areas where further investigation is needed. Further research could explore the specific reasons behind these differences and delve deeper into the factors influencing online shopping choices beyond employment status.

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