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**Ashwini Shejwal**

Assistant Professor, Narsee Monjee College of Commerce and Economics, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

**Manvi Gupta**

Students (M. Com), Narsee Monjee College of Commerce and Economics, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

**Anagha Nair**

Students (M. Com), Narsee Monjee College of Commerce and Economics, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

**Pragati Rajput**

Students (M. Com), Narsee Monjee College of Commerce and Economics, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

**Minal Vasa**

Students (M. Com), Narsee Monjee College of Commerce and Economics, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

**Corresponding Author:**

**Ashwini Shejwal**

Assistant Professor, Narsee Monjee College of Commerce and Economics, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

# Comparative study of male & female online buying behaviour of generation X with reference to metropolitan cities

**Ashwini Shejwal, Manvi Gupta, Anagha Nair, Pragati Rajput and Minal Vasa**

### Abstract

With increasing technological advances, a growing number of consumers are getting adapted to online shopping. One of the most popular internet activities is online shopping. Age and gender have been shown to affect customer intentions to shop and consumer acceptance of online buying as insights into customer behaviour are based on their values and beliefs. One of the most educated generations in history, Generation X or people born between 1965 and 1980, is known for their media and technology savvy, doubtfulness and realistic attitude. Due to these, reckless buying is not seen among this generation. Gender differences may also impact how consumers make decisions, as well as how tough those decisions are, as those differences may impact behaviours and attitudes. While males tend to favour objective knowledge over subjective information, women often are more thorough and take both into account. The research undertaken intends to study the level of awareness of E-Commerce shopping and to explore the extent to which online shopping is preferred by Generation X. Generation X makes more online purchases than any other age group. This might come as a surprise to many considering Millennials are the digital natives of our society. However, as Millennials grow older and enter the workforce and start families, their expenditure increases and they find themselves having less time to spend shopping. On the other hand, Gen X have more time and money i.e. earnings or savings to spend on purchases. This study will help to understand the buying behaviour of males and females of Generation X.

**Keywords:** Online shopping, generation X, buying behaviour, males, females

### Introduction

Online shopping has become a popular mode of shopping, especially among the younger generation. However, there is limited research on the online shopping behaviour of males and females of Generation X in metropolitan cities. The objective of this comparative study is to evaluate and compare the online buying patterns of males and females that belong to Generation X in metropolitan cities, with a focus on their preferences, driving forces, and difficulties. The behaviour pattern of Gen X is assumed to be different from Gen Y & Z, in terms of characteristics, behaviour patterns, beliefs, and attitudes as they attempt to balance family, life, and work. The purchase decisions made by Gen X would presumably be more informed and research oriented. Their needs would be more diverse and they are under more financial pressure, they tend to frequent retailers that focus on providing good values. It is commonly believed that gen x takes decisions that are backed by logic and research and are less likely to indulge in impulsive buying, that the generation z is believed to do. According to a general belief women tend to spend more time in shopping, whereas, men like to walk into a store, hunt for a specific item they want, buy it as quickly as possible, ignorant of minor changes that result in somewhat more expensive purchases. Whether this is applicable even for online purchases or not, we will get proper insights on that once we conduct the research. Males and females have different characteristics and so it is generally assumed that their online buying behaviour may also differ. The kind of goods they purchase, their frequency of purchases, the amount spent, etc. could be different. The gender differences can also be seen on the following grounds the e-commerce platforms that they prefer, methods of payments preferred, level of safety felt online. Females are more likely to purchase products like clothing apparels, cosmetics and accessories.

On the other hand, males are assumed to purchase more of items like medicines, watches, etc. The detailed analysis on this can be obtained once the research is completed, in the conclusion. The study's findings will be useful to marketers and e-commerce companies, allowing them to create more effective marketing plans and modify their offerings to the preferences of their target market.

### Review of Literature

In order to write this research paper, a few literatures have been reviewed which are as under

- Goldring *et al.* (2020) <sup>[14]</sup> in their research examined how market mavens vary between Gen Z (born 1997-2012) and Gen X (born 1965-1980). Comparisons between mavens and non-mavens revealed differences in value consciousness, marketplace interfaces, status consumption, need for uniqueness, and social outcomes decision-making. Gen Z and Gen X mavens also showed differences in status consumption and social outcomes decision-making. Social media engagement was analyzed, by product category and platform, with implications for business managers.
- Dabija *et al.* (2019) <sup>[9]</sup> in their research, explored the differences in online shopping behavior between Millennials and Gen Z in an emerging market. Results showed that Gen Z is more likely to shop online, using their smartphones. Gen Y shops online quite frequently, with services bought exclusively online by Gen Z. This research offers insight into how retailers can improve their offers and customer experience when targeting both generations in emerging markets.
- Eger *et al.* (2021) <sup>[11]</sup> in their research aimed to explore the trends and impacts of COVID-19 on consumer buying behavior in the Czech Republic, focusing on Baby Boomers, Gen X, and Gen Y. A survey and regression analysis found that fear appeal (health and economic fears) influenced both traditional and online shopping. Results showed distinct, yet similar, behavior between generations. This study provides insights to help retailers and marketers formulate strategies for the ongoing pandemic.
- Karabulut *et al.* (2016) <sup>[12]</sup> in their study compared the eWOM behaviors of 524 consumers from Generation X and Y and uncovered gender differences. Results show that, while male and female behaviors were similar, there were significant differences in Gen X and Y in terms of WOM experience, credibility, susceptibility to influence, effect, and positive valence. No difference was found in negative valence for both generations. It has implications for marketing theory and managers.
- Rajarathinam *et al.* (2022) <sup>[13]</sup> in their study examined the effects of social media advertising on young consumers in India. Data from 1,325 people in Chennai and Coimbatore revealed that social media advertising positively affected the use of social media and buying behavior. Additionally, four factors of social media (accessibility, customization, user interest, and user interaction) were found to be moderating factors. The findings suggest that the use of social media can partially mediate the relationship between social media advertising and consumer buying behavior.
- Dabija *et al.* (2018) <sup>[10]</sup> in their study stated that companies must understand the needs of Gen X and Millennials to succeed. Marketers must develop a

marketing mix that targets both groups. Social media is an important factor in influencing customers, as it allows them to compare brands and products and access more information. Millennials place greater trust in online information than Gen Xers. Businesses can use this to their advantage and should tailor their approach accordingly.

- Mary *et al.* (2021) <sup>[15]</sup> in their paper stated that COVID-19 has changed purchase behaviors worldwide. With lockdowns, online buying platforms have been more popular, Gen Z and Millennials are familiar with technology, whereas Gen X has now been forced to join in. This study seeks to understand Gen X consumer behavior online in India and the factors that make online retail success.

### Objectives of the Study

- To study how the online buying behaviour of males and females differ in Generation X.
- To know the most preferred e-commerce platform for online purchases by Generation X.
- To understand the preference of electronic devices for online shopping.

### Hypothesis of the Study

The hypothesis of this research study is as under-  
Hypothesis 1

Ho= There is no significant impact of gender towards online purchases. Ha= There is a significant impact of gender towards online purchases.

Hypothesis 2

Ho= Generation X is more inclined to use laptops as compared to other devices for online shopping.

Ha= Generation X is more inclined to use mobile phones as compared to other devices for online shopping.

### Research Methodology

#### i) Research Design

Comparative Research Design is used in the following research proposal

#### ii) Sources & Methods of data collection:

- a) Primary: Primary data sources are collected through questionnaire and interviews
- b) Secondary: Secondary data sources are collected through ROL and Internet

#### iii) Sampling Design

- a) Sampling method - The Sampling method followed in this research study is
- b) Stratified Sampling which comes under probability sampling method.
- c) Sampling frame - The population i.e. males and females of Generation X is 42 to 58 years old who shop online.
- d) Sampling size -The Sampling size of this research study is 214 respondents which includes 106 males and 106 females of Generation X that shop online.

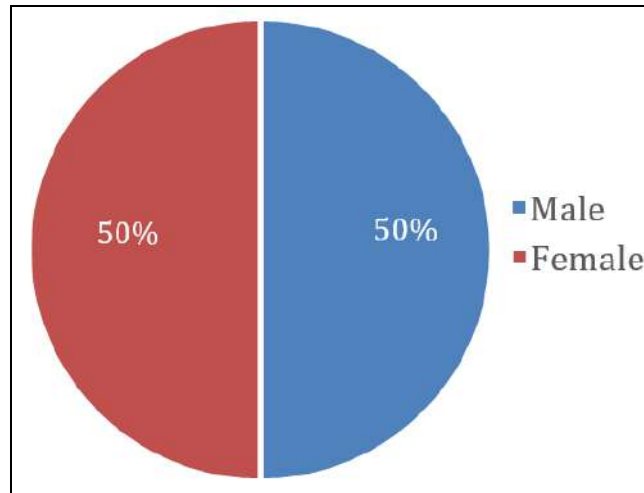
### Data Interpretation

#### Gender

Table 1: Gender

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Male	106	50
Female	106	50
Total	214	100

Source: Compiled from Primary Data



Source: Compiled from Primary Data

Fig 1: Gender

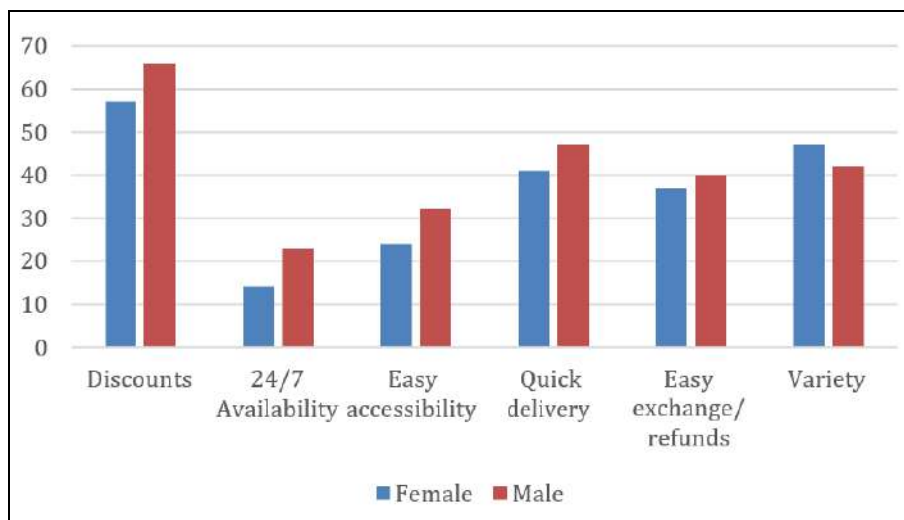
From the above Pie-Chart, it can be interpreted that both the genders are equal in numbers, which gives an unbiased result.

**What factors motivate you to shop online?**

Table 2: Factors that motivate to shop online

What factors motivate you to shop online	Female	Male
Discounts	57	66
24/7 Availability	14	23
Easy Accessibility	24	32
Quick Delivery	41	47
Easy Exchange/ Refunds	37	40
Variety	47	42

Source: Compiled from Primary Data



Source: Compiled from Primary Data

Fig 2: Factors that motivate to shop online

**Inference:** The above table shows the reasons for the preference to shop online. Out of 212 respondents, a majority of 66 females and 57 males state the reason as discounts followed by 47 females and 42 males stating their

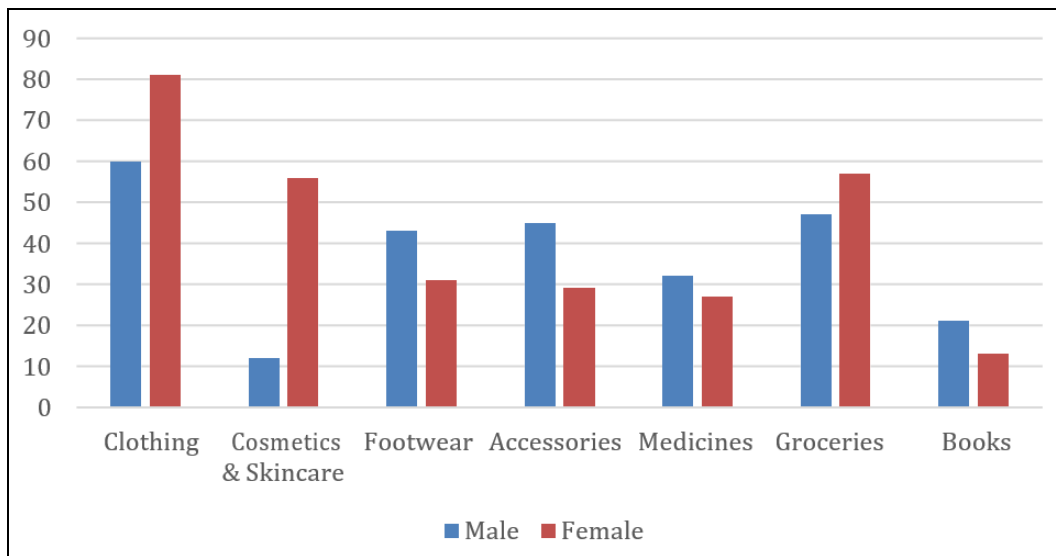
reason as the variety of choices. The other two major reasons stated by respondents are quick delivery and easy exchanges/ refunds. Other reasons include easy accessibility and 24/7 availability.

**Which goods do you prefer buying online?**

**Table 3: Products preferred buying online**

Products preferred buying online	Male	Female
Clothing	60	81
Cosmetics & Skincare	12	56
Footwear	43	31
Accessories	45	29
Medicines	32	27
Groceries	47	57
Books	21	13

Source: Compiled from Primary Data



Source: Compiled from Primary Data

**Fig 3: Products preferred buying online**

**Inference:** The above table shows the products preferred to buy online. Out of 212 respondents, a majority of 70 females and 60 males prefer to shop clothing online followed by 57 females and 47 males prefer to buy

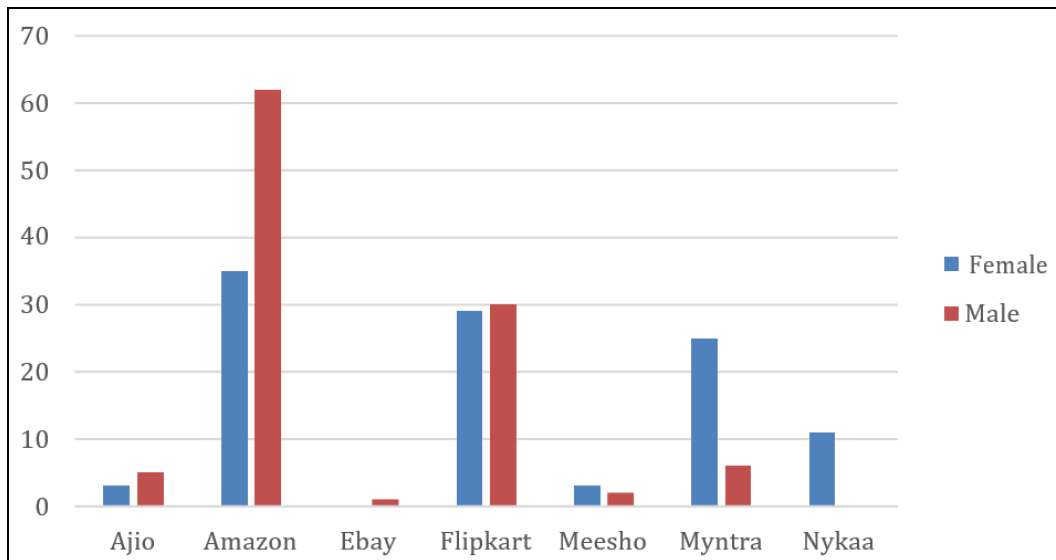
groceries. 56 females and 12 males prefer to purchase Cosmetics and skincare. Other preferred products include accessories and medicines. Very less respondents i.e. 21 males and 13 females prefer to buy books online.

**Which e-commerce platform do you prefer the most?**

**Table 4: Most frequently used e-commerce platform**

Count of Which e-commerce platform do you prefer the most? Row Labels	Column Labels		Grand Total
	Female	Male	
Ajio	3	5	8
Amazon	35	62	97
Ebay	-	1	1
Flipkart	29	30	59
Meesho	3	2	5
Myntra	25	6	31
Nykaa	11	-	11
Grand Total	106	106	212

Source: Compiled from Primary Data



Source: Compiled from Primary Data

Fig 4: Most frequently used e-commerce platform

**Inference:** The above table shows the most preferred e-commerce platform. Out of 212 respondents, Amazon is the most preferred with 62 males and 35 females followed by Flipkart which is preferred by 30 males and 29 females. The 3rd most preferred is Myntra with 25 females and 6 males

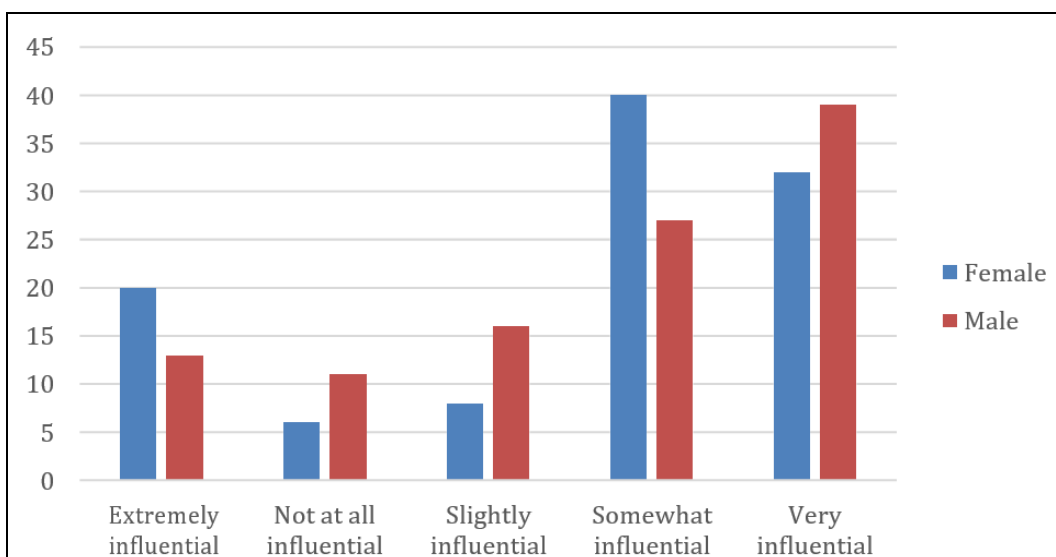
preferring it. Meesho is preferred by 3 females and 2 males and Ajoio is preferred by 3 females and 5 males. The platforms with the least votes include Nykaa which is preferred by 11 females and eBay which is preferred by 1 male.

**To what extent do you get influenced by generation Y/Z to purchase online?**

Table 5: Level of influence by Gen Y/Z

Count of to what extent do you get influenced by generation Y/Z to purchase online? Row Labels	Column Labels		Grand Total
	Female	Male	
Extremely influential	20	13	33
Not at all influential	6	11	17
Slightly influential	8	16	24
Somewhat influential	40	27	67
Very influential	32	39	71
Grand Total	106	106	212

Source: Compiled from Primary Data



Source: Compiled from Primary Data

Fig 5: Level of influence by Gen Y/Z

**Inference:** The above table shows how influential is generation Y/Z to Gen X to shop online. Out of 212

respondents, a majority of 40 females agree that they are somewhat influenced by Gen Y/Z with the 2nd majority of

32 females claiming them as very influential. 20 females find it extremely influential and 8 of them find it slightly influential. Majority of the males i.e. 39 agree that they are very influential while 27 find them to be somewhat influential. 13 males find it extremely influential and 16 of them find it slightly influential. Least number of

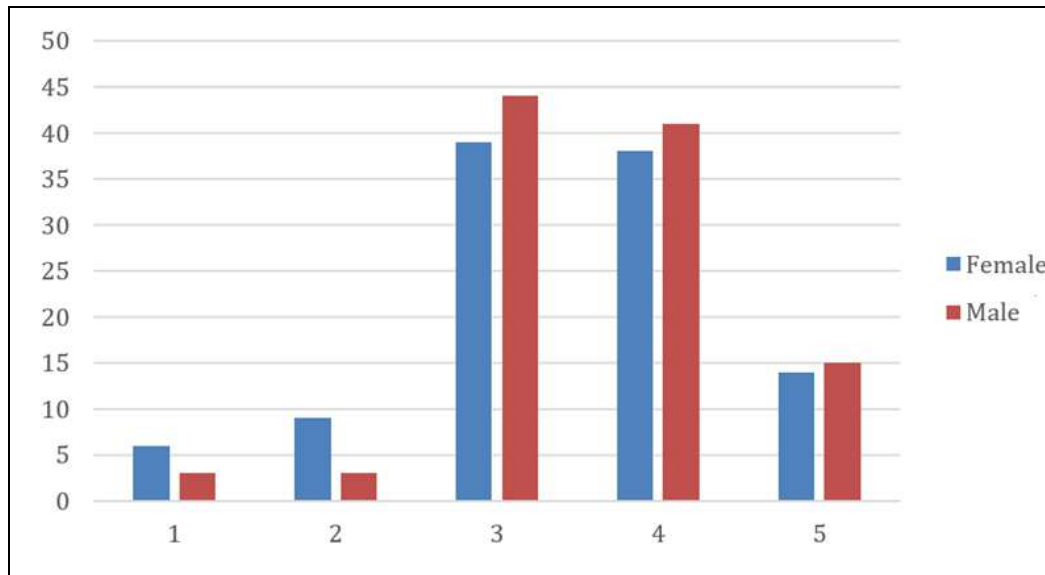
respondents i.e. 6 females and 11 males find them not at all influential.

**How safe do you feel when shopping online? (1 being the least and 5 being the most)**

**Table 6:** Level of safety when shopping online

Count of How safe do you feel when shopping online? (1 being the least and 5 being the most)	Column Labels		Grand Total
	Female	Male	
1	6	3	9
2	9	3	12
3	39	44	83
4	38	41	79
5	14	15	29
Grand Total	106	106	212

Source: Compiled from Primary Data



Source: Compiled from Primary Data

**Fig 6:** Level of safety when shopping online

**Inference:** The above chart represents the feeling of safety while purchasing online on a scale of 1-5 (1 being the least and 5 being the most). Out of 212 respondents, 39 female and 44 male respondents rate the safety level as 3 while 38

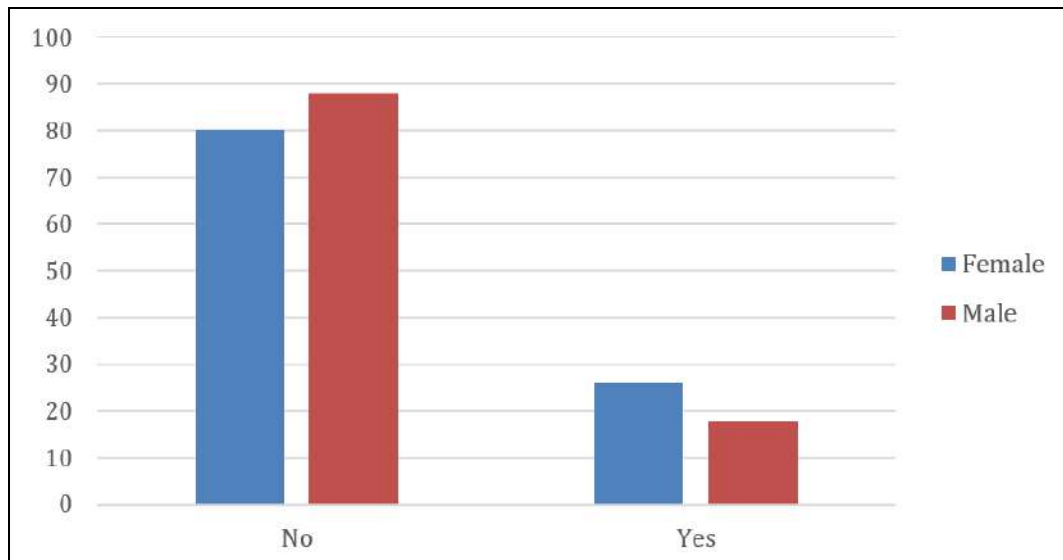
female and 41 male respondents rate the safety level as 4. 14 females and 15 males rate it as 5 while 6 females and 3 males rate it as 1 and 9 females and 3 males rate it as 2.

**Do you make impulse purchases?**

**Table 7:** Frequency of impulse purchases

Count of Do you make impulse purchases?	Column Labels		Grand Total
	Female	Male	
No	80	88	168
Yes	26	18	44
Grand Total	106	106	212

Source: Compiled from Primary Data



Source: Compiled from Primary Data

Fig 7: Frequency of impulse purchases

**Inference:** The above chart represents whether respondents make impulse purchases. Out of 212 respondents, 88 males and 80 females state that they don't make impulse purchases

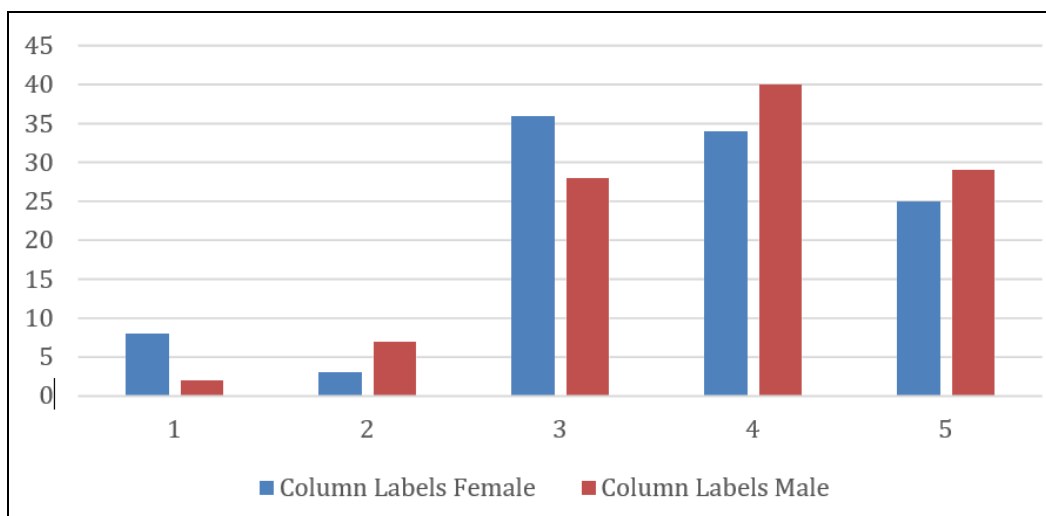
whereas 18 male and 26 female respondents state that they do make impulse purchase decisions.

**How convenient do you find the online return policy? (1 being the least and 5 being the most)**

Table 8: How convenient do you find the online return policy?

Count of How convenient do you find the online return policy? (1 being the least and 5 being the most)	Column Labels	
	Female	Male
1	8	2
2	3	7
3	36	28
4	34	40
5	25	29
Grand Total	106	106

Source: Compiled from Primary Data



Source: Compiled from Primary Data

Fig 8: How convenient do you find the online return policy?

**Inference:** The above chart represents how convenient is the online return policy on a scale of 1-5 (1 being the least and 5 being the most). Out of 212 respondents, 36 female and 28 male respondents rate convenience as 3 while 34 female and 40 male respondents rate the safety level as 4. 25

females and 29 males rate it as 5 while 3 females and 7 males rate it as 2 and 8 females and 2 males rate it as 1.

**Significance of the Study**

- This research is going to be proved useful for the

various companies that have the generation x as their target market, in a way to understand their perspective and needs via this research.

- Understanding and comparing the viewpoints of both the genders mentioned under Generation X is possible through this research.
- Developing innovative products for this specific generation and a specific gender under the generation can be easy and successful.

### Scope for Further Studies

The study leaves a vast scope for more investigation related to further studies on other generations, further studies on rural areas, further studies on LGBTIQ, further researches about comparison of different generations.

### Limitations

- This research is only covering the Metropolitan cities, therefore leaving all the other parts untouched.
- Only one generation, that is Generation X is taken into consideration for the research, therefore not taking into account the perspectives of the other generations.
- Apparently, the preferences of people change with time, so someone preferring to pay by COD, may after some time wish to use UPI payments as well, so considering a shift like this, the data collected might not stand true after a period of time.

### Findings

- Majority of the male and female respondents prefer to shop online than traditional shopping.
- This is majorly due to availability of discounts, variety of options, quick delivery, easy exchanges/ refunds and also easy accessibility and 24/7 availability.
- Both female and male respondents majorly prefer to purchase clothing and groceries.
- Female respondents also prefer buying cosmetics and skincare and few of the respondents state that they make impulse purchases.
- Some of the respondents shop as and when the need arises whereas some of them need no special occasion to shop.
- As for the frequency of purchase, the majority of males rarely purchase online with the majority of females purchasing online once a month. This shows that in terms of the frequency women tend to shop more than male customers.
- The amount spent monthly for online shopping is less than 5000.
- The payment mode preferred is cash on delivery and debit cards followed by UPI.
- Further, the most preferred e-commerce platform is Amazon followed by Flipkart and Myntra.
- Generation X claim that they are influenced by Generation Y/Z to shop online.
- The preferred electronic device for shopping is mobile phones followed by laptops.
- The respondents are satisfied with the quality of online purchases and find the return policy pretty convenient.
- However, they do not feel completely safe purchasing high-end products online.
- Few of the respondents claim to have been scammed while shopping online.

- Nevertheless, the majority of the respondents feel safe to shop online.

### Suggestions

- Even though the COD option is available on shopping platforms, they seem to be charging extra for COD which ends up demotivating people to buy online.
- E-commerce can work on their mobile apps and make their platforms more user friendly as most of the respondents use mobile phones.
- The frequency of Discounts/Offer need to be increased from once a year to two to three times a year in order to gain more profits as these discounts are the driving force for making online purchases.

### Conclusions

Majority of the male and female respondents prefer to shop online than traditional shopping. This study was conducted to understand and analyse how the online buying behaviour of males and females differ in Generation X. Customers prefer buying a variety of products online due to various reasons like discounts and quick delivery. The amount spent is moderate and payment modes like cash on delivery followed by debit cards and UPI are preferred and hence charging extra for COD may end up discouraging

them. Further proving the hypothesis true, gen X prefers using mobile phones for online shopping. Hence e-commerce platforms can work on making their websites and apps more mobile user-friendly. In terms of the frequency women tend to shop more than male customers and few of them state that they make impulse purchases. There is, hence, a significant impact of gender towards online purchases.

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