

An Empirical Study on Attractive Features of Mobile Shopping Application

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Abstract

Today online retailers introduced a huge number of mobile shopping applications (apps) for their customers so that they can have a better online shopping experience. The present research aimed to study the attractive features of mobile shopping apps according to respondents. The research also aimed to study the demographic profile of customers' who are using mobile shopping apps. Consumers' preference for attractive feature in mobile shopping app is reflected through compare prices. The study also indicate that more educated consumers are familiar with the mobile shopping application as majority of respondents have post graduation as their educational background.

Keywords: Mobile shopping application, Mobile commerce, Online shopping, Attractive features of mobile shopping app.

INTRODUCTION

Today Online shopping provides huge opportunities to retailers to enhance the experiences that are necessary to stay ahead of shoppers who are demanding more customization in terms of product selection, quick delivery, easy return policies and providing multi channels for shopping. Online shopping provides simple, easy and convenient means of shopping to customers by providing just one click to shop. According to Forrester Research (2011) , the reasons for growing popularity of online shopping are issues related to price (products are available at cheaper cost than in-store shopping), easy access to retailer through online channel or convenience factor, quick delivery and wide range of products to choose.

Online shopping opened up a variety of choices for customers and empowered them for better decision making process. Online shopping has been shown to provide more satisfaction to modern consumers seeking convenience and speed ((Yu and Wu, 2007)). On the other hand, some consumers still feel uncomfortable to buy online. Lack of trust, for instance, seems to be the major reason that impedes consumers to buy online. Also, consumers may have a need to exam and feel the products and to meet friends and get some more comments about the products before purchasing. Such factors may have negative influence on consumer decision to shop online.

Mobile phones are increasingly used by customers for banking, payment budgeting and shopping. The development of mobile shopping system allows shopper to browse product or services, search information about product (like price, availability in near store),purchasing online, analyzing competitors product, quick delivery, notification about product, easy payment system, ease in exchange or return etc. . According to a survey (Mobile consumer 2014), when consumer are asked about a possible reason for changing their mobile network provider in the future, a larger proportion of mobile user answered 'network quality for internet (20%) than those saying 'network quality for phone calls' (16%).

The impact of mobile will have on the entire shopping experience of customers and it will be much more significant by using their mobile phones for both online and offline purchases. So now retailers cannot hope to compete unless they are focusing on consumer while they are using a mobile in this way (Forrester research, 2012). Mobile phone is becoming an important part for people to perform their day to day activities starting from morning alarm to late night conversation with friend. Mobile phone users now research about product information before purchasing to get best and fair deal for their purchases. With the increase use of mobile phones for shopping customers reported that a total of 70% of M-Shoppers reported that they have showroomed (“visited a store to look at a product, and purchased the product from an online retailer instead”) at least once in the past year. This rate includes those purchasing a product online after they leave the store or even while still within the store (Matthew quint & David Rogers). As mobile devices are rapidly changing consumer preferences and transforming the way consumer shopping experience, consumers are expected to use their mobile devices to make purchases and to buy anything which they possibly need and want immediately from anywhere and accessed at anytime (Rose, et al., 2011; Safeena, et al., 2011; Elbadrawy & Aziz, 2011).

The way consumers behave and shop is changing, now consumer prefer to use the way which make their shopping task easy and entertaining. Consumers are very particular about their shopping and they are very interested in finding ways that make their shopping a best deal. The mobile apps allow customer to shop with cheapest price and find best deal for their purchases. People prefer to shop with apps because it allows comparing price of different product available, offer discount and incentives, to keep up with product, to manage reward earned, to check stock in stores, to find upcoming event and to keep up with new products. The apps also help consumer to choose product by providing review and rating as shopper are very interested in knowing about the views of other people about the product they are going to purchase.

An app is a program that runs on a smartphone or on mobile devices and includes contact, email, games, calendar, weather information, a browser, social media, location based services and many more (consumer council of Canada, 2012). A mobile app is a computer program operated through mobile operating system like Apple app store, Google play, window phone store etc (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia). Apps are thought to make our life easier, doing things such as streamlining our calendars and grocery lists, offering entertainment while we’re stuck in line, and making it easy to collaborate with coworkers. Consumers associate apps with productivity. They bank, pay bills, shop, reserve hotels and make travel plans, while, of course, staying productive and connected with both home and the office (Compuware 2012).

A retailer app represents a self-contained software program dedicated solely to that retailer – a virtual store dedicated to that specific retailer. The mobile app developer can determine what features the program will offer. For example, the retailer can decide if the mobile app should only allow customers to complete a purchase, share information about a possible purchase, or offer both features (consumer happy to buy apps, 2014). According to a recent industry study, 38 percent of smartphone shoppers had used a mobile app to make a purchase from a retailer, and 56 percent said they planned to make a purchase with a retailer app in the next year (Adobe, 2013).

The retailers’ mobile shopping apps like flipkart app, e-Bay app, Amazon app, Snapdeal app, Jabong app, Naaptol app, Myntra app, Junglee app, Homeshop18 app, Yehbhi app etc. are offering best deal to their customer to make a better shopping experience. The apps provide selection of product from

large variety for shoes, lifestyle and fashion, watches, bags, sunglasses, jewellery, electronics, books, mobile and many more.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Shopping, Productivity and Messaging gives another stunning growth year”, suggests that in the past year apps was used for games and entertainment but in 2014 apps are very popular for business purposes as retail came to mobile in a big way. In 2014 usage of mobile was growing in lifestyle and shopping by a large proportion. Usage of shopping apps on iOS was increased by 174% and for Android by 220% (Khalaf Simon, 2015). Predicting mobile app usage for purchasing and information sharing”, findings suggest that the level of interest in a retail app is significant to the intension of purchasing and information sharing activities of consumers’ and positive relation between recent visit and interest in app on information sharing and purchase intension (Talyor David G. Michael Levin, 2014). A study of Mobile Application preferred by Youth and future scope”, according to the study the application most of the respondent preferred are weather, utility apps (bills payment etc.), productivity apps, entertainment apps, search tools apps games apps, GPS apps, news apps, social media apps in this order. The findings of study indicated that application developers are required to develop apps which are easy to use in daily life (Trivedi J.P. et al., 2014).

2014 Shoppers experience study”, the findings of study are i)among the mobile user 78% uses their devices to search products, ii) 54% shoppers will respond to personalized experience, when they get special treatment like special access or token gifts in return. The research emphasis that online shopper are influenced by ease of finding information in digital shopping, ease of returning product, fast and easy checkouts and consistent multi channel experience. It also emphasis that mobile apps and websites are not mature in mobile shopping as compared to other industries like airline industry (Skorupa Joe (2014). According to Hendrix Phil (2013), “Survey: the mobile shopping apps consumers value most”, i) mobile apps enhance shopping experience and customer experience, ii) consumers are interested in mobile shopping apps as it save time and money, iii) consumer value those apps that allow mobile coupons, price comparison, manage loyalty and reward, iv) consumers are more likely to expose mobile shopping apps to family and friends which leads to trial and increases awareness. The research include four phases i.e., discover, choose, buy and use.

Educational use of smart phone technology”, a survey of mobile phone application use by undergraduate university students. The purpose of survey is to present the use of smart phone application by undergraduate students. Undergraduate students use apps, search engines, online encyclopedias, and libraries. The students most frequently uses search engines apps for finding academic information (Catharine Resee Bomhold, 2013). How in-store shoppers are using mobile devices”, according to the survey customer prefer mobile sites for in-store purchase as compare to apps (65% prefer mobile site and 35% prefer apps). The research also present shoppers use of mobile phone in-store for apparel, electronic, health & beauty, household care, pet product and baby products (Mobile In-Store Research, 2013).

Mobile Shopping: Retail app usage on the rise (2013), explained the way smart phone and tablet users are shopping on retail apps, mobile catalogs and browsers. In 2013 shoppers are more interested in using as compared to browser for purchasing. In the research, it was concluded that 53% mobile shopper share their opinion about apps through in person, 21% shopper share through facebook and 19% share their opinion through e-mail. A study by Nielsen (2013), "Mobile path to purchase, the key findings i)mobile presents a significant portion of online retail shopping, ii)77% of smartphone users complete their purchases in person, iii) for 57% of smartphone users location is most important. The report concluded that as compare to apps, mobile web has the highest reach to consumer but as compare to web, apps have the highest engagement. The study also suggests that as compare to female, male are more likely to use apps.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Objective of the study

- 1) To identify the attractive features of mobile shopping application according to respondents.
- 2) To study the demographic profile of customers' who are using mobile shopping applications.
- 3) To suggest some strategies to online retailers about providing better mobile shopping application experience to the consumer's.

Sample Size and Characteristics

The survey of 42 respondents was conducted. All respondents were using mobile shopping app and are familiar with mobile shopping app. Personal interviews and survey method were used in the study. For data collection, primary as well as secondary methods are used. For primary data collection, quantitative approach is adopted by using a well structured questionnaire. Secondary data is collected from online journals and reports. Collected data has been analyzed by using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics include percentage and mean method.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

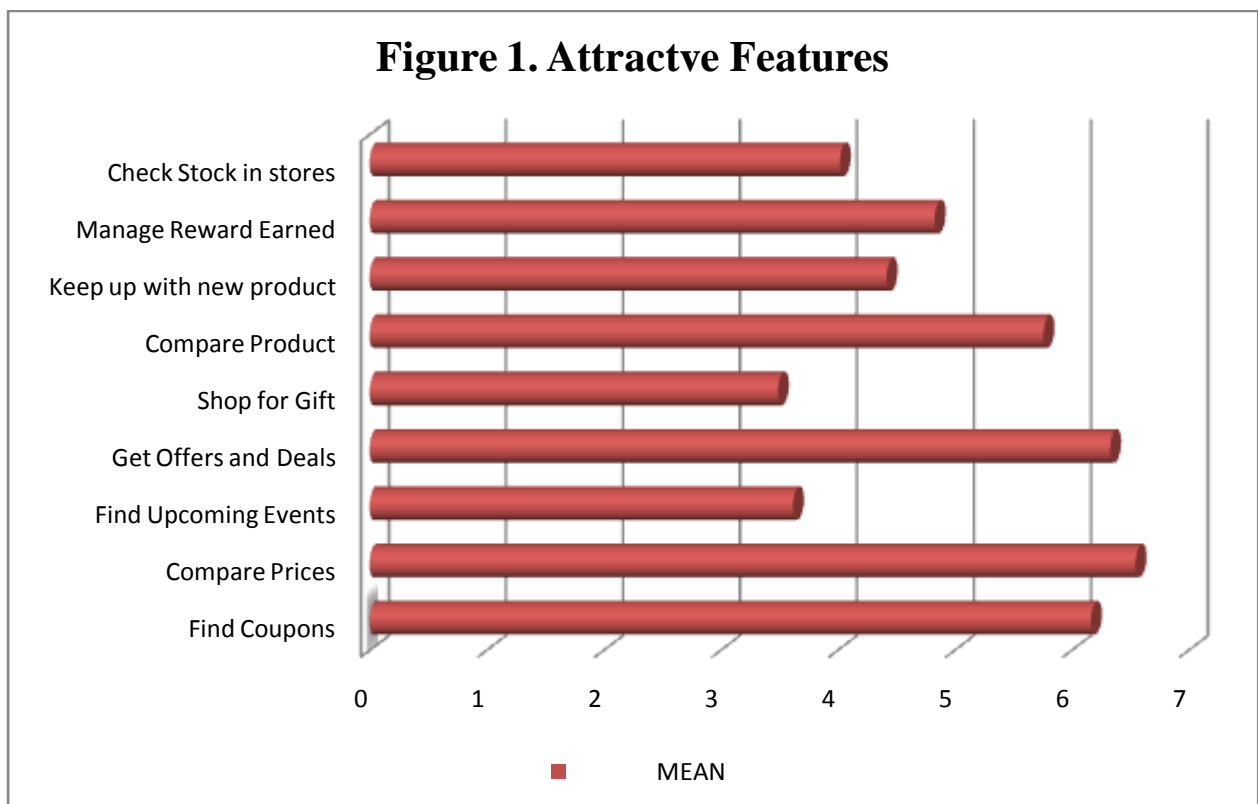
Preferred attractive features of mobile shopping apps by respondents:

According to respondents comparing prices is the most attractive feature of mobile shopping apps, to get Offers and Deals is selected as second attractive feature and to Find Coupons is selected as third attractive feature of mobile shopping apps. The least attractive features of mobile shopping apps according to respondents are to Shop for Gifts. The features are based on mobile shopping survey, U.S. smart phone owners (2012). The priority for features is collected from respondents as shown in the Table 1.

TABLE 1. Attractive features of mobile shopping app

Features	Mean	Rank
1. Find Coupons	6.166	03
2. Compare Prices	6.547	01
3. Find Upcoming Events	3.619	08
4. Get offers and Deals	6.330	02
5. Shop for Gifts	3.490	09
6. Compare Prices	5.760	04
7. Keep up with New Products	4.420	07
8. Manage Reward Earned	4.830	05
9. Check Stock in Store	4.020	06

Sources: Mobile shopping survey, U.S. smart phone owners, Feb.2013.



Demographic profile of respondents:

Out of 42 respondents, 15 (35.7%) of respondents were male and remaining 27 (64.3%) of respondents were female. Majority of them (59.5) were in the age group up to 25 years. The

educational level of majority of respondents (47.6) was post graduation. The table 2 provides the demographic details of the respondents.

Table 2: Demographic Details of the Respondents

	Category	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	15	35.70
	Female	27	64.30
Age (in years)	Up to 25	25	59.50
	26-45	17	40.50
	Above 46	00	00.00
Education Level	Graduation	14	33.33
	Post Graduation	20	47.60
	Above Post Graduation	08	19.00

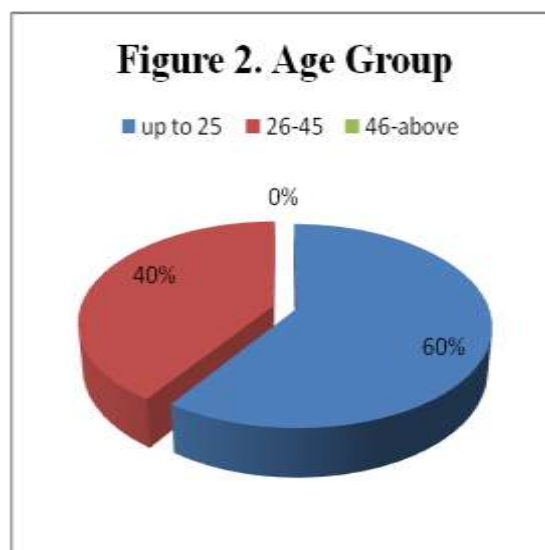
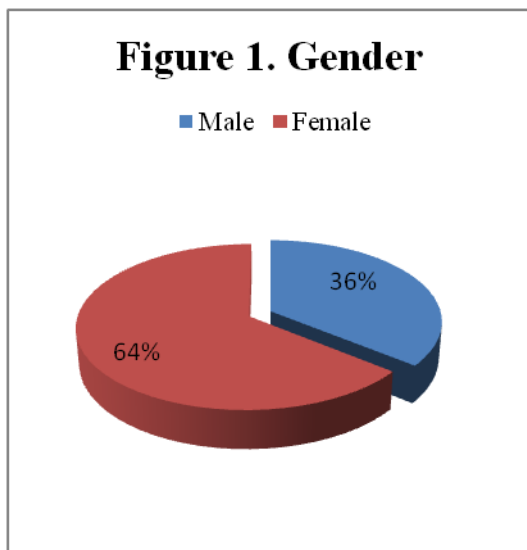
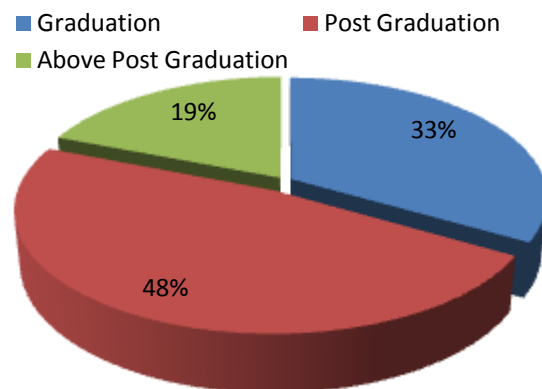


Figure 3. Education Level



CONCLUSION

The Statistics clearly indicate that the consumers' both genders was aware of the mobile shopping app. Majority of respondents (59.5%) were from the age group of up to 25 years which clearly states that young generation is attracted towards the mobile shopping apps. The education level of majority of respondents (47.6%) was post graduation which signifies that the more educated consumers are familiar with the mobile shopping application. Consumers' preference for attractive feature in mobile shopping app is reflected through compare price which is followed by offers and deals in mobile shopping apps.

MANAGERIAL APPLICATION

The article identifies that the consumers' are very keen to purchase through mobile shopping apps as it provides many attractive features, but there are some features like shop for gifts, finding upcoming events etc. are not very popular among the customers'. So the online retailers need to focus their effort to provide better gift options and to notify suitable upcoming events to capture the interest of customer'. Now the mobile shopping app has become a most important sales channel for online retailers. The in-store or offline retailers need to provide better shopping options for their customers' so that they can retain them.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY AND SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The sample size of the study may not be true representation of the total population that has exposed to mobile shopping apps and thus gives only probable results. The present study is an attempt to fill the academic literature gap in the area of mobile shopping application. Moreover the sample size is small with respect to the total population, which can be increased further to improve the accuracy of results. A study on security features like downloading of application from trusted sources, protection of mobile phone from viruses, reading privacy policies and so on, can be conducted as a further research

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