

Consumer Attitudes & Perceptions Towards Baby Products in Online Pharmacy Platforms in India.

Dr. Parag A Inamdar,

Assistant Professor

Adv. V. B. Deshpande College of Commerce (Night), Mulund.

Abstract –

Online platforms these days offers a wide range of products, including medicines, wellness items and baby care products, catering to the evolving needs of modern consumers. Purchasing commodities online has become a modern symbol of standardized living. In India online businesses are growing very rapidly. Pharmaceutical industry is one of the fastest growing industries in India and remained one of the largest producers during the pandemic and lockdown. During lockdown, online shopping increased on large scale. Purchase of pharmaceutical products through online shops like Netmeds, 1mg etc...is also a modern change in the trend to buy Baby products. However, e-purchase of Baby products has its own advantages and disadvantages. This paper is an attempt to find out the awareness among consumers about online purchase of baby products and to identify the factors attracting them towards purchase of same through online mode.

Keywords – Online shopping, Baby Products, E-Pharmacy, Online Baby products, Consumer awareness.

Introduction –

Modern era is very much attracted by the e-commerce facilities provided by businesses. Baby products such as infant food, diapers, skincare items, health supplements and hygiene products require a high level of trust, safety assurance, and quality consciousness from consumers. Parents and caregivers are especially cautious while selecting such products, as they directly affect the health and well-being of infants. In this context, online pharmacy platforms in India have positioned themselves as reliable sources by offering certified products, expert guidance, competitive pricing, doorstep delivery and easy access to product information. Economic liberalisation in India has its own impact on how Indian people lives and thinks. This transformation actually started from British period, when Indian people started to adopt their culture and hobbies. Economic liberalisation had a cascading effect to add into it. Consumer behavior is directly related to people's mindsets. The changing mindset

is becoming the driving factor for consumer's ever changing demand pattern. The emerging Indian mindset has its roots in traditional values. However new generation India is learning to make use of tradition in modern lifestyle. Use of Ayurveda, Vedic Mathematics, and Numerology etc... are some examples of it. Individual energies of young India are adding up to it. Their changing mindset is redefining what is culturally desirable. The new behavior is different than principle tradition. The change is visible in people's everyday business, their dreams and aspiration, their career choices and their overall approach to life.

Younger Indian believes that individuals can break free of their traditional barriers. Online shopping is considered to be modern and easiest way of buying goods. Even pharmaceutical industry has no exceptions to it. There are several online Baby products providing establishments that provides various options to the consumers to order Baby products from their homes. Going from one medical shop to another, looking for various Baby products is considered to be a history now. This research tries to identify the driving factors for consumers changing perspective towards the demand for online medicine.

The availability of high speed internet has made smart phones a platform from where consumers can buy anything, anytime and with discounted price. Such type of flexibility is one of the main reasons why people are opting for e-purchase today. Online business is the ideal example of best modern day business model. This trend can also be seen in increasing demand for pharmaceutical products through e-platforms. Online pharmacies are pharmacies that operate through internet and provide consumers a choice to buy medicines online. Prompt delivery, discount in price and 24*7 accessibility are some of the incentives given by online pharmacists to drag consumers from traditional or conventional pharmacy to e-pharmacy. Along with the benefits provided by e-pharmacy the risk involved with it cannot be neglected.

Need for Study –

Consumer attitudes and perceptions play a crucial role in determining purchasing decisions in the online baby products market. Factors such as product quality, brand reputation, pricing availability, authenticity, delivery efficiency, consumer reviews and trust in online platforms influence consumer behavior. Currently online sale of Baby products is not directly governed by specific law. Online pharmacy laws are still in its early stage and there are no dedicated laws to control or govern the sale of online medicine in India. The IT Act, 2000 covers some issues on online dealing

but it has no clear and separate provisions for online sale of medicine. The amendment to the Drugs and cosmetic rules, 1945 was published by department of Health and Family Welfare under Ministry of Health on 28th Aug. 2018 sets up primary requirements and conditions for the sale of drugs by e-pharmacy. But whether sellers and buyers are aware about it? That’s why, this study attempts to identify the factors deriving the demand side for online medicines.

The findings of the study are expected to provide valuable insights for improving consumer satisfaction, building trust, and enhancing the overall growth of the online baby products market in India.

Objective –

- To understand the consumer’s awareness towards availability online pharmacy service.
- To identify the drivers of demand for Baby Products through E-Pharmacy platform.

Hypothesis –

H₀ – Consumers are not aware about the availability of online pharmacy service for Baby products.

H₁ – Consumers are aware about the availability of online pharmacy service of Baby products.

Methodology –

This research is based on primary data collected through a “Google form” with randomly selected samples of 54 consumers purchasing Baby products / medicine through online or offline mode from the Mumbai region. In proportion to the Mumbai population, the sample size selected for this research is a part of a “Pilot study” to understand the awareness among the consumers and identify the drivers that motivate consumers to purchase medicines through online mode.

Results of the Study –

Primary Data -

1. Mode of Purchase of medicine – Table 1

Type	Frequency	Percentage
Online	40	59.25
Offline	14	40.74

2. Major areas of concern while purchasing medicine through offline mode (From Medical Shops) –

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
No Discount in Price	9	16.67
Compulsion of Doctor’s Prescription	28	51.85
Non Availability of Medicines	3	5.56
Not safe during pandemic	10	18.52
None of above	0	0

3. Factors responsible to attract consumers to buy medicine through online mode – Table 3

Responsible Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Discounted Price	10	18.52
Choice of time and home delivery of medicines	20	37.04
Availability of medicines without Prescription	6	11.11
Easy mode of access	15	27.78
No personal visit to medicine shops	3	5.56

4. Awareness about legal provisions or safeguard for consumers towards online shopping –

Table 4

Whether consumers are aware about safeguards?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	10	18.52
No	44	81.48

5. Average rating given by consumers to online and offline mode for purchase of medicine on the scale of 1 to 5. (1 = Average & 5 = Excellent)

Table 5

Mode of Purchase	Average Rating
Online	4.43
Offline	3.14

Hypothesis Testing –

H_0 – Consumers are not aware about the availability of online pharmacy service.

H_1 – Consumers are aware about the availability of online pharmacy service.

Large sample test: Test for the specified population proportion (Z Test) was carried out for Hypothesis testing (Table 1).

Reject H_0 against H_1 if, $Z_0 > Z_\alpha$ at level of significance α for $\alpha = 0.05$, $Z_\alpha = 1.64$

Test rejected the null hypothesis hence alternative hypothesis is accepted i.e. Consumers are aware about the availability of Online Pharmacy service.

Findings –

1. Majority of consumers are aware about the existence of online pharmacy for purchase of Baby products or medicines.
2. Compulsion of Doctor's prescription is the major concern area for respondents for purchasing Baby products through offline mode. Which means that majority of respondents prefers self-medication.
3. Preferential time and place of delivery is mainly responsible factor for consumers opting for online mode for purchase of Baby products.
4. Majority of respondents are not aware about the legal safeguard or rules for purchasing Baby products online.
5. During certain conditions, like limited availability, new launch of products etc... respondents found to prefer Online Purchase of Baby products over the offline mode.

Suggestions –

1. Online pharmacy platforms should clearly display certification, licenses, batch numbers and expiry dates of baby products. Highlighting 100% genuine products and government approvals can enhance consumer confidence.
2. Clear guidelines should be provided for the purchase or sale of Baby products through online mode. Parents prefer complete and transparent information. Platforms should include ingredient lists, age suitability, usage instructions, allergy warnings etc... to support informed decision making.
3. Regular monitoring of sale of online Baby products will curb the unhealthy practices.
4. Timely and reliable delivery is crucial for baby products. Online pharmacies should ensure faster delivery options, especially for essential items like diapers, infant food, and healthcare products.

5. Public awareness campaigns should be organized for making people aware about pros and cons of Online purchase of Baby products.

Conclusion –

In the era of internet revolution, online purchase and sale is the future for all goods and services, and in that, the pharmacy is no exception to it. However, it is the duty of consumers to be more responsible in the purchase of such sensitive products. An e-pharmacist also needs to act more responsibly while selling such health-related products. If strict rules are made and followed, then online sale of Baby products will prove to be an important factor, especially for critically ill patients, those who have limitations in personally reaching out to the medical shops for the purchase of Baby products.

The findings indicate that factors such as product quality, authenticity, pricing, brand reputation, availability, delivery efficiency and customer reviews significantly influence consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions. Trust and safety remain the most critical concerns. Baby products directly impact infant health and well-being. While online pharmacies offer advantages such as convenience, wider product choices, and attractive discounts, concerns related to counterfeit products, delayed delivery and return policies continue to affect consumer perception.

Overall the study concludes that online pharmacy platforms in India have strong growth potential in the baby products segment. By focusing on transparency, quality assurance, efficient logistics, customer support, and secure digital transactions, online pharmacies can enhance consumer trust and satisfaction. As digital adoption continues to expand in India, online pharmacies are likely to play an increasingly important role in meeting the healthcare and baby care needs of Indian consumers.

References –

1. Bagozzi, R and Gurhan, Z (2007), *The Social Psychology of consumer Behavior*, Open University Press, Philadelphia, USA.
2. Barnett, C., Cloke, P., Clarke, N. and Malpass, A (2004), *Articulating Ethics and Consumption: Cultures of Consumption*, working paper series, No. 17, available from www.consume.bbk.ac.uk/publication.html
3. Goldsmith, R (2002), *Viral Marketing: Get your Audience to Do your Marketing for You*, Prentice Hall Business, London.

4. Gopalan, S and Mueen, M (Ed.) (2008), Indian Rural Markets and Marketing Practices – Recent Developments, IUP publishing, Tripura, India
5. Graves, P (2010), Consumerology – The market research Myth, the truth about consumers and the psychology of shopping, Nicholas Brealey publishing, Boston, USA.
6. Aithal, A (2018), Users Perspectives on online pharmacy model, International Journal of Health Science and Pharmacy, ISSN: 2581-6411, Vol 2, No.1 June 2018.