Impact of Social Context on Online Shopping Behavior in Selected Asian Countries
India, Malaysia, Singapore, Uzbekistan, and Thailand

N. L. Balasudarsun, M. Sathish, Manimekalai Jambulingam and Eason Yamalee

Abstract

Internet technology has helped marketers focus on electronic commerce; one way is by zeroing in on the many factors that influence online shopping behaviour. This paper deals with the impact of social factors such as family, friends, their reviews, and external and interpersonal factors on planned and unplanned online purchases. This descriptive study was conducted using structured survey questionnaires. Data were collected through online and offline techniques, employing "Snowball sampling". The Wald-Wolfowitz RUN test was conducted to ensure randomness. Structural equation models, F Tests, and T Tests were used to determine sample size, which was justified using G power analysis. Online consumer shopping behaviour is formed by attitude, trust, shopping enjoyment, and shopping experiences, which are directly influenced by social context factors. This study establishes that Indian, Singaporean, and Malaysian students are careful and think twice before making purchases, keep shopping lists, are particular about e-stores, and will not purchase without a plan. However, in Uzbekistan and parts of Singapore, unplanned purchases happen often due to patterns of increased spending and impulsive purchases. Since the internet and e-stores are especially new in Uzbekistan, its youth are tempted to browse online suggestions and impulsively act on reviews from friends or peers.

Keywords: Social Context, Planned Purchase, Unplanned Purchase, Online Shopping.

INTRODUCTION

Electronic commerce has become a norm among consumers of this century. Online shopping has become the third most popular internet activity after e-mailing, instant messaging and browsing on websites (Puranik and Bansal, 2014). Buying and selling of products and services through the internet is now common place. Moreover, some organizations, particularly in retailing, have come out with augmented sales campaigns through online channels and advertisements through online trading portals such as eBay and Amazon to attract both buyers and sellers (Lu, Pang, Hang, and Tailor, 2015). The amount of e-transactions has increased sharply with extensive usage of internet and technology (Hassanein and Head, 2007). Implementation of technology in e-tailing businesses has grown rapidly over the last decade; however, marketers are still left with limited means to attract, retain, and fulfill customer needs and achieve customer satisfaction (Jublee and Balamurugan, 2016). Along with traditional ways of doing business, the following are major categories of e-commerce activities: business to business, business to customer, customer to business, and customer to customer. This research paper deals

N. L. Balasudarsun (Corresponding Author)
M. Sathish
PSG Institute of Management,
Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu-641004

Manimekalai Jambulingam
Taylor's Business School
Selangor-47500, Malaysia

Eason Yamalee
Faculty of Education Rattana Bundit University,
Bangkok-10240 Thailand.

with an attempt to analyse the influence of social context on planned and unplanned purchases by online consumers—in particular, students in India, Malaysia, Singapore, Uzbekistan, and Thailand—based on existing research. Though many research studies have been conducted about online shopping, no study has been conducted that particularly researches the relation between the social contexts of India, Malaysia, Singapore, Uzbekistan, and Thailand and the online purchasing patterns of their respective student consumers.

LITERATURE REVIEW & RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Many researchers and practitioners in electronic commerce constantly strive to obtain better insights into consumer behaviour in cyberspace. E-commerce is the buying and selling of goods and services online; the internet facilitated the rise of online shopping tools. The website and online consumer behaviour create difficulties of service quality in e-channels.

Social Context

Only a few studies have examined the impact of social context on web usage behaviour. Internet usage by family members; external influences like articles, reviews, and promotions of the websites; and interpersonal influence like relatives and colleagues have been identified as significant predictors of web use (Agarwal and Venkatesh, 2002; Kraut, Mukhopadhyay, Szczypula, Kiesler, and Scherlis, 1999; Parthasarathy and Battacherjee, 1998).

External Influences

Balamurugan, Sathish, and Jublee (2017) identified that advertisements positively impact consumers' opinions of products. Similarly, Wood (2005) revealed that electronic word of mouth largely impacts online purchases. Odabası and Odabası (2010) stated that consumers use social media as a communication tool to report satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Miller (2010) mentioned that social media play an important role in convincing people to go online.

Interpersonal Influences

Gilly, Graham, Wolfinbarger, and Yale (1998) noted that interpersonal information search shows how consumers behave towards information obtained from opinion leaders, friends, colleagues, experts, and word of mouth. Further, family size influences online shopping habits (Richa, 2012). Thomson, Laing, and McKee (2007) noted that family members constitute the basic structure of the primary reference group and they have a great impact upon online purchase behaviour.
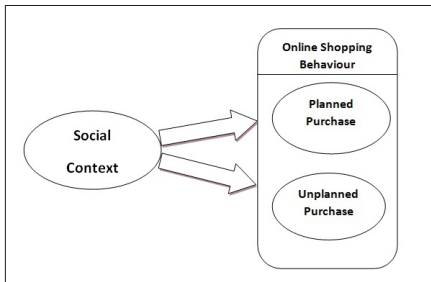
Planned Purchase

Planned buying behaviour is defined as a buying action that happens in response to a problem that has been identified earlier or whose purchase intention is formed well in advance of getting into the store (Piron, 1993). While buying a product, many customers go through a decision-making process that includes need recognition, information search, identifying alternatives, evaluating alternatives, action (otherwise purchase), and post-purchase behaviour. Customers decide whether to buy or not, what to buy, and where to buy it by evaluating the pros and cons of alternatives to maximize benefits (Engel, Blackwell, and Kollatt, 1978). The influence of social factors such as family and reference group on consumers' shopping behaviour has been recognized (Levy and Weitz, 2009). The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991) is more accurate and effective in predicting consumers' behaviour intentions and actual behaviour.

Unplanned Purchase

Impulse purchase behaviour happens when a customer feels the urge to purchase something at the very instant without any more evaluation (Rook, 1987). Piron (1991) and Bellenger and Korgaonkar (1980) revealed that impulse purchase behaviour is an action done without any prior plan because of a stimulus. The term "impulse buying" is generally considered to be synonymous with "unplanned purchase" (Stern, 1962), i.e., any purchase that a shopper makes but has not planned in advance.

In-home shoppers have been found to be more impulsive (Darian, 1987). Internet shoppers score higher on measures of impulsiveness than non-shoppers (Donthu and Garcia, 1999).

Research Framework

Figure 1: Research Framework

The model is framed to find out the relationship between social context and online shopping behaviour. Online shopping behaviour is measured through two variables: planned purchase and unplanned purchase. Social context is considered as a dependent variable, which is measured with two operating variables called internal influences and external influences.

OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

Primary Objective

1. To study the online shopping behaviour of students in the selected Asian countries.

Secondary Objectives

1. To study the impact of social context on online shopping behaviour.
2. To compare the countries based on social context of online shopping behaviour among students.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Since the research is to test the formulated hypothesis, the research design for the study is descriptive (Malhotra and Chauhan, 2008). The period of the study is from July 2012 to December 2015. Snowball sampling, which is a non-probability sampling technique, was used as students were spread across different countries and it is impossible to measure the exact population. Snowball sampling is commonly used in social sciences and statistics research to link hidden populations (Babbie, 2001). To ensure randomness, after data collection, the Wald-Wolfowitz RUN test was conducted since the maximum number of variables showed randomness (Sig. Values are greater than 0.05). Table 1 explains this in detail.

Hence, in the study, the sample size has been justified by using G power analysis. G power3 software was used to justify the minimum sample size while using SEM. Since the tests and number of predictors vary across different objectives, the calculations are done in four parts: the chosen predictor, effect size, alpha and beta values, and collected sample size. These are tabulated as below.

Table 1: Runs test

	Test Value	Cases < Test Value	Cases ≥ Test Value	Total Cases	Number of Runs	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Social context	3.40	392	413	825	373	.795	.427
Planned purchase	3.67	380	445	825	341	−1.468	.142
Unplanned purchase	3.00	366	459	825	336	−1.628	.104

Table 2: Justification of sample size chosen for the study

Target sample size	Usable samples obtained	Possible tests	No. of groups/ No. of predictors	Effect size	Alpha	Achieved power (1-Beta)
1107	825	F- Test (SEM)	3	0.10	0.05	0.999999
		F – Test (Anova)	5	0.25	0.05	0.999962
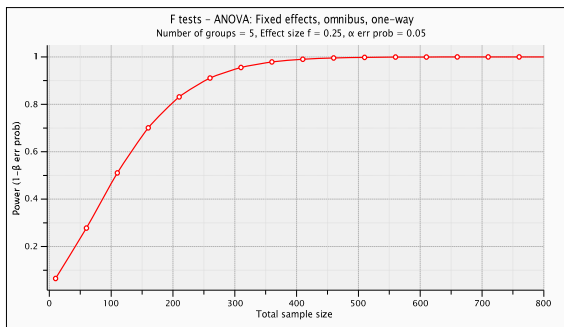
Figure 2: Justification of the sample size

G power analysis is done to calculate the necessary sample size for a specified power. The total sample size of the survey is 1107, out of which 825 are error free and reliable. The below figure shows the relation of sample size vs. power, i.e., the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis. As seen in the graph, the reliability of the data increases with the increase in sample size from 0. As the sample size increases to 400, the power of the sample starts to stabilize. At the sample size of (approximately) 440, the power of the sample stabilizes and remains constant thereafter. This indicates that 440 samples are enough to get a reliable output for this population. However, 825 reliable data from five different countries were taken to affirm the results.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter has been arranged into two major areas: The first part is the descriptive statistics used to understand the demographic profile of the respondents, and the second part is an analysis of country-wise comparison of the constructs using a Structural Equation Model.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics was used to analyse the demographic profile of the respondents. Demographic profiles such as gender, age, education, mode of study, nationality, and money spent in a year online shopping by the respondents were identified (Table 3).

Uzbekistan has the highest mean value of 3.63 for social context, followed by Singapore (3.57), and the overall mean value for social context is 3.35. Since the internet is new to Uzbekistan, the young generation is tempted to browse online and get suggestions and recommendations from their friends or colleagues. However, in Singapore, parents are also familiar with the use of the internet. Thus, product ratings and reviews play important roles among Singaporeans (Sam and Sharma, 2015). Information about product launches, promotions, and service offerings have an impact on consumers' inclination to purchase products online in Uzbekistan (Rakesh and Khare, 2012). Table 3 has the computed mean values of all the parameters of online shopping behaviour in different countries. It is inferred that India has the highest mean value of 3.77 for planned purchases, which has an overall mean value of 3.56.

Indian, Singaporean and Malaysian students have higher-than-average mean values, whereas Uzbekistan and Thailand have lower mean values than the average. Indian, Singaporean, and

Table 3: Descriptive statistics of selected Asian countries

		Mean					Std. Deviation					
		India	Malaysia	Singapore	Uzbekistan	Thailand	India	Malaysia	Singapore	Uzbekistan	Thailand	Overall mean
OSB	Planned purchase	3.77	3.72	3.73	3.47	3.13	.84	.72	.68	.80	.87	3.56
	Unplanned purchase	2.97	2.69	3.27	3.26	3.08	.97	.89	.86	.97	.86	3.05
	Social context	3.32	3.16	3.57	3.63	3.08	.86	.86	.73	.60	1.01	3.35

Malaysian students are careful before making purchases, think twice before going for it, keep a shopping list, are particular about e-stores, and would not purchase without a plan (Balamurugan, Sathish, and Sathyanarayanan, 2013). These countries have become digitally equipped in recent years thanks to improved economic well-being, another important factor. India stands first when it comes to planned purchases, as Indians nearly always clearly identify their needs and do research on a product's features, price, and delivery dates before purchase (Bettman, 1979). Unknown e-stores, which are not synchronized with social networking sites (SNSs), are expected to have the least impact on integrity, beliefs, and adversely affected purchase intentions in Uzbekistan (Brengman and Karimov, 2012). Laohapensang (2009) has found that online shopping is influenced by subjective norms such as influence by family members, friends, and employers and perceived behavioural controls like facing challenges in internet shopping in Thailand.

Country-wise Comparison of the Constructs using Structural Equation Modeling

In this part, the country-wise comparison of the constructs is analysed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). For the randomness of the sample, a run test (sig = >0.05) was applied.

India

SEM was used to analyse each country, and important factors were identified for Indian customers. The following analysis was done with 440 respondents in India.
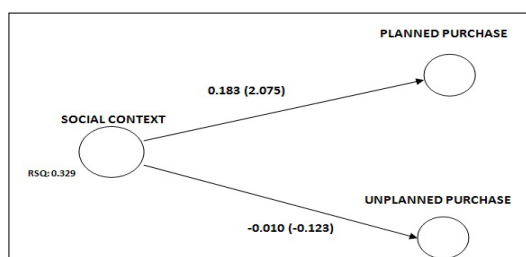

Figure 3: The SEM model output of social context for India

Structural Model–Bootstrap

Table 4: Structural model – bootstrap for India

Construct	Entire sample estimate	T-Statistic	Result
Unplanned Purchase	–0.010	–0.123	Insignificant
Planned Purchase	0.183	2.075	Significant

H1: There is a positive relationship between unplanned purchases and social context among Indian customers.

The model proves that the relationship between unplanned purchase and social context among Indian customers is insignificant and negative (beta = –0.010 and t statistic = –0.123). It indicates that an unplanned purchase is not influenced by social context, so the customers who do plan their purchases are influenced by external and internal forces. Moreover, if they consider the social context variable, the unplanned purchase factor will have a negative impact.

H2: There is a positive relationship between planned purchases and social context among Indian customers.
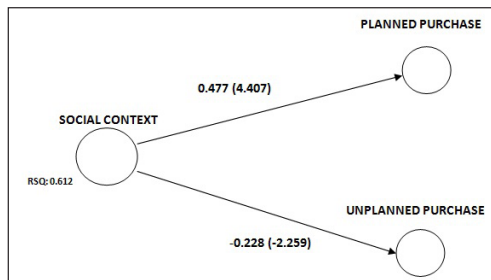
The model proves that the relationship between planned purchase and social context among Indian customers is significant and positive (beta = 0.183 and t statistic = 2.075). It indicates that planned purchase is influenced by the social context. So, the customers who are doing planned purchases are influenced by external and internal forces.

Malaysia

SEM was used to analyse each country, and important factors were identified for Malaysian customers. The following analysis was done with 86 respondents in Malaysia.

H3: There is a positive relationship between unplanned purchases and social context among Malaysian Customers.

Figure 4: The SEM model output of social context for Malaysia

The model proves that the relationship between unplanned purchases and social context among Malaysian customers is insignificant and negative (beta = –0.028 and t statistic = –2.259). It indicates that an unplanned purchase is not influenced by the social context. So, customers who do unplanned purchases are not influenced by external and internal forces. In a developing country like Malaysia, customers prefer to buy products only in a planned way (Balamurugan et al., 2017). This clearly indicates that the social context results in a consumer's purchase decisions' being planned.

Structural Model–Bootstrap
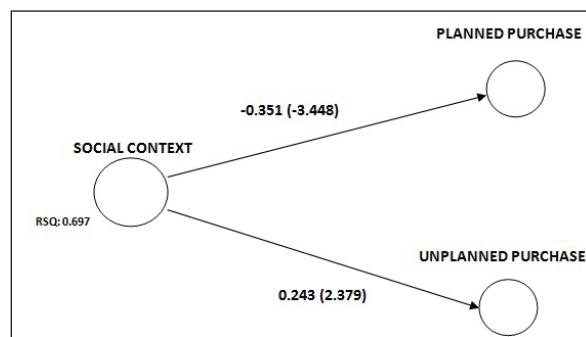
Table 5: Structural model – bootstrap for Malaysia

Construct	Entire sample estimate	T-Statistic	Result
Unplanned Purchase	–0.028	–2.259	Insignificant
Planned Purchase	0.477	4.407	Significant

H4: There is a positive relationship between planned purchases and social context among Malaysian Customers.

The model proves that the relationship between planned purchase and social context among Malaysian customers is significant and positive (beta = 0.477 and t statistic = 4.407). It indicates that planned purchase is influenced by the social context. So, the customers who are doing planned purchases are influenced by the external and internal forces that lead to a greater volume of purchase.

Singapore

SEM was used to analyse each country, and important factors were identified for customers in Singapore. The following analysis was done with 72 respondents in Singapore.

Figure 5: The SEM model output of social context for Singapore

Structural Model–Bootstrap

Table 6: Structural model – bootstrap for Singapore

Construct	Entire sample estimate	T-Statistic	Result
Unplanned Purchase	0.243	2.379	Significant
Planned Purchase	–0.351	–3.448	Insignificant

H5: There is a positive relationship between unplanned purchases and social context among Singaporean customers.

The model proves that the relationship between unplanned purchase and social context among Singaporean customers is significant and positive (beta = 0.243 and t statistic = 2.379). It indicates that unplanned purchase is influenced by the social context.

H6: There is a positive relationship between planned purchases and social context among Singaporean customers.

The model proves that the relationship between planned purchase and social context among Singaporean customers is insignificant and Negative (beta = –0.351 and t statistic = –3.448). It indicates that planned purchase is not influenced by the social context.

The results of the study support the model presented in Figure 5 and the hypothesis regarding the relationship between the constructs. The degree of relationship between two constructs is equally important for planned purchases by consumers when they make online purchase.

Customers believe that web stores that have good reputations and belong to large companies are reliable. Unplanned purchase happens if the idea of shopping from the web store is appealing and e-shopping is considered a good idea. Some enjoy online shopping as they take it as a leisurely and pleasurable activity. They find their visits to web stores interesting and enjoyable. Those who do frequent and extensive purchases have not planned in advance since they have been e-shopping for many years and have enough knowledge in e-shopping. Given these factors, customers have blindly gone for unplanned purchase in Singapore.

Uzbekistan

SEM was used to analyse each country, and important factors were identified for Uzbekistani customers. The following analysis was done with 79 respondents in Uzbekistan.
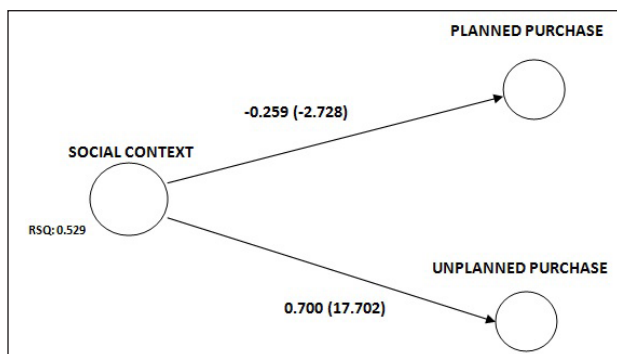

Figure 6: The SEM model output of social context for Uzbekistan

Structural Model – Bootstrap

Table 7: Structural model – bootstrap for Uzbekistan

Construct	Entire sample estimate	T-Statistic	Result
Unplanned Purchase	0.700	17.702	Significant
Planned Purchase	–0.259	–2.728	Insignificant

H7: There is a positive relationship between unplanned purchases and social context among Uzbekistani customers.

The model proves that the relationship between unplanned purchase and social context among Uzbekistani customers is significant and positive (beta = 0.700 and t statistic = 17.702). It indicates that unplanned purchase is influenced by the social context.

H8: There is a positive relationship between planned purchases and social context among Uzbekistani customers.
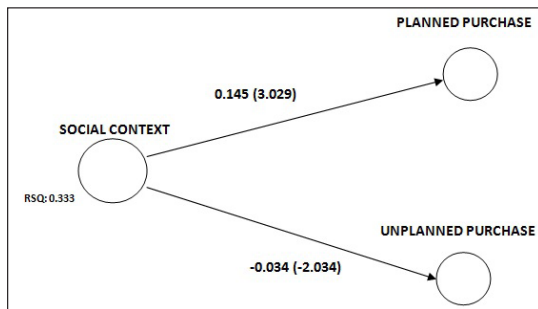
The model proves that the relationship between planned purchase and social context among Uzbekistani customers is insignificant and negative (beta = –0.259 and t statistic = –2.728). It indicates that planned purchase is not influenced by the social context.

The results of the study support the model presented in Figure 6 and the hypothesis regarding the relationship between the constructs. The degree of the relationship between two constructs is equally important for planned purchases by consumers when they make online purchases.

Customers believe that web stores that have good reputations and belong to large companies are reliable. Unplanned purchase happens if the idea of shopping from the web store is appealing and e-shopping is considered a good idea. Some enjoy online shopping as they take it as a leisurely and pleasurable activity. They find their visits to web stores interesting and enjoyable.

Thailand

SEM was used to analyse each country, and important factors were identified for Thai customers. The following analysis was done with 148 respondents in Thailand.

Figure 7: The SEM model output of social context for Thailand

Structural Model – Bootstrap

Table 8: Structural model – bootstrap for Thailand

Construct	Entire sample estimate	T-Statistic	Result
Unplanned Purchase	–0.034	–2.034	Insignificant
Planned Purchase	0.145	3.029	Significant

H9: There is a positive relationship between unplanned purchase and social context among Thai customers.

The model proves that the relationship between unplanned purchase and social context among Thai customers is insignificant and negative (beta = –0.034 and t statistic = –2.034). It indicates that unplanned purchase is not influenced by the social context.

H10: There is a positive relationship between planned purchases and social context among Thai customers.

The model proves that the relationship between planned purchases and social context among Thai customers is significant and positive (beta = 0.145 and t statistic = 3.029). It indicates that a planned purchase is directly influenced by the social context. Customers who do planned purchases are thus influenced by external and internal forces. This leads to a higher volume of purchases.

The results of the study support the model presented in Figure 7 and the hypothesis regarding the relationship between the constructs. The degree of relationship among all the constructs is equally important for planned purchases and unplanned purchases by consumers when they make online purchases. However, 33.3% of planned purchases happen through the factors of social context. The rest of the impacts would be from unknown variables. This is based on the study among the students in Thailand with a sample of 148 respondents.

Students from Thailand feel that online shopping is a tedious task. Their interest in online shopping is low, and they do not enjoy browsing web stores. They believe that web stores are not large, do not have good reputations, and are not reliable. They identified that web stores do not provide the expected service and are not helpful. So, social context does not significantly influence unplanned purchases among respondents in Thailand.

DISCUSSION

The impact of the usage of the internet and the World Wide Web on business transactions has been widely spread over across the globe (Brashear, Kashyap, Musante, and Donthu, 2009). Though business-to-business (B2B) executes a considerable number of electronic transactions, it's business-to-consumer (B2C) that has played a major role in attracting most marketers. Consumers have rights to choose or reject any product from anywhere and enjoy competitive prices coupled with the availability of a wide array of choices.

Social Context

Since the internet and the concept of e-stores are new to Uzbekistan, the young generations are tempted to browse online and receive suggestions and recommendations from their friends or colleagues (Ha and Stoel, 2012). However, parents in Singapore are also familiar with the use of the internet, and product ratings and reviews play important roles among Singaporeans (Sam and Sharma, 2015). Information about product launches, promotions, and service offerings has an impact on consumers' inclination to purchase products online in Uzbekistan (Rakesh and Khare, 2012). Nevertheless, students in India, Malaysia, and Thailand are not influenced by social context factors such as friends and family, articles and reviews, and promotional offers.

Planned Purchases

Indian, Singaporean, and Malaysian students are wary of making any purchase, think twice before they go for it, keep a shopping list, are particular about e-stores and will not purchase without a plan. These countries have become digitally equipped in recent years, and changes in their spending pattern. India stands first when it comes to planned purchases, as Indians almost always clearly identify their needs and do research about the features of the product, its price, and the delivery dates before making any purchase.

Unplanned Purchases

In Singapore and Uzbekistan, unplanned purchases happen to a large extent. Singaporeans exhibit high-value spending patterns and are impulsive in purchasing. One of the activities Singaporeans indulge in for relaxation is browsing online to purchase spontaneously and without much thinking. Unplanned purchases happen in Uzbekistan as Online shopping is new to them and willing to explore the new way of shopping.

Measurement of the Impact of Social Context's Influence on Online Shopping Behaviour of Students – Country-wise

The impact of social context's influence on students' online shopping behaviour was measured in selected countries. Since the results change country-wise, the variable 'Country' was declared as the moderating variable. The Structural Equation Model (SEM) was used to analyse all the countries with the mentioned factors.

India

The degree of relationship of social context is equally important towards planned purchase for consumers when they make online purchase. However, only 32.9% of the planned purchase happens through social context and t statistic is greater than 2 (2.075) towards planned purchase. Rest of the impacts would be from unobserved variables, based on this study among the students in India. People get tempted when their family members make online purchases. Reviews, articles, and the opinions of friends and relatives influence them to purchase online. Those who think that online shopping is a leisurely and pleasurable activity, have interest in online shopping, and enjoy browsing web stores go for unplanned purchases. Overall, social context plays a role among respondents in India in planned purchase.

Malaysia

The degree of relationship of social context is equally important towards planned purchase for consumers when they make online purchase. However, 61.2% of the planned purchase happens through social context and t statistic is greater than 2 (4.407) towards planned purchase. Rest of the impacts would be from unobserved variables, based on this study among the students in Malaysia. Planned purchase happens if customers have good shopping experience and positive attitudes toward web stores. Use of the internet by family members

and influence by articles, reviews, mass media, relatives, colleagues, friends, and word of mouth make customers think twice and encourage planned purchase.

Singapore

The degree of relationship of social context is equally important towards unplanned purchase for consumers when they make online purchase. However, 69.7% of unplanned purchase happens through social context and t statistic is greater than 2 (2.379) towards unplanned purchase. Rest of the impacts would be from unobserved variables, based on this study among the students in Singapore. Social context provides extraordinary shopping enjoyment and trust of online shopping among customers in Singapore. Shoppers who make frequent and extensive purchases have sufficient knowledge of online shopping and years of experience that help them make planned purchases. Unplanned purchase happens if the idea of shopping from the web store is appealing and e-shopping a good idea. Based on this reality, customers have blindly gone for unplanned purchase in Singapore.

Uzbekistan

The degree of relationship of social context is equally important towards unplanned purchase for consumers when they make online purchase. However, 52.9% of unplanned purchase happens through social context and t statistic is greater than 2 (17.702) towards unplanned purchase. Rest of the impacts would be from unobserved variables, based on this study among the students in Uzbekistan. Social context is important for unplanned purchases for the respondents in Uzbekistan. Since the internet and e-stores are especially new in Uzbekistan, its youth are tempted to browse online suggestions and impulsively act on reviews from friends or peers. Reviews, articles, opinions of friends and relatives influence them to purchase online.

Thailand

The degree of relationship of social context is equally important towards planned purchase for consumers when they make online purchase. However, only 33.3% of planned purchase happens through social context and t statistic is greater than 2 (3.02) towards planned purchase. Rest of the impacts would be from unobserved variables, based on this study among the students in Thailand. Social context is important for planned purchases for the respondents in Thailand. A better shopping experience leads to planned purchases. Internet users are not significantly influenced by the opinions of family members, reviews, articles, friends, and relatives. Customers who buy online frequently and extensively and have been doing e-shopping for many years gain sufficient knowledge about online shopping. Customers from Thailand usually prefer to go online shopping more during the political turmoil as it is more convenient, safer than going to a physical store.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Since reviews and references influence purchase, marketers may consider referral programs. Some of the customers' leisure activity is browsing. So, if the e-stores are attractive and well designed, business transactions are possible. All these would lead to unplanned purchases. Planned purchase is possible among the Malaysian customers if they have better shopping experience, positive attitudes towards the web stores, and the influence of family and friends. Customers in Singapore have both planned and unplanned online purchase behaviours. They go for planned purchases if the e-store can offer better utility of the product or service. Marketers must establish brand value of the e-stores in order to make customers proud of purchasing online in a specific web store. In Uzbekistan, it is better to have frequent contact with existing customers by sending thank-you messages and information about new arrivals because friends and colleagues influence others to visit a web store. It is also better to have a

physical store of the same company as the e-store, as this makes customers feel comfortable, and they may perceive less risk. There is a huge gap in terms of internet marketing in Thailand. Marketers must concentrate more in almost all areas.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Conclusion

The present research has reported various contributions to the fields of marketing, psychology, and global business. A few studies have been done to compare the selected countries, which are of distinctly different cultural backgrounds than the Western countries. This research is believed to be the first comprehensive study to compare online shopping behaviour of students in five Asian countries along with social context with proper reliability and validity. The second major contribution is based on social context and planned and unplanned purchases. Singaporeans and Indians enjoy their shopping. The third contribution of the research is that it has provided a glimpse into the differences between the consumers among the selected countries in terms of purchase pattern, technical knowledge, and influence of opinions of others on online shopping behaviour. Finally, it can be found from the study that the level of economic development of the country made them changes in their spending pattern indeed influences the consumers' decisions in several ways.

Future Research Directions

This research evokes many questions, and further research is necessary until a clear picture of the major factors that influence the way people feel, think, act, make decisions, and purchase on the web is obtained. The present research was done for the purpose of testing the existing theory. It can be extended further in many areas, some of which are described below:

This model was tested in five different countries across the Asian continent. A similar model could be used to compare online shopping behaviour of students from different continents or even countries in two or more different continents. Research on finding the factors that influence online shopping could be targeted specifically towards product- or service-based industries.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There are some obvious limitations in the present study. The major fact is that the data collection was done in different countries with the help of friends and other colleagues overseas, and the duration of data collection was long. The respondents were asked to think of their most recent online purchase, which may have elicited an improper response. There may be a possibility of ignorance. The research has generally focused on the customers bought online recently without focusing on a specific product or service or a particular web store. Using the same questionnaire in all the countries for data collection limits the generalization of the study. Another important challenge is language. Though the respondents were students and educated, they felt that it would be better if the questions were in their local language. Some students (like those in Thailand) did not prefer to disclose their names and spending patterns, which resulted in unusable data.

REFERENCES

Agarwal, R., & Venkatesh, V. (2002). Assessing a firm's Web presence: A heuristic evaluation procedure for the measurement of usability. *Information Systems Research,* 13(2), 168–186.

Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behaviour. *Organizational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes,* 50(2), 179–211.

Babbie, E. (2001). *The practice of social research.* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Thomson.

Balamurugan, R. N., Jublee, D., & Sathish, M. (2017). Impact of individual factors through consumer choices on online consumer buying behaviour. *Great Lakes Herald,* 11(1), 19–38

Balamurugan, R. N., Sathish, M., & Sathyanarayanan, R. S. (2013). Consumer behaviour towards online shopping: A study with reference to Coimbatore City. *TMC Academic Journal, Singapore*, 8(1), 43–53.

Bellenger, D., & Korgaonkar, P. (1980). Profiling the recreational shopper. *Journal of Retailing,* 56(4), 77–92.

Bettman, J. R. (1979). An information processing theory of consumer choice. *Journal of Marketing, 43*(3), 124–126.

Brashear, T. G., Kashyap, V., Musante, M. D., & Donthu, N. (2009). A profile of the Internet shopper: Evidence from six countries. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, 17*(3), 267–281.

Brengman, M., & Karimov, F. P. (2012). The effect of web communities on consumers' initial trust in B2C e-commerce websites. *Management Research Review, 35*(9), 791–817.

Darian, J. C. (1987). In-home shopping: Are there consumer segments? *Journal of Retailing, 63*(2), 163–186.

Donthu, N., & Garcia, A. (1999). The internet shopper. *Journal of Advertising Research, 39*(3), 52–58.

Engel, J. F., Blackwell, R. D., & Kollatt, D. (1978). *Consumer behaviour.* Hinsdale, IL: The Dryden Press.

Gilly, M. C., Graham, J. L., Wolfinbarger, M. F., & Yale, L. J. (1998). A dyadic study of interpersonal information search. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 26*(2), 83–100.

Ha, S., & Stoel, L. (2012). Online apparel retailing: Roles of e-shopping quality and experiential e-shopping motives. *Journal of Service Management, 23*(2), 197–215.

Hassanein, K., Head, M., & Ju, C. (2009). A cross-cultural comparison of the impact of social presence on website trust, usefulness and enjoyment. *International Journal of Electronic Business, 7(*6), 625.

Jublee, D., & Balamurugan, R. N. (2016). Factors influencing online shopping behaviour among young shoppers in Coimbatore. *Asian Research Journal of Business Management, 4*(3), 1–12.

Kraut, R., Mukhopadhyay, T., Szczypula, J., Kiesler, S., & Scherlis, B. (1999). Information and communication: Alternative uses of the Internet in households. *Information Systems Research, 10*(4), 287–303.

Laohapensang, O. (2009). Factors influencing internet shopping behaviour: A survey of consumers in Thailand. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management, 13*(4), 501–513.

Levy, M., & Weitz, B. (2009). *Retailing Management.* Columbus, OH: McGraw-Hill Irwin.

Lu, L. W., Pang, J., Hang, P. H., & Tailor, N. (2015). *E-commerce in Singapore: How it affects the nature of competition and what it means for competition policy.* Competition Commission of Singapore.

Malhotra, H., & Chauhan, M. K. (2008). Consumers' behaviour towards online purchases. *International Journal of English Language, Literature and Humanities, 2*(9), 387–401.

Miller, R., & Lammas, N. (2010). Social media and its implications for viral marketing. *Asia Pacific Public Relations Journal, 11*, 1–9.

Odabaşı, K., & Odabaşı, A. K. (2010). *İnternette pazarlama ve sosyal medya stratejileri.* Istanbul: Cinius.

Parthasarathy, M., & Bhattacherjee, A. (1998). Understanding post-adoption behaviour in the context of online services. *Information Systems Research, 9*(4), 362–379.

Piron, F. (1991). Defining impulse purchasing. *Advances in Consumer Research, 18*, 509–514.

Piron, F. (1993). A comparison of emotional reactions experienced by planned, unplanned and impulse purchases. *Advances in Consumer Research, 20*(1), 341–344.

Puranik, R., & Bansal, A. (2014). A study of internet users' perception towards e-shopping. *Pacific Business Review International, 6*(9), 37–44.

Rakesh, S., & Khare, A. J. (2012). Impact of promotions and value consciousness in online shopping behaviour in India. *Journal of Database Marketing & Customer Strategy Management, 19*(4), 311–320.

Richa, D. (2012). Impact of demographic factors of consumers on online shopping behaviour: A study of consumers in India. *International Journal of Engineering and Management Studies, 3*(1), 43–52.

Rook, D. W. (1987). The buying impulse. *Journal of Consumer Research, 14*(2), 189–199.

Sam, Y. C., & Sharma, C. (2015). An exploration into the factors driving consumers in Singapore towards or away from the adoption of online shopping. *Global Business and Management Research: An international Journal, 7*(1), 60–73.

Shahalam, S., Bakar, Z., Ismail, H., & Ahsan, N. (2008). Young consumers shopping online: An empirical study. *Journal of Internet Business, 5*, 81–98.

Stern, H. (1962). The significance of impulse buying today. *The Journal of Psychology*, 149(2), 443.

Thomson, E. S., Laing, A. W., & McKee, L. (2007). Exploring child influence behaviour. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 6, 182–202.

Wood, M. (2005). Discretionary unplanned buying in consumer society. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour,* 4(4), 268–281.