

Vol 3 Issue 8 Feb 2014

ISSN No :2231-5063

International Multidisciplinary Research Journal

Golden Research Thoughts

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RNI MAHMUL/2011/38595

ISSN No.2231-5063

Golden Research Thoughts Journal is a multidisciplinary research journal, published monthly in English, Hindi & Marathi Language. All research papers submitted to the journal will be double - blind peer reviewed referred by members of the editorial board. Readers will include investigator in universities, research institutes government and industry with research interest in the general subjects.

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THE ADVENT OF E-COMMERCE, NEW MEDIA AND SOCIAL CHANGE

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Abstract:-The paper studies the emergence of e-commerce and its growing popularity. The internet has provided a public sphere to the e-generation that provides them a virtual space to interact and diffuse information and make their opinion/ decision related to the issue. The growing divide and inequality in the society due to poverty and source of income has resulted in depriving some group of the society from availing information, communication technologies.

Keywords:E-Commerce , New Media and Social Change , communication technologies.

INTRODUCTION:

The convergence of internet, mobile, television, radio and even newspaper has provided us a new platform that can easily mix and become a part of our lifestyle. This platform has the advantage of crossing one media territory and creating a new platform along with another media tool. The smart phones with broadband facility have become a popular and convenient method of using social media and other application using internet. This form of convergent and interactive media is generally termed as New Media.

NEW MEDIA AND E-COMMERCE

E-Commerce is understood mainly by doing business over the internet. It is not only about buying and selling but also serving customers and collaborating with business partners. Social media has attracted a large number of people to use internet through various media tools. But the notion e-commerce is no longer purely attached with internet rather the terms like m-commerce (mobile commerce) and t-commerce (television commerce) are also acquiring significant position in the whole scenario.

Mobile phone has proved out to be the most successful technology to reach the hands of common man even to the remotest section of the society. Now with the advent of smart phones and broadband there are chances of more and more people accessing internet. The problem of the first level of digital divide i.e. access divide can be abridged by the affordability due its low price and growing popularity of smart phones. The accessibility of facebook through smart phones Whatsapp and e-chat are the primary activities popular on the internet. This can result into the second level of digital divide, i.e. usage divide. When there is a difference between the usage patterns of the internet, it generates a divide among the primary level (e-mails, chats and social media) and secondary level (e-commerce, access journals etc) users, it is denoted as usage divide.

E-Commerce has an advantage of “shopping from the comfort of one's home and having a wide product assortment to choose from has brought about increased reliance on the online medium”. The use of set top box and interactive television systems has enabled even audience who are not comfortable with internet to join the t-commerce. The housewives are mostly utilizing this option to shop and become a part of digital commerce system.

NEW MEDIA, E-COMMERCE AND PUBLIC SPHERE

The growing simplicity in technology, its low cost and accessibility has made the new media popular among the netizens. The growing popularity of new media has made it a new public sphere for e-commerce. The public sphere is understood as a constellation of communicative spaces in society that permit the circulation of information, ideas, debates—ideally in an unfettered manner—and also the formation of political will, that is, public opinion. The reason behind

the growth of e-commerce through the new media is also due to much demanded concept of public sphere by the customers. The new and interactive medium provides us with opportunity to make a community and discuss on a product on the social media or on its websites. For a customer commerce and shopping is not restricted to products, competition in the market, its value and availability. Rather new media provides a platform for customers to discuss, analyse, compare, provide feedback and make an opinion about the product before buying it. This form of platform is also popular as “Virtual Space”.

GROWTH OF E-COMMERCE

The popularity of e-commerce has increased with the growing number of internet connection in the country. The broadband connection has crossed over 121 million subscribers in the country. The growth of e-commerce can be broadly divided into two phases: the first phase is the time of growth of online matrimonial and recruitment sites. The first wave of e-commerce started in India with the introduction of internet in India in 1995. The economic liberalization reforms of 1991 attracted a lot of MNCs and led to the growth of the IT industry in the country. The first form of e-commerce started with B2B directory in 1996. It enabled buyers and sellers to easily connect with their counterparts. The second popular form of e-commerce was launched in 1996 through online matrimonial websites. It appealed to the Indian culture and tradition that consider the issue of matrimonial as life time decision. So the idea was well received by the internet users. The third commerce industry that flourished was the online recruitment services. Indian population has a large number of educated unemployed sections that whole heartedly welcomed this service.

The second wave of e-commerce emerged with the growing popularity and reliance on the internet. The online travel planning became a sought after activity in the e-commerce sector. Ticket booking and vacation planning became the major activity. The second e-commerce activity that gained popularity is the online retail. The growth of online retail was mainly due to changing urban consumer lifestyle and the need for convenience of shopping at home.

IMPACT ON SOCIETY

E-Commerce has become very popular with the internet generation. The middle class families find shopping through internet very convenient and profitable as they get a large variety of products with various offers and schemes. Customers get a plenty of brands to choose and get a option to escape the heat and dust of traditional market shopping. The new way of shopping has resulted to a fundamental shift in the way goods, services, and ideas are created, produced and distributed. The biggest hurdle for the e-commerce was to earn trust of the consumers to encourage them to be comfortable with online transactions. Many e-businesses also promoted cash on delivery system and even return the parcel system if product found was not up to the mark. Gaining the trust of the younger generation may not be such an issue as for those brand names are very important. Offers on popular brand names make the e-commerce more enticing for the internet generation. But ILO World Employment Report 2001 observes that given its different speed of diffusion in wealthy and poor countries, the ICT revolution is resulting in a widening global “digital divide”. The report observes that despite phenomenal growth in ICT in the industrialized world and its increasing penetration into developing countries a large part of the globe remain 'technologically disconnected' from the benefits of electronic marvels revolutionizing life, work and communications in the digital era.

CONCLUSION:

Internet and e-commerce together leads to continued increase in the educational attainment of the work force, shift of employment to service sectors, and increased employment opportunities for women, formation of online trade unions. But, impact of Internet and e-commerce on the labor market is undeniable. It is expected that implications of these technologies will open new opportunities for the labour market and give a new shape to the future labour market. The small shops in neighbouring localities have tremendous effect on their sales due to the popularity of e-commerce. Market has always been a place where the customer is given freedom to choose but now customers also have option of choosing even the type of market where they wish to shop. E-market has gained new trust and momentum and is expected to revolutionise the shopping and business experience in the near future.

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