

Antecedents of online shopping behavior and their effect on consumer satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the antecedents of online shopping behavior and their effects on consumer satisfaction. The effects of convenience, variety seeking, social influence, advertising, trust, and products on online shopping behavior and their effects on consumer satisfaction. A quantitative research design was used to collect the data through a questionnaire based on a sample of 312 respondents from rural residences in Kosovo. Data were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM). The results showed that five out of the seven hypotheses were accepted and supported. The results showed that there is a relationship between convenience, variety seeking, and product with online shopping behavior, and online shopping behavior has a relationship with consumer satisfaction. The main conclusion is that rural consumers are satisfied with online shopping.

Keywords:

Convenience, variety seeking, product, online shopping behavior, consumer satisfaction

Introduction

Online shopping is defined as the process of purchasing products and services over the internet (Jusoh & Ling, 2012). Online shopping, also known as electronic commerce (e-commerce) is one of the advanced products of the technological changes that have changed the way of doing business and the way of exchanging business transactions (Smith, 2019). Online shopping has been increasing worldwide. A significant increase is seen also in Kosovo with the highest percentage of internet users in Europe 93% of the population (Eurostat, 2019). Online shopping has emerged as one of the most popular Internet applications. Online shopping has proven to offer more satisfaction to modern consumers who seek speed and convenience (Yu & Wu, 2007).

Nowadays the best way to purchase a product or service is through online shopping. Based on the importance of online shopping has increased the interest of the researcher to investigate what factors affect online shopping behavior and their relationship with consumer satisfaction. Researchers in the past attempted to explain the antecedents of online shopping and stated that demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education, income, and variety of products (Beqaj et al., 2019) play a significant role in purchase decisions and also in consumer satisfaction. Most of the studies that are conducted in emerging economies like Kosovo have investigated the factors that affect online shopping and what affects their satisfaction, but no one has studied how much our consumers who live in rural areas are inclined to buy online (Ismajli et al., 2022; Jashari & Rrustemi, 2017).

Therefore the purpose of this research is to assess the online shopping behavior of the rural consumer, to see how rural consumers engage in online shopping, Since rural customers stay in villages and are not familiar with online shopping, what percentage of rural consumers engage in online transactions and how they feel about online shopping. Consumer satisfaction and demographic factors affecting shopping behavior have been studied a lot (Beqaj et al., 2019; Davis, et al., 2021; Uzun & Poturak, 2014). Therefore, this study tries to investigate convenience, variety seeking, social influence, advertising, product, and trust as antecedents of online shopping behavior and their effect on consumer satisfaction.

Literature Review

The way of exchanging goods and services between parties has existed in different forms for centuries and has also evolved to meet the needs of individuals and technological advancements. Online shopping is one of the advanced products of the technological changes that have changed the way of doing business and the way of exchanging business transactions (Smith, 2019). Online shopping is a process whereby consumers directly buy goods and services from a seller without an intermediary service over the internet (Sunitha & Gnanadhas, 2014).

The intentions of consumers to buy online depend on the quality of the products, the security of websites, and the web environment offered (Chen & Dibb, 2010). Intentions to do online shopping affect user behavior and lack of intention limit consumers to go online shopping. Before making purchase decisions a consumer evaluates online products by getting information from his reference group. This means the more people suggest e-buying to each other, the more this buying method will be popular among people. This makes necessary the use of word-of-mouth marketing for retailers (Javadi, et al., 2012). The researcher suggested that consumers' purchase decisions are explained by their attitudes and consumer attitudes are affected by intention. When this intention is applied to online shopping behavior, the research can examine the outcome of the purchase transaction (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1977)

Convenience

Online shopping convenience has become one of the primary impetus underlying consumer tendency to adopt online purchasing ((Law, et al., 2016; Xiang et al., 2016). The willingness of customers to buy online can be affected by convenience (Katawetawaraks & Wang, 2011). Researchers have found many reasons why convenience is positively related to online shopping behavior (Dang, et al., 2018) found convenience as one of the main concerns in the online shopping culture of the participants because convenience is the most decisive factor that has influenced consumers' online shopping. Another reason why convenience is indirectly related to online shopping behavior is because of the ability of the consumer to compare different online stores, the easy and convenient online payment system, and the ability to place an order at any time that is convenient for them (Wei, Lee & Shen, 2018). Another study conducted in India revealed that convenience is positively and significantly associated with user behavior and indirectly impacts consumer satisfaction (Davis, et al., 2021; Uzun & Poturak, 2014). Based on the above the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Convenience is significantly related to online shopping behavior.

Variety seeking

Often consumers find themselves in a variety seeking buying different products from their day-to-day routine. When consumers are faced with low involvement in particular product, but there are noticeable differences between brands, this is known as variety (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012). In this case, the consumer does a lot of brand switching, simply for the sake of variety rather than because of dissatisfaction.

When it comes to product categories like this, the marketing approach for the leading brand and smaller ones can vary. The dominant brand will aim to promote repeated buying by taking up most of the shelf space, keeping their products fully stocked, and frequently running reminder ads. On the other hand, smaller firms will try to stimulate customers to try something different by presenting lower prices, exclusive deals, coupons, free samples, and advertising that highlights reasons for exploring new options (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012). Davis, et al. (2021) revealed that variety seeking has a high influence on consumer online shopping behavior. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Variety seeking is significantly related to online shopping behavior.

Social influence

Social influence is prominent in the online shopping process. Social shopping refers to shopping behaviors, orientations, or motives in an online shopping platform or social commerce (Wang & Zhang, 2012). Venkatesan (1966) believes that the influence or change of shopping attitudes and behaviors during consumer shopping is mainly from other people or groups in their social networks. Reference groups, social class, and sub-culture play a vital role in influencing consumers' buying decisions (Ajzen, 1991).

Social influence impacts an individual's buying process by using social media networks to share, recommend, suggest and comment on products or services. Some researchers assessed that social influence doesn't have any significant relationship with online shopping behavior (Prawira & Sihombing, 2020; Sonwaney & Chincholkar, 2019). But, some researchers stated the opposite that social influence has a significant relationship with online shopping behavior (Davis, et al., 2021; Liu, et al., 2019). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Social influence is significantly related to online shopping behavior.

Advertising

Advertising is defined as brand-initiated communication intent on impacting people, always associated with the brand, and a brand can be an authentic brand, an individual, or a cause (Dahlen & Rosengren, 2016). Advertising can influence consumers to buy a product or patronize services they have never tasted (Dahlen & Rosengren, 2016; Belk, 2017). Advertising influences lifestyle and buying behavior. Thus, for businesses to be well known, they have to invest in advertising. Researchers conducted empirical studies on the effect of advertising on online shopping behavior (Udegbe, 2017; Kim, 2018). The results of the studies revealed that advertising content plays a significant role in influencing online shopping behavior. This evidence was further affirmed by researchers, (Nasaidi & Hassan, 2021; Davis, et al., 2021). Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Advertising is significantly related to online shopping behavior.

Trust

Trust is another important issue in consumers' online shopping behavior (Gommans et al., 2001). Trust is connected with security. A Consumer cannot see a product in person while he is ordering it, and cannot look into salespersons' eyes while doing that, so companies need to build trust among their consumers to avoid uncertainties. Trust is a necessity when it comes to online shopping (McCole & Palmer, 2001). Due to the risky nature of online shopping, trust and risk play significant roles in effecting online transactions it has a great contribution to the success of online shopping (Pavlou, 2003). Online trust is based on the perception of the risks or benefits of the online transaction (Teo & Liu, 2007). The greater the trust, the more likely that consumers engage in online shopping and the shopping will be repeated. Other studies affirmed that trust has a significant relationship with online shopping behavior (Davis, et al., 2021; Ayodele & Olise, 2021; Uzun & Poturak, 2014). Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Trust is significantly related to online shopping behavior.

Product

Product features play a crucial role in consumer decision purchase. Much evidence points to the crucial role of the product feature in online shopping behavior (Chitturi, 2007; Chernev, 2004). They argue that when consumers buy online, functional characteristics of the products help achieve prevention goals, which emphasize safety and prevention of negative outcomes. The more the product has a higher value and reduced buying frequency the more information is needed to investigate the reasons. As stated by Davis et al. (2021); Uzun & Poturak (2014) product characteristics are significantly related to online shopping behavior, because of the trust in the product that they have purchased before and they were satisfied with the product they received after buying online. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H6: Product is significantly related to online shopping behavior

While, convenience, variety seeking, social influence advertising, trust, and product features are positively related to online shopping behavior, Davis, et al. (2021) revealed that online shopping behavior is significantly associated with consumer satisfaction. The more consumer is satisfied with buying online, he will continue to buy online in the future. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H7: Online shopping behavior is significantly related to consumer satisfaction.

Based on the above literature review a research model is put forward online shopping behavior and consumer satisfaction as dependent variables and convenience, variety seeking, social influence, advertising, trust and, product as independent variables. The relationship between these variables is depicted in figure 1.

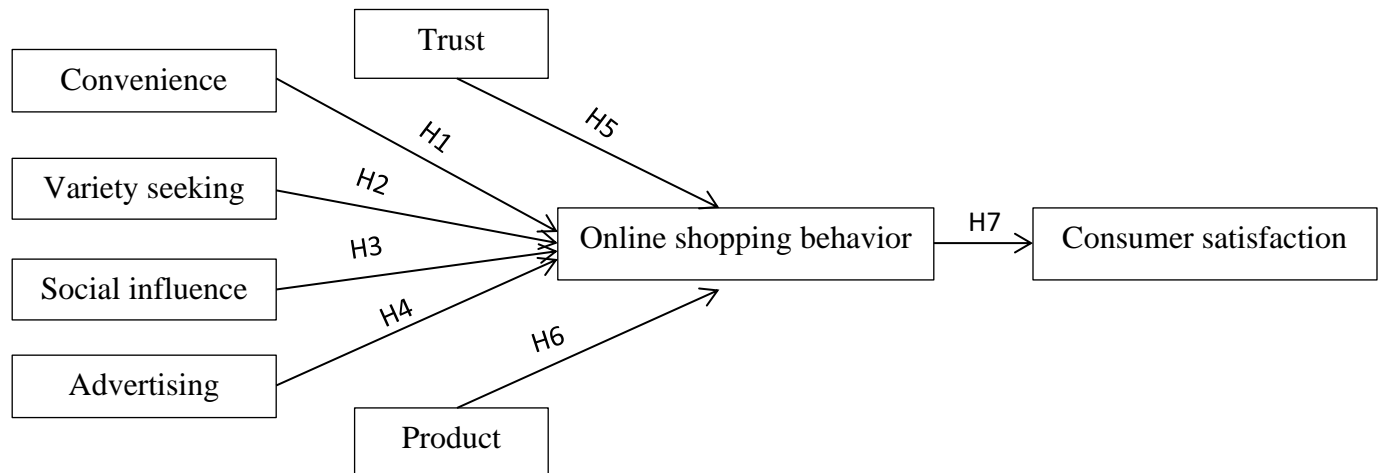


Figure 1. The Research model

Research Methodology

Research instrument and data collection

This study utilized a quantitative research design to assess antecedents of online shopping behavior and their effect on consumer satisfaction. It was conducted in Kosovo and all the respondents live in a rural residence. To develop a research instrument were used eight dimensions each containing their items. Six of them were independent variables and each of them was measured using their items.

Thus, convenience (C) was comprised of 3 items, variety seeking (VS) of 3 items, social influence (SI) of 5 items, advertising (A) of 3 items, trust (T) of 3 items, and product (P) of 3 items. And, dependent variables: online shopping behavior (OSB) of 4 items and, consumer satisfaction (CS) of 5 items. All research indicators are engendered from a previous study by Davis et al. (2021). The questionnaire conducted in this way was distributed to the respondent that lives in a rural residence in Kosovo. Data were obtained through an online survey. An online survey has several benefits. It is less costly, has no geographical limits, is convenience for both respondents and researcher, and has anonymity security. Data were collected from 312 samples from June to November 2022.

A questionnaire survey was used to collect respondents' responses, the survey items were developed and adopted from a previous study by Davis et al. (2021). The questionnaire was translated from English to Albanian for better comprehension of respondents. A five-point Likert scale ("1" representing "strongly disagree"; and "5" representing "strongly agree") is commonly used since it is one of the most basic psychometric tools and is often used in educational and social science research (Joshi et al., 2015), as shown in Table 1.

Table 1.Research instrument

Construct	Code	Item
Convenience (C)	C1	Placing orders from anywhere
	C2	I shop mostly through online since its available round the clock
	C3	Low and reliable shipping
Variety seeking (VS)	VS1	I browse online shopping stores to window shop at your leisure
	VS2	I prefer online stores than offline stores due to broad availability of product ranges
Social Influence (SI)	VS3	I browse online shopping stores to know what is in trend
	SI1	Do you share your purchase online
	SI2	Do you purchase when a product is being shared by your friend/relative/colleague
	SI3	Do you shop based on social media feeds or posts (Instagram, WhatsApp status, Facebook posts, Twitter)
	SI4	I use online forums and online communities for acquiring information about a product
	SI5	If I am offered a reward for sharing my purchase, I would share them in social media
Advertising (A)	A1	Advertisements provide complete information on a product
	A2	Personalized or targeted advertisements act as a motivator to purchase a product
	A3	Banner ads are distracting but provide useful information regarding products and offers
Trust	T1	There is no difference between the product quality regardless of being purchased online or offline
	T2	Product information given by the provider is verified and not biased
	T3	Online provider ensures that customer reviews and ratings are not biased
Product	P1	Product belonging to a brand is an obvious to perform well
	P2	Customer reviews and ratings for products in the digital world(social media, shopping sites, forums)
	P3	Getting to know about products performance through experts(expert blogs, videos from experts)
Online shopping behavior (OSB)	OSB1	When I go online shopping, I buy things that I intended to purchase
	OSB2	I am not a person who makes unplanned purchase
	OSB3	I avoid buying things that are not on my shopping list
	OSB4	I often buy things that I need
Consumer satisfaction (CS)	CS1	I am satisfied with buying products online
	CS2	I am satisfied with the price, I pay for the goods that I buy online
	CS3	I am satisfied with the online store for providing better service after purchase
	CS4	I am satisfied with the customer care while and after buying online
	CS5	I am satisfied with delivery of product after buying online

Source: Modified from Davis et al. (2021)

The questionnaire was constructed in two parts. The first part of the questionnaire represents the demographic characteristics of respondents. The second part has eight indicators as shown in Table 1 to measure independent and dependent variables. Through online survey participants have stated how much they purchase online and what factors influence their decision to purchase online and from that how satisfied are they with online shopping.

Table 2. Respondents Demographic characteristics

Gender	Frequency	%
Female	164	52.6
Male	148	47.4
Age		
<18	12	3.8
18-25	75	24.0
25-35	87	27.9
35-45	63	20.2
45-55	41	13.1
55-65	28	9.0
>65	6	1.9
Marital status		
Single	104	33.3
Married	205	65.7
Divorced	1	0.3
Widow	2	0.6
Employment		
Student	46	14.7
Unemployed	87	27.9
Self employed	38	12.2
Employed	141	45.2
Education		
Elementary	87	27.9
High school	82	26.3
Bachelor	93	29.8
Master	26	8.3
PhD	6	1.9
Other	18	5.8

Table 2 shows that most of the respondents belong to females 52.6% and males with 47.4%. Most of the respondents are from the group aged 25-35 years at 27.9%, followed by the group aged 18-25 years with 24.0%, group 35-45 years with 20.2%, 45-55 years with 13.1%, 9.0% group age from 55-65 years, and less of the respondents belong to the group age over 65 years with 1.9%, and under 18 years with 3.8%.

Concerning respondents' marital status 65.7% are married, 33.3% are single and a few of them 0.9% are divorced and widowed. Concerning respondents' employment status, most of them are employed from 45.2%, 12.2% are self-employed, 27.9% are unemployed, and less of them are students from 14.7%. Regarding respondents' education, 27.9% have elementary education, 26.3% have a high school, 29.8% have a bachelor's degree, 8.3% master's degree, 1.9% have PhD, and 5.8% have other education.

Findings and Discussion

Data were analyzed using Smart PLS 4 and SPSS 25 software. SEM technique has been used to assess the measurement model and to estimate the structural model. To analyze gathered data have been used two-step approach, as recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988).

The first step involves the assessment of the reliability and validity of the measurement model, while the second step tests the structural relationships between the latent constructs. Reliability and validity of the construct have been conducted using Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability. The threshold of Cronbach's alpha should be equal to 0.7 or above to be considered acceptable (Hair et al., 2017). The evaluation of the measurement model is performed to show how the variables combine to represent the theory based on convergent and discriminant validity.

Convergent validity

Convergent validity refers to how closely the new scale is related to other variables and other measures of the same construct. Table 3 shows that Cronbach's alpha values range from 0.702 to 0.871. The composite reliability value range from 0.827 to 0.921, and results confirmed that all reliability values exceed the cut-off point level of 0.70. Results confirmed that all reliability values exceed the cut-off point level of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2017). The values of AVE should be 0.5 or above to be considered good because if the value is below 0.5, it means that there is an error (Hair et al., 2017), that based on the survey results average variance extracted values range from 0.589 to 0.796, that is over the recommended value.

Table 3. Convergent validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite reliability	AVE
Convenience	0.704	0.724	0.834	0.627
Variety seeking	0.871	0.890	0.921	0.796
Social influence	0.828	0.835	0.877	0.589
Advertising	0.764	0.772	0.864	0.679
Trust	0.796	0.926	0.874	0.704
Product	0.702	0.744	0.827	0.615
Online shopping behavior	0.860	0.956	0.907	0.722
Consumer satisfaction	0.842	0.864	0.886	0.610

Discriminant validity

Discriminant validity tests whether concepts or measurements that are not supposed to be related are actually unrelated. Discriminant validity was assessed with the Heterotrait- monotrait ratio of correlations criterion (HTMT) proposed by Henseler et al. (2015). As shown in Table 4 the highest value obtained was 0.742, which is lower than the threshold of 0.85 (HTMT0.85) (Kline, 2011) and 0.90 (HTMT0.90) (Gold et al., 2001), indicating that there is no concern about discriminant validity.

Table 4. Discriminant validity

	C	VS	SI	A	T	P	OSB	CS
Convenience								
Variety seeking	0.587							
Social influence	0.350	0.742						
Advertising	0.294	0.357	0.385					
Trust	0.403	0.290	0.200	0.518				
Product	0.578	0.633	0.608	0.516	0.330			
Online shopping behavior	0.223	0.547	0.480	0.299	0.215	0.434		
Consumer satisfaction	0.722	0.610	0.458	0.463	0.465	0.494	0.306	

Assessment of structural model

This study has used the Smart PLS structural equation modeling (SEM) for assessing the proposed model. In figure 2 are shown the results of the SEM path analysis. The path measurement shows that convenience contributes with 0.121, variety seeking with -0.370, social influence with -0.167, advertising with -0.032, and product with -0.149 to online shopping behavior. Whereas online shopping behavior to consumer satisfaction R^2 is -0.278. The model shows that online shopping behavior variance is explained by 32%, whereas consumer satisfaction with 7.7%.

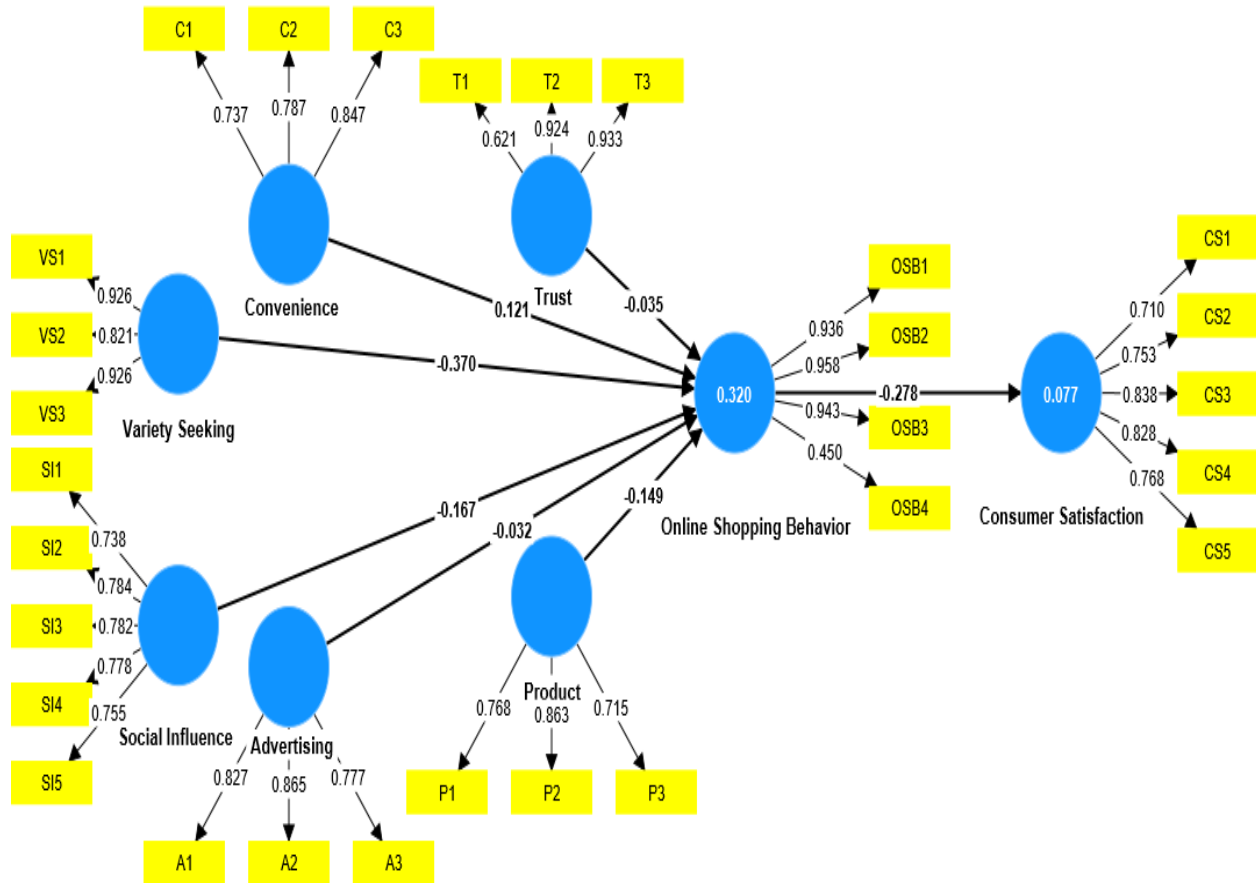


Figure 2. Structural Equation Modeling

The factor loading for all items in the construct is shown in table 5. The table shows that all items are 0.450 to 0.958. The outer loadings value should be higher than 0.70 and it should be considered for deletion if the removal of the indicator with outer loadings is between 0.40 and 0.70 if it contributes to an increase in composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE) (Hair et al., 2017). The collinearity test is used to test whether the method is biased. According to Becker et al. (2015), the VIF value should be lower than 5 to consider significant, but the ideal value of VIF should be close to 3 or lower (Hair et al., 2017). Based on that threshold all the VIFs' from the collinearity test are equal to or lower than 5, and the model can be considered free of common method bias.

Table 5. Construct items loadings

Construct	Loadings	Mean	SDEV	VIF
Convenience (C)				
C1	0.737	4.64	0.730	1.325
C2	0.787	4.22	1.102	1.372
C3	0.847	4.21	1.050	1.446
Variety seeking (VS)				
VS1	0.926	3.76	1.427	3.190
VS2	0.821	3.75	1.196	1.777
VS3	0.926	3.83	1.447	3.335
Social Influence (SI)				
SI1	0.738	2.42	1.507	1.627
SI2	0.784	3.56	1.233	1.802
SI3	0.782	3.89	1.299	1.957
SI4	0.778	3.51	1.140	2.482
SI5	0.755	3.80	1.257	1.969
Advertising (A)				
A1	0.827	3.62	1.120	1.517
A2	0.865	3.54	0.878	1.975
A3	0.777	3.29	0.958	1.539
Trust				
T1	0.621	3.43	1.146	1.331
T2	0.924	3.40	1.083	2.620
T3	0.933	3.29	1.072	2.466
Product				
P1	0.768	4.01	1.064	1.224
P2	0.863	4.14	0.924	1.562
P3	0.715	4.18	0.794	1.525
Online shopping behavior (OSB)				
OSB1	0.936	3.41	1.443	3.262
OSB2	0.958	3.47	1.474	3.257
OSB3	0.943	3.58	1.457	3.134
OSB4	0.450	3.69	1.326	1.180
Consumer satisfaction (CS)				
CS1	0.710	4.09	0.864	1.662
CS2	0.753	3.81	1.013	1.526
CS3	0.838	4.13	0.909	2.102
CS4	0.828	4.13	0.948	2.715
CS5	0.768	4.36	0.840	2.299

Testing hypotheses

A multiple regression analysis with the SEM model has been used to investigate the relationship between antecedents with online shopping behavior and their effect on consumer satisfaction. Where antecedents of online shopping behavior were convenience, variety seeking, social influence, advertising, trust and, product, with SEM model, investigate their relationship with online shopping behavior, and the relationship of online shopping behavior with consumer satisfaction.

Table 5 shows that convenience has a positive significant relationship with online shopping behavior, variety seeking has a negative significant relationship with online shopping behavior also social influence has a negative significant relationship with online shopping behavior. Advertising and trust show that they don't have any significant relationship with online shopping behavior. But product features have a negative significant relationship with online shopping behavior. That shows that online shopping behavior has a negative significant relationship with consumer satisfaction. Based on that result from we can state that the online shopping behavior of rural consumers is affected

by convenience, but variety seeking social influence and, product negatively affect their online shopping behavior and their satisfaction isn't depended on their buying behavior. Therefore, based on these results, H4 and H5 are rejected, and H1, H2, H3, H6 and H7 are supported.

Table 6. Hypotheses testing

		Path Coefficient	STDEV	T values	P values	Results
H1	Convenience -> Online shopping behavior	0.121	0.053	2.289	0.022	Supported
H2	Variety seeking -> Online shopping behavior	-0.370	0.065	5.738	0.000	Supported
H3	Social influence -> Online shopping behavior	-0.167	0.066	2.553	0.011	Supported
H4	Advertising -> Online shopping behavior	-0.032	0.056	0.568	0.570	Rejected
H5	Trust -> Online shopping behavior	-0.035	0.049	0.704	0.481	Rejected
H6	Product -> Online shopping behavior	-0.149	0.058	2.584	0.010	Supported
H7	Online shopping behavior -> Consumer satisfaction	-0.278	0.056	4.992	0.000	Supported

Discussion

The purpose of this research is to assess the online shopping behavior of the rural consumer, to see how rural consumers engage in online shopping, since rural customers stay in villages and are not familiar with online shopping, what percentage of rural consumers engage in online transactions and how they feel about online shopping. Consumer satisfaction and demographic factors affecting shopping behavior have been studied a lot.

Therefore, this study has tried to investigate convenience, variety seeking, social influence, advertising, product and, trust as antecedents of online shopping behavior and their effect on consumer satisfaction.

The empirical results in this study show that rural consumers of Kosovo are used to do online purchases based on some factors. Factors that affect online shopping behavior in this consumer category are convenience, which supports other previous studies (Dang, et al., 2018; Davis, et al., 2021; Uzun & Poturak, 2014); variety seeking, which supports other previous studies (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012; Davis, et al., 2021) chance to try something different from their routine, and negatively affect online shopping behavior. Other factors affecting online shopping behavior in this study are social influence and products that support previous studies (Chitturi, 2007; Chernev, 2004; Davis, et al., 2021; Uzun & Poturak, 2014; Liu, et al., 2019). Finally, the study has also investigated the relationship between online shopping behavior and consumer satisfaction that support the previous studies (Davis, et al., 2021; Uzun & Poturak, 2014). So, study supports only five hypotheses and rejects two of them.

Conclusions

Online shopping has emerged as one of the most popular Internet applications. Online shopping has been shown to provide more satisfaction to modern consumers seeking convenience and speed. Nowadays the best way to purchase a product or service is through online shopping. Buying online now is routine and factors that affect rural consumers to buy online are convenience, variety seeking social influence and, product features, and these factors through online shopping behavior influence consumer satisfaction. Based on that we can state that they are familiar with online shopping they are satisfied with online shopping.

The paper provides some evidence to companies and business owners that rural consumers are increasingly buying online, allowing businesses and decision-makers to design the right online marketing strategies.

The study also contributes to digital marketing literature by providing scientific evidence for the behavior of rural consumers during online shopping. So far, no study has been found from an emerging country like Kosovo studying rural consumers' satisfaction with online shopping (Ismajli et al., 2022; Jashari & Rrustemi, 2017).

As any study in social science has their limitation, also this study has some limitations, one of that is common method bias. Also, another limitation might be a focus group for collection and analyzing only on the rural residents. Future research with the young population or in urban residences will give a more comprehensive conclusion for online consumer shopping behavior. Also, future research can focus on other indicators and can also trust and products be concluded as moderator factors in online shopping behavior.

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