

# Factors Influencing Guinea Consumers to Shop Online

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**Abstract:** In the era of globalization electronic marketing is a great revolution. Over the last decade maximum business organizations are running with technological change. Online shopping or marketing is the use of technology (i.e., computer) for better marketing performance. And retailers are devising strategies to meet the demand of online shoppers. Therefore we have also decided to study consumer's attitudes towards online shopping and specifically studying the factors influencing consumers to shop online.

The population selected for the research is Guinea, and narrowed down to Kofi Anan University students, University cafeteria and Guinea Public library, the sample size selected for this research is 100 and i have used convenience sampling technique.

The findings indicated that among the four factors selected for this research the most attractive and influencing factor for online shoppers in Guinea is Website Design/Features, following convenience the second most influencing and thirdly time saving. Results have also showed that security is of important concern among online shoppers in Guinea. The research has also found that there are some other factors which influence online shoppers including, less price, discount, feedback from previous customers and quality of product. For the second research question i.e. who are online shoppers in term of demography: the correlation results for the age and attitudes towards online shopping has showed that elderly people are not so keen to shop online. Whereas for education it is concluded that higher education makes online shopping less attractive, for the income the correlation results are so weak hence we could not conclude anything out of it. It is expected that this study will not only help retailers in Guinea to devise successful strategies for online shoppers but it will also provide a base for similar studies in the field of consumer attitudes towards online shopping.

It is hoped that this study will be able to stimulate future research interests in the area of E-commerce. It is recommended to include detailed website design to be evaluated by consumers in future. In order to reap the maximum benefits of future research, the website must have been improvised to include all the necessary features that have been discussed or even more. The potential participants can be invited to take part in the survey through the actual website so that they can evaluate and visualize the features, benefits, ease of use, security, trustworthiness and etc. with less bias but with more true perception and feedback. It also serves as an evaluation of the marketing strategy through the survey.

**Keywords:** factors influencing online shoppers.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Generally speaking the trend of e-commerce has been increased rapidly in the recent years with the development of internet and due to the easy accessibility of internet usage. Easy access to internet has driven consumers to shop online in fact according to the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) communication policy (2001), online shopping is third most popular activity on the internet after email using and web browsing. Globally more than 627 million people have done online shopping so far, World's biggest online shoppers include Germans and British. Books, airline tickets/reservations, clothing/shoes videos/games and other electronic products are the most popular items purchased on the internet. (ACNielsen Report on Global Consumer Attitudes towards Online Shopping, 2007).

On the other hand E-commerce has been grown very fast because of many advantages associated with buying on internet because of lower transaction and search cost as compared to other types of shopping. Through online shopping consumers can buy faster, more alternatives and can order product and services with comparative lowest price. Therefore Marketers have carefully analysed factors influencing costumers to shop online and spend billions of dollars to facilitate all the demographics of online shoppers.

Consumers shopping online refers to their psychological state in terms of making purchases over the Internet. Online buying behaviour process refers to the products purchased online. The process of online buying behaviour consists of five steps and it is similar to traditional shopping behaviour . For instance, consumer recognize the need for buying some product (book), they refers to the internet to buy online and start to search for the information and look for all the alternatives and finally make a purchase which best fits to their needs. Before making final purchase consumers are bombarded by several factors which limits or influence consumers for the final decision.

The problem area is factors that influence consumers to shop online and those factors will help marketers to formulate their strategies towards online marketing respectively. As the area of research will be on Guinea and specifically on Conakry so my research thesis will not only be helpful for the marketers in general but specifically will be helpful for the marketers in

Guinea. Researchers will precede this work with primary data which will help them in covering the subject area in more diversified way.

## 2. PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

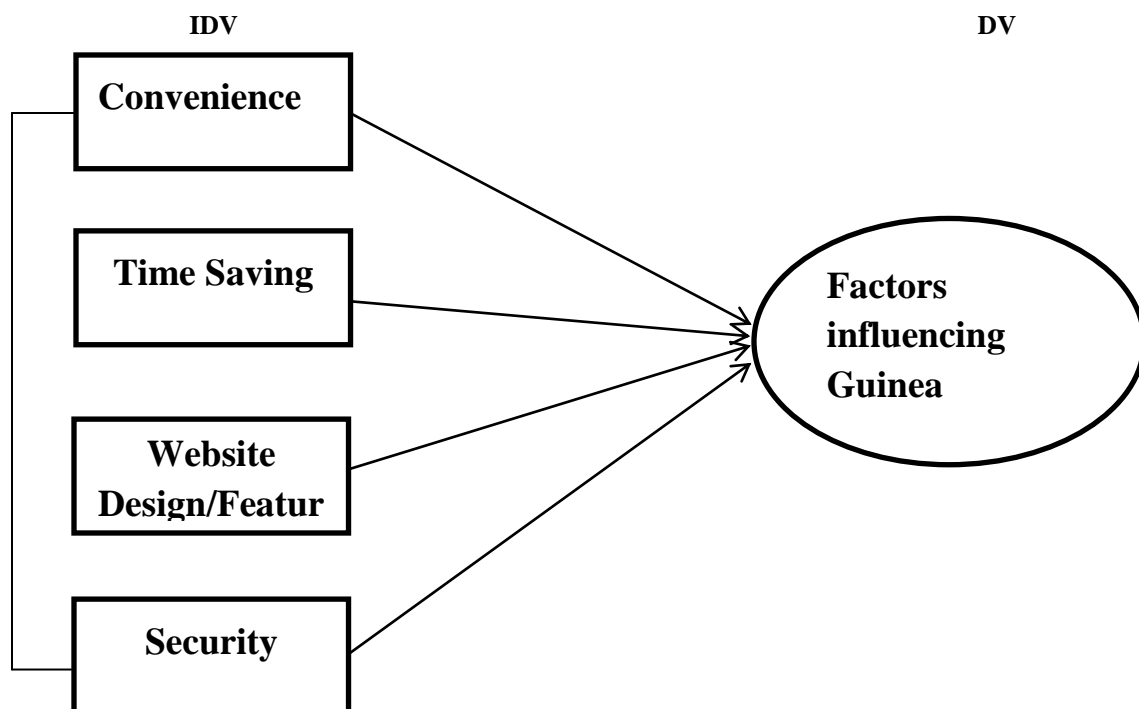
The prime purpose of the research is to identify and analyse the factors influencing Guinea consumers to shop online. Besides the factors influencing another purpose of the study is to analyse who are online shoppers in terms of demography. The findings of this research will not only help Guinea marketers to formulate their marketing strategies for online shoppers but will also increase the knowledge and research in field of online shopping.

- i) What factors influence consumers to shop online?
- ii) Who are online shoppers in terms of demography?

One of my research objectives is to work on factors that influence consumers to shop online, i have decided to study four factors such as Convenience, Time Saving, Website Design/Features and Security. While it is important to investigate the motivation behind consumer purchasing but it is equally important to find how the consumers form attitudes and behaviours towards online buying because consumer attitude towards purchasing online is a conspicuous factor affecting actual buying behaviour. When marketers get to know the factors affecting online Guinea buyer's behaviour then it create huge opportunity for the marketers to develop the marketing strategies accordingly and turn the potential customers into actual one and retain the exiting buyers. However, consumers' willingness to purchase online could be affected by one's individual needs and these needs can be "Need for Cognition" and "Need to Evaluate." All the needs are strongly affected by different Situational factors i.e. can be cognitive involvement (indicates one's personal relevance with the Internet as a medium of shopping. More cognitively involved persons usually believe that the Internet can also raise their shopping efficiency) and affective involvement (affective involvement include affective factors, such as hedonic and symbolic expectations, can also influence the personal relevance of a shopping medium.) (Zaichkowsky, 1994).

## 3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The research model shown below is constructed by the writers on the basis of number of researches done in the area of consumer attitudes towards online shopping specifically and broadly on online shopping behaviour. The diagram shown below depicts the factors influencing consumer to shop online.



## 4. RELATED LITERATURE

Though there are several factors that influence consumers to shop online, but as mentioned above researchers have selected four factors after reading literature in the field on consumer attitudes towards online shopping and these factors are discussed below in the light of previous literature.

### *Convenience*

Convenience factor refers that it is easy to browse or search the information through online is easier than the traditional retail shopping. Through online, consumers can easily search product catalogue but if the consumer look generally for the same product or item in a traditional store manually it is difficult to visit physically and time consuming also. Convenience has always been a prime factor for consumers to shop online. Darian (1987) mention that online shoppers carry multiple benefits in terms of convenience, such as less time consuming, flexibility, very less physical effort etc. According to the Robinson, Riley, Rettie and Wilsonz (2007) the major motivation for online purchasing is convince in terms of shop at any time and having bundles of items delivered at door step.

### *Time saving*

Time savings is one of most influencing factors of online shopping. Browse or search an online catalogue can save time and patience. People can save time and can reduce effort by shopping online. According to Rohm and Swaminathan's (2004), one possible explanation that online shopping saves time during the purchasing of goods and it can eliminate the traveling time required to go to the traditional store. On the other side, some respondent think that it is also time taken for delivery of goods or services over online shopping.

Unexpectedly time saving is not the motivating factor for the consumers to shop online (Corbett, 2001) because it takes time receiving goods or delivery. But time saving factor can be seen through different dimensions i.e. "person living in Florida can shop at Harod's in London (through the web) in less time than it takes to visit the local Burdines department store" (Alba et al. 1997, p. 41, emphasis added). Morganosky and Cude (2000) have concluded that time saving factor was reported to be primary reason among those consumers who have already experienced the online grocery buying. So the importance of the time saving factor cannot be neglected as motivation behind online purchasing.

### *Website Design/Features*

Website design and online shopping activity is one of the vital influencing factors of online shopping. Website design, website reliability/fulfillment, website customer service and website security/privacy are the most attractive features which influence the perception of the consumer of online buying Shergill & Chen (2005). Kamariah and Salwani (2005) claims the higher website quality, the higher consumer intends to shop from internet. Web design quality has important impacts on consumer choice of electronic stores, stated by Liang and Lai (2000). Website design one of the important factor motivating consumers for online shopping. Almost 100,000 on-line shopper's surveyed by (Reibstein, 2000) shows that web site design was rated as important factor for online shopping.

A study conducted by Yasmin and Nik (2010) shows a significant relationship between online shopping activity and website features. Website design features can be considered as a motivational factor that can create positive or negative feelings with a website. However, worse quality website features can also hamper online shopping. According to Liang and Lai (2000), web design quality or website features has direct impact on user to shop online.

### *Security*

Security is another dominant factor which affects consumers to shop online. However many internet users avoid online shopping because of credit card fraud, privacy factors, non delivery risk, post purchase service and so on. But transaction security on the online shopping has received attention. Safe and secured transaction of money and credit card information increases trust and decreases transaction risk. In 1995, UK has introduced Fraud free electronic shopping and later on Europe and Singapore introduced secured electronic transaction (SET). According to Bhatnagar and Ghose (2004) Security is one of the attribute.

which limits buying on the web as they claim that there is a large segment of internet shoppers who don't like to buy online because of their thinking about the security of their sensitive information.

## **5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This Part of the research which gives the overview regarding consumers attitudes towards online shopping, following future prospects in online shopping in Africa countries, problem definition, research purpose and research questions. This part highlights the purpose and overview of the study. Research design helps reader to understand what strategies are used to collect the data.

In the research design it describes the research design and data collection method that is being used by the writers. It includes sampling, sampling design, questionnaire design and last but not least validity and reliability of this research. Theoretical framework gives to a reader a clear picture as to what theories and models used by the researchers to support their study. This part of the research covers the methodology of my research, collection of data, how many correspondents does it need for sampling design, and questionnaire design about all the factors and finally data analysis. Another part will be about input and output of the research which include comparative analysis, correlation analysis of four factors and additional comment or recommendation from respondents if any. Last part is conclusion and recommendation.

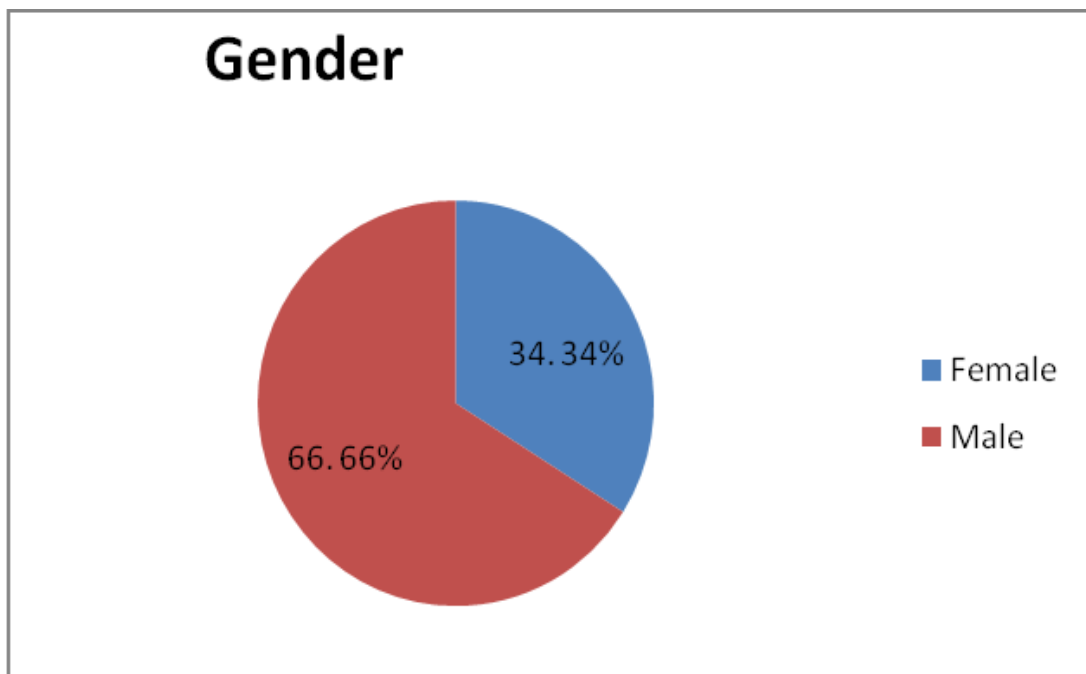
The research regarding Consumer's attitude towards online shopping is a descriptive research because it just want to draw a picture of my topic as what are the factors that influence consumers to shop online. In general two types of research methods are being used quantitative and qualitative. This research is about quantitative method, in the research as it is a precise way. According to Creswell (1994) time is vital attribute for decision making while selecting research method. Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhil (2000) suggests that quantitative research can be faster as compare to qualitative as it is possible to forecast the time schedule, whereas qualitative can be relatively long in duration. Research projects normally done for academic reasons are limited to time as our research is also being done for academic purpose and is time limited so that is why we are going to prefer quantitative approach.

## **6. RESULTS/ FINDING**

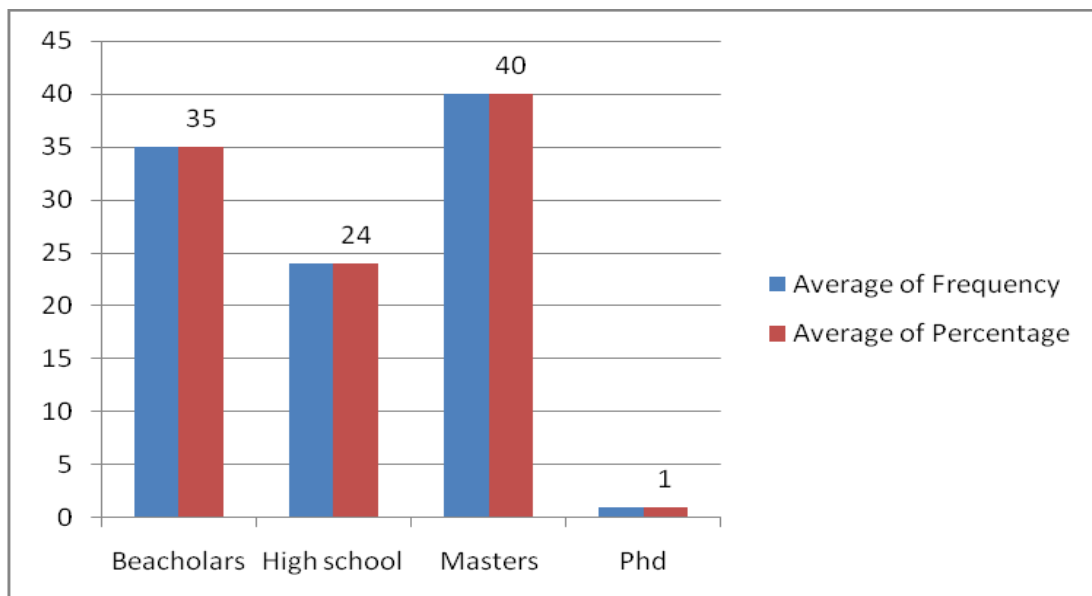
The findings that we have gained in this research are as follows; starting from demography the results of correlation results of age shows -0,7381 it indicated that there is a quite strong negative correlation between age and attitude to on-line shopping, i.e. elderly people are not so keen to shop on-line. This will help online retailers to make strategies according to different age brackets. Correlation is also done on Education to see the trend of online shoppers with different education level, the results

showed -0,95688 which is very high negative correlation between education and attitudes towards online shopping and would indicate that higher education makes on-line shopping less attractive. The correlation results between income and attitudes towards online shopping is very weak i.e. -0,1226 , it shows very weak relationship so we cannot conclude anything out of it. The second part of the analysis is done on factors influencing consumers to shop online. From the results we have concluded that the most influencing and attractive factor among four factors is website design/features with average score of 4,064 , following convenience that is second most influencing factor with average score 3,96 , time saving with average score 3,28 and security with average score 3,35 is also important, particularly the security concerns are very important while shopping online. Last but not least after analysing the additional comments made by 31 respondents out of total 100 sample size, we have found that low price, discount, feedback from precious shoppers, and quality of product and information are also considered to be important factors.

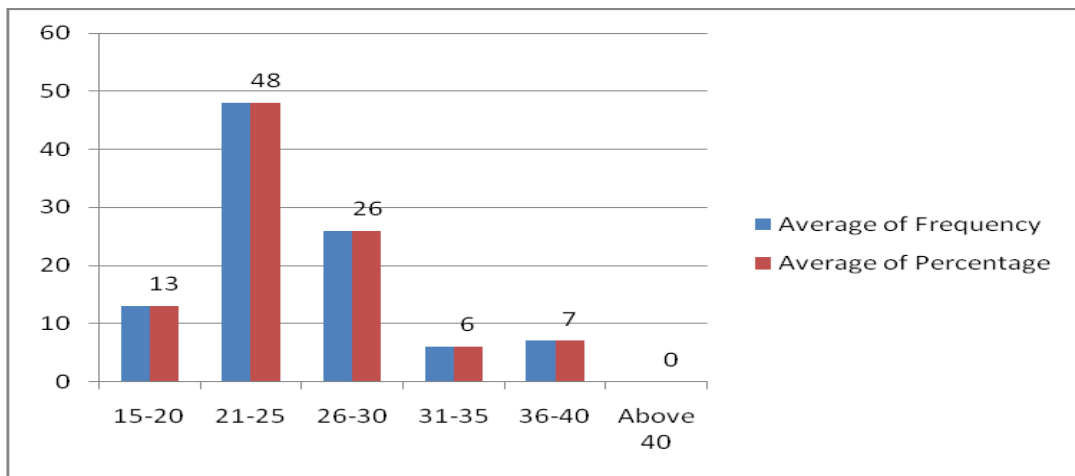
**Gender:** According to demography profile, 66.66% respondents are male and 33.34% respondents are female. As we mentioned before the study is conducted in the Kofi Anan University students, university cafeteria, university library, and public Library. From these groups total respondents are 100. At the time of survey comparatively higher number of female said that they don't have shopping experience through online. So, according to the survey result it is clear that male respondents are more interested to shop online than female.



**Education:** The study is conducted with 100 respondents, between them 39% respondents are bachelor student, 10% respondents are high school student, 45% respondents are master student and only 6% PhD student. From all of the respondents maximum number of respondents (40%) is master student. Survey results shows that 84% respondents are bachelor and master student because most of our respondents are study in Kofi Anan University.



**Age:** Below shows that 13% respondents are between 15-20 years old, 48% respondents are between 21-25 years old, 26% respondents between 26-30 years old, 6% respondents are between 31-35 years old, and 7% respondents are between 36-40 years old. As we mentioned before the study is conducted in the Kofi Anan University students, university cafeteria, and university library in Guinea. So according to the respondents group, maximum respondents are high school, bachelor and master student. Between them 48% respondent prefer to shop online that is the highest percentage who has age limit between 21 to 25 years. Overall result shows that between all of them the respondents who has age limit between 21 to 30 years (48%+26%= 74%) people are more familiar to shop online.



## 7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Online shopping is becoming more popular day by day with the increase in the usage of World Wide Web known as www. Understanding customer's need for online selling has become challenge for marketers. Specially understanding the consumer's attitudes towards online shopping, making improvement in the factors that influence consumers to shop online and working on factors that affect consumers to shop online will help marketers to gain the competitive edge over others. Therefore our study has focused mainly on two research questions, i) what are factors that influence consumers to shop online and to see what factors are most attractive for Gotland online shoppers. ii) Who are online shoppers in terms of demography? We foresee that our findings will give a clear and wide picture to online retailers and will help them understand the specific factors that influence consumers to shop online, so they can build up their strategies to cater online shoppers in Guinea.

We have also worked on demographic factors of online shoppers in Gotland, to see a correlation within demography factors such as Age, Income and Education; this will also give an insight to online retailers to see the online shopping attitudes within these demographic factors.

It is hoped that this study will be able to stimulate future research interests in the area of E-commerce. It is recommended to include detailed website design to be evaluated by consumers in future. In order to reap the maximum benefits of future research, the website must have been improvised to include all the necessary features that have been discussed or even more. The potential participants can be invited to take part in the survey through the actual website so that they can evaluate and visualize the features, benefits, ease of use, security, trustworthiness and etc. with less bias but with more true perception and feedback. It also serves as an evaluation of the marketing strategy through the survey.

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