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## ONLINE SHOPPING TRENDS OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS STUDYING BUSINESS AT THE SCHOOL OF HIGHER STUDIES OF JOJUTLA

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**Abstract:** This article analyzes the online purchasing trends of university students majoring in business at the School of Higher Studies of Jojutla (EESJOJUTLA by its acronym in Spanish), dependent on the Autonomous University of the State of Morelos (UAEM by its acronym in Spanish ), based on research of an exploratory type in the context where it is developed, with a quantitative approach, through the application of a questionnaire validated by specialists in electronic commerce and designed by Martínez-Hernández, Roque-Hernández and Mendoza-Juárez (2022), called “Questionnaire for online shopping by college students.”

This instrument is composed of 43 items, integrated into 9 dimensions: generalities, frequency of purchase, review of the product and seller, reason and means of purchase, prices and discounts, online payments, shipping and guarantees, which was adequately answered by 90 students majoring in business.

Mexico, since 2020, has become, only after Brazil and Argentina, one of the fastest growing online commerce markets; therefore, it is interesting knowing online shopping trends.

The results show that students consider that their general knowledge about online shopping is average, since they have a very low purchasing frequency, as the purchasing action is limited to satisfying their personal needs. This, mostly through the Mercado Libre application, an electronic medium positioned as the favorite for buying online, due to the fact that the speed of its parcel delivery to your home completely converges with the main reason for the final decision to purchase online. For which, the population is willing to wait up to five days and pay up to \$100 for it

**Keywords:** online shopping, purchasing trends, purchasing frequency

## INTRODUCTION

An online purchase is that transactional activity that allows us to interact, through electronic devices, in various digital markets, to acquire goods or services remotely. While trends are described as the behavior of people, during a certain period of time, in their search to satisfy the most common needs and desires of their daily lives, considering the changes in the environment that surround each consumer or group of consumers.

Electronic commerce over the last thirty years has gone through very rapid changes and the COVID-19 health emergency at the beginning of 2020 only caused its growth, already expected, to accelerate even more.

The use of the Internet became more than a luxury, a first-hand necessity for carrying out almost all our daily activities. Our habits, as well as our needs, have changed, so if companies and businesses want to keep up with the pace of change, they must constantly prepare to be able to offer their products and services in the best way.

The “Post-pandemic” Mexico we live in has become a banner of the online shopping industry in our region. Since 2020, we have become, only after Brazil and Argentina, one of the fastest growing online commerce markets.

Likewise, in 2022, it was estimated that more than 48% of the Mexican population would purchase goods or services online. It is estimated that this trend will continue to increase in the coming years without stopping, reaching 58% penetration in 2025.

For what was previously stated, we undertook the task of identifying the purchasing frequency of university students of business at the School of Higher Studies of Jojutla, as well as recognizing the most common reasons and means of purchasing and the influence that the prices and discounts offered online have on their purchasing decision.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Ignacio Somalo Peciña, “electronic commerce means the transfer of normal, commercial, governmental or personal transactions to computerized media via telecommunications networks, including a wide variety of activities.” (Reyes, 2021, s. p.)

On the other hand, Roger A. Kerin, Steven W. Hartley, and Rudelius William say that “Electronic commerce is usually called any activity in which some form of electronic communication is used, in the storage, exchange, advertising, distribution and payment of goods and services.” (Reyes, 2021, s. p.)

Furthermore, according to Laura Estela Fischer de la Vega, and Jorge Espejo Callado, “electronic commerce is called all internet transactions that an organization carries out with its markets via the internet.” (Reyes, 2021, s. p.)

The perspectives that these authors give us about electronic commerce present a constant in all the variations of their concepts; the use of the internet to carry out transactions through electronic means. With this, it can be stated that electronic commerce is the transactional activity that allows us to interact, through electronic devices, in various digital markets, where we can acquire goods and services remotely.

For Erner Guillaume (2010), “trends were born with modernity; “They are the consequence of the great changes observed since the end of the 18th century in the economic, technological and sociological fields.” (p. 34).

According to Kotler (2006), “a trend is a direction or sequence of events that has a certain intensity and duration, it is more predictable and lasting than passing fads, revealing what the future will be like, and offering numerous opportunities.” (p. 77).

Therefore, a consumer trend is understood as the behavioral patterns that guide the purchasing action of products and services in new opportunities that arise in the market (during a certain time), so that independent companies or businesses can know, with some certainty, how and in what way they should be adapted, to satisfy the new needs and desires of their target consumer and, thus, be able to impact the market of their interest. (Ruiz, 2022). So, we can understand a purchasing trend as the behavior of people, during a certain period of time, in their search to satisfy the most common needs and desires for their daily lives, considering the changes in the environment that surrounds each consumer or a group of them.

The results of the research article published in LATAM Latin American Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities, carried out by Harold Bustamante, Natali Sánchez, Jairo A. Agudelo and Julián Merchán in June 2022 titled: “Consumption trends of university students and the influence of e-commerce during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Case study”, marks a before and after in terms of the variables that consumers take into account when making their purchases, since, before the pandemic, these were not so common in the purchasing behavior of users.

The seven new habits that will redefine consumption in Latin America include: paying greater attention to prices, shopping for convenience and proximity, supporting local commerce, trying new products, second-hand consumption, using digital media to make payments, using digital channels and online stores. Likewise, this shows a change in the channels in the purchasing process by integrating electronic commerce, which reduces time and crowds, but thus generating a more informed consumer.

On the other hand, the research titled: “Purchase trends in electronic commerce by university students; a case study”, carried out in 2019 by José Herrera, María Vásquez and Carlos Jacobo, shows results that highlight that the selected sample makes online purchases at least once every 6 months, using as the main purchasing tool the computer, and making visible that the most purchased products by Mexicans are electronic items. And it is precisely the variety of products and the extensive recommendations from other buyers with good experiences, the reasons that have the greatest influence and relevance when deciding where to buy.

Then again, the payment method most used by the Mexicans who were informants in this study are credit cards, with a notable difference of more than double over the PayPal payment platform. This tells us that the fear of using Credit Cards have gradually been lost and Internet purchasing users use them with more security and comfort.

## METHODOLOGY

The approach used is exploratory and quantitative, obtaining results through the application of the questionnaire designed by Martínez-Hernández, Roque-Hernández and Mendoza-Juárez (2022) and validated by five specialists in electronic commerce.

This instrument, designed to quantify the perceptions of university students about online shopping, is made up of 43 questions that arise from 9 dimensions: generalities, purchase frequency, review of the product and the seller, reason for purchase, means of purchase, prices and discounts, online payments, shipping and guarantees (see table1).

Dimension	Description
<b>Generalities</b>	This dimension measures the starting point to identify the degree of approach of the respondents towards the topic being addressed.
<b>Purchase frequency</b>	It identifies the population's recurrence towards online purchases, to satisfy their personal needs or those of third parties, whether for profit or not.
<b>Product and seller review</b>	It focuses on evaluating how thorough respondents can be when making online purchases; if they carry out prior research on the references of the seller or the product before the purchase, as well as measuring how inclined they are to contact the manufacturers to make their purchases.
<b>Reason for purchase</b>	Dimension that identifies the main reasons why respondents make purchases online.
<b>Means of purchase</b>	The aim is to identify the digital programs most used by respondents to make online purchases.
<b>Prices and discounts</b>	This dimension identifies whether respondents really care about the prices of the products they are going to purchase, so that some price or discount factor may or may not determine the final purchase action.
<b>Online payments</b>	It is related to the security of online payments, the means that the surveyed population mostly uses, as well as the recommendations and suggestions they make to others, based on their experiences.
<b>Shipment</b>	Through this dimension it can be recognized how much importance the target population gives to the speed of shipping their items, as well as the means they prefer to receive their merchandise.
<b>Garantee</b>	This dimension recognizes the degree of importance that respondents give to their items having a guarantee, either with the portal where they purchase it or directly with its manufacturer.

**Table 1.** Description of the dimensions of the instrument about perceptions and habits of online buyers.

Source: Own elaboration

For this research, it was decided to apply a census, that is, to survey the total population, which was made up of 94 students who are enrolled in the business degree at EESJOJUTLA and, it is worth mentioning that 4 were not answered in their entirety, so they had to be thrown away.

The scale applied by this instrument is the Likert type, which, for this study, includes responses ranging from 1, which is very little, to 5, which is too much.

A pilot test was carried out to eliminate errors in the writing of the questionnaire or lack of understanding in any question, subsequently the questionnaire was applied through Google Forms, sent through the WhatsApp application.

The information collected was integrated into an Excel sheet automatically and processed through the use of descriptive statistics formulas.

## RESULTS

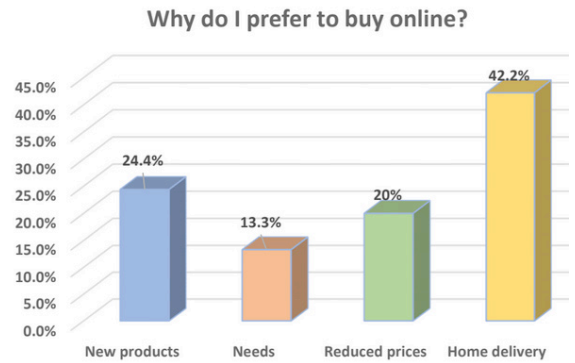
According to the information collected through the instrument used and once being processed, the following results were obtained.

### GENERAL DATA

The results of the study show that 52.2% are male students, while 47.8% were female, in addition, all respondents have an age range between 18 and 24 years.

Furthermore, it was found that the purchasing frequency is actually very low, since the results gave a tie of 13% for those who considered that they buy a lot and too much, resulting that this 26% buys regularly but, despite it, 31% of respondents make very few purchases online, as they only focus on purchasing products mostly for personal needs, leaving purchases for simple pleasure in second place and maintaining an almost zero frequency on doing any business by resaling the products.

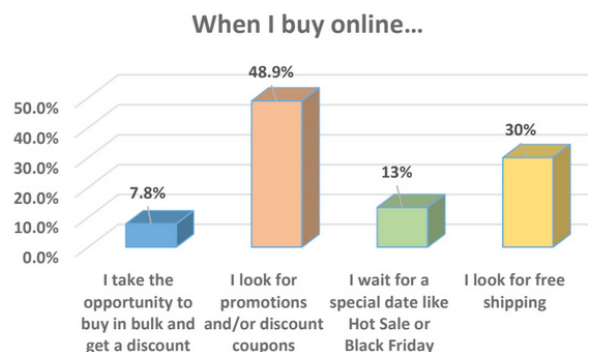
33% of those surveyed acknowledge that they are willing to buy online just because of publicity, even when the brands are unknown. This is mainly motivated by publicity in applications or websites. Thus, the decisive factor in the purchasing action for 42.2% of the population is home delivery, according to processed data (see graph 1).



Graphic 1. Why do I prefer to buy online?

Regarding the means of purchase, mobile applications are the most used when purchasing online by the students surveyed, with Mercado Libre being the unquestionably most used electronic site, with 57.8% preference.

Conversely, it is inferred that, for university students, it is too important to consider the prices and discounts offered online when making their online purchases since, in this part of the study, searching for promotions and/or discount coupons overlaps, for a score considerably higher by 48.9% than the search for free shipping on the products to be purchased (see graph 2). Nonetheless, even if buying wholesale means getting a discount, only 41.1% declared doing so. Hence, a large part of those surveyed usually spend between \$501 and \$1,000 on their online purchases, but there is a considerable difference with the second place that declares spending less than \$500.



Graphic 2. When I buy online...

Source: Own Elaboration

## CONCLUSIONS

The results show that the students of the business degree of the EESJOJUTLA ask for more and better products and/or services for lower prices, this due to the ease of use of the site and the speed of its delivery, as well as the benefits that generates making many purchases after a while.

They always try to pay the minimum for their shipments and if it is free the best. In addition, if the product offered online has promotions and/or discount coupons, this

becomes an incentive that they do take into account. It is important to reiterate that the shipping factor is positioned as the main motivator for online purchasing.

Furthermore, low prices and discounts are positioned as the third most influential reason for the final online purchase decision, since now the biggest trend for online university buyers is to receive a lot for very little. Therefore, the speed by which Mercado Libre is distinguished, positions it as the electronic site most used by the population.

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