

Online shopping - a strategy need for rural customerFenin Samuel. S¹ and K. A. Janardhanan²

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ABSTRACT

Online shopping has risen overdramatically in most recent days as marketers have taken advantage of these chances offered by the internet. However, In spite of its significant worthy of interest, conceivable benefits, a lot of these internet determinations have been unsuccessful. However industry watchers promote that there is still hope for e-commerce in both rural and urban areas. Since the behaviour of customers is intrinsic to the breakdown or triumph of an online shopping website, the reason of this study was consequently to establish, by the way of quantitative analysis, the online buying behaviour of rural consumers in Tamilnadu. The study was conducted in January 2016 on a convenience sample of respondents from a variety of fields and age groups from rural areas of Tamilnadu. The study reveals the influencing factors both the encouraging and discouraging, of rural consumers of Tamilnadu in the direction of buying online which will be ready to lend a hand for the online companies to plan accordingly.

KEYWORDS: Shopping Website; E-Shopping; Internet Efforts; Rural Customers

1. INTRODUCTION

The commencement of the Internet, conveyed by the increase of consistent technologies, has shaped a significant force on the lives of people all over the place in the world. There was a extremely huge movement of change in the traditional business practices. There are now businesses are forthcoming on the internet or online to achieve or sell their merchandises. For marketers, one of the main impacts has been the incidence of virtual stores that sell products and services online. Consumers can currently buy goods and services virtually in all places, 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, without chronological and geological margins.

Shabeer VP (2014) Citing data from Google Trends, a report collective by Google India highpoints exponential growth in anxiety among Indians in online shopping. In the year 2011 to 2012, consumer interest in online shopping in India raised 128 percent compare to only 40 percent in the preceding year.

"With approximately 8 million Indians spending online in the year 2012, the online shopping business in India is increasing quickly and will undergo to see exponential progress," Rajan Anandan (2012) the managing director and vice president of Google India said. "By surveillance at the tendencies in 2012, we guess 2013 to be a flexible development year for ensembles that are absorbed on fast emergent categories like technological products and accessories, apparels and niche product categories like baby products, health nutrition and home furnishing. We anticipate the development to derive from outside of the top eight metros."

Two years back the e-commerce industry has seen about 700 million dollars of speculation, creating it an investor most wanted. Even though, the struggle remains the same. India will need many additional online sites, and the dominance of service also needs to be widened. "There is a whole of only about 70 e-commerce businesses now in India. Presently the industry is worth about \$12 billion, but in the next 3 to 4 years is predictable to rise to 0 to 40 billion dollars."

According to the study conducted by D S Rawat (2013), India's e-commerce market, which stood at \$2.5 billion in 2009, reached \$8.5 billion in 2012 and rise to 88 per cent to touch \$16 billion in 2013. The survey estimates the country's e-commerce market to reach \$56 billion by 2023, determined by rising online retail.

In spite of the increase in use and reputation of the Internet over the last few years, the question of why customers prefer or vacillate to shop on the Internet still remains poorly understood.

Review of literature: Online Marketing is defined as "the art and science of selling products and/or services over digital networks, such as Internet and cellular phone networks"

Yulishari et al (2011), in their paper "Factors that inspire customers buying intent on shopping online" clarify the significance of internet in the online business. The study statuses that the Internet is not only a networking media, but also as a transaction medium for customers at global marketplace in the world and becomes prevailing retailers in the future. The most essential component of e-retail deals a direct interactive channel along with no time explanation, people and place. To shop on Internet becomes a substitute for customers since it is more contented than conservative shopping which frequently ascribed with concerned crowded, traffic jam, parking space, limited time etc.

While discussing on the acceptance of Online shopping, Gregory Karp (2009) in his article in "The Morning Call" indicates that online shopping can be a smart consumer's best friend, with the ability to easily comparison shop, search for discounts and make purchases with a few mouse clicks.

Vishal Midha (2012) in his article about "Impact of consumers empowerment on Online Trust; An examination across genders" explains that, while e-commerce has grown substantially over the last decade, it still is marred with the lack of trust and growing privacy concerns. So some of the consumers who like to purchase through

online is still hesitating to make any purchase.

J Suresh Reddy (2003) has published article in Indian Journal of Marketing. Title of article is "Impact of E-commerce on marketing". Marketing is one of the business function most dramatically affected by emerging information technologies. Allred, R.C. et al., (2006) Internet is providing companies new channels of communication and interaction. It can create closer yet more cost effective relationships with customers in sales, marketing and customer support. Bauer H.H et al (2005) Companies can use web to provide ongoing information, service and support. It also creates positive interaction with customers that can serve as the foundation for long term relationships and encourage repeat purchases. Bellman S et al (1999) Even cyber shopping allows customers to sit in the comfort of their homes and purchases their goods. One can shop any kind of product or service in the mind of the night and from any part of the world.

Statement of the problem: In response to the opportunity presented by the Internet, many companies adopted web sites as part of their marketing efforts, and online shopping has increased. However, in spite of significant potential benefits, many of these internet efforts have failed. The purpose of this study was therefore to determine the online buying behaviour of rural consumers in Tamilnadu with a view to help traders to harness e- business potential advantages. The scope of this study was restricted to a quantitative analysis of selected internet users of rural parts of Tamilnadu.

Objective of the study:

- i. To examine demographic factors of internet users who purchase online in rural parts of Tamilnadu
- ii. To find out the factors that influence consumers buy online.
- iii. To find out the factors that influence consumers for not to buy online.
- iv. To determine the perception of rural consumers in Tamilnadu towards online purchasing.

2. METHODOLOGY

Both Primary and Secondary sources are used to collect data. Primary data are collected from online shoppers in Kanyakumari district. Primary data are collected in the form of questionnaire and direct interview methods. Questionnaire was structured and was built in relationship with objective of the research and hypotheses. Regarding the secondary data, the concepts of consumer behaviour and other literatures in online shopping were taken from the various sources like reference books, article and journals.

Sample Size and Design: The main purpose of the research is to quantify the attitudes and perceptions of ecommerce customers in Kanyakumari dist. The data will be collected through the responses given by online shoppers and are analysed and interpreted by using appropriate statistical tools.

The population here considered for the study was rural areas of Kanyakumari District in the state of Tamilnadu. In this the population can portray the behaviour of rural consumers who have their own internet facility in their home or through other sources. The sampling unit selected for the present study was the individuals who use the internet for visiting online shopping portals.

The sample size taken by the researcher was 100 respondents across Kanyakumari District. All clusters namely, students, workers in service class, business class, professional and others were considered as a respondent for the present study. Researcher had made an attempt that the sample size was sufficient in quantity, representative and estimator with sufficiently high precision. In this study, Statistical tools like Mann-Whitney U test, Kruskal wallis H test mean and percentages was employed to measure the demographic changes and consumer's personal opinion towards online shopping.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The responses of the respondents were analysed based on various demographic segments like their gender, age, education, occupation and income to find their perception and attitude towards online shopping.

Table.1.Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Gender	Content	Percentage
	Female	26
	Male	74
	Total	100
Age	20-35	60
	36-50	32
	>50	8
	Total	100
Education	Below SSLC	10
	Below Degree	31
	Degree and above	59

Total		100
Occupation	Employee	38
	Business	28
	NRI	10
	Others	24
Total		100

Table 1 shows that out of the total 100 respondents in the rural parts who use internet and visit various shopping sites, when considering the gender, 74 percent are men compared to 26 percent women. So it is very clear that rural men consumers are keener about online shopping.

The age wise study reveals that 60 percent are comes under the 20-35 age categories, which shows that the new generation consumers are more interested in online shopping while compared to the older generation who still like to buy from the traditional kirana stores.

The education wise study about the respondent's reveals that 10 percent are below SSLC, 31 percent are below Degree qualified and 59 percent are having a Degree and above. So it shows that the educational qualification of the respondents have a significant influence on online shopping behaviour. Those who have higher education are more interested in online shopping compared to the low educated people.

Finally the Occupation wise study shows that out of total 100 respondents 38 percent are comes under the employee class, 28 percent are Business class, 10 percent are NRI's and 24 percent are comes under the class 'Others', which include student, profession, agriculture etc.

Table 2 and Table 3 shows the result of statistical analysis of the survey on the encouraging and discouraging factors for shop online by the rural consumers. Rank is computed on the basis of weighted mean score of the variables.

Table.2.Encouraging Factors for Shop Online

Variable	Weighted Mean Score	Rank
Low Price	22.01	1
Greater Selection of Products	20.54	2
Saves Time	17.23	3
Products Rare/Unavailable in Rural Market can be	13.92	4
Convenient Store Hours	11.10	5
Variety of Stores	8.37	6
Novel Experience of Shopping	7.69	7

From the Table 2, it is clear that the low price offered by the online sites, which got the Rank 1, is the most important influencing factor for the rural consumers to shop online. Wide range of products offered by the online sites and saving of time when purchase online are also an important factor in online shopping which have second and third rank respectively.

The advantage of Rare/unavailable products in the rural market can be bought from the online sites is considered by a considerable number of consumers. Variety of stores available in the online shopping sector and novel experience of shopping are not the important influencing factors in online shopping.

Table.3.Discouraging Factors for Shop Online

Variable	Weighted Mean Score	Rank
Product Cannot be Examined	20.31	1
Delivery System	19.80	2
Lack Confidence in the Security	16.90	3
Product may be of Inferior Quality	15.93	4
Web Page is not User Friendly	11.03	5
Lack of High Speed Internet Connection	6.39	6
Lack of Customer Support	6.00	7

From the Table 3, it is clear that product cannot be examined physically is the most important discouraging factors for shop online. The delivery system of the online shopping companies and lack of confidence in the security about the personal and account details of consumers is also discouraging them, which stands in second and third rank respectively. The fear about the quality of product delivered is also pulling back the consumers from online shopping.

From the Table 3, it is also clear that the lack of high speed internet connectivity in the rural areas or lack of customer support representative in online sites is not a big discouraging factor in online shopping.

4. CONCLUSION

Today markets are normally consumer driven in the present economy. Even though the online shopping or

ecommerce is comparatively new to the rural online shoppers; they were very much familiarise with the advantages and disadvantages or ups and downs of this business. In order to make it more successful and less disapproval, the online marketers first need to understand consumer's perception and make necessary adjustment in accordance with it.

From the study it is clear that the low price offered by the online companies plays the most positively influencing factor compared to other retail market price motivate rural customers to shop online. Purchase through online saves time and more convenience due to 24*7 availability and large number of brands with their images are displayed in the portals helps customers to know about their products how it actually looks at. Like other, online shopping also has some discouraging factors because rural customers prefer to examine the products physically before they place any orders. The details provided in the shopping portals are also not sufficient for them to purchase through online. They were also all marketing activities are framed by the companies based on the behaviour of consumers. How they think, and react to various marketing strategies does matter on the performance and success of the companies. Generally rural consumers are indifferent in purchase decisions. So by conducting deep study and analysis, marketers can adopt appropriate marketing strategies to attract new consumers and retain existing consumers. Consumers' tastes and behaviour are changing within no time, so continuous study about the consumer behaviour is very important and helpful for companies to adopt suitable marketing strategies to attract them towards the business is not up to the expectation of the rural consumers.

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