

Consumer Attitude Towards Online Shopping with Reference to Thoothukudi

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Abstract

"Online shopping" refers to the process of purchasing goods or services through the use of the Internet, which often eliminates the need for middlemen. Customers of online retailers have the ease of being able to shop without leaving their couches. Because so many people now have internet connection in their homes as well as their places of employment, online retailers are open around the clock for customers' convenience. As a result, because it is so convenient, shopping online is a fantastic choice for them to consider. When it comes to shopping over the holidays, one of the most appealing aspects of doing it online is the absence of the time-consuming obligations of having to wait in lengthy lines or search the store for a certain item. Many different things are available to purchase from online stores. As a consequence of this, people in Coimbatore will be polled about their feelings on online shopping so that conclusions can be drawn.

Key words: *Online Shopping, Internet, Online Retailers, Customers' Convenience.*

Introduction: Online Shopping

Before committing to a purchase, consumers who shop online share the same goal of achieving a more streamlined experience when evaluating prices and products offered by various vendors. Customers who shop at conventional retail establishments are not prevented from having access to these alternate options. The tastes of consumers have evolved to the point where they no longer find satisfaction in placing as much importance on the aforementioned characteristics as they formerly did. Brick-and-mortar establishments are no longer able to meet the shopping requirements of modern consumers because of the hectic lifestyles these consumers lead. Electronic shopping, more commonly referred to as shopping done via the internet, has developed as a result of these problems as well as developments in technology. Since the advent of the Internet, numerous customers' opinions on shopping have undergone substantial shifts as a direct result of the numerous advantages it offers in terms of ease of use, speed of transaction, cost, depth of product knowledge, and quality of customer service. E-commerce has given businesses a new channel via which they may communicate with their clientele on the internet, which in turn has enabled them to develop more meaningful connections with those clients. "Online shopping" refers to the practice of making purchases of goods and services directly through a company's website rather of going through a middleman. One of the many manifestations of e-commerce is the act of making purchases online. When making a purchase online, both parties must employ some form of electronic communication in order to successfully complete the transaction. This practice, which has also been referred to as "Electronic Shopping" and "E-shopping," has seen a significant uptick in its prevalence in recent years. Electronic shopping is the practice of purchasing goods or services from a seller over the internet by utilizing a computer interface that establishes two-way communication between the customer's device and the vendor's virtual storefront. This can be done through the use of the term "e-commerce," which stands for "electronic commerce."

Customers of an online store have the luxury of taking their time to peruse product photographs, read product descriptions, and make pricing comparisons at their own pace. Consumers who shop online can use the "search" facilities offered by a number of different online retailers to locate the specific brand, model, or type of an item that they are looking for. A store may be referred to as a "e-shop," "e-store," "internet shop," "web shop," "web store," "online store," or "virtual store." All of these terms are interchangeable. It is almost unusual to come across a significant retail establishment that does not simultaneously have an online storefront at this point in time. These kinds of businesses are sometimes referred to as "e-tailers," which is short for electronic retailers.

Literature review

According to study conducted in 2018 by Dr. K. Premalatha and Ms. S. Revathi, the vast majority of Indian consumers continue to engage in more tried-and-true purchasing behaviours and demonstrate consistent usage patterns over the course of time. Customers who purchase for things via the internet often have an immediate need for the product.

According to research conducted by V. Mathan Kumar and R. Velmurugan (2019), the majority of buyers make their purchasing decisions based on factors such as user reviews, the availability of simple EMI alternatives, the availability of relevant information about the product, the facility for returning the product, and the facility for order tracking details. As a result, it is essential for online stores to conduct regular surveys of their customers to determine the requirements they have, to react quickly to any issues that may arise, and to provide a comprehensive set of services, including the sale of low-cost, high-quality products, the exchange of items that are defective, and the prompt delivery of all orders. According to the opinions of V. Sivakumar and Shankar R. (2019), advertisements on social media will have an effective reach of items regardless of the companies being advertised. Roy and Datta (2022) conducted research to determine consumers' perspectives on and preferences for both traditional and internet shopping environments. The survey came to the conclusion that when it comes to purchasing items online, factors such as cost, discount offers, replacement facility, convenience, and so on play more significant roles than they do when shopping in traditional brick-and-mortar establishments. The possibility of further research as well as some managerial implications have been investigated.

Statement of the problem

The Internet and the technologies that make it possible have allowed businesses to reach customers who are located thousands of miles away, who come from very different cultural backgrounds, and who speak languages that the businesses do not understand. This is all because to the Internet. Because the Internet is still a young virtual medium despite having the potential for a vast user base, it is necessary for online merchants to have a deep awareness of the specific preferences and interests of their customers. Because the new virtual market will present big differences to customers, it is vital to analyze and discover the factors that influence the customer while they are making a purchase on the internet. Analyzing the behaviours of consumers is not a novel concept. Various theories have been utilized for a considerable amount of time in an effort to improve one's understanding of the consumer's cognitive process and to develop a strategy for marketing that will attract the consumer. However, there are still fundamental differences between the behaviours of those who purchase in stores and those who shop online that need to be taken into consideration. Because online retailing is still a relatively new medium for retailing and because the behaviour of online consumers differs from the behaviour of traditional consumers, it is essential to have a solid understanding of the variables that influence the behaviour of online shoppers. Because of this, it is essential to have an understanding of the motivations that lead clients to make purchases via the internet if they like shopping. In order to be successful in the cutthroat retail market that exists today, online retailers need to hone in on the unique preferences of their target clients and cater to the demands of those individuals.

Objective of the study

1. To analyse the attitude of consumers towards online shopping.

Research methodology

The research contains an equal amount of analytical and descriptive components. The foundation of this study is made up of primary data, which was amassed with the assistance of an exhaustive and meticulous questionnaire. The secondary data collection for the study included contributions from a variety of sources, including books, websites, newspapers, magazines, the internet, company reports, and business journals. The people living in thoothukudi who took part in this survey were the focus of the study, and a significant number of them shopped online on a regular basis. A sample size of one hundred has been calculated through the use of a technique known as "stratified random sampling."

Analysis and discussion

Table 1: Demographic Profile

Variables	Classification	Frequency
Gender	Male	71
	Female	29
Age (In years)	Less than 30	26
	Between 30 & 40	33
	Between 40 & 50	31
	More than 50	10
Area of Residence	Rural	19
	Urban	81
Marital status	Married	74
	Unmarried	26
Education	Under Graduation	51
	Post-Graduation	31
	Professional level	18
Annual Income (INR Lakhs)	Less than 5	66
	Between 5 and 8	21
	Between 8 and 10	11
	Above 10	02

Source: Primary data

The above table denotes the demographic profile of the respondents who are the consumers of online shopping in thoothukudi. It is clear from the table that;

- Most of the respondents are male comprising at the count of 71, followed by female respondents of 29.
- A total of 33 respondents are aged between 30 & 40, followed by 31 respondents at the age group between 40 & 50, 10 respondents at the age group of above 50 and finally 26 respondents are in age group less than 30.
- Majority of the respondents have their residence in urban region comprising of 81 in numbers and rural region comprises of 19 respondents.
- 74 respondents are married and 26 respondents are unmarried.
- 51 respondents are under graduates, followed by 31 respondents are post graduates and 18 respondents are professionals
- 66 respondents have less than 5 lakhs, 21 respondents have their annual income of between 5 and 8 lakhs, followed by 11 respondents have their annual income between 8 and 10 lakhs and 02 respondents have their annual income of more than 10 lakhs per annum.

Table 2: Attitude - Descriptive Statistics

S. No	Statements	Mean	SD
1.	I often make online shopping spontaneously.	1.39	1.16
2	I often do online shopping without thinking.	1.76	0.75
3.	I am comfortable at purchasing online	1.15	1.14
4.	Sometimes I am a bit careless about online shopping	1.56	1.01
5.	I am comfortable at purchasing directly through the advertisements	1.16	1.08
6	I do online purchases according to how I feel at the moment.	1.07	1.18
7	Most of the online shopping sites and products are worth sharing	1.59	0.94
8	I suggest my peers to make online purchases	1.35	1.03

Source: Primary data

The table above presents the descriptive statistics comprising the mean and standard deviation of the constructs reflecting the attitude of respondents towards the online shopping. It can be concluded that the construct I often do online shopping without thinking has a better mean value and the construct I am comfortable at purchasing online has better deviation.

Ho: There is no significant difference between the attitude of respondents towards the online shopping and their demographic profile

Table 3: ANOVA: Attitude * Demographic Profile

Dependent variable	Independent variable	<i>f</i>	Sig.
Attitude	Gender	83.25	.02*
	Age	124.18	.00**
	Residence	26.14	.08
	Marital status	66.98	.15
	Education	58.11	.00**
	Income	145.87	.00**

Source: Primary data

The analysis of variance defining the difference between the attitude of respondents towards the online shopping and their demographic profile is presented in table 3. The table confers that the variables gender, age, education and income are significant with attitude at 5 per cent and 1 per cent respectively. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and concluded that there is a significant difference between the attitude of respondents towards the online shopping and their demographic profile.

Conclusion

Technology has made significant strides over the course of the years to provide customers with a better experience when shopping online. These strides will continue to be

made in the years to come. Some people have theorized that people will eventually buy more things online than they will in physical stores as a result of the exponential growth of both goods and businesses. Shopping online has, on the other hand, made it possible for many small merchants who would never have been able to get their businesses off the ground if they had been forced to endure the enormous costs of opening a traditional brick-and-mortar store. As more and more people make the switch to buying online, the scenario will continue to improve and expand, and as a result, it will be a situation in which both customers and sellers will come out ahead.

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