CUSTOMER ATTITUDE TOWARDS ONLINE RETAILING IN TIRUNELVELI CITY

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ABSTRACT

Internet has revolutionized the society as a whole and has developed as a basic need of human's addition to food, cloth, and shelter. As a part of internet revolution online shopping has been one of the growing sectors of modern society. Online shopping is a common platform where consumers can choose the product of their choice in their own comfortable time and place. Shopping decisions in his / her own personal space can be made easily. In this method, prices can be compared easily. Online shopping provides the customer with an ability to compare the goods from different vendors in a short time. *As number of online retailers grow day by day it has become vital for retailers to understand the pulse of consumers from large metropolitans to smaller cities.* Online retailers are also looking for answers on how to understand consumer behaviour in order to maximise their consumer's experience and foster their brand loyalty. The present research is to learn about the attitude of online customers among Tirunelveli city.

Key Words: Online Retailers, Consumers, Online Shopping

INTRODUCTION

Online shopping is fast becoming the main shopping choice for many people. Consumers prefer online stores for their shopping needs over the brick-and-mortar stores for a variety of reasons like discounted prices, quick price comparisons, unavailability of desired items in the retail stores, 24 hours shopping convenience, etc. Consumers can make easy payment through credit or debit card and cash on delivery. The Internet is fundamentally different from all other communication channels because online retailers can learn so much about customers. They can identify habits, technologies, and preferences of different customers. The freedom that the web offers has fundamentally altered the company/customer relationship upending it and putting the empowered customer in the driver's seat. Here the researcher made an attempt to find out the impact of demographic factors along with different criterion like preference of online retailer, source of awareness, usage period of online shopping, frequency of usage, amount of money being spent and kinds of products preferred.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

P.Kuppuraj and Dr.N.Ravichandran(2019) in their study "Consumer preferences towards online shopping websites in Coimbatore city" has said that online consumers are young

and graduates so they can access internet any place and any time, they also feel cheaper to buy through online websites.

Dr.P.Sankar(2019) in his study "Factors that Influence Rural Consumers in Tamilnadu towards Online Shopping" has said that rural customers would like to examine products before they buy. The details given in the website are not enough for them to make any purchase decisions. So companies should make suitable marketing strategies to make them adopt online retailing.

Dr.D.Vijaya Lakshmi and S.Deepika(2021) in their study " A study on access and usage of online shopping by women in Coimbatore city" has revealed that the expectation of women regarding online shopping are guarantee, delivery period, poor design of web pages. It is concluded that the women are satisfied on a whole and steps should be taken to enhance the number of women buyers in future.

Dr.UmaNarang(2021) in her study "Factors affecting online shopping behaviours of consumers" has revealed that online consumers are affected by assorted factors and they are hesitant to do online shopping due to technological complexity in online buying. Retailers if could make payments more transparent e-business is going to be the shopping mode of the future.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Customer attitude is a mix of customer's beliefs, feelings, perception and behaviour towards an organisation. Each and every organisation whether small or big which operates through any common platform needs to update their knowledge about changes takes place in customer's attitude about a particular organisation. It is also remains as a base to understand different aspects which will influence the buying decision of customers.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To analyse customer attitude towards online retailing in Tirunelveli city.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is based on Tirunelveli city only and may not serve as a choice of the state or nation. The opinions of the sample may be biased.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive research design is used for the study as the objective is to find out   the attitude of the sample population regarding a problem. The sample area has been fixed as Tirunelveli city as there is a growing trend for online retailing among the total population. Convenience Sampling Method has been adopted for the study with a sample size of 76. Percentage analysis and Chi-square test were used as statistical tools. Primary data has been collected through mailed questionnaire. Questionnaire was circulated among 146 respondents out of which 76 were found to be useful. The response rate was 52%. Secondary data was collected from different websites, research papers, newspapers etc.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

TABLE No.1. Respondent's Profile

DETERMINANTS	VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Age	18-23 years	12	16
	24-29 years	51	67
	30-35 years	9	12
	above 35 years	4	5
Sex	Male	44	58
	Female	32	42
Size of Family	Nuclear Family	48	63
	Joint Family	28	37
Education	H.S.C.	9	12
	U.G	15	20
	P.G	52	68
Occupation	Government Employee	10	13
	Private Employee	36	47
	Self Employed	25	33
	Others	5	7
Monthly Income	Below Rs.20,000	37	49
	Rs.20,001-Rs.40,000	28	37
	Rs.40,001-Rs.60,000	7	9
	Above Rs.60,000	4	5

67% respondents belong to age group of 24-29 years.58% respondents are male and the rest are female.63% respondents belong to nuclear family and the rest 37% belongs to joint family.68% respondents have completed post graduation.47% of the respondents are working in private organisations and 33% employees are self employed.13% of respondents are government employees and the rest 7% belongs to others category which includes mechanics, social workers, builders and directors from cinema.49% respondents earn below Rs.20,000 a month and 37% of respondents earn between Rs.20,000 – Rs.40,000 a month.

TABLE No.2. Source of Awareness about Online Retailing

DETERMINANTS	VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Source Of Awarness	Social Media Advertisements	33	44
	Non-Social Media advertisements	10	13
	Friends	29	38
	Relatives	4	5

44% respondents came to know about online retailing through advertisements in social media platforms like face book, twitter etc and 38% respondents came to know about online

retailing through non social media advertisements like advertisements in news papers, television etc.

TABLE No.3. Online Buying Dynamics

DETERMINANTS	VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Preferred Online Retailer	AMAZON	46	61
	FLIPKART	28	36
	CLUB FACTORY	2	3
Usage Of Online Shopping Websites	less than 6 months	6	8
	6 months - 1 year	12	16
	1 year - 2 years	14	18
	more than 2 years	44	58
Frequency Of Shopping Online	once in a week	11	15
	once in a month	33	43
	once in 6 months	22	29
	once in a year	10	13
Average Monthly Spending On Online Shopping	Rs.100 – Rs.1000	34	45
	Rs.1001 – Rs.2000	24	31
	Rs.2001 – Rs.3000	10	13
	More Than Rs.3000	8	11
Kinds of products preferred	Electronic Items	35	46
	Clothing	22	29
	Books	11	14
	Cosmetics	8	11
Habit Of Checking Details Of The Seller	Yes	54	71
	No	22	29
Shopping During "End Of Season Sale"	Yes	43	57
	No	33	43

61% of respondents prefer Amazon as their preferred online retailer, 36% respondents have preferred Flipkart as their preferred online retailer and 3% have preferred Club Factory as their preferred online retailer. 58% respondents have been using online retailing for more than two years.43% respondents shop using online retailing once in a month and 29% respondents shop using online retailing once in six months.89% respondents spend below three thousand rupees a month through online retailing.46% respondents prefer to buy electronic items and 29% respondents prefer to buy clothes in online retailing.

71% respondents have the habit of checking the name of the seller and rest 29% does not have the habit of checking the name of the seller during online shopping.57% respondents prefer to buy during special discount seasons and the rest 43% respondents does not prefer to buy during special discount seasons.

Chi-Square Test | Sex by kinds of products preferred | n = 76

TABLE No.4

SEX	Kinds of products preferred					
	ELECTRONIC ITEMS	CLOTHING	BOOKS	COSMETICS	TOTAL	X² VALUE
MALE	26(20.26%)	11(12.16%)	3(5.21%)	4(6.37%)	44	8.4386
FEMALE	9(14.74%)	10(8.84%)	6(3.79%)	7(4.63%)	32	p=.037766 (d.f=3)
TOTAL	35	21	9	11	76	

From the table no.4, it is inferred that null hypothesis is rejected($X^2 = 8.4386$, $p = 0.37766$) and exists a significant relationship between sex of the respondents and kind of products preferred in online retailing.

Major proportion of Male respondents prefers electronic items when compared to female respondents and a proportion of female respondents prefer clothes.

Chi-Square Test | Sex by Habit of checking details of the seller | n = 76

TABLE No. 5

SEX	Habit of checking details of the seller			
	YES	NO	TOTAL	X² VALUE
MALE	28(25.47%)	16(18.53%)	44	1.4132
FEMALE	16(18.53%)	16(13.47%)	32	p=.0234522
TOTAL	44	32	76	(d.f=1)

From the table no.5 it is inferred that null hypothesis is rejected ($X^2 = 1.4132$, $p = .0234522$) and exists a significant relationship between sex and habit of checking the details of the seller

Male respondents are more likely to check the details of the seller than the female respondents.

Chi-Square Test | Income by Frequency of using online shopping websites | n = 76

TABLE No.6

INCOME	Frequency of using online shopping websites					
	ONCE IN A WEEK	ONCE IN A MONTH	ONCE IN SIX MONTHS	ONCE IN A YEAR	TOTAL	X² VALUE

Below Rs.20,000	4(5.26%)	16(16.32%)	11(10%)	9(8.42%)	40	
Rs.20,000-Rs.40,000	2(3.29%)	12(10.20%)	5(6.25%)	6(5.26%)	25	7.3913 p=0.2861 (d.f=3)
Above Rs.40,000	4(1.45%)	3(4.49%)	3(2.75%)	1(2.32%)	11	
TOTAL	10	31	19	16	76	

From the above table it is inferred that null hypothesis is accepted(X^2=7.3913, p=0.2861)

Chi-Square Test ||Income by Frequency of using online shopping website

TABLE No.7

INCOME	Frequency of using online shopping websites				TOTAL	X^2 VALUE
	ONCE IN A WEEK	ONCE IN A MONTH	ONCE IN SIX MONTHS	ONCE IN A YEAR		
Govt Employee	2(1.84%)	5(5.71%)	4(3.50%)	3(2.95%)	14	
Pvt Employee	5(5.13%)	18(15.91%)	11(9.75%)	5(8.21%)	39	6.8266 p=0.6551 (d.f=3)
Self Employed	1(2.11%)	6(6.53%)	3(4.00%)	6(3.37%)	16	
Others	2(0.92%)	2(2.86%)	1(1.75%)	2(1.47%)	7	
TOTAL	10	31	19	16	76	

From the above table it is inferred that null hypothesis is accepted(X^2=6.8266, p=0.6551)

CONCLUSION

Online retailing has become inevitable in daily life. Taste and preference of consumers change in a frequent manner, so it has become vital for every online retailer to have an eye on changing atmosphere in customer's preferences. India has over 50 prominent online shopping websites out of which customers are aware about only three websites. Rest of the retailers should focus to reach large mass of population and should look to expand their market. Online retailers should enrich the customer's knowledge on services provided by the retailers, in order to meet a sustained competition it has become important for every online retailer to think ahead of their time.

SUGGESTIONS

Online retailers should concentrate more on promotional activities in order to gain the loyalty of the potential customers.

Online retailers should enlighten the knowledge of the customers about various services provided by them as majority of customers' use online retailing only to buy a particular variety of products. Only when the customers became aware of the varied services available in online retailing they will tend to use them very often.

A major portion of high salaried employees is not into online retailing. Online retailers should try to engage them into online shopping.

Online retailers should also concentrate on non social media advertisements like television, news papers, radio etc as still a part of customers prefer them.

Online retailers need to gain the confidence of the customers as still the amount of average spending through online shopping is very less.

Online retailers should indulge in furious promotional activities during special discount seasons as still a part of customers are not showing interest to buy products in special discount seasons.

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