A STUDY ON PRODUCT PREFERENCES AND MAPPING SATISFACTION LEVELS OF PROFESSIONALS TOWARDS ONLINE SHOPPING IN TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Now a days, customers are becoming more active and comfortable with online shopping, this could be attributed to various factors such as busy modern lives, longer working hours, ability to browse products from the comfort of one's home, wider range of options available etc. with variety of reasons such as shopping of apparels, shoes, leather belts, hand bags, jewellery etc., social and business networking, online transactions, researching products or services, booking their travel tickets online. In order to evaluate the factors influencing for satisfaction towards online shopping in Tirunelveli district has been studied and investigated through primary and secondary data. Demographics like age, marital status and occupation has been investigated with the help of primary data and Secondary Data. A total sample of 150 professionals was taken for the study. It was concluded that majority of the professionals are satisfied with online shopping. Professionals are using online shopping to purchase different type of the products. It was also found in the study that the professionals who are professionals and private employees are significantly differs with the professionals who are government employees and labour on customer service factor. In availability factor, the private employees are significantly differs with the government employees, professionals and labour. It can also be concluded from the results of the data analysis that security and privacy, information quality, customer service, price and quality of the product, availability are the key factors which influence the satisfaction of the professionals towards online shopping. Thus, to create a highly satisfied customer base, the online stores must concentrate on these five factors.

KEY WORDS: Online Shopping, Professionals, Product Preferences and Satisfaction

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INTRODUCTION

Recently at present time online shopping is the new trend of shopping in India that is used to refer to computer- based- shopping or E-shopping same like internet banking or E-banking. Over the past few years online shopping or E-shopping has increased percentage of online buyer's in India. New concept of the online shopping is a great example for business revaluation in India. Online shopping is the process whereby consumers directly buy goods, services etc. from a seller interactively in real time without an intermediary service over the internet. Online shopping is a recent phenomenon in e-commerce and its definitely going to be the future of shopping in the world.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Customer satisfaction is the key factor for customer retention and acquisition in online shopping system. Customer satisfaction with respect to online shopping is matching the customer's perception of the online experience confirms their expectation. Especially the role of after sale services plays important role for online retailers to sustain in a competitive world. The growth in future of e-commerce will be improvements to the shopping process on

existing Web sites, there will be implementation of more online shopping sites by existing retailers with introduction of novel goods, services and online shopping experiences for coming of age of a younger and more technology-oriented generation. Online marketing has many advantages like global reach, availability of wide variety and cheaper products, 24X7 timing etc. Customer satisfaction is the key factor for customer retention and acquisition in online shopping system. Customer satisfaction with respect to online shopping is the extent to which customer's perception of the online experience confirms their expectation

This is the era of technology and the dependency of people on technology can be seen every field whether it is agriculture, commerce, education, health and service etc. Retailers have also found an easy medium to reach large number of customers with the help of business-to-customer (B2C) model of e-commerce. Unlike in the traditional method of selling products to customers through brick and mortar stores, B2C ecommerce uses internet technology to reach large number of customers through the websites of their stores. Thus, customers can buy the products just by seeing the product image and analyzing information about the product features and functions on the websites. This has eliminated the face to face communication of retailer and customers, which in traditional method was the trust building factor among both the parties and also played an important role in providing sense of satisfaction to customer. Due to this online buying method, it has become difficult for the retailers to gain the customers trust. Moreover, the competition in e-commerce market is rising day by day with more and more e-stores coming into existence and offering different product lines. Thus, creating satisfaction among online customers has become more cumbersome for online retailers. This arise the need to study the level of satisfaction among professionals towards online shopping and finding out the factors which are predominant in influencing their satisfaction.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Online shopping becomes part of the every human being. Many individual in one way or other are using online shopping to purchase products and services. Since online shopping offers so many benefits, many persons are willing to purchase through online. However, online shopping is also having its own limitations. This study useful to know the satisfaction of professionals towards online shopping

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ✓ To understand the demographic factors which are influencing the customers for online shopping and its customer satisfaction
- ✓ To study the product preferences of professionals in online shopping

METHODOLOGY

In order to evaluate the factors influencing for satisfaction towards online shopping in Tirunelveli district has been studied and investigated through primary and secondary data. Demographics like age, marital status and occupation has been investigated with the help of primary data and Secondary Data. Exploratory research method is used to describe the characteristics of population of study which is used in research through observations and survey methods. Convenience sampling technique is used to study from the large population of professionals who does online shopping. Primary data is collected through structural questionnaire method and satisfaction were measured based on five-point Likert-scales ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The secondary data of the study is collected through various journals, reports, books, articles, magazines, research papers, websites etc. A total sample of 150 professionals was taken for the study. Reliability score (Cronbach's Alpha) of the questionnaire was 0.8. SPSS version 20 (statistical package for social sciences) is used for the analysis of data. Microsoft excel is used for evaluation of data and online google form is used to collect responses of professionals. Product category for online shopping has been studied from FMCG Sector Personal products like Apparels like T-shirt, jeans, formals, casuals, ethnic followed by Accessories like watches, sunglasses, handbags, jewellery and Shoes and sandals. The study covers only Tirunelveli district area from Tamilnadu state in India.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1

Product Preferences of professionals in online shopping

Sl. No	Category of products	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Apparels	30	20.0
2.	Cosmetics	44	29.3
3.	Handbags	22	14.7
4.	Jewellery	27	18.0
5.	Mobile Phone	15	10.0
6.	Other items	12	8.0
	Total	**150**	**100**

Source: Primary data

Table 1 clearly shows that 29.3% of the respondents preferred to buy cosmetics, 20% of the respondents preferred to buy apparels, 18% of the respondents preferred to buy jewellery, 14.7% of the respondents preferred to buy handbags, 10% of the respondents preferred to buy mobile phone and 8% of the respondents preferred to buy other items namely household items and electronic items.

Table 2

Satisfaction towards online shopping

Satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	114	76
No	36	24
Total	**150**	**100**

Source: Primary data

Table 2 shows that 76% of the respondents are satisfied with online shopping and 24% of the respondents are not satisfied with online shopping. It can be concluded that majority of the professionals are satisfied with online shopping.

Age Group of professionals and Factors influencing the satisfaction towards online shopping

The following null hypothesis was framed for finding out the significant difference among age group of professionals with respect to the factors influencing the satisfaction towards online shopping.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference among Age Group of professionals with respect to the factors influencing the satisfaction towards online shopping

The following table shows the result of 'ANOVA' test for significant difference among age group of professionals with respect to the factors influencing the satisfaction towards online shopping.

Table 3

ANOVA for Significant difference among Age Group of professionals with respect to the factors influencing the satisfaction towards online shopping

Factors	Age Group					F Value	p Value
	30-35 years	35-40 years	41-45 years	46-50 years	Above 50 years		
Security and privacy	28.68 (6.82)	27.68 (7.19)	27.41 (6.69)	27.85 (7.25)	29.06 (6.02)	1.006	0.404
Information quality	35.92^{b} (6.16)	35.72^{b} (6.09)	34.38^{ab} (5.92)	33.05^{a} (7.45)	34.33^{ab} (7.21)	3.615	0.006*
Customer service	31.75^{ab} (5.92)	32.53^{b} (5.56)	29.91^{a} (5.71)	29.56^{a} (7.20)	29.96^{a} (5.93)	5.854	0.000*
Price and quality of the product	27.89 (4.92)	27.12 (4.74)	26.87 (5.16)	27.92 (5.85)	26.20 (5.76)	1.579	0.178
Availability	28.49^{b} (4.43)	28.62^{b} (5.12)	26.56^{ab} (5.37)	28.08^{b} (5.08)	24.93^{a} (5.91)	6.466	0.000*

Source: Computed Data

Note: 1. The value within bracket refers to SD

2. Different alphabet among Age group denotes significant at 5% level using Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT)

Since the 'p' value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected at 5% level of significance with regard to information quality factor, customer service factor and availability factor. Hence there is a significant difference among the age group of professionals with regard to information quality factor, customer service factor and availability factor. Based on Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) the professionals who belong to the age group of 30 to 35 years and 36 to 40 years are significantly differs with the professionals who belong to the age group of 41 to 45 years, 46-50 years and above 50 years on information quality factor. In customer service factor, the professionals who belong to the age group of 30 to 35 years and 36 to 40 years are significantly differs with the professionals who belong to the age group of 41 to 45 years, 46-50 years and above 50 years.

Based on Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) the professionals who belong to the age group of 30 to 35 years and 36 to 40 years are significantly differs with the professionals who belong to the age group of 41 to 45 years, 46-50 years and above 50 years on availability factor.

Since the 'p' value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance with regard to security and privacy factor and price and quality of the product factor. Hence there is no significant difference among age group of professionals with respect to security and privacy factor and price and quality of the product factor. It is inferred that age group is not a significant variable influencing the satisfaction towards online shopping namely security and privacy factor and price and quality of the product factor among professionals. It is concluded that no significant difference among age group of professionals with respect to factors influencing satisfaction towards online shopping namely security and privacy factor and price and quality of the product factor.

Marital Status of professionals and Factors influencing the satisfaction towards online shopping

Single and married professionals have influenced by different factors for satisfaction towards online shopping namely security and privacy factor, information quality factor, customer service factor, price and quality of the product factor and availability factor at different level. Hence an attempt has been made to find out whether there is a significant difference among single and married professionals with reference to the factors influencing satisfaction towards online shopping.

The following null hypothesis was framed for finding out the significant difference among single and married professionals with respect to the factors influencing the satisfaction towards online shopping.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference among single and married professionals with respect to the factors influencing the satisfaction towards online shopping

The following table shows the result of 't' test for significant difference among single and married professionals with respect to the factors influencing the satisfaction towards online shopping.

Table 4

t test for Significant difference between Single and Married with respect to the factors influencing the satisfaction towards online shopping

Factors	Marital Status				t Value	p Value
	Single		Married			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Security and privacy	27.65	6.87	28.20	6.96	0.881	0.378
Information quality	35.05	6.70	35.27	6.24	0.380	0.704
Customer service	31.20	6.51	31.43	5.83	0.418	0.676

Price and quality of the product	27.31	4.85	27.41	5.14	0.212	0.832
Availability	28.08	4.95	27.96	5.10	0.271	0.786

Source: Computed Data

Note: 1. The value within bracket refers to SD

Since the 'p' value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance with regard to security and privacy factor, information quality factor, customer service factor, price and quality of the product factor and availability factor. Hence there is no significant difference among single and married professionals with respect to security and privacy factor, information quality factor, customer service factor, price and quality of the product factor and availability factor. It is inferred that marital status is not a significant variable influencing the satisfaction towards online shopping among professionals. It is concluded that no significant difference among single and married professionals with respect to factors influencing satisfaction towards online shopping namely security and privacy factor, information quality factor, customer service factor, price and quality of the product factor and availability factor.

SUGGESTIONS

- ✓ The professionals face major problems on theft of credit card information, and lack of security on online payments. Implementing precautionary steps to solve these problems shall create consumer confidence on online shopping.
- ✓ Internet environment has to be improved in the areas of art, dynamic and interactive techniques. This improvement will give more visual appeal.
- ✓ One of the major drawbacks that the respondents have felt is no proper returning policy to the product. After getting opinion from the respondent if the above said problem occurs, then they should be guided in a proper way to return the product. This will create a good website reputation and repurchasing power of the respondents.

CONCLUSION

From the above study it was concluded that majority of the professionals are satisfied with online shopping. Professionals are using online shopping to purchase different type of the products. It can also be concluded from the results of the data analysis that security and privacy, information quality, customer service, price and quality of the product, availability are the key factors which influence the satisfaction of the professionals towards online shopping. Thus, to create a highly satisfied customer base, the online stores must concentrate on these five factors.

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