

A STUDY ON CUSTOMER PERCEPTION AND SATISFACTION TOWARDS E-TAILING PLATFORMS IN SIVAGANGAI DISTRICT

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Abstract

In recent years, e-tailing (electronic retailing) has rapidly grown due to technological advancements, especially with respect to how customers purchase products or services online. Due to this growth, this study will analyze customer's perceptions and satisfaction of e-tailing platforms, primarily in Sivagangai District by measuring the effect of five key elements (product quality, delivery service, price, website usability, customer service/support) on each respondent's overall satisfaction level with e-tailing companies. Secondary data used for this research includes literature from journals, newspapers, & internet search results which will help to develop the 120 survey questionnaire that was administered to respondents for completion. The survey will also be analyzed using statistical methods including descriptive statistics, chi-square test, paired sample t-test, & one-way ANOVA among others. What the results indicate about the three most significant factors affecting customer satisfaction are delivery speed (time), product quality, and trustworthiness of the company operating the e-tailing sites. Based upon these findings, recommendations to improve the experience of customers using e-tailing sites and the quality of services offered by e-tailing companies provides direction for future research on enhancing customers' experiences while using e-tailing sites.

Keywords: E-Tailing, Customer Satisfaction, Online Shopping, Consumer Perception, E-Tailing Service Quality, Sivagangai District

Introduction

E-tailing (e-retailing) is defined as the act of selling goods and services over the internet to consumers; in light of recent advancements in both internet and smart phone technology, consumers are now choosing to purchase their products and services online as opposed to physically going to a retail store. E-Tailing companies such as Amazon, Flipkart and Meesho provide consumers a convenience for shopping at home via their computer or mobile device, as well as offer consumers more choice than what traditional brick and mortar retailers can offer.

With e-tailing businesses, customer satisfaction is a critical aspect that contributes to their overall success. The way customers perceive an e-tailer (e.g. through the quality of the website that sells products, how well they deliver those products, and the level of customer service provided) will influence whether they make a sequel purchase.

Need for the Study

1. There is a growing need for e-commerce in places such as rural and semi-urban areas like Sivagangai.
2. Consumer behavior has changed, & consumers have developed new preferences regarding shopping online.
3. To determine how satisfied customers are and what their expectations are regarding the e-tailing services they purchase.



4. To provide e-tailers with information on how to improve their service quality to retain their customers.

Statement of the Problem

Although e-tailing is expanding rapidly, there have been numerous complaints from customers regarding issues related to service delivery, such as late deliveries, poor-quality products, and complicated return policies. Therefore, it is important to provide research on customer perception and satisfaction regarding e-tailing, to identify "gaps" in service delivery, and to improve customers' overall experience with the e-tailer.

Scope of the Study

1. The geographical scope of the research will be Sivagangai district.
2. The study will focus on the major e-tailing platforms.
3. The focus of the study will be exclusively on customer perception and satisfaction
4. regarding e-tailing.
5. The following four main factors will be examined as they relate to e-tailing: price,
6. quality, delivery, and service.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study perceptions towards e-commerce
2. To assess customer satisfaction
3. To identify variables that affect consumer's e-commerce behavior
4. To analyze the relationship between demographics and satisfaction levels
5. To provide recommendations to improve customer satisfaction

Literature Review

Khatana (2022)= Delivery speed 39.5% and product quality 46.7% were determined to be the two most important factors in determining customer satisfaction with e-commerce.

Hemantha et al. (2022) - Website attributes, customer service, trust, and word of mouth were identified as factors that affect customer experience and repeat purchases.

Yalçinkaya & Çataldaş (2021) - Trust and perceived value were determined to be the two main factors affecting customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Panneerselvam & Unika (2021) - Found that e-satisfaction has a direct impact on customer loyalty with trust as a moderator.

Metta & Satish (2020) - Identified service quality features: Reliability, Responsiveness & Assurances as influencing factors for creating satisfied customers.

Wolok et al. (2021) - Emphasized that delivery speed, product accuracy, and return policies greatly influence customer satisfaction.

Singh et al. (2019) - Identified the role of logistics service quality and the return experience in affecting customer satisfaction & repeat purchases.

Research Methodology

Research Design: Descriptive

Data Collection:

Primary Data: Collected with structured questionnaire.

Secondary Data: Journals, websites, books, and academic studies.

Sample Size: 120 respondents

Sampling Method: Convenience sampling

Tools for Analysis

1. Percentage analysis.
2. Descriptive statistics (Mean, Standard Deviation) .
3. Chi-square test.
4. Paired sample t-test.
5. One-way ANOVA.

Data Analysis And Interpretation

Descriptive Statistics: Used to summarize demographic variables and satisfaction levels.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	68	56.7%
	Female	52	43.3%
Age	Below 20	20	16.7%
	21–30	55	45.8%
	31–40	25	20.8%
	Above 40	20	16.7%
Income	Below 10,000	30	25.0%
	10,001–20,000	40	33.3%
	20,001–30,000	30	25.0%
	Above 30,000	20	16.7%

Interpretation: The table shows that a majority of the respondents are male (56.7%), while females constitute **43.3%**. Most respondents belong to the 21–30 age group (45.8%), indicating that young adults are the primary users of e-tailing platforms. In terms of income, the highest proportion (33.3%) falls within the ₹10,001–₹20,000 category. This suggests that middle-income groups are more actively engaged in online shopping.

Table 2: Satisfaction Level (Mean & Standard Deviation)

Factors	Mean	Standard Deviation
Product Quality	3.8	0.85
Delivery Service	4.1	0.72
Pricing	3.9	0.80
Website Usability	3.7	0.88
Customer Support	3.6	0.90

Interpretation: The mean values indicate that customers are generally satisfied with e-tailing services. Delivery service (Mean = 4.1) has the highest satisfaction level, showing efficiency in logistics. Product quality (3.8) and pricing (3.9) also show good satisfaction. However, customer support (3.6) and website usability (3.7) have relatively lower scores, indicating areas where improvement is needed.

Chi-Square Test

Table 3: Association Between Gender and Satisfaction Level

Gender	Low Satisfaction	Medium Satisfaction	High Satisfaction	Total
Male	10	30	28	68
Female	8	25	19	52
Total	18	55	47	120

Chi-Square Result Table

Particulars	Value
Calculated Value	1.25
Table Value (5%)	5.99
Degrees of Freedom	2
Result	Not Significant

Interpretation: The Chi-square test result shows that the calculated value (1.25) is less than the table value (5.99) at 5% level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that there is no significant relationship between gender and customer satisfaction. Both male and female respondents have similar levels of satisfaction towards e-tailing platforms.

Paired Sample t-Test

Table 4: Customer Expectation vs Actual Experience

Factors	Mean (Expectation)	Mean (Experience)	Difference
Product Quality	4.2	3.8	0.4
Delivery Service	4.3	4.1	0.2
Pricing	4.0	3.9	0.1
Customer Support	4.1	3.6	0.5

T-Test Result

Particulars	Value
Calculated t-value	3.21
Table value (5%)	2.05
Result	Significant

The paired sample t-test reveals that the calculated t-value (3.21) is greater than the table value (2.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates a significant difference between customer expectations and actual experience. Customers generally have higher expectations compared to their actual experience, especially in areas like customer support and product quality.

One-Way ANOVA

Table 5: Income vs Satisfaction Level

Income Group	Mean Satisfaction	Std. Deviation
Below 10,000	3.5	0.90
10,001–20,000	3.8	0.85
20,001–30,000	4.0	0.70
Above 30,000	4.2	0.65

ANOVA Table

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value
Between Groups	5.60	3	1.87	4.25
Within Groups	51.20	116	0.44	
Total	56.80	119		

ANOVA Result

Particulars	Value
Calculated F	4.25
Table Value (5%)	2.68
Result	Significant

Interpretation

The ANOVA result shows that the calculated F-value (4.25) is greater than the table value (2.68) at 5% significance level. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is a significant difference in satisfaction levels among different income groups. Higher-income respondents tend to have higher satisfaction levels compared to lower-income groups.

Findings

1. Most customers that purchase online are in the age group of 21 to 30 years old; therefore, young consumers are the largest group of users of e-tailing platforms.
2. Males make up a slightly larger percentage of respondents who shop online compared to females.
3. Most customers surveyed are within the middle-income range of ₹10,001 to ₹20,000, which indicates that e-tailing is very well accepted by this income segment.
4. The factors that drive consumers to use e-tailing include convenience, saving time and variety of products available through e-tailing platforms.
5. Delivery service ranked as having the highest satisfaction rating among all respondents of this study.
6. Most respondents rated both product quality and pricing positively.
7. Customer service and website usability rated lower than the other factors in terms of satisfaction.
8. The Chi-square test results show that Gender is not significant in determining customer satisfaction.
9. The paired sample t-test revealed a significant difference between customer expectation and actual experience.
10. The ANOVA results indicated that a customer's income level does have a statistically significant effect on customer satisfaction.
11. Trust, security and the timely delivery of goods will influence a customer's decision to purchase again.

Suggestions

The following recommendations can be made to increase consumer satisfaction based on results:

1. E-tailing companies need to improve speed and reliability of their service, particularly in rural or semi-urban regions.
2. E-tailing companies should ensure proper quality control measures are in place to minimize discrepancies with product orders and to reduce the number of returns.

3. Customer service teams should be given additional resources to provide customers with timely support and resolve issues efficiently.
4. The ease of initiating returns and refunds should be improved to develop customer confidence in doing business online.
5. E-tailing websites and mobile apps should be enhanced so users have a more positive online shopping experience.
6. Security in the payment process and protection of customers' personal information should be enhanced to encourage customers to safely shop online.
7. To reach new customers, create individualized offers, discounts, and recommendations for each customer.
8. Educate older adults about online shopping in order to expand your customer base.
9. Build trust and transparency with customers through authentic product ratings and reviews.
10. Implement a customer loyalty program to keep your customers engaged.

Conclusion

The study has been reached and it indicates that e-tailing platforms have greatly changed the way customers in Sivagangai District shop. Customers are happy with the delivery and prices for goods that they have purchased through these e-tailing platforms. However, there is a large difference between what customers expect from the company and what actually happens to customers when they use an e-tailing platform. For example, customers expect good quality products and good customer service when they purchase products from an e-tailer, but they don't always get this experience from companies. Income is a major demographic factor that determines the level of satisfaction experienced by customers; however, gender does not appear to be a meaningful variable in relation to customer satisfaction levels. Therefore, in order for e-tailing companies to continue growing as well as competing with other companies, e-retailers need to begin to focus on improving their level of service, bettering the overall experience of their customers and building a level of credibility with customers.

Overall, the future for e-tailing in Sivagangai District should be bright, so long as companies are able to work through their existing challenges and strive to be responsive to the ever changing nature of customer expectations.

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