

COMPARATIVE STUDY ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION OF ONLINE SHOPPING SYSTEM

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Abstract

The structure of the retail sector in India is continuously developing and is considered one of the most promising to expand as fast as possible among world markets. The Analyzing of Consumers buying Decision Process reveals that the Indian consumers are reluctant in their buying behaviour and they have an inherent tendency towards opting either Internet shopping or Store shopping. Each shopping modes has its pros and cons. Online shopping offers flexibility, product options, 'open 24/7', substantial savings, and feedback on the specific product. On the other hand, traditional shopping enables consumer to touch and feel the products they need before purchasing and this is something that is missing in the online platforms. Consumers switch between different modes of shopping because of the differences in their behaviours when they choose each mode depending with their convenience and needs. These behavioural differences are discussed in this paper with reference to factors that affect consumer preferences, decision-making and buying behaviour in both physical and virtual environments. In line with this understanding, the study seeks to understand the shift in shopping behaviour to provide a perspective to the continually changing nature of retail business in India with specific reference to the impact of digitalization on the retail business.

Keywords: Consumer Buying Behavior, Online Shopping Behavior, Traditional Shopping Behavior, Retail Industry, E-Commerce, Digital Transformation, Shopping Preferences, Market Trends, Customer Reviews, Discount Strategies.

Introduction

Now let us examine the trends moving retail industries forward over the last decade in India: Enabling factors and the main driving forces As incomes, and urbanization progress, the Indian public's desire for better goods and services has been fueled by the rapid advancement of e-commerce. In old days, shopping meant going round physical shops where the consumer was able to physically touch and feel products before buying them. Traditional shopping is one of the oldest methods of shopping that is still popular among people due to the ability to offer a physical concept of the shopping process. Browsers can physically examine the goods, evaluate their worth and even bargain to have them at their preferred price before making the purchase. Though large formats like Big Bazaar and Spencer's, local markets still dominate the traditional way of shopping due to familiarity and interaction but the new trend of online shopping has changed the total concept of shopping in the retail format. E-commerce makes consumers to shop from the comfort of their homes and is characterized by wide varieties of products, affordability, voluminous discounts and operation at unspecified times. Moreover, the geographical restrictions are removed and make it easy to compare through reviews and ratings. Nonetheless, it fails to offer the haptic feedback customers can get from shopping at conventional storefronts to which some shoppers switch after using online catalogs for their periodic purchasing needs.

A number of factors affect consumer behaviour as far as shopping decisions are concerned, including price sensitivity, quality of products, speed of delivery, and individual tendency. Traditional shopping is a preference to conventional buyers who have to touch the product and have faith in personal buying, while tear buying targets the technological society who opt for time and digital modes of payment. Technology has only added the fuel to this fire by integrating the click and collect mechanisms and other forms of paying online while buying offline. This paper seeks to assess the differences in consumer behaviour when they are shopping online and when they are shopping physically. It looks at issues to do with trust, convenience, discounts offered and other issues to do with an individual's preferences. The study intends to contribute to the current understanding of the shift in operation modes of retail stores in India in order to better target the rapidly growing number of online as well as offline customers.

Factors Affecting Customer Satisfaction in the Retail Industry

Satisfaction levels of the customer is an essential factor as far as retail business chain is concerned. It demonstrates the degree to which a business struggling to meet customers' expectations and drives their behaviour in terms of repeat patronage and profitability. It is denoted that there are also significant factors, which affect the customer and they are quality, price, service, availability, individual approach, and openness.

Product Quality and Pricing

1. Customer demands are ever the quality goods that should be sold at cheaper prices. If a given company is in a position to make products that meet or over the expectations of the consumers while keeping the price reasonable then it has a competitive edge. Theories show that price is a critical determinant of consumer behavior because customers always want the best deal that was available. Nevertheless, mere low prices cannot guarantee customer satisfaction it comes with the quality of the product which should correspond with the price charged. Also, organizations should strive to tread the aspect of price transparency in order to ensure trust and to eliminate cases of dissatisfaction occasioned by hidden charges. Some of the common tools of consumer attraction employed that maintain profitability include promotional discounts and value-added offers. Other similar companies such as Dabur India Ltd have demonstrated that a good balance can be made between relatively low prices of its products and competitive product quality that would sustain customer demand and loyalty.
2. **Customer Service and Accessibility**

Relevant customer satisfaction is also defined by efficient and responsive customer services. Consumers like it when their concerns are dealt with efficiently and properly by the business entities they deal with. The responsibility of the customer care department therefore lies in creating a favorable perception since it is for this reason that customer tend to either come back and repurchase from the firm or go to other firms. Friendly and warm assistance not only improves satisfaction but creates a long-term customer engagement concept available in current retail stores. Customer accessibility as well, stands as a critical factor in modern retail. Merchants have to make sure customers are able to navigate through pages, find what they need and make purchases without fail. This entails things such as faster speed for online

stores, and multilingual services, and compatibility with mobile devices. Also, accessibility should address the case of disabled persons by enabling them to browse through sites or shops comfortably. Increased availability does not only benefit the customer side but it also increases popularity and profitability.

Strategies for Improving Customer Satisfaction

1. Personalization and Convenience

Today's customers are unique, and they need business to address them as such. Consumers may use buying behavior data and related information to encourage businesses to alert them when specific products and services are in deal or on sale or to recommend just the product or service that the consumer needs most. Creating customized consumer experiences assists the development of an emotional connection with specific consumers, thus creating feelings of importance to the consumer. For instance, when people are shopping, online marketing employs automation of search engines to market related products, therefore enhancing its sales and conversions. Case 2 / Convenience Another significant characteristic of consumers' decision making is convenience. Everyone is patient with regards to time therefore, shoppers enjoy simple and less time consuming processes. Facilities such as cash on delivery, free home delivery, and easy return are ways that increase the level of satisfaction for a buyer. Thus, e-commerce sites, especially those that operate electronically rather than physically, can only survive through convenient and time-saving services.

2. Targeting and Segmentation

There is important need to target and segment retail business to meet the required consumer needs. By sorting out the population involved based on factors like age, preferences, and usage of products and services, companies can achieve tailor made marketing projects. Due to this, it helps in promoting among those segments which are likely to engage and make a purchase hence increasing the sales Chalmhuri and Batt advancing that segmentation familiarizes with the customer's preference thus enhancing the promoting strategy. This makes it easier for companies to better strike a personal chord with its customers and create tailored products and promotions that will lead to increased satisfaction. They also make the customers purchase frequently in order to benefit from the promotions and boost up customer loyalty.

3. Value-Added Services and Technological Innovation

Titanium-range carries free shipping, installation support, and after-sales to give a business a competitive edge over other competitors in the industry. With the growing universal customer trend of preferring ease in shopping, business entities have no option but to adopt technology interventions. Hypotheses concerning many elements of online shopping include, for example: integrating mobile payment, chatbots that address customer needs, AI-based recommendations increase efficacy and pleasure. Besides, many applications like virtual fitting, AR elements make online shopping more creative and less ambiguous concerning the product's quality. Many retailers have to keep on adapting to investor expectations in order to construct customer satisfaction and effective shopping experiences.

Concept of Online Shopping

Electronic commerce or commonly known as e-commerce involves the buying and selling of products and services through computer networks attaching web browsers, hand-held and smart phones. It has completely transformed the retail industry to give consumers a way of shopping commodities without physically walking into stores. In the view of Hooda and Singh (2018), online shopping satisfies the consumers who cannot afford time for the conventional shopping. According to Rowley Jennifer (1998), online shopping means a system whereby the buyers can directly order goods or services electronically from the sellers without intervention of other middle men.

People use technology in their daily lives which has led to e-shopping as most people's preferences have changed. Consumers can be able to compare price, read some of the comment and gain more insight regarding the various products this makes it easier for them to make their purchases as they are well informed when it comes to the quality of the products. It has two primary contractual models of business to consumer (B2B) for businesses that sell products to other businesses and business to consumer (B2C) for online markets selling goods and services to customers.

Weiber and Kollmann (1998) noted that online transaction is one of the most frequent Internet activities next to email and WWW browsing. It enables customer to purchase goods and services which are globally available with flexible payments such as credit/debit cards, e-wallets and other cash payment methods such as cash on delivery. However, online shopping is still in its infancy, mandatory for it can effectively compete with the product touch, playing role, and entertainment of physical retail stores, as it is particularly attractive to people who want to shop as an activity.

Benefits and Limitations of Online Shopping

Perhaps, there is no need to mention that buying goods online has lots of benefits, which explain why more and more people choose this path. One of innovation is that people are able to buy products anytime but not anywhere since it is restricted to the hours of operation of the store. This feature of availability is particularly present and helpful when rivals' physical shops are packed by holidaymakers. Second, it cuts commute time and costs due to the absence of mobility between different physical stores in a single day.

The third major benefit is product differentiation. Product differentiation means that companies in this environment are able to produce a wider range of products than they may have been able to in other environments. An online store has over a hundred sub-categories for the following consumer goods: Electronics, clothing, home and furniture, and groceries giving the buyer the opportunity to make purchases that might not be readily available in their local store. Users can also get information from other users which helps make a decision and increase confidence in buying products. Comparison with other vendors is also made to keep the prices relatively low such that customers can fetch the best available deals.

But at the same time, online shopping also has its drawbacks. There is also the inability to touch a product and therefore cannot determine the quality of the product. Other disadvantages include long delivery period, use of credit cards in payment is insecure and prices cannot be bargained. However, there is no face-to-face consultation from the online

store like having someone helping you to find the product you wanted to buy. However, such limitations do not bar certain innovations such as augmented reality, and virtual trials that are providing a sort of intermediate stage between internet shopping and actual store shopping.

Growth and Success of E-Commerce Platforms: The Case of Amazon

Amazon, an industry giant in the online market platform industry, has therefore been instrumental in the promotion this form of service delivery. Starting its journey in India under the domain name Amazon.in it has emerged as the largest online market place in India with over 20 million products listed in categories which includes electronics, fashion, home, and furniture and even groceries. They are mostly successful in covering the three basic factors that drive consumers in India that is convenience, affordability, and reliability.

The Good, Great and Best Sales periodically organized by Amazon along with the Great Indian Sale during festive seasons boosting the sales with HUGE deals and discounts has thousands of buyer's base. Of course, Amazon does not offer only products they deliver integrated services as bill payments, mobile recharges, flight bookings, purchasing insurance, and more, making it the e-commerce ecosystem.

Same day and next day delivery has created new standards by the kind of services offered by Amazon to the consumers who prefer purchase from a company that delivers their consignment on the same or the very next day. This lies in the foundation of customer satisfaction with secure payment gateways and acceptable return policies, and which upholds its mission. Other improvements include features such as recommendation to users and AI search functionality.

In addition, the imbalanced expertise of Amazon combining big data analytics and machine learning helps identify the customer preferences, optimize the stock, and provide relevant recommendations. Such aspects as concentration on the usage of new technologies, as well as innovation, have ensured Amazon continuous dominance in the globally competitive e-commerce industry.

Nevertheless, the case of Amazon indicates the trends in other e-commerce businesses, stressing, such factors as efficiency, effective advertising, and customer satisfaction as the main drivers of constant growth.

Evolution and Growth of Online Shopping

Electronic shopping or e-shopping as it is commonly referred to as has completely brought a shift to the retail industry by providing the customer with a wide range of efficient services, they can choose from. Through it, consumers can freely navigate and shop for various goods and services conveniently through laptop, smartphones, tablets and or computers connected to the world wide web. According to Hooda and Singh (2018), the convenience offered by online shopping makes it poised for favour among busy consumers since they do not have the time or mounting desire to physically shop. According to Rowley Jennifer (1998), online shopping may be described as a selling environment that directly connects customers with products' vendors, providing a straightforward process for the acquisition of goods.

Globalisation and technological improvements and shifting consumer preferences have boosted the e-commerce business. They include detailed product descriptions, price comparison and customers' reviews that enable a consumer to make decisions. Online shopping can be mainly divided into two categories: on one side there is B2B—that is Business-to-Business—buying and selling between businesses and companies and on the other side, there is B2C—Business-to-Consumer, selling products directly to the end consumer. As identified by Weiber and Kollmann (1998), online purchasing closely follows email and WWW browsing among internet users owing to simplicity and flexibility of conditions for remote payments by debit/credit card, e-purse, or cash on delivery.

However, with all the breakthroughs associated with this type of shopping it is impossible to replace the traditional one that implies tactile and interlocutory contact. Most consumer still have a tendency to shop physically to be able to touch and feel the product, or simply to socialize or to engage in recreational pursuits such as mall hunting. Consequently, both online shopping and traditional retailing are futuristic to prevail simultaneously while making available the blend options of both approaches, for instance, click-and-collect.

Opportunities and Challenges in the Online Shopping Landscape

E-commerce is made numerous possibilities, it offers comfort, cheap assortment of products, and availability of various goods on the Internet. Other competitors use online stores, and customers can order at any time without considering the store's working hours. It is most interesting during festive seasons when people are many in physical retail shops. Also, the e-commerce carries more extensive product portfolio than physical outlets, where once a client accesses site, he or she can easily browse different categories such electronics, clothes and groceries. Other device such as price comparison engines and customer reviews also help the buyer in decision making process. Offers like seasonal sale, cashback, and discounts are irresistible for millions of customers, for instance, Amazon's Great Indian Sale.

But yet again online shopping has its shortfall. A major drawback is the lack of physical contact with the products indicating that such a system can cause doubts about product quality and reliability. Others are delivery delay, fake sellers on the internet, and the risk of being defrauded while making payments online. Some customers also crumble because they do not get the same level of help or attention found in traditional stores. While methods such as AR and virtual trials may try to support this lack, they remain incapable of fully mimicking the actual tactile experience of the traditional shopping approach.

The challenges are being met by e-commerce solutions through effective use of AI recommendation systems, safe payment solutions and accommodation of a flexible return policy which would enhance consumer confidence and customer satisfaction. Amazon being one of the big beneficiaries of the big data and machine learning, has been able to use these in order to modify its users experience, delivery mechanisms and stay competitive. E-commerce platforms have continued to adopt new services as the family Bowman thus incorporating services like bill payments, mobile recharges, and bookings has expanded the use of e-commerce platforms to become basic necessities to modern life.

Nonetheless, it seems that the future is quite clear for online shopping. Kairos such as voice search, artificial assistants, and packing with earth-friendly touches can also be deemed to offer an even better experience. To support growth and respond to change demands in this highly competitive market, companies have to advancing and solve issues associated with security constantly.

Conclusion

Electronic commerce or commonly referred to as 'E-com or Etail' has been adopted as a revolutionary feature that breaks new grounds on how retailing is being conducted. In terms of the location of the store, it is highly convenient, diverse and flexible, freely opened anytime and all places through the digital device. Many consumer needs have been met by online shopping including comparison of prices, reviews of products and secure methods of payment it is for this reason that most buyers now prefer to shop online. However, it cannot eliminate the physical contact assessment that is characteristic of conventional retail stores and social contacts. However, there is evidence that instead of one side dominating the other there will be a new model of retail combining the two experiential approaches.

However, online shopping has some downside, which include security issues, long time delivery and other, and the products cannot be inspected in these stores before buying. As for these restrictions, companies are moving to incorporate new technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), augmented reality (AR), and big data analytics into the UX design to increase customers' confidence. Companies such as Amazon have standardised these by providing fast delivery, personalized recommendations and synergy to other services to assert the stake for customer centric strategies in maintaining the growth.

This research therefore infers that there is significant room for total sales through online shopping in the future due to technology, increasing ubiquity of Internet, and elevation of consumers' demands. Companies have to keep on evolving and developing: enhancing personalization, protecting data, and being environmentally friendly to thrive. This increase of consumers' inclination for convenience and cost, shows how online shopping will continue to progress, improving smarter, faster, and more interactive solutions meeting contemporary retail demands.

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