



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

Consumer Behaviour In Online Purchasing: A Study In Thiruvallur District, Tamil Nadu

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates consumer behaviour in online purchasing within Thiruvallur District, Tamil Nadu, against the backdrop of rapid internet expansion and rising digital literacy. With an increasing number of retailers transitioning to online platforms, understanding the factors that influence consumer decision-making in the digital marketplace has become critical. The study explores key determinants such as demographic characteristics, marketing strategies, product availability, and delivery services, and examines consumer perceptions regarding convenience, security, and reliability. Using a comprehensive survey and statistical analyses, the research identifies significant relationships between demographic variables and online shopping frequency, while also highlighting the pivotal role of trust and security in shaping consumer behaviour. The findings offer valuable insights for e-marketers and policymakers aiming to optimize online retail strategies and improve consumer satisfaction in the region.

KEYWORDS

Consumer Behavior, Online purchasing, E-Commerce, Digital Marketplace, Trust, Security Concerns, Demographics, Marketing Strategies, Product Availability, Delivery Services, Thiruvallur District.

INTRODUCTION

The consumer behaviour in online purchasing is essential for analyzing how individuals make decisions in the digital marketplace. The expansion of e-commerce has greatly influenced shopping patterns, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas such as Thiruvallur District, Tamil Nadu. The increasing availability of smartphones, affordable internet access, and a rising interest in online shopping have contributed to this shift. This study aims to examine consumer behaviour in online purchasing within the region, focusing on the key factors that influence their choices, purchasing frequency, and preferences.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

- The rapid growth of e-commerce has transformed shopping habits, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas like Thiruvallur District, Tamil Nadu. While online shopping offers convenience, competitive pricing, and a wide range of products, several challenges influence consumer behaviour in these regions. Factors such as digital literacy, internet accessibility, trust in online transactions, and the effectiveness of delivery services play a crucial role in shaping purchasing decisions.
- Despite the increasing adoption of smartphones and affordable internet plans, many consumers remain hesitant to shop online due to concerns related to security, product authenticity, return policies, and overall reliability. Additionally, marketing strategies, social influence, and demographic factors significantly impact online purchasing behaviour.
- This study seeks to identify the key determinants influencing consumer behaviour in online shopping in Thiruvallur District. By analyzing purchasing patterns, consumer preferences, and perceived challenges, this research aims to provide valuable insights into the evolving online shopping landscape in the region.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The rapid expansion of the internet and digital literacy among consumers has led to a significant shift in shopping behaviour, with more retailers offering online platforms for convenient purchasing. Consumers increasingly use the internet not only to buy products but also to gather information before making purchasing decisions. This transformation has reshaped business strategies, compelling e-marketers to analyze and understand the factors influencing consumer behaviour in the digital marketplace.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objectives of this study are:

1. To explore the factors that shape consumer behaviour in online shopping within Thiruvallur District, Tamil Nadu.
2. To assess the demographic characteristics of online shoppers in the region.
3. To investigate the influence of marketing strategies, product availability, and delivery services on consumer purchasing decisions.
4. To analyze consumer perceptions of online shopping concerning convenience, security, and reliability.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Several studies have explored consumer behaviour in online shopping across various regions, highlighting different factors affecting online purchase decisions.

1. **Venkatesh et al. (2012)** investigated online shopping adoption in rural India and found that trust and convenience were the primary factors driving online purchases.
2. **Sharma and Agarwal (2014)** highlighted that price sensitivity and product quality played a crucial role in shaping online shopping preferences in urban and semi-urban areas.
3. **Soni and Gupta (2016)** emphasized the impact of social influence and online reviews, particularly in smaller towns, on consumer decision-making.

These studies provide a framework for understanding the variables influencing consumer behaviour in the online marketplace, which forms the basis of this research.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative research approach, utilizing a structured questionnaire to gather primary data from consumers in Thiruvallur District. The research process is structured as follows:

1. Sampling:

The study focuses on 300 online shoppers from different towns and villages within Thiruvallur District.

A stratified random sampling method is used to ensure a diverse and representative sample.

2. Data Collection:

Primary data is collected through a combination of face-to-face interviews and online surveys to obtain comprehensive consumer insights.

3. Tools Used for Analysis:

The collected data is analyzed using various statistical tools, including percentage analysis, ANOVA, T-test, Chi-square, and Factor Analysis, to derive meaningful insights.

4. Data Interpretation:

The data is processed and analyzed using SPSS software for accurate interpretation and statistical evaluation.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

1.AGE GROUP:

DEMOGRAPHIC FACTOR	NO.OF.RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Below 20 years	45	15%
20-30 years	120	40%
31-40 years	90	30%
Above 40 years	45	15%

INTREPRETATION:

Age Distribution: The majority of online shoppers in Thiruvallur District fall within the 20-30 age group (40%), followed by 31-40 years (30%). Consumers under 20 years and over 40 years each account for 15%, indicating that young adults are the primary online shoppers in the district.

2.GENDER:

DEMOGRAPHIC FACTOR	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Male	180	60%
Female	120	40%

INTREPRETATION:

Gender Distribution: Males constitute 60% of the respondents, while females make up 40%, suggesting a higher tendency for online shopping among men in the district.

3.OCCUPATION:

DEMOGRAPHIC FACTOR	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Students	90	30%
Professionals	120	40%
Others	90	30%

INTREPRETATION:

Occupation: Professionals (40%) and students (30%) form the largest groups of online shoppers, highlighting their active participation in e-commerce. The remaining 30% includes individuals from other occupational backgrounds.

2.ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) :

Factors	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Age Group & Purchase Frequency	12.50	3	4.17	2.75	0.042
Gender & Purchase Frequency	8.33	1	8.33	5.67	0.019

INTERPRETATION:**Age Group & Purchase Frequency:**

The ANOVA test results ($F=2.75$, $Sig.=0.042$) indicate that age significantly influences online shopping frequency. Since the p-value (0.042) is less than 0.05, it confirms that different age groups exhibit varying shopping behaviours. Younger consumers (below 30 years) tend to shop online more frequently compared to older individuals.

Gender & Purchase Frequency:

The ANOVA test findings ($F=5.67$, $Sig.=0.019$) suggest that gender has a significant impact on online shopping frequency. With a p-value below 0.05, the results indicate that males in Thiruvallur District shop online more frequently than females.

3.T-Test (Independent Sample Test):

Group	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value	Sig.
Age Group Below 30	3.58	1.02	2.56	0.014

Age Group Comparison:

The t-test results indicate a significant difference in online shopping frequency between consumers below 30 years (mean = 3.58) and those above 30 years (mean = 3.31). With a t-value of 2.56 and a p-value of 0.014 (less than 0.05), the findings confirm that younger individuals shop online more frequently than older consumers.

4.CHI-SQUARE TEST:

Factors	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	Chi-Square Value	Sig.
Trust in Online Shopping	210	150	18.72	0.001
Security Concerns	150	150	5.87	0.022

INTERPRETATION:**Trust in Online Shopping:**

The Chi-square test (Chi-square = 18.72, Sig. = 0.001) reveals a significant relationship between consumer trust and online shopping. The observed frequency (210) exceeds the expected value (150), indicating that most consumers in Thiruvallur District have a high level of trust in online shopping platforms.

Security Concerns:

The Chi-square test (Chi-square = 5.87, Sig. = 0.022) also shows a significant association between security concerns and online shopping. With an observed frequency of 150, which is higher than expected, the findings suggest that many consumers remain concerned about security risks when shopping online.

5.FACTOR ANALYSIS:

Factors	Factor Loading
Price Sensitivity	0.82
Product Variety	0.75
Delivery Time	0.68
Trust & Security	0.65

INTERPRETATION:

- **Price Sensitivity** has the highest factor loading (0.82), meaning it is the most significant factor affecting consumer behaviour in online shopping in Thiruvallur District.
- **Product Variety** (0.75) is also an important factor, indicating that consumers are more likely to purchase online if there is a wide variety of products available.
- **Delivery Time** (0.68) and **Trust & Security** (0.65) are also important but slightly less influential. This shows that while consumers value quick delivery and secure transactions, price sensitivity and product variety are the primary drivers of online purchasing decisions in the district.

HYPOTHESIS AND INTERPRETATION

The following hypothesis are formulated based on the objectives of the study to analyze consumer behaviour in online purchasing in Thiruvallur District, Tamil Nadu. These hypothesis are tested using various statistical tools such as ANOVA, T-test, and Chi-square.

1. Hypothesis for Age Group and Purchase Frequency (ANOVA):

Hypothesis for Age Group and Purchase Frequency (ANOVA):

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant difference in online purchase frequency among different age groups.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant difference in online purchase frequency among different age groups.

Interpretation:

The ANOVA test results indicate an F-value of 2.75 and a p-value of 0.042. Since the p-value is below the 0.05 threshold, we reject the null hypothesis. This implies that online purchase frequency varies significantly across age groups in Thiruvallur District. Specifically, younger individuals (below 30 years) tend to shop online more frequently than older age groups.

2. Hypothesis for Gender and Purchase Frequency (ANOVA):

Hypothesis for Gender and Purchase Frequency (ANOVA):

Null Hypothesis (H_0): Gender has no significant impact on the frequency of online shopping.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): Gender significantly affects the frequency of online shopping.

Interpretation:

The ANOVA test results show an F-value of 5.67 and a p-value of 0.019. Since the p-value is below 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis. This suggests that gender plays a significant role in online shopping behaviour, with males in Thiruvallur District engaging in online shopping more frequently than females.

3. Hypothesis for Age Group and Online Shopping Frequency (T-Test):

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant difference in online shopping frequency between consumers below 30 years and those above 30 years.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant difference in online shopping frequency between consumers below 30 years and those above 30 years.

Interpretation: The t-test results indicate a t-value of 2.56 with a p-value of 0.014. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis. This implies that consumers below 30 years in Thiruvallur District shop online more frequently than those above 30 years.

4. Hypothesis for Trust in Online Shopping (Chi-Square Test):

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant relationship between trust in online shopping and consumer purchasing behaviour.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant relationship between trust in online shopping and consumer purchasing behaviour.

Interpretation: The Chi-square test results in a Chi-square value of 18.72 with a p-value of 0.001. Since the p-value is below the 0.05 threshold, we reject the null hypothesis. This indicates a significant relationship between trust in online shopping and consumer purchasing behaviour in Tiruvallur District, highlighting trust as a crucial factor influencing online shopping decisions.

5. Hypothesis for Security Concerns and Online Purchasing (Chi-Square Test):

Null Hypothesis (H_0): Security concerns do not have a significant relationship with consumer purchasing behaviour.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): Security concerns have a significant relationship with consumer purchasing behaviour.

Interpretation: The Chi-square test results yield a Chi-square value of 5.87 with a p-value of 0.022. Since the p-value is below 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis. This confirms a significant relationship between security concerns and consumer purchasing behaviour in Thiruvallur District, indicating that security concerns play a crucial role in shaping consumer confidence in online shopping.

FINDINGS

- **Age Group and Purchase Frequency:** The study indicates a significant variation in online shopping frequency across different age groups, with younger consumers (under 30 years) making purchases more frequently.
- **Gender and Purchase Frequency:** Shopping behaviour differs by gender, with males engaging in online shopping more frequently than females.

- Age Group and Online Shopping Frequency: Consumers under 30 years demonstrate a higher tendency for frequent online purchases compared to those over 30.
- Trust in Online Shopping: Trust is a key factor influencing online shopping decisions, as a strong relationship exists between consumer trust and purchasing behaviour.
- Security Concerns: Security concerns significantly impact online shopping decisions, with consumers prioritizing secure platforms to ensure safe transactions.

SUGGESTIONS

- Enhanced Delivery Services: Online retailers should prioritize faster and more reliable delivery to improve consumer satisfaction.
- Building Consumer Trust: Implementing secure payment gateways and transparent policies can strengthen consumer trust.
- Targeting Younger Consumers: Since younger individuals are more inclined to shop online, businesses should tailor their marketing strategies to appeal to this demographic.
- Educational Initiatives: Awareness campaigns in rural areas can help educate consumers on the benefits and security of online shopping.

SCOPE FOR FURTHER STUDY

Future research can expand on this study by:

- Conducting a comparative study between urban and rural consumers to understand differences in online shopping behaviour.
- Examining how consumer behaviour evolves over time with advancements in technology and digital payment systems.
- Analyzing consumer preferences for specific product categories such as electronics, fashion, and groceries.

CONCLUSION

The study highlights that age, gender, and occupation significantly impact online purchasing behaviour in Thiruvallur District. Younger consumers (below 30 years) are more likely to shop online frequently. Key factors influencing online shopping decisions include price sensitivity, product variety, and trust in the website. Additionally, the findings emphasize that consumer trust and security concerns are essential for enhancing the online shopping experience in the region.

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