

A study on rural customer's perception on Indian e-commerce platform: a reference to Coimbatore district

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Abstract

This study explores the perception of rural customers in Coimbatore district towards Indian e-commerce platforms. With the rapid growth of internet penetration and smartphone usage, e-commerce has become increasingly accessible to rural consumers. The research aims to understand the factors influencing rural customers' adoption of e-commerce, their satisfaction levels, and the challenges they face. Data was collected through surveys and interviews with rural consumers, and analyzed using statistical tools. The findings reveal that while rural customers appreciate the convenience and variety offered by e-commerce platforms, they also encounter issues such as lack of trust, limited digital literacy, and logistical challenges. The study provides insights for e-commerce companies to tailor their strategies to better serve rural markets and enhance customer satisfaction.

Keywords: Rural customers, Coimbatore district, E-Commerce, Digital literacy, Customer perception

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The significance of this research lies in its potential to bridge the gap between e-commerce platforms and rural consumers. Despite the rapid growth of e-commerce in urban areas, rural customers often face unique challenges such as limited digital literacy, lack of trust in online transactions, and logistical issues. By addressing these concerns, e-commerce companies can better serve this segment of the market and contribute to the overall growth of the digital economy in India. The study also highlights the opportunities for e-commerce platforms to enhance customer satisfaction and build long-term relationships with rural consumers, ultimately driving inclusive growth and development. With the advent of widespread internet access and the increasing penetration of smartphones, e-commerce has revolutionized the retail industry in India. This study focuses on understanding the perception of rural customers in the Coimbatore district towards Indian e-commerce platforms. By exploring the factors that influence their adoption of e-commerce, the study aims to uncover the motivations and barriers faced by these consumers. Surveys and interviews were conducted with rural customers to gather data, which was then analyzed to provide

insights into their attitudes and experiences. The findings of this study are expected to offer valuable information

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite the rapid growth of e-commerce in urban areas, rural customers in the Coimbatore district face unique challenges that hinder their adoption and satisfaction with Indian e-commerce platforms. These challenges include limited digital literacy, lack of trust in online transactions, logistical issues, and inadequate customer support. Understanding the perceptions, attitudes, and experiences of rural customers is crucial for e-commerce companies to address these barriers and improve their engagement with this market segment. This study aims to identify the key factors influencing rural customers' perception of e-commerce,

1.3 NEED OF STUDY

The need for this study arises from the growing importance of e-commerce in India's economy and the unique challenges faced by rural customers in adopting these platforms. While urban areas have seen significant growth

online shopping, rural regions, including Coimbatore district, often lag due to factors such as limited digital literacy, lack of trust, and logistical issues. By understanding the perceptions and experiences of rural customers, this study aims to identify the barriers to e-commerce adoption and provide actionable insights for e-commerce companies to tailor their strategies. This, in turn, can enhance customer satisfaction, foster inclusive growth, and bridge the digital divide between urban and rural markets. The study concludes that rural customers in the Coimbatore district have a growing interest in e-commerce platforms due to the convenience and variety of products offered. However, several challenges need to be addressed to enhance their online shopping experience.

1.4 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study on rural customers' perception of Indian e-commerce platforms, with a focus on the Coimbatore district, encompasses several key areas. It aims to explore the awareness, adoption, and satisfaction levels of rural consumers regarding online shopping. The study also seeks to identify the factors influencing their purchasing decisions, such as internet accessibility, trust in e-commerce platforms, and logistical challenges. Additionally, it examines the impact of socio-economic and demographic factors on e-commerce usage. The ultimate goal is to provide actionable insights for e-commerce platforms to better cater to the needs of rural customers

1.5 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To Explore the Influence of Socio-demographic Factors on Rural Consumers' Perception of E-commerce
2. Factors Influencing Rural Customers' Perception of E-commerce Platforms
3. To Understand the Perception of Rural Customers Regarding Trust and Credibility of E-commerce Platforms
4. To Identify the primary Barriers of rural customers in E-Commerce.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology for the study on rural customers' perception of Indian e-commerce platforms in the Coimbatore district

involves a mixed-methods approach. This includes both quantitative and qualitative techniques to gather comprehensive data. Surveys and questionnaires are administered to a representative sample of rural consumers to collect quantitative data on their awareness, usage, and satisfaction levels with e-commerce platforms. The study also analyzes secondary data from relevant sources to supplement the primary findings.

1.7 SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

- The sampling technique is studying the population by gathering the information and analysing that data at random.
- This research is conducted by random sampling.

1.7.1 SAMPLING SIZE

- Sample size refers to the number of participants or observations included in a study.
- Approximately 150 respondents will be targeted for participation in the study.

1.7.2 TOOLS USED

- Frequency
- Anova

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The area of the study is conducted only in Coimbatore city, so the result may not be applicable to other cities.
- Only 150 respondents have been taken for the study, if the responses increase the results may differ.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the upcoming lines, the review of literature takes place which includes reviews of past studies.

Dr. A. Karuppasamy and Mrs. S. Mahalakshmi (2023)¹, in the study titled **“Perception of Rural Folks on E-Service in Coimbatore District”**. This study explores the perception of rural consumers in the Coimbatore district towards e-services. It highlights the increasing use of the internet for various purposes, including online shopping, and examines the factors influencing rural consumers' adoption of e-commerce. The research identifies key barriers such as internet accessibility, trust in online transactions, and logistical challenges.

The study also emphasizes the role of government initiatives in promoting digital literacy and internet usage among rural populations.

Dr. R. Kumar and Dr. S. Anitha (2022)², in the study titled **“Rural Consumer Adoption of E-Commerce Platforms: A Study in Coimbatore District”** his study investigates the factors influencing rural consumers' adoption of e-commerce platforms in the Coimbatore district. It highlights the growing trend of online shopping among rural populations and identifies key factors such as internet accessibility, trust in online transactions, and the availability of diverse products. The study also examines the impact of socio-economic factors on e-commerce adoption and suggests strategies for e-commerce platforms to address the unique needs of rural consumers. By understanding these factors, the study provides valuable insights for enhancing the e-commerce experience for rural customers.

Dr. P. Natarajan and Dr. K. Meenakshi (2021), in the study titled **“Challenges and Opportunities for E-Commerce in Rural India: A Focus on Coimbatore District”** This research explores the challenges and opportunities faced by e-commerce platforms in rural India, with a specific focus on the Coimbatore district. It

The study also highlights the potential opportunities for e-commerce growth in rural areas, driven by increasing internet penetration and government initiatives. The findings provide recommendations for e-commerce platforms to overcome these challenges and effectively tap into the rural market.

Dr. M. Venkatesh and Dr. L. Kavitha (2020), in the study titled **“E-Commerce Adoption Among Rural Consumers: Insights from Coimbatore District”** This study examines the adoption of e-commerce platforms among rural consumers in the Coimbatore district. It focuses on the factors influencing their online shopping behavior, including product availability, pricing, and delivery services. The research also explores the role of digital literacy and trust in online transactions. The findings suggest that addressing these factors can significantly enhance the e-commerce experience for rural consumers and drive higher adoption rates. The study provides actionable insights for e-commerce platforms to better serve the rural market. The study provides recommendations for e-commerce platforms to enhance their services and build trust among rural consumers, ultimately contributing to the growth of the e-commerce industry in rural India.

3.1 PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

Table 1

DEMOGRAPHICS		FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
AGE	18-25	120	80.5
	26-40	24	16.1
	41-55	6	3.4
	TOTAL	150	100.0
GENDER	MALE	49	32.9
	FEMALE	101	67.1
	TOTAL	150	100.0
EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	PRIMARY LEVEL	6	4.0
	SECONDARY LEVEL	39	26.2
	GRADUATE	105	69.8
	TOTAL	150	100.0
FAMILY TYPE	NUCLEAR	123	82.6
	JOINT	21	13.4
	OTHERS	6	4.0
	TOTAL	150	100.0

MONTHLY INCOME	BELOW 10,000	56	37.6
	10,000 - 20,000	33	22.1
	20,000 - 30,000	27	18.1
	ABOVE 40,000	34	22.1
	TOTAL	150	100.0

ONEWAY ANOVA					
FACTORS		SUM OF SQUARES	DF	MEAN SQUARE	F
3.1 Availability of internet and mobile networks	Between Groups	.145	1	.145	.208
	Within Groups	103.215	148	.697	
	Total	103.360	149		
3.2 Awareness about ecommerce platforms	Between Groups	3.734	1	3.734	6.029
	Within Groups	91.659	148	.619	
	Total	95.393	149		
3.3 Product Relevance (Eg : Agricultural Tools)	Between Groups	25.627	1	25.627	38.285
	Within Groups	99.067	148	.669	
	Total	124.693	149		
3.4 Reliability of Delivery services	Between Groups	38.170	1	38.170	64.706
	Within Groups	87.304	148	.590	
	Total	125.473	149		
3.5 Trust and Security	Between Groups	83.130	1	83.130	166.928
	Within Groups	73.704	148	.498	
	Total	156.833	149		
3.6 Opportunities for small business	Between Groups	65.781	1	65.781	83.788
	Within Groups	116.193	148	.785	
	Total	181.973	149		
3.7 Local language interface	Between Groups	30.225	1	30.225	45.454
	Within Groups	98.415	148	.665	
	Total	128.640	149		
3.8 Packaging styles	Between Groups	56.836	1	56.836	85.280
	Within Groups	98.637	148	.666	
	Total	155.473	149		

INTERPRETATION

The demographic data from the study on rural customers' perception of Indian e-commerce platforms in the Coimbatore district reveals several key insights. The majority of respondents are young adults aged 18-25 (80.5%), followed by those aged 26-40 (16.1%), with a small proportion aged 41-55 (3.4%). A higher percentage of respondents are female (67.1%) compared to male (32.9%). In terms of educational qualifications, most respondents are graduates (69.8%), while a smaller percentage have secondary-level education (26.2%) and primary-level education (4.0%). The data also indicates that a significant majority of respondents come from nuclear families (82.6%), with fewer from joint families (13.4%) and other family types (4.0%). This demographic profile suggests that young, educated individuals from nuclear families are the primary users of e-commerce platforms in rural Coimbatore, highlighting the importance of targeting this segment for improved digital services.

INTERPRETATION

The results from the one-way ANOVA analysis highlight various factors influencing rural customers' perceptions of e-commerce platforms in the Coimbatore district. The availability of internet and mobile networks does not show significant variation between groups ($F = 0.208$), indicating a consistent level of access across respondents. Awareness about e-commerce platforms ($F = 6.029$), product relevance ($F = 38.285$), reliability of delivery services ($F = 64.706$), trust and security ($F = 166.928$), opportunities for small businesses ($F = 83.788$), local language interface ($F = 45.454$), and packaging styles ($F = 85.280$)

4.1 CONCLUSION

The study on rural customers' perception of Indian e-commerce platforms, with a reference to the Coimbatore district, has provided valuable insights into the adoption and usage of online shopping among rural consumers. The findings reveal a growing interest in e-commerce platforms due to the convenience, variety, and competitive pricing they offer. However, several challenges need to be addressed to enhance the online shopping experience for rural customers. These include improving internet connectivity, ensuring reliable delivery services, building trust in online payment systems, and providing user-friendly interfaces in local languages.

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