

Rural Consumer Behaviour Towards Online Shopping in Chengalpattu City

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ABSTRACT

The article explores the intricate dynamics of consumer behavior, particularly focusing on its implications for understanding purchasing decisions. It elucidates the multifaceted nature of consumer behavior, encompassing the acquisition, evaluation, utilization, and disposal of goods and services. The central emphasis lies in comprehending the behavior patterns of consumers during product selection to meet their needs and desires. Consumer behavior analysis becomes paramount for marketers, serving as a foundation for effective marketing strategies. This comprehensive study scrutinizes the myriad determinants influencing consumer behavior, including cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors. It underscores the pivotal role of understanding these determinants, despite their uncontrollable nature, in decoding the complexities of consumer behavior. Moreover, the article sheds light on the profound impact of lifestyle on consumer preferences and purchasing behaviors. It highlights the evolving nature of societal norms, allowing individuals in modern consumer societies to select products and services that mirror their identities. A substantial segment of the article delves into the evolving landscape of online shopping, specifically among rural consumers in Chengalpattu Town (Villages). It outlines the objectives of studying rural consumer behavior towards online shopping, aiming to analyze motivations, awareness levels, satisfaction, and product attribute influences on purchase decisions. The research methodology entails a descriptive survey employing structured questionnaires among rural consumers, emphasizing demographics and online shopping behavior. Findings illuminate demographic patterns, income levels, spending habits, and factors influencing online purchasing decisions among rural consumers. The article concludes by highlighting the advantages of online shopping, such as a diverse product range and cost-effectiveness, juxtaposed against barriers like psychological needs, trust issues, and limited internet access hindering the adoption of online shopping in rural areas. The provided suggestions aim to bridge these gaps by enhancing communication, education, trust-building, and infrastructure in rural markets, fostering a conducive environment for online commerce among rural consumers.

INTRODUCTION

Consumer behavior is the decision-making process and physical activity involved in acquiring, evaluating, using, and disposing of goods and services. It is the study of customers and how they behave while deciding to buy a product that satisfies their needs. It is a study of the actions of the consumers that drive them to buy and use certain products. It refers to the actions and the decision processes of people who purchase goods and services for personal consumption.

The study of Consumer behavior is an attempt to understand and predict human action in the buying role. It is a complex, dynamic, dimensional process; all marketing decisions are based on assumptions about consumer behavior. In such an environment, the knowledge of consumer behavior helps the marketer to understand how consumers think, feel and select from alternatives like products, and brands and how the consumers are influenced by their environment, the reference groups, family, salespersons, and so on.

The study of consumer behavior is most important for marketers as they can understand the expectation of the consumers. It helps to understand what makes a consumer to buy a product. It is important to assess the kind of products liked by consumers so that they can release it to the market. Marketers can understand the

likes and dislikes of consumers and design base their marketing efforts based on the findings. Consumer buying behavior studies various situations such as what do consumers buy, why do they buy, when do they buy, how often do consumers buy, for what reason do they buy and much more.

1.1 IMPORTANCE OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

Understanding consumer behavior is essential for a company to find success for its current products as well as new product launches. Every consumer has a different thought process and attitude towards buying a particular product. If a company fails to understand the reaction of a consumer towards a product. If a company fails to understand the reaction of a consumer towards a product, there are high chances of product failure. Due to the changing fashion, technology, trends, living style, disposable income and similar other

factors, consumer behavior also changes. A marketer has to understand the factors that are changing so that the marketing efforts can be aligned accordingly.

2.1 BENEFITS OF ONLINE SHOPPING

- Saves time and effort.
- The convenience of shopping at home.
- A wide variety/range of products is available.
- Good discounts / lower prices.
- Get detailed information about the product.
- We can compare various models/brands.



There is a significant change in the rural consumers due to the growth in:-

- Disposable Income
- Education Facilities
- Media Reach
- Urban Interactions
- Reach the marketers

Rural markets came out as potential markets over the years. With the markets, there is a growth in consumer base having varied characteristics.

Therefore, rural marketers analyze the consumption pattern and lifestyle of the consumer. To remain competitive, marketers develop rural and region-specific marketing strategies. Hence, marketers must explore and understand rural consumers' buying habits and preferences. This helps meet the

organizational marketing objectives and earn profits.

2.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF RURAL CONSUMERS:

The user's needs and wants of the rural market are different. Thus, the rural consumer possesses distinctive characteristics.



EDUCATION

Consumers are less literate due to fewer educational facilities.

The marketers need such strategies which generate product awareness considering this characteristic. They can incorporate an audio-visual medium of communication in their marketing campaign.

LOW-INCOME LEVELS

The income of the rural consumer has grown over the years. But still, their disposable income is spent on necessities. They prefer affordable products and purchase only the required quantity of goods.

The marketers must launch their products in small packaging and at lower rates.

OCCUPATION

The consumption pattern of rural consumers largely depends upon their income and occupation. It is observed that the occupation of a rural consumer is framed in general.

There exist other professions as well, like service providers, technical workers, etc. The companies must launch such products in markets that satisfy all consumer groups.

1.2 IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The success of any enterprise depends on its ability to create a satisfied set of consumers. Hence, all activities of the marketers should be directed towards the satisfaction of consumers, their needs, and their wants. To do so the marketers should have a complete understanding of the consumer's preferences. In rural areas, consumers get highly influenced by internal and external forces. The rural marketing strategy widely depends upon the consumer's behavior. The marketers try to achieve a high level of consumer acceptance. So, they explore and understand the preferences of the consumer. And critically examine rural consumers' behavior. Electronic commerce encompasses all online marketplaces that connect buyers and sellers. The internet is used to process all electronic transactions.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

- Consumer behavior is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society. It blends elements from
- Psychology,

➤ Sociology
➤ Social anthropology and
➤ Economics
➤ It attempts to understand the decision-making processes of buyers, both individually and in groups. It studies characteristics of individual consumers such as demographics and behavioral variables in an attempt to understand people's wants. It also tries to assess influences on the consumer from groups such as family, friends, reference groups, and society in general.
As a researcher's knowledge goes, there is no study of rural consumer behavior towards online shopping in Chengalpattu Town (Villages). This is a maiden attempt to study the rural consumer behavior towards online shopping in Chengalpattu Town (Villages).
The purpose of the study is to determine the online buying behavior of selected rural consumers in the Tiruvannamalai district. The scope of this study is restricted to a quantitative analysis of the selected internet users of rural parts of the Tiruvannamalai district.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY MAIN OBJECTIVE:

To study and analyses the rural consumer behavior towards online shopping in Chengalpattu Town (Villages).

SECONDARY OBJECTIVES:

1. To analyze the reason for purchasing online shopping.
2. To study and examine consumer awareness towards the purchase of online shopping.
3. To identify the satisfaction level of the rural consumer towards the purchase of online shopping.
4. To find out the influence of product attributes on the purchase decision of online shopping.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is descriptive and adopts a survey method. A well-structured questionnaire was used to collect information. Efforts were also taken to collect all the published information through available reference materials.

1.5.1 QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

The question used for the study has two parts. The first part is about the demographic details of the respondents. The second part is about rural consumer behavior towards online shopping. It consists of questions related to, factors motivating the type of consumer, rural consumer behavior, E-commerce, the purpose of online shopping, price, design, and quality.

1.5.2 AREA OF THE STUDY

The study is conducted in Chengalpattu Town (Villages) in the State of Tamil Nadu.
The rationale behind the choice of Chengalpattu Town is explained below.

- The sprouting growth of the manufacturing and trading industry has led to a change in the style of people residing at Chengalpattu Town.
- The respondent's familiarity with rural consumer behavior and online shopping and various scheme related to it.

1.5.3 SAMPLE DESIGN

The convenience sampling method is used for selected the respondents from the user of Online Shopping in the town of Chengalpattu. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed. The scrutiny of these led to the rejection of 5 responses on account of being incomplete. Thus, 195 questionnaires were used for the present study.

A structured questionnaire was framed to collect primary data from rural consumers.
The convenience sampling method is used to collect responses from 195 respondents.

PRIMARY DATA:

The primary data were collected from the selected consumers in Chengalpattu Town (surrounding villages)

SECONDARY DATA:

Secondary data were collected from Journals, Books, Magazines, Newspapers, and various websites.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study uses a descriptive research design to judge the buying behavior pattern and awareness regarding online shopping in terms of rural consumers. The study uses convenient sampling

SAMPLE SIZE

The sample size taken in this study was 195 respondents across Chengalpattu District. Data were collected from the rural areas Padalam of and. karunguzhi

SAMPLING PLAN

A structured questionnaire was used for the study to collect data from the rural areas of the Tiruvannamalai District.

1.8.4. ANALYSIS OF DATA

The primary data collected from the consumers of online shopping were analyzed using the following statistical tools by using the SPSS package:

1. Percentage Analysis
2. Chi-square test
3. ANOVA
4. F-value
5. Standard error
6. Standard deviation
7. Mean

1.6 STATISTICAL TOOLS USED FOR ANALYSIS

1. Percentage Analysis

Percentages refer to a special kind of ratio. Percentages are used in making a comparison between two or more series of data. Percentages are used to describe relationships.

$$\text{percentage of respondent} = \frac{\text{No of respondents}}{\text{Total no of respondents}} \times 100$$

2. Chi-square Test

Chi-square test to compare the relationship between the two variables Formula

$$X^2 = \sum (O - E)^2 / E$$

Where,

O=Observed value E=Expected value

There are many situations in which it is not possible to make any rigid assumption about the distribution of the population from which samples are being drawn.

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study has the following constraints:

- ❖ The sample size is restricted to 195 consumers, due to mind financial constraints.
- ❖ Convenience Sampling has its limitations. The results of the study cannot be generalized to the entire Tamil Nadu or India.
- ❖ The study is conducted considering the prevailing condition which is subject to change in the future.

REVIEW LITERATURE

Nielsen (March 2020) when Covid-19 occurred, there are more than 50% of customers reduced their frequency of visiting physical stores, 80% reduced their occasions of out-of- home consumption and 39% bought more frequently from online shopping channels. The type of goods being searched and purchased has changed drastically since the appearance of Covid-19, mostly about hygiene goods (76%), travel plans (63%, though 22% of it was cancelled), home-cooking, and home-eating which are also more often consumed (63%). One of the noticeable issues is that around 64% of Vietnamese are prepared to keep maintaining their new habits which are using food delivery or purchasing goods online even after the pandemic.

Gaikwad (2015) explained that the prime purpose of the research is to identify and analyze the factors influencing consumers to shop online. Besides the factors influencing another purpose of the study is to analyze who are online shoppers in terms of demography

Sureshkumar (2017), discussed the rural people's behavior towards online shopping, and why they prefer online shopping. In recent years, rural markets have acquired significance, as the overall growth of the economy has resulted in a substantial increase in the purchasing power of the rural communities. Rural Markets are defined as those segments of the overall market of any economy, which are distinct from the other types of markets like the stock market, commodity markets, or Labor economics. Online shopping or e-shopping is a form of electronic commerce that allows consumers to directly buy goods or services from a seller over the Internet using web browser alternative names are: e-web-store, e-shop, e-store, Internet shop, web-shop, web-store, online store, online storefront, and virtual store. The purpose of this study is to analyze the impact of consumer perceptions regarding online shopping. A sample of 100 (63 males and 37 females) respondents was taken into consideration from rural areas.

Santhi & Gopal (2018) found that understanding customers' needs and desires for online buying, the selling has become a challenging task for marketers. Especially understanding the consumer's attitudes toward online shopping, improving the factors that influence consumers to shop online, and working on factors that affect consumers to shop online will help marketers to gain a competitive advantage over the others.

Singhal & Patra (2018) in their study found that A preference measurement check was made to know the perception of the consumers regarding the top e-commerce website i.e. Flipkart, Amazon, Snapdeal, Jeong, Shop clues, and others. The major reason behind their perception was based on various discounts, easy payment facilities, easy return facilities, timely and express delivery Wai et al (2019) Literature show that when consumers get influenced to buy a particular product or service, some underlying roots are based on their behavior.

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ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter is aimed at describing the demographic profile of respondents' viz., gender, Educational Qualification, Occupation, and Monthly income. The data relating to these factors are tabulated and presented. The factors influencing consumers' intention to buy production online are identified and their relationship with the demographic profile of the respondents is examined. The collected data were analyzed in this chapter, and the following tables and figures support the analysis

Gender of the Respondents:

Analysis of respondents concerning their gender was carried out. The results are summarized in Table 4.1

Table 4.1 Gender-wise Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Male	63	32.3
Female	132	67.7
Total	195	100

Source: Primary data

It is observed from the above table 4.1 that 67.7% of them were Female respondents and 32.3% of them were male respondents.

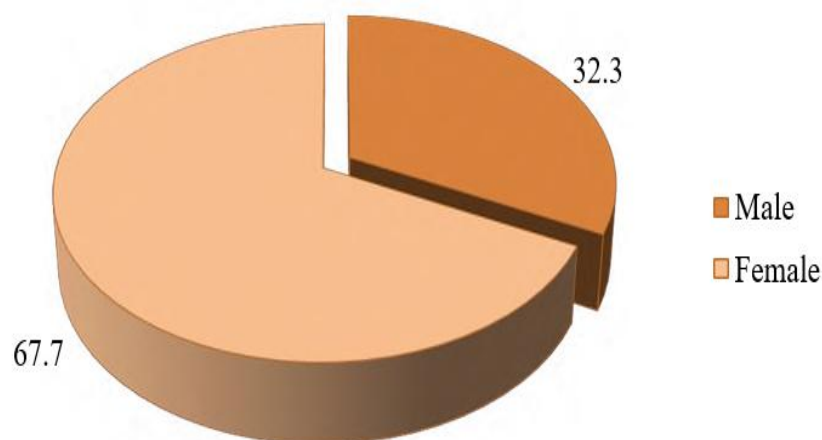


Figure 4.1: Gender distribution of Respondents

4.1 Educational Qualification of Respondents:

Education is one of the primary determinants of online purchase behavior. Analysis of respondents concerning their educational equal qualifications was carried out. The results are summarized in table 4.2:

Table 4.2 Educational Qualification of the Respondents

Level of Education	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Up to 10th standard	59	30.3
12th standard	35	17.9
Diploma	24	12.3
UG	58	29.7
PG	14	7.2
Professional	5	2.6
Total	195	100

Source: Primary data

Table 4.2 shows that 30.3% of the respondents have completed till 10th Standard, 29.7% of them have done their Under-graduation, 17.9% of them have school education till 12th standard, 12.3% of them have completed Diploma, 7.2% of them were post-Graduates, and only very less (2.6%) of them have possess professional qualification

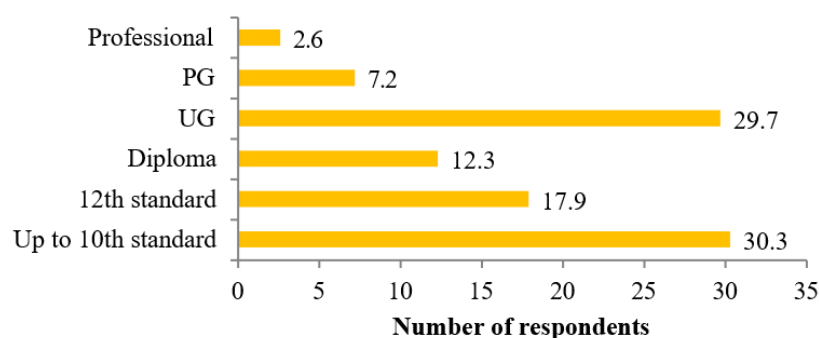


Figure 4.2: Education of Respondents

4.2 Occupation of the Respondents:

Analysis of the occupation of the respondents was carried out and the results are summarized in table 4.3:

Table 4.3 Occupation of the Respondents

Occupation	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Agriculture	36	18.5

Daily Wage	70	35.9
Businessman	15	7.7
Student	19	9.7
Homemaker	48	24.6
Government Job	7	3.6
Total	195	100

Source: Primary data

It is depicted in table 4.3 that 35.9% of the respondents were daily wage workers, 24.6% of them were homemakers, 18.5% of them were doing Agriculture, 9.7% of them were students, 7.7% of them were Businessmen, and only very less (3.6%) of them working in a government job.

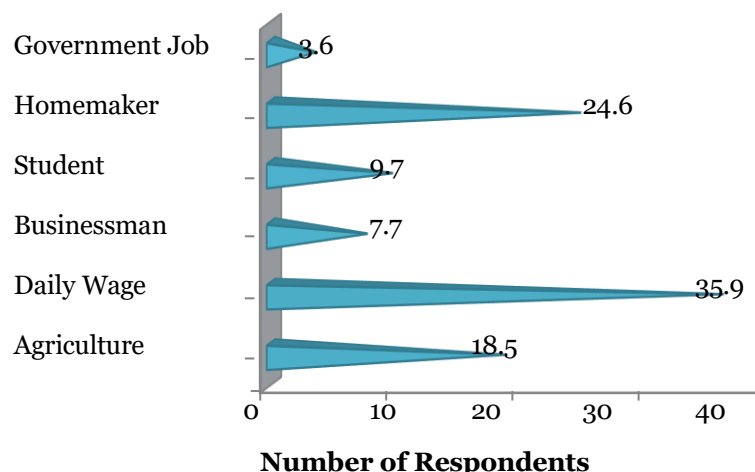


Figure 4.3: Occupation of Respondents

4.3 Monthly Income of the Respondents:

Analysis of respondents concerning their monthly income was carried out. The results are summarized in table 4.4:

Table 4.4 Monthly Income of the Respondents

Monthly Income	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Less than Rs.20,000	174	89.2
Rs.20,001 – 30,000	14	7.2
Rs.30,001- 40,000	5	2.6
More than Rs.40,000	2	1
Total	195	100

Source: Primary data

From the above table, it is evident that 89.2% of the respondents earn a monthly income of less than Rs.20,000, 7.2% of them earn between Rs.20,001 to Rs.30,000 monthly, 2.6% of them earn between Rs.30,001 to Rs.40,000 monthly, and only 1% earn more than Rs.40,000 as their monthly income.

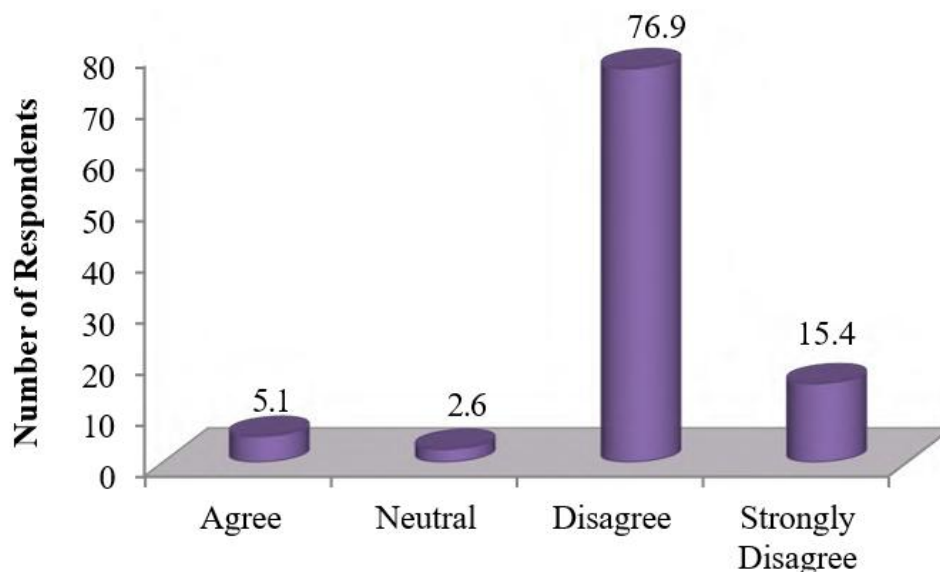


Figure 4.4: Monthly Income of Respondents

4.4 Amount Spent on Online Shopping:

Analysis of respondents concerning the amount spent on online shopping every month was carried out. The results are summarized in table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Amount Spent on Online Shopping every month

Amount spent on online shopping every month	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Less than Rs.2000	135	69.2
Rs.2,000-5,000	48	24.6
Rs.5,000-10,000	7	3.6
More than Rs.10,000	5	2.6
Total	195	100

Source: Primary data

The table shows that 69.2% of the respondents spent less than Rs.2,000 every month on online shopping, 24.6% of them spent between Rs.2,000 to Rs.5,000 monthly, 3.6% of them spent between Rs.5,000 to Rs.10,000 monthly, and only 2.6% spend more than Rs.10,000 in a month on online shopping.

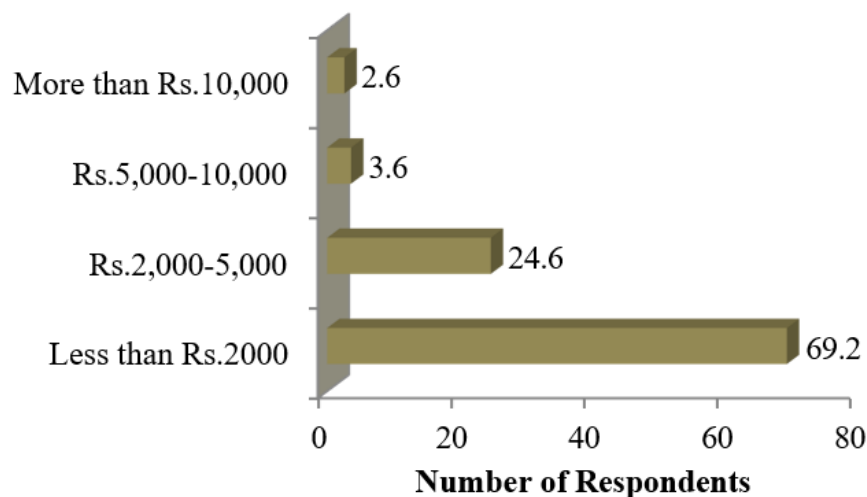


Figure 4.5: Amount spent on online shopping every month

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the overall summary of the research undertaken by the researcher. It presents all the aspects of the present research in nutshell and also puts forward a few suggestions for further study as well as highlights the implications of the present research. In this chapter, the researcher has weaved in ideas from research studies and findings of the present study. In this chapter the researcher has presented the major findings obtained during the study, suggestions and conclusion. The findings have been derived from the data analysis conducted and from the interpretations drawn out from the data analysis. So, the present chapter is focusing on summary of the findings, suggestions and conclusion.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- It is observed from the above table 4.1 that 67.7% were female respondents and 32.3% were male respondents.
- 30.3% of the respondents have completed till 10th Standard, 29.7% of them have done their Under-graduation, 17.9% of them have school education till 12th standard, 12.3% of them completed Diploma, 7.2% of them were post-Graduates, and only very less (2.6%) of them have possess professional education.
- 35.9% of the respondents were daily waged workers, 24.6% of them were homemakers, 18.5% of them were doing Agriculture, 9.7% of them were students, 7.7% of them were Businessmen, and only very less (3.6%) of them working in a government job.
- 89.2% of the respondents earn a monthly income less than Rs.20,000, 7.2% of them earn between Rs.20,001 to Rs.30,000 monthly, 2.6% of them earn between Rs.30,001 to Rs.40,000 monthly, and only 1% earn more than Rs.40,000 as their monthly income.
- 69.2% of the respondents spend less than Rs.2,000 every month on online shopping, 24.6% of them spend between Rs.2,000 to Rs.5,000 monthly, 3.6% of them spend between Rs.5,000 to Rs.10,000 monthly, and only 2.6% spend more than Rs.10,000 in a month on online shopping.
- 36.4% of the respondents stated that Family and friends were the sources of getting the idea of buying a specific brand/product through online shopping.
- It is evident that 48.2% of the respondents prefer Flipkart.

SUGGESTIONS

- Rural Consumer should participate in Online Shopping for easy delivery and a variety of products.
- The rural consumer has less disposable income, so they prefer to buy less expensive products. Low price offered by online companies motivates the rural consumers to buy online.
- Rural Communication facilities should be improved so that there will not be any communication gap between rural consumers and marketers.
- Government should develop infrastructure facilities like roadways, and railways in rural areas so that products can reach easily rural consumers.

CONCLUSION:

According to the study, a wider range of products has the greatest favorable influence. Rural consumers are encouraged to shop online by the low prices offered by online retailers. Additionally, they are happy with the savings and promotions they receive from numerous online retailers like Amazon, and Flipkart. We noticed from this survey that there are several barriers in online shopping.

- The psychological needs of the traditional consumer are not satisfied because they can only "see" a thing in a digital form on a computer screen; they cannot touch or feel it.
- The lack of trust and the fear of being fooled is one of the most discouraging factors that affect online sales in rural areas.
- Rural Consumers don't have the opportunity to touch and feel the products, they believe that those sold on online platforms may be of worse quality.
- Many villages still lack proper internet access, which prevents them from making online purchases.

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