Assessing Rural Women Consumers Satisfaction And Challenges In Digital Marketing; A Study Of Kanniyakumari District, Tamilnadu

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Abstract

One persistent trend in today's marketing is digital shopping. Things are hastily moving forward towards digitalization. Digital shopping is becoming increasingly common in rural communities, but at the same time, many challenges arise for rural residents. These challenges include privacy concerns, technology glitches, lack of personalized assistance, lacks of quality assurance, low digital literacy, missing of products, huge shipping charges, long process and poor network connection. These factors add to the complicated web of problems facing consumers in the digital age. This study focuses on revealing the factors that impede consumers from moving forward in terms of digital advancement. The study investigates the specific issues faced by rural consumers in digital shopping and extensively examines consumer satisfaction with preferences for digital marketing. This study employs Garrett's ranking tools to examine the challenges faced by rural consumers and KMO factor analysis to analyze consumer satisfaction. The study revealed that a lack of quality assurance is the most challenging problem identified by the respondents. With 475 sample respondents, the study was carried out in the Kanniyakumari district, Tamilnadu.

Keywords: Rural, Digital shopping, Consumers, Challenges, Customer satisfaction, E-commerce.

INTRODUCTION

Digital marketing in rural areas is a relatively unexplored field with much untapped potential. (Nayak 2021) Consumers confront an extensive variety of impediments in regard to shopping via the internet, which affects their experience as a whole. Since the majority of Indians live in rural areas, this study focuses on this group of people. Each product and service's spectacular success lies in its ability to penetrate rural areas. The plan known as "Digital India" aims to empower a knowledge economy and society through digital means. The primary driver of the digital push in rural areas is the accessibility of the internet and smartphone. In India, almost 70% of people live in rural areas. Traditional methods in every aspect of marketing will soon be superseded by digital media. People live in better living conditions as a result of digitalization.

We are moving toward the technologically advanced nation; in this context reaching the unreached population is predominant. As technology advances and the number of people using the internet increases, traditional marketing is being replaced by digital marketing strategies including SEO, social media marketing, email marketing, content marketing, blogs, applications, and websites. In today's scenario, no one has the time to visit the shop and buy things; this is the main reason that digital marketing is rapidly growing daily. Every marketer aspires to promote their goods and services to increase revenue, maintain customer loyalty, reach consumers, and win new clients. In the top of the market; digital marketing makes it easier for businesspeople to connect. Digital marketing is one of the essential to the economic development of our country.

Marketing is a restless, changing and dynamic business activity. (Varma 2018) (Kaur et. al 2021) A digitally empowered society is the goal of our digital India scheme. Nevertheless the goal was not fulfilled because some resistance present. It is essential to carry out a thorough investigation aimed at analyzing consumers' attitudes, preferences, and

perceptions regarding different online marketing channels and tactics to analyze and obtain insights into the prevalent sentiments and behaviors in relation to digital marketing strategies. Researchers can learn a great deal about consumers' receptiveness, purchasing decisions, and general satisfaction with digital marketing initiatives by exploring how they interact with digital advertising, social media campaigns, email promotions, and other forms of online marketing communication. To effectively engage with their target audience and produce good outcomes in the competitive online world, businesses and marketers must have a thorough understanding of how consumers perceive and respond to these digital marketing initiatives. This study offers valuable insights into bridging the digital divide and improving access to e-commerce in rural areas.
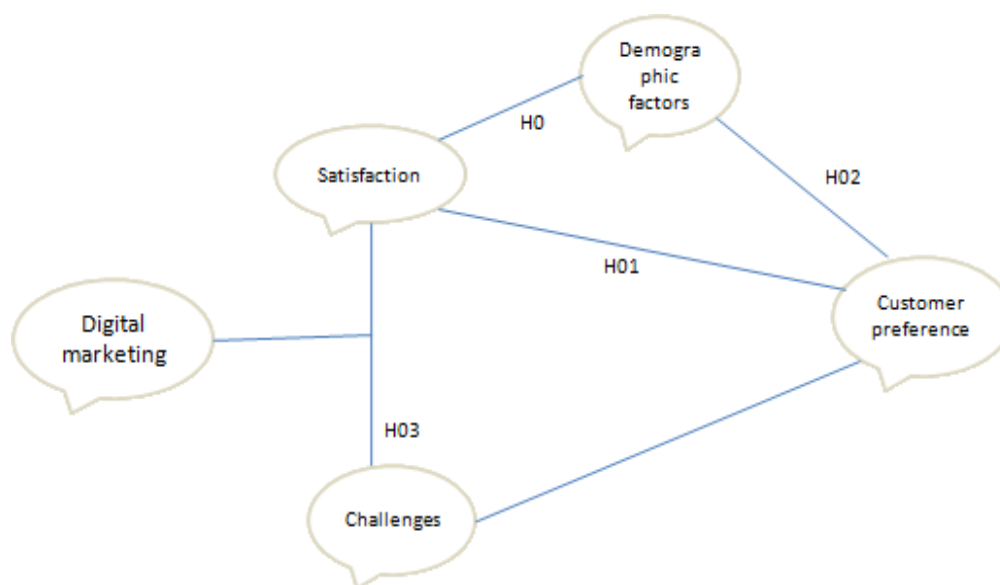

Figure 1. Conceptual framework

H0 - There is a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and demographic factors.

H01- Customer satisfaction has a positive influence on consumer preference

H02- Customer preference has a positive effect on demographical factors.

H03- Customer challenges have a negative influence on customer satisfaction in digital marketing

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sunil (2022) focused on the challenges that the rural populace faces when shopping online. The difficulties were ranked via text mining techniques in this study. The report lists problems with the internet, ignorance, mistrust, transportation, low literacy, language hurdles, payment methods, and other problems. Additionally, the study offered solutions to the aforementioned issues on the basis of his research. **Anthonysamy & Ignatius (2021)** have specifically researched the delivery problems associated with juvenile e-shopping in remote areas. The study focuses on the delivery problem and how it can impact the behavior of rural customers. **Nayak (2021)** explored how digital marketing changes the lifestyle of the population. The research revealed that rural consumers are satisfied with online shopping for their needed products only. The researcher concludes that every person uses the internet and does online shopping according to their needs and that they easily find products. A study conducted by **Sharma and Thakur (2020)** explored the effects of digital media and how it affects consumers' purchasing decisions. This study aims to investigate the effects of digital media and determine whether it is an essential tool for consumers and marketers. Many consumers are happy with the goods they purchase on the internet. The study reveals the consumer's purchasing power, which is primarily based on the family's monthly income. In their study, **Bala and Verma (2018)** make it clear that social media ought to be considered an integral part of a company's marketing plan. On the basis of this research, it can also be claimed that a company's ability to effectively market its brand on social media platforms is crucial for ensuring the success of its online marketing efforts. It is possible to analyze the efficacy of Internet marketing for different types of firms. Growing social media usage is opening new avenues for digital dealers to reach out to clients via digital platforms. **Sureshkumar (2017)** explains how rural residents behave when they shop online and explores their motivations for and against doing so. Rural markets have become more significant in the contemporary era; generally the expansion of the economy has significantly increased rural consumers' purchasing power The study revealed that e-marketers find it challenging to convert the percentage of online

consumers into traditional buyers through successful website design.

HYPOTHESIS AND METHODOLOGY

Measures

This study aims to test the hypotheses presented in the conceptual framework. A Likert scale was used to measure the level of satisfaction of consumers with digital marketing. The five point Likert scale ranged from 1- Highly dissatisfied, 2- Dissatisfied, 3- Neutral, 4- Satisfied and 5- Highly satisfied. Before the survey, the interview schedule was assessed via a reliability test. A pilot test of the interview schedule was conducted involving 50 respondents from the study area to scale items more clearly and more precisely.

Sample and Data Collection

The targeted group for this study was kanniyakumari rural digital marketing customers. The primary and secondary data used in the study contained both sources. Purposive sampling was used in the course of the study. An interview schedule was used to collect the data. The Kanniyakumari district has 9 blocks, 6 taluks and 95 panchayat villages. The data were collected from all 95 panchayat villages with equal distributions of samples. A total of 475 respondents were included in the analysis. The secondary data were obtained from a range of websites, books, e-contents, and journals.

Hypothesis

H0 - There is a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and demographic factors.

H01- Customer satisfaction has a positive influence on consumer preference

H02- Customer preference has a positive effect on demographical factors.

H03- Customer challenges have a negative influence on customer satisfaction in digital marketing

RESULTS

Demographic outline of the respondents

To fully understand the respondents' diverse perspectives and inclinations, an in-depth analysis of their demographic profile is necessary. Essential information including age, gender, educational background, occupation, and income is addressed in this demographic analysis. Its lens provides a basis for comprehending the subtleties of consumers. The demographic profile of the respondents is displayed in Table 1 below. Analyze the respondent profile facilitates the extraction of insightful conclusions.

Table 1. Demographic outline of the respondents

Parameters	Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Up to 20 years	74	16
	21 to 30 years	158	33
	31 to 40 years	90	19
	41 to 50 years	140	29
	Above 50 years	13	3
	Total	**475**	**100**
Marital Status	Married	325	68
	Unmarried	150	32
	Total	**475**	**100**
Educational Qualification	Illiterate	22	5
	School level	203	43
	UG	122	25
	PG	128	27
	Total	**475**	**100**
Occupation	Home maker	109	23
	Self employed	100	21
	Govt. Employee	39	8
	Private employee	151	32
	Agriculturist	30	6
	Student	46	10
	Total	**475**	**100**
Family status	Joint Family	154	32
	Nuclear Family	321	68

	Total	**475**	**100**
Monthly Income	Up to Rs.10,000		22
	Rs.10,001 – Rs. 20,000	104	36
		172	13
	Rs. 20,001 – Rs. 30,000	60	29
		139	
	Above Rs.30,000		
	Total	**475**	**100**
Family members	Below 3 members	44	9
	3 to 6 members	397	84
	7 to 9 members	26	5
	Above 9 members	8	2
	Total	**475**	**100**

Age: Among the 475 respondents, 158 (33%) were aged between 21 and 30 years. This age group is more inclined to make digital purchases than other age groups. **Marital Status:** Of the 475 respondents, 325 respondents were married, while 150 were unmarried. **Educational Qualification**: A significant portion of the respondents, 203 had completed their schooling. **Occupation**: The majority of the respondents, 151 (32%), were private employee. It indicates majority of the women are now working. **Family Status**: Most respondents, 321 (68%), were nuclear families, reflecting a preference for nuclear family systems over joint family setups. **Family Monthly Income**: The data show that 172 out of 475 respondents (36%) had a family monthly income Rs. 10,001 to Rs.20,000. **Family members**: Out of 475 respondents, 84 % of the respondents have 3 to 6 members in a family.

H01- Customer satisfaction has a positive influence on consumer preference

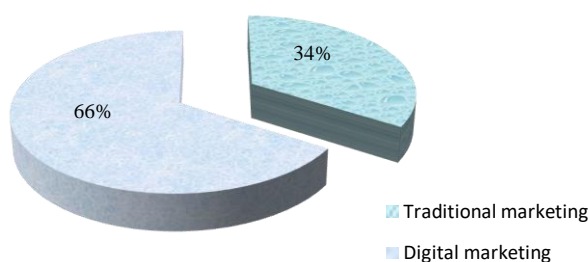**Customer preference in marketing**

Figure 2. Customer preference in marketing

The figure 2 illustrates that, out of 475 respondents, the majority (66 per cent) of respondents preferred digital marketing rather than traditional marketing. This result shows that rural people are also moving forward in the digital world. The remaining 34% of the respondents preferred traditional marketing which shows that people still want traditional methods for purchasing. However, the percentage of those preferring traditional marketing is lower.

H02 - There is a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and demographic factors.

Table 2 exhibits the relationships between customer satisfaction and demographic factors such as age, marital status, educational qualification, occupation, family status, monthly income and spending hours. Analysis of variance was used to determine the relationship between the two variables. Age, marital status, educational qualification, occupation, and spending hour significant values (0.041, 0.037, 0.047, 0.037, and 0.025 respectively) are less than the p-value of 0.05. Therefore, the hypothesis (H02) is accepted there is a positive relationship between these factors and customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction in digital marketing depends on independent variables such as age, marital status, educational qualifications, occupation, and spending hours. The significant value of family status and monthly income (0.089, 0.017) are greater than the p-value of 0.05. Therefore, the hypothesis (H02) is rejected. There is no positive relationship between these factors and customer satisfaction in digital marketing.

Table 2. Customer satisfaction by demographic factors

S. No	Variables	D.F	'F' value	Sig.	Results(H02)
1	Age	4	2.674	0.041	Accepted
2	Marital status	1	2.928	0.037	Accepted
3	Educational Qualification	4	2.495	0.047	Accepted
4	Occupation	5	2.460	0.037	Accepted
5	Family status	1	1.360	0.089	Rejected
6	Monthly Income	3	2.354	0.076	Rejected
7	Spending hours	3	2.588	0.025	Accepted

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

Customer satisfaction with digital marketing

Table 3. KMO and Bartlett's tests

Kaiser- Meyer-Olkin Measure of sampling adequacy	.825
Bartlett's test of Sphericity	2601.857
Df	190
Sig.	.001

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure is an index that defines sampling adequacy. The KMO test value is 0.825 which is greater than 0.5: thus the data reduction technique can be considered acceptable and valid. Bartlett's test of sphericity helps researchers decide whether the results of factor analysis are worth considering and whether we should continue analyze the research work. Bartlett's test of sphericity, with a level of significance of <0.5 shows that there is a high level of correlation between variables, which makes it adequate to apply factor analysis.

Table 4. Rotated Component Matrix[a]

Factors	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
nvenient shopping	-.022	**.808**	.006	-.163	.032
se to operate online website/application	.007	**.780**	.164	.016	.065
ve the time and energy	.002	**.752**	.093	.219	.063
se to resolve consumer grievance	.024	.193	**.606**	.029	.053
ilitates window shopping	-.007	**.612**	.042	.266	.106
sy to compare the different retailer prices	.038	.044	.033	.104	**.753**
ailability of variety of products/services	.009	.183	.358	**.594**	.085
ractive product images	.037	-.099	**.460**	.277	.340
se product replacement	.042	.012	**.827**	.056	-.056
ates brand awareness	.055	.145	**.529**	.062	.388
vides product / service description	.068	.140	.133	.051	**.710**
clusive discounts and special offers are available	.030	.171	.035	**.587**	.336
vides 24*7 access	.339	.004	.012	**.748**	-.037
rch product at wider range	**.736**	.011	.005	.299	.052
eps customers updated	**.772**	-.018	.045	.208	-.041
ves relaxation	**.716**	-.067	.087	.017	.099
moves all geographical barriers	**.720**	.002	-.028	.022	.051
proves people's standard of living	**.744**	-.059	.130	.124	-.048
ates employment opportunities	**.731**	.081	.007	-.019	.001
se to target the right products	**.731**	.029	-.050	-.109	.092

Extraction Method. Principal component analysis.

Table 4 shows the variance of each component. There are five distinct components with eigen values greater than 1 from the given set of 20 variables. The total variance contributed by the first component is 19.604, by second 11.836, by third component is 8.791, by fourth component is 8.311, and the fifth component is 7.563. The factors are grouped in Table 4.
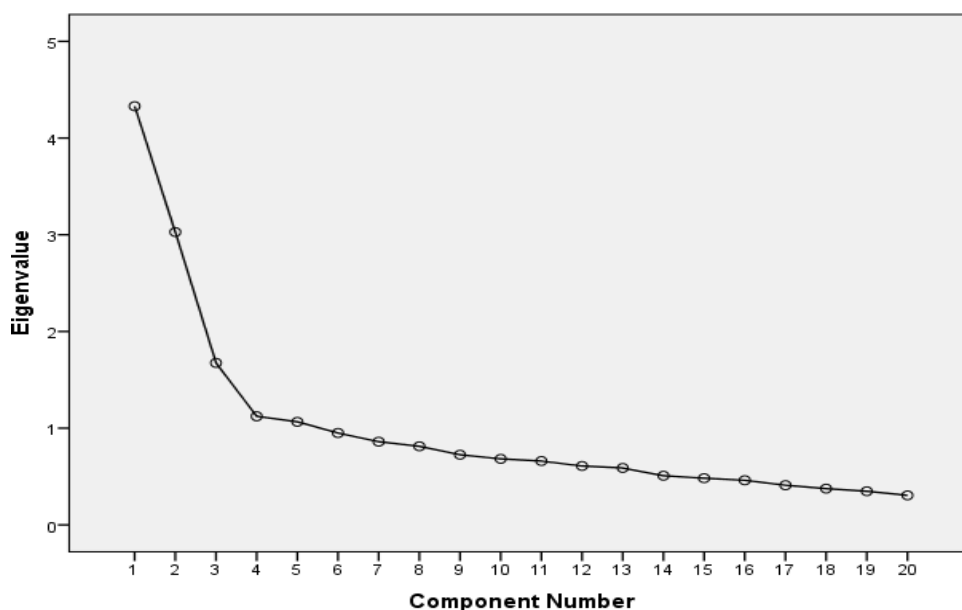
Figure 3. Scree Plot

The figure shows the components as the X -axis and the corresponding eigen values as the Y-axis. The first five components are considered, whose eigen values are 4.329, 3.028, 1.675, 1.123 and 1.066. 4.329 is the maximum eigen value: hence, this factor is the most significant followed by the other factors.

H03- Customer challenges have a negative influence on customer satisfaction in digital marketing

Challenges faced by consumers

Consumers encounter various challenges in digital shopping. In this view, the following challenges are pointed out by the customer. Garrett's ranking technique is used to rank the following challenges faced by rural consumers.

$$\text{Percentage Position} = \frac{100(R_{ij} \% 0.5)}{N_j}$$

where,

R_{*+} = Rank given by the ith variable by the jth respondent.

N_{+} = Number of variables ranked by j^{th} respondent.

The results were obtained via Garrett's ranking table and scores, and the total scores of each factor were added and ranks were given according to the total value. The factor with the highest mean value is considered to be the most important factor.[1]
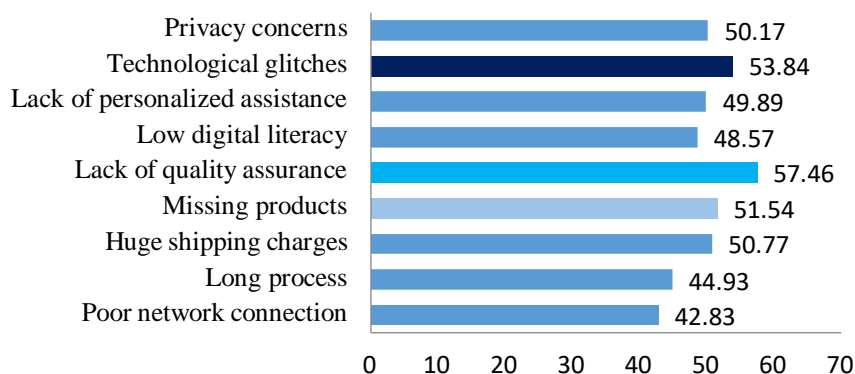

Figure 4. Challenges faced by rural consumers
Source. Primary data

Figure 4 shows the challenges faced by rural consumers. The first rank is placed with a mean score of 57.46 for "Lack of quality assurance". People's preference for traditional marketing is due primarily to tangible evaluation. Physical

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[1] https://www.scribd.com/doc/141092918/Garrett-Ranking#

evaluations were abolished in digital shopping. Since rural customers are unable to inspect products physically before making a purchase, they are skeptical about the true quality of products when they shop online. The second rank is placed with a mean score of 53.84 for "Technological glitches". Issues such as website crashes, payment failures, or glitches during the checkout process can disrupt the online shopping journey. The third rank is placed with a mean score of 51.54 for "Missing products". The absence of an ordered product in digital shopping hinders their ability to shop digitally. This results in frustration and a reliance on traditional marketing. The fourth rank is placed with a mean score of 50.77 for "Huge shipping charges". Exorbitant delivery costs discourage people from shopping online. The expansion of digital shopping in rural areas may be halted by this pricing barrier. The fifth rank is placed with a mean score of 50.17 for "Privacy concerns". For every consumer, concerns over the collection, usage, and sharing of personal data by online shops can pose a serious obstacle. The sixth rank is placed with a mean score of 49.89 for "Lack of personalized assistance". There is no in-person help available and customers may find themselves without prompt support. This makes it more difficult to respond to queries and problems right away. The seventh rank is placed with a mean score of 48.57 for "Low digital literacy". Rural customers find it difficult to participate in online buying. As a result, their access to a wider variety of goods and services is restricted. The eighth rank is placed with a mean score of 44.93 for "Long process". A prolonged procedure can turn away potential customers because it is challenging and takes time from product selection to final payment, hindering them from finishing their orders. The ninth rank is placed with a mean score of 42.83 for "Poor network connection". Poor network connections make online buying more difficult in rural locations. People living in rural locations find it difficult to become fully involved in online purchasing because of the digital gap.

CONCLUSION

Digital marketing is becoming increasingly important in rural areas because it allows companies to reach a wider audience and grow their customer base. This study highlights several hurdles that prevent customers from engaging in online buying. People are moving forward digitalization but traditional marketing still exists. Thirty four percent of the respondents still preferred traditional marketing. People use digital marketing but do not fully depend on digital marketing. The majority of 21 to 30 generations i.e young generations use digital marketing the most. Modern generation people are moving towards digitalization but older generation people are struggling with the adoption of the digital world. Software and applications designed on the basis of senior citizens help increase digital marketing for old generations of people. Tackling issues such as weak network connections, limited digital literacy, expensive shipping, missing products, lack of quality control and technical malfunctions is essential to reducing the digital divide. By empowering rural consumers through initiatives centered on digital literacy, inclusive online services, and infrastructure development may fully realize the potential of digital commerce.

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