



WEBROOMING AND STOREROOMING ATTITUDE OF ONLINE SHOPPERS IN COIMBATORE CITY

Dr. A. Fazlunnisa

*Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Texcity Arts and Science College, Coimbatore – 105,
Tamilnadu.*

ABSTRACT

Consumers' needs and their usage (consumption) pattern have been changing from time to time. Consumers need have transformed from product experiences to the personal experiences with the each and every product they use. This research article aims to analyse the cross- shopping behaviour exhibited by the Coimbatoreans and to understand what are the criteria that influences their online and off-line physical shopping practices. The data needed for the conduct of this study were collected both online and in-field survey method. Needed data were collected from 300 (online cum retail store shoppers) shoppers living in Coimbatore city. The study elucidated the nature of differences felt by the retail consumers' while shopping at physical (brick -mortal) retail store and from online retail websites through adoption of webrooming and storerooming searches. Storeroomers enjoys the feasibility of availing different options for making their payments, attracted by social media /online promotions, enjoy door step delivery, reviews experts' opinion and recommendations, buy useful products online and also enjoy high end after sales services. The study concluded that large portion of sample subjects have claim difference experience between virtual shopping and shopping in retail stores i.e., more convenient, experiences with the product assessment, price cum offers and discounts, payment options and time consuming are found to be factors that influencing shopping at retail stores or online stores.

KEY WORDS: Webrooming, Storerooming, Physical Store, Online Shopping.

INTRODUCTION

Metamorphisms of marketing practices have changed and evolved new changes from time to time. Market for a specific product always revolve around too concept demand and supply. Consumers' needs and their usage (consumption) pattern have been changing from time to time (Mckinsey & Company). Digitalization, smart phone usage and growth in virtual communication tools has changed modern business practices. Virtual marketing, retailing and shopping is the happening trend these days. Not only metro city inhabitants, even rural consumers prefer online shopping these days. Number of factors influences virtual shopping these days i.e., in a technology hybrid environment. In short, consumers need have transformed from product experiences to the personal experiences with the each and every product they use (Gupta and Gupta, 2016). At the same time, it is undeniable fact that still date, about 75 per cent of the Indian living in the tier II and III cities still date prefer to stop and shop at retail store compared to shopping on online. Crowded retail stores during festival seasons, special occasion and the addition desperate consumers rushing to the retail store after the relaxation of the lock-down called during Covid 19 Pandemic period (The New Indian Express, 2020).

RELEVANCE TO THE STUDY

In post-millennium period, due to rapid retail evolution, people have turned not only brand conscious, they have also turned into more variant seekers, quality consciousness, value seekers, health conscious, socially conscious, digital savvy, etc., so they started shopping in departmental stores and hyper markets (Gupta and Gupta, 2016). While shopping online or off-line retail store two different behavioural patterns of pre-marketing search made by the shoppers these days. The consumers are found to have exhibited cross shopping behaviour i.e., they drive motivations for shopping either through online retail store browsing or through visits the physical store and they executive their shopping either at online store (after checking the products availability, its features etc., at physical store or they can browse online retail store products listed and can try searching cum buying the same products at retail store (by making physical visit) (Roy et al., 2022).



LITERATURE DISCUSSION

Literatures collected on the concept of webrooming or storerooming or pre-purchase search made by the shoppers are very briefly discussed in this section.

Two different criterions influence the consumers to shop either at online or at physical store says Arora et al., (2017). Feasibility at the physical store to touch, feel and experience the product support the retail consumers to conduct storerooming search. At the same time better online services, low price of products and multiple channels shopping options influences consumers to conduct webrooming. Factors that motivate and influences the consumers to shop online or in physical store were discussed in the study of Shankar et al., (2021) with the application of SOR (Stimulation-Organism-Responses) Model. The authors claim that convenience of shopping, retailers’ attentiveness, post-purchase attention and inclination to buy the products influences the online or physical store preferences by the shoppers. Arora et al., (2022) listed number of factors that influences showrooming shopping behaviour among the consumers. The store location, retailers support and nature of relationship build with the retailers, situation of shopping and shopping motivations (price, offers and promotion etc.,). Article of Shankar and Jain (2022) claim that shoppers feel that searching for products online (webrooming) is more useful and convenient in shopping in physical stores. As they get quick assistance of salesman, have opportunity to touch, feel and check the products. Roy et al., (2022) commented that the consumers feel more motivated and enjoy conducting cross-shopping (both based on webrooming and storerooming), as these practices support them to realise novel satisfaction derived while shopping different POP (Point-of-Purchase).

Through assessment of bibliographical studies, the author claims that shopping motives and conveniences are found to be two major factors that motivate the shoppers to conduct webrooming or storerooming pre-purchase search and assessment of the products.

AIM OF THE ARTICLE

This research article aims to analyse the cross- shopping behaviour exhibited by the Coimbatorens and to understand what are the criterions that influences their online and off-line physical shopping practices.

METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

The article is ethnographic in nature that is focused on the cross-shopping practices among Coimbatorens i.e., among the Tamil families living in the Coimbatore city. Shopping through multi-channels (omni channels) trend among the tier II city habitant has influenced the researcher to select Coimbatore city for the conduct of survey and assess the cross-shopping trend among the heterogeneous population group. The data needed for the conduct of this study were collected both online and in-field survey method. Needed data were collected from 300 (online cum retail store shoppers).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive data analysis revealed that three hundred cross shoppers are distributed as 51.60 per cent male and 48.40 per women shoppers. About 27.73 per cent of the shoppers are aged between 26-30 years and 24.27 per cent of the sample subjects are in the age group of 31-40 years. The samples are found to be well educated i.e., 50.14 per cent of the sample populations have completed to their post-graduation studies and 42.93 per cent of the subjects are graduates. About, 68.93 per cent of the shoppers are employed in a private organisation and 32.80 per cent of the sample virtual shoppers’ monthly income valued between ₹.15,001 – ₹.25,000. Cross retail shoppers mostly shop fashion apparel (64.27 per cent), food and groceries (63.73 per cent), mobile phones (55.07 per cent), shoes (53.60 per cent), watches (51.87 per cent), electronic goods (other than mobile phones) (50 per cent).

TABLE: 1
WEBROOMING AND STOREROOMING
BEHAVIOUR OF THE SHOPPERS

Sl. No	Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Physical Retailers (Webrooming)	184	61.33
2.	Online Retail Store (Storerooming)	116	38.67
	Total	300	100

Source: Primary Data



The sample population as 61.33 per cent of the webroomers (searching the products on online retail stores and shopping in regular retail stores) and 38.67 per cent of the samples are Storeroomers (searching the products in regular retail stores and shopping in online retail stores).

TABLE: 2
GROUP MEAN SCORE
ASSOCIATION BETWEEN CONSUMERS EXPERIENCES WITH VIRTUAL SHOPPING AND THEIR FEEL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN VIRTUAL AND RETAIL STORES SHOPPING

Particulars	Feel of Differences				Wilk's Lambda	F	Sig
	Webroomers		Storeroomers				
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
X ₁ -Product Quality, Variety and Brands	2.500	0.769	1.700	0.993	.440	748	.000
X ₂ -Mode of Payment, Price, Offers, Discounts, Loyalty Points & Freebies	1.750	0.807	2.670	0.750	.491	748	.000
X ₃ -Online & Social Media Promotions	2.230	0.846	2.330	0.474	.399	748	.007
X ₄ -Physical Delivery & Safety of the Product	1.890	1.123	3.000	1.162	.317	748	.000
X ₅ -Recommendations & References by the Reviewers	2.260	0.917	3.830	0.692	.476	748	.000
X ₆ -Past Usage Reviews & Comments	3.330	0.474	2.140	0.832	.428	748	.000
X ₇ -Availability & Usefulness of the Products	1.790	1.045	3.330	0.750	.424	748	.000
X ₈ -Customer Care & After Sales Services	1.890	1.053	4.170	0.692	.482	748	.000
X ₉ -Certification & Guarantees	3.500	1.125	1.720	1.028	.384	748	.000
X ₁₀ -Others	3.170	1.221	1.890	0.955	.264	748	.000
Eigen Value	1.248						
% of Variation Explained	100 per cent						
Wilk's Lambda	.445						
Chi-Square	602.210						
DF	9						
P	.000						
Canonical Correlation	.745						

Source: Computed from Primary Data Level of Significance: 5 per cent

Canonical Discriminant Function Fitted:

$$1.786-1.202X_1+.203 X_2-.822 X_3-.385 X_4+.581 X_5+.542 X_6+.421 X_7+.641 X_8+.712 X_9$$

Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) test score presented in the above Table: 2, Wilk's Lambda proportionate ratio is found to 0.445 and the Chi-Square value is 602.210 significant at 5 per cent (.000) are found to significant and establishes practical relationship with two independents at same time inter-related variables tested.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

In post-millennium period, due to rapid retail evolution, people have turned not only brand conscious more variant seekers, quality consciousness, value seekers, health conscious, socially conscious, digital savvy, etc., so they started shopping in departmental stores and hyper markets. Later with the growth of internet usage, the nation has also experienced growth in virtual shopping. The study elucidated the nature of differences felt by the retail consumers' while shopping at physical (brick -mortal) retail store and from online retail websites through adoption of webrooming and storerooming searches. Storeroomers enjoys the feasibility of availing different options for making their payments, attracted by social media /online promotions, enjoy door step delivery, reviews experts' opinion and recommendations, buy useful products online and also enjoy high end after sales services. Past studies also provided need evidences that consumer shift to online shopping is due to their influenced of e-retailers image, attractive website design and customers relationship with the retailers. At the same time shoppers are smart enough



to difference between physical market and virtual market. E-retailers aimed to offer more advantages that conventional bricks and mortar stores to their shoppers that include greater flexibility, enhanced market outreach, lower cost structures, faster transactions, broader product lines, greater convenience and customisation. The study concluded that large portion of sample subjects have claim difference experience between virtual shopping and shopping in retail stores i.e., more convenient, experiences with the product assessment, price cum offers and discounts, payment options and time consuming are found to be factors that influencing shopping at retail stores or online stores.

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