

# **The Impact of Social Networking in Online Shopping and Its Various Key Factors Influencing Customer Satisfaction. An Empirical Study in Vellore District, Tamil Nadu.**

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## **Abstract**

Social networking entails connecting with new and current friends, family, coworkers, and enterprises using online social media platforms. Individuals can utilize social networking to share their interests and issues with others who may be able to support or connect with them. Customers worldwide are adopting the Internet as their demanding and sophisticated lifestyle and shopping, and it is becoming increasingly popular in Vellore too. Without a doubt, it has many potential customers for internet business as a developing country. Customers' satisfaction does not remain the same or constant in each type of situation; it shifts over time. Customer satisfaction is influenced by a variety of factors. In this Research, an attempt has been made here to determine how what extent these factors impact customer satisfaction. Primary data was collected through a well-structured Questionnaire. The data were analyzed using PLS-SEM. The validity and reliability of the scales were tested, and both were determined to be satisfactory. This survey, every factor had a direct impact on customer satisfaction and retention, and the study proved that factors such as Price and Quality, Product features, Ease of use, Warranty, Brand value, Reviews, and environmental friendliness were major predictors of consumer satisfaction.

**Key Words:** Customer satisfaction, Customer perception, Internet shopping, Social Networking, Factors, PLS-SEM.

## **1.Introduction:**

In recent years, social networking evolved into a large globalized market for the purchase of goods and services. The online shopping method has become a vital platform in many industrialized nations, delivering an array of goods with 24-hour access and comprehensive content. Across the e-commerce market cycle, the customer utilizes the internet for a range of purposes, such as: looking for product features, pricing, or reviews, selecting goods and services using the internet, buying, paying premiums, or any other implies, followed by delivery of the appropriate product via the internet, or any other means, and, finally, sales service. Needs and wants are boundless and evolve; from place to place and from man to man.

Pentina and Koh (2012) briefly explain social media marketing and social networking in their article, such as how SMM triggers viral communications between consumers across online sales platforms, favorable brands with fan pages, and promotion-related advertisements developed by website companies and organizations via popular networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and many other social network platforms. Jara et al. (2014) investigate Social networking is being adopted by the most modern generation of individuals,

who may easily contact them through this marketing strategy by generating more interest and engagement through the usage of social networking.

Marketplace on Facebook and Instagram personal seller pages on Instagram are the most common social networking seller pages and are very famous online shopping websites nowadays. Through this, an order is placed online, and paid online, and after receiving a product, if there are any issues raised against the product, the issues are solved through customer care, and the product is replaced online. Social networking is used as a platform to grow sales and services, and additionally, it helps the nation and its economic growth. Customers from Vellore, Tamil Nadu, such as shoppers, academics, professors, company entrepreneurs, and marketers, are heavily involved in online shopping.

Innovation has become essential to sustaining website performance, and technical innovation has sparked interest in the significant study (Cattani, G., & Malerba, F. (2021). Product innovation development, process innovations in website designs, and organizational innovations, which are ways of structuring a website's assets in novel or enhanced forms, are the three areas of technology development. Several studies have found a link between several variables and consumer happiness (Hanelt et al., 2021); Ramesh Kumar (2019) used the demographic variable to regulate the relationship between the innovation of websites and consumer satisfaction. Several past studies have examined factors and website performance and identified substantial impacts on consumers. According to Marion and Fixson (2021), websites on the internet are involved in R&D to innovate new products. It is widely understood that the introduction of a new product is an indication of technological advancement, and the degree to which that product is successful on the market may be used to measure the consequences on customers. To be more specific regarding product innovation and enhancement opportunities, the global business environment's dynamic compels websites to adapt to the changing wishes and requirements of their potential clients. Technology has grown into an essential element driving environmental sustainability and website performance in this context.

Based on the widely used corporate concept of maximizing profits to create value for investors, there is no longer an expectation that enterprises will act properly toward society. As a result, Consumer Satisfaction is an idea with an ironic note to it (Sardana et al., 2020). It should come as no surprise that consumer satisfaction is high. Reviews typically serve as a strategic tool for establishing reputational reliability and improving a product's market potential, hence raising its level of success. These perspectives of Shaukat et al., 2016 Xu et al., 2022; are reinforced by the assertion that it has been shown to enhance a website's performance.

Websites probably highlight activities that satisfy customers for the same strategic objectives. This research's main goal is to discover the connection between the variables (price and Quality, product features, Ease of use, Warranty, Brand value, reviews, and environmental friendliness) and Consumer satisfaction. Considering that the only objective of any website is satisfaction. Furthermore, as a result of this study, there is no requirement for a mediator in the situations outlined above. Factors have a direct impact on consumer behaviour. In certain cases, technological innovation is helping to drive consumers and retailers to enhance the quality of their websites and products. As a result, it was carried out to better understand the nature of this hyperlink. The current study makes numerous significant contributions and has significant consequences. For example, this is an innovative study because it creates a research model that incorporates the elements that influence product innovation, website social responsibility, environmental sustainability, and technology.

Furthermore, the results of this research may be beneficial for e-businesses in Vellore is attempting to address the idea that financing environmental activities suggests additional expenditures that affect a company's economic success. A generally accepted opinion in the business sector that perspective is true has kept the mistake alive. Second, past research has indicated that when mediators and moderators are present, the relationship between variables impacting consumer happiness and technological innovation in e-business may be better addressed (Gupta & Gupta, 2020; Ramadani et al., 2019).

### **Factors Influencing Customer Satisfaction through Online Shopping:**

Customer perception is not always continuous or stable in every circumstance; it shifts with time. Customer Satisfaction is impacted by a variety of variables. Developments in these variables cause changes in Customer Satisfaction. The following are the variables that affect customer Satisfaction.

Table: 1 Factors Influencing Consumer Satisfaction

S.No	Variables	Author
1	Price and Quality	Cho and Park (2001); Kim (2005); Lin et al. (2011); Chen et al. (2012); Khan (2015); Thilakarathne and Abeysekara (2016); Vasic et al. (2019) and Chen et al. (2012); Polites (2012); Ludin and Cheng (2014); Khan (2015); Vasic et al. (2019)
2	Product Features	Schaupp and Belanger (2005); Lin et al. (2011); Momtaz et al. (2011); Guo et al. (2012); Musa et al. (2015); Al - Jahwari et al. (2018).
3	Ease of use	Cho and Park (2001); Zeng et al. (2009); Nikhashemi et al. (2013)
4	Warranty	Guo et al. (2012); Dharmesti and Nugroho (2012);
5	Brand value	Momtaz et al. (2011); Al-Kasasbeh et al. (2011) Musa et al. (2015)
6	Reviews	Y.C.Mohan and J.Vijayadurai (2016)
7	Environmental friendliness	Tandon et al. (2017), Vasic et al. (2019)

According to Cantillon et al., (2015), Demographic factors in the following ways Age, Gender, marital status, occupation, family size, educational level, income level, nationality, religion, geography, and so on are examples of demographic elements or variables. And also, about Geographical Factors, Especially in Western Countries for some goods or services, geographical variations may be quite important. Marketers resort to a considerable extent to investigate and analyze psychological behaviours to better appreciate current customer variances based on region. The inclusion of this regional information can support advertisers in targeting the most successful and economical mailings, advertisements, or personal sales. Finally, In the majority of instances, psychological factors also impact customer satisfaction. Abraham Maslow devised a hierarchy of needs, structured like a pyramid, that runs from the most basic urgent physical demands such as food, thirst, and shelter to the most luxurious non-essentials. Maslow said that individuals should prioritize their needs, beginning with the

physiological. The pyramid extends from the most basic acute physical necessities, such as hunger, thirst, and shelter, to the most opulent non-essentials. Maslow said that individuals should prioritize their needs, beginning with the physiological.

## **2. Review of Literature and formulating hypothesis:**

Asha (2017) described in her study that people can benefit more from e-commerce for both social and buying purposes. This study focuses on customer purchasing behaviour and their satisfaction level with the impact of online shopping demographic factors, as well as understanding customer preferences in online shopping platforms. This study adopts the descriptive research method and the sampling technique is convenience sampling. The representative sample is 142 respondents with the help of a structured questionnaire. The key findings are that some of the demographic factors influence customer purchase behaviour and satisfaction level in e-stores.

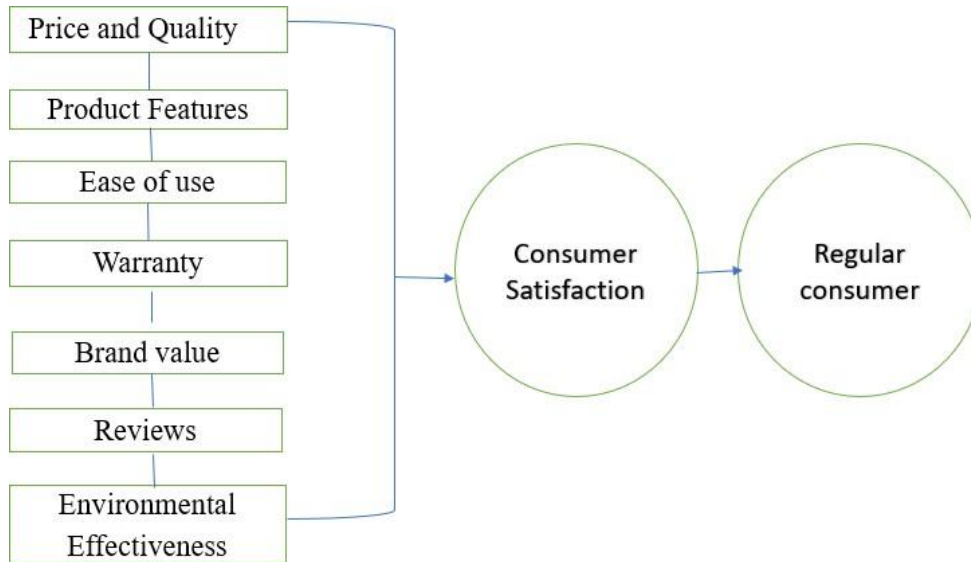
Archana and Dhiman Kuvad (2017) describe the level of customer satisfaction in e-commerce, held in Gujarat. The primary goals of this research are to better understand customer purchase behaviour and gender differences in purchasing behaviour. This is a quantitative study, and primary information will be gathered through a questionnaire. The sample size will be 50 male and 50 female respondents. According to the findings of this study, people in Gujarat like shopping, and the majority of respondents are unaware of safety measures at shopping malls. There are no differences in purchasing behaviour between men and women. According to Johnson, (1999), Online shopping buying behaviour is often called customer purchasing behaviour. These five factors, which include e-stores, equipment and training, product attributes, website technological characteristics, information features, and home screen display, have a direct association with online buying behavior. As per surveys, those who live interconnected lifestyles and have limited time spend less time shopping online.

Hasslinger, (2007) specifies customer behaviour in his research as follows: to enhance and entice online customers, it is essential to recognize their behaviour and what they demand and need. Digital shopping is a new medium with new customer needs. All customers have unique product wishes and expectations; thus, all businesses need to recognize and appreciate their web-based resources. Kumar Rakesh (2011) explained in their study findings, that the customer is the central focus of all marketing initiatives. One of the most important components of promoting is understanding his actions and needs. Customer behaviour research is undertaken at every stage of the consumption process, beginning before the purchase. Na Wang explained in their study (2008), online retail and customer satisfaction are impacted by variables that include accessibility, trustworthiness, information comparability, perceived risks, secrecy, web design, easy access, occupational status, and internet knowledge. social, personal, cultural, and psychological behaviour all influence internet purchasing habits. Expectations influence online purchasing. Rodriguez, 2009 discusses in his article that online shopping behaviour depends on independent dimensions, personality factors, digital knowledge, Shopping motives, and the last factor is shopping bonuses. These are major elements of online customer behaviour. Online researchers are the primary sources of information for online shoppers since they want to get information quickly and easily, such as competitor brands, best price offers, product specifications, and user feedback.

According to Albors-Ramos and Hervás (2008), web-based internet sources of social media are completely transforming consumer purchasing habits by providing several means of shopping for, examining, deciding, and obtaining products and services. Furthermore, Thomas (2007) stated in his research that the adoption of technology has a good influence on customers'

readiness to purchase more and also focuses on marketers' operations and practices in the name of competition and market strategies via new obstacles.

### 3. Conceptual Framework:



H1: There is a positive relationship between Consumer Satisfaction and Regular Consumers.

H2: There is a positive relationship between Consumer Satisfaction factors.

H3: The Factors are positively influencing consumers.

### 4. Research Gap:

Following a comprehensive investigation of the review literature, the Researcher discovered that much research has been conducted on the subject of customer behavioral research. However, it is also true that there is little research has been conducted in the sector, but not in the covered Vellore district. The goal of this research is to discover and gain customer insights toward online shopping about the economy of this District, thus there was a big demand for research in this sector as well. That is the primary reason for choosing this specific topic and place.

### Objectives of the Study:

1. To focus on the importance and necessity of customer satisfaction level.
2. To study the effect of factors that affect customer satisfaction in online shopping.

### 5. Research Design

#### 5.1. Methodology of Data Collection:

Primary and Secondary data are collected to understand the online shopping customers' behavior and their satisfaction level towards purchases from electronic platforms.

- Primary Data: The primary data for the study has been collected through a questionnaire using Google Forms.
- Secondary Data The secondary data has been collected through 1. Books and journals. 2. Magazines 3. Research reports 4. Articles from various journals 5. Websites.

**5.2. Sample Size and Sample Design:** Only a sample of 142 customers was randomly selected, with Vellore District serving as the study's scope and financial constraints in consideration. The sample fairly represents all popular products and brands offered by various firms throughout the Districts.

### 5.3. Sampling Methods:

The primary data is collected using the snowball technique to cover every customer and the indefinite population of online customers.

## 6. METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

- Percentage Method.
- PLS-SEM

### 6.1 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

**Table 1 Demographic Profile**

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age</b>	Below 20 years	75	53%
	21 to 30	49	34%
	31 to 40	11	8%
	41 to 50 years	7	5%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Female	122	86%
	Male	20	14%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>	Unmarried	104	73
	Married	27	19
	Separated	11	8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Educational status</b>	Undergraduate	108	76
	Postgraduate	34	24
	<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Occupation</b>	Private jobs	<b>24</b>	<b>18</b>
	Government Job	<b>22</b>	<b>15</b>
	Business	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>
	Others	<b>83</b>	<b>58</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Primary Data

### **Inference**

From the demographic table, Under the category, Age, 53% of the respondents from the below 20 years category, 34 % of respondents belong to the age group 21 to 30 yrs.', 8% The majority of responses are between the ages of 31 to 40 years, 5 % of the respondents belong to the category 41 to 50 years and above. There are no single responses from 51 yrs. and above.

It's inferred under the gender category, 86 % of the respondents belong to females and 14% of the respondents belong to a male.

Under the category Marital Status, 73% of the respondents belong to the Unmarried category, 19% of the respondents belong to the Married respondents, and 8 percent of respondents are from the group Separated.

Under the category of educational status, 76% of the respondents completed their Undergraduate, and 24% of the respondents completed their post-graduation. Finally, Under the category of Occupation, 18% of the respondents were from Private jobs, 15% of respondents belonged to the group Govt jobs., 9% of responses were for Business people, and the majority 58% of the respondents belonged to the category Others, this category includes the Doctorate students who are all getting salary for their work.

### **6.2 Measures:**

This study constructed well-established scales from the literature to measure the variables. The assessment criteria utilized in this study are presented in Table 1. First, five items from a previous study (Vasic et al., 2019) were used to assess both price and quality. Second, product features were scored using a 5-item measure based on the Jahwari et al. (2018) product innovation scale. Third, Nikhashemi et al. (2013) graded ease of use; questions concerning consumer satisfaction are incorporated in the questions, indicating as a dependent variable; and the independent variables are included in the questionnaire as 7. Li et.al (2006) and Tandan et.al (2017) explained Environmental effectiveness and customer review. These elements were derived from Tandon et al. (2017) and Li et al. (2006) study. Lastly, the selected variable was assigned a Likert scale value ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A greater number of points proposed that the variable's concept was in a greater impact position.

Table 1. Variables and items.

Construct	Sources	Nature
Price and Quality	Vasic et al. (2019)	Independent
Product Features	Jahwari et al. (2018)	Independent
Ease of use	Nikhashemi et al. (2013)	Independent
Warranty	Dharmesti and Nugroho (2012);	Independent
Brand value	Musa et al. (2015)	Independent
Reviews	Y.C.Mohan & J.Vijayadurai (2016)	Independent
Environmental		
Effectiveness	Tandon et al. (2017)	Independent
Consumer Satisfaction	Tandon et al. (2017)	Dependent

## 7. Results and Discussions:

### 7.1 Data analysis:

In the study analysis, the PLS (SEM) technique was used. The SEM methodology is used to study the association between variables. Hair et al., 2019 describe that the PLS-SEM methodology is useful in exploratory study approaches and leads to improved final results.

Additionally, Richter et al., (2016) identified the PLS-SEM was more suited for the CB-SEM; sample size is necessary, the sample is normally distributed, and the model has been described. These conditions necessitate the selection of suitable variables when transforming a framework into an SEM. PLS-SEM may be able to satisfy these requirements. Sarstedt et al. (2014) employed Smart PLS 4.0 software in this case.

### 7.2 Assessment of measurement model

The measurement model's validity and reliability have been investigated and evaluated. The outer loading values established during the test acquired a good level of dependability, as shown in Table 2. All of the used variables' outer loading values are higher than 0.50 (Hair et al., 2017) and differentiate between 0.603 to 0.114. The convergent validity is not higher because average variance extracted (AVE) points for all construct break-off values should be greater than 0.50 but instead fluctuate between 0.433 to 0.766.

According to Kline (2015), the Composite reliability (CR) of the latent variable varies from 0.802 to 0.899, which is above the acceptable threshold of 0.50 for exploratory research.



Fornell and Larcker's (1981) technique is recommended to get a better result for discriminant validity analysis. Table 3 results include all factors and the inverse square roots of AVE (ranging from 1.207 to 4.221). Table 3 displays the coefficients of the AVE square root along the diagonal, while the other shows correlations between the other variables. These correlations are stronger across the board, demonstrating that the discriminant validity is adequate (Hair et al., 2017). We also calculate the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT) as an additional indicator of the test's discriminant validity. The HTMT is determined as well, and it must be less than 0.85 (Henseler et al., 2015). Table 4 shows that the HTMT values for each construct are lower than the threshold values, which can be validated (Table 5). by Yun Hsuan Su (2023)

### 7.3 Hypothesis testing

Compared with parametric tests, the bootstrapping method of Smart PLS is used to examine the hypothesis. The PLS method has some substantial advantages over other tests. (Chin, 2010). Henseler et.al 2009, expressed in their survey the reliability of Smart PLS.

This study has three direct hypotheses. The researcher used Smart PLS 4 editions for the hypothesis with bootstrapping subsets for the framework of this study.

Table: 2

Variables	items	outer loadings	Cronbha alpha	CR	Avg
Consumer Satisfaction	CS1	0.862	0.877	0.889	0.73
	CS2	0.824			
	CS3	0.844			
	CS4	0.885			
Factors	FA1	0.767	0.751	0.802	0.433
	FA2	0.687			
	FA3	0.78			
	FA4	0.73			
	FA5	0.603			
	FA6	0.672			
	FA7	0.114			
Regular Consumer	RC1	0.8	0.848	0.883	0.766
	RC2	0.9			
	RC3	0.92			

**Table 3: Discriminant validity Fornell-Larcker criterion.**

F2 value

	CS	FA	RC
CS		1.369	1.207
FA			4.221
RC			

**Table 4: Discriminant validity HTMT criterion.**

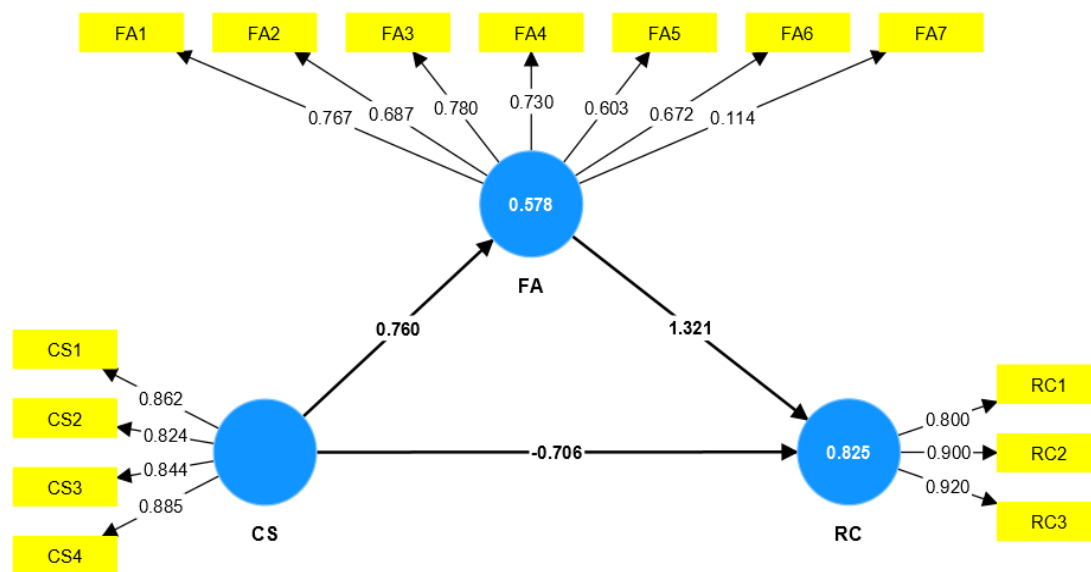
	CS	FA	RC
CS	0.854		
FA	0.76	0.658	
RC	0.298	0.784	0.875

**Table 5: Hypothesis Results**

hypothesis	Path	path coefficient	Std. deviation (STDEV)	T stats( O/STDEV )	P Value	F2	Decision
H1	CS -> FA	0.761	0.042	18.04	0	1.369	Supported
H2	CS -> RC	-0.71	0.094	7.495	0	1.207	Supported
H3	FA -> RC	1.327	0.07	18.798	0	4.221	Supported

The PI exhibits a substantial and positive correlation with FP ( $\beta$  0.761 and p-value 0.000), which supports the H1 and is accepted. Moreover, CS was significantly linked with RC ( $\beta$  -0.71 and p-value 0.000) and accepted H2. likewise, FA greatly supports RA ( $\beta$  1.327 and p-value 0.000).

According to Imran et al 2021, the value of F2 assesses the exogenous and endogenous variables. The f2 is divided into several categories as suggested by Cohen 1988, the effect of small size is 1.207, the medium is 1.369, and the largest effect of f2 is 4.221. As per Table 5, the value of FA on RC is more. Also, CS has a medium influence of 1.369 on FA. And the smallest influence is 1.207 on CS on RC.



**Figure: Structural Model**  
 Source: Author's Source

**Table 6: R2 and Q2**

	R-square	R-square adjusted
FA	0.578	0.575
RC	0.825	0.823

Source: Author's Source

#### 7.4 The predictive Model power

Yun Hsuan Su, 2023, expressed that the exogenous variable should be whole by R2 when the degree of variation is attributed. From Table 6, the result shows 82% under RC, at the same time FA shows 57%. From Table 6 results, RC and FA completed their criteria. The researcher used Smart PLS to finalize the model's cross-validity redundancy or R2 adjusted value's predictive power through the blindfolding method.

Chin et.al (2020) states that the R2, which adjusted value must be greater than zero. Table 3 anticipated that the FA and RC values would be greater than zero. As a result, this study model has a high predictive potential.

## **8. Conclusions**

Finally, from this research, a strong relationship between CS, FA, and RA is partially tested for consumer satisfaction as there is no influence of mediating variables that directly affect the factors. The website manager should concentrate on environmental sustainability practices through factors influencing consumer satisfaction through this effort the consumers may change into regular consumers. Through this effective manner, the website can also avoid competition.

According to Na and Kang (2019), some study focuses on a specific element, and this research contributes highly essential variables that impact both consumers and marketers in Indian marketplaces. Based on the findings of this study, e-commerce managers and website designers should prioritize website quality through cutting-edge innovation. The success of an organization should be determined by managerial decisions. The management should prioritize customer happiness for continuous performance improvement; also, certain new ideas can turn a client into a repeat customer (Lin et al., 2013).

According to the study's findings, consumer happiness has a positive and influential effect on the component that impacts corporate growth. In H2, consumer happiness has a significant influence on consumers and encourages them to become repeat customers. Furthermore, H3, the following elements, Product quality, Product Features, simplicity of use, Warranty, brand value, Reviews, and Environmental effectiveness, assist management as well as consumers in meeting their demands.

According to Dangelio et al., 2017, if management focuses on gathering information from various databases and queries from customer databases and using this information for management decision-making time, it will help to reduce the gap between consumer expectations and their issues while placing orders that the H3 confirms.

### **8.1 Implications of the Study**

#### **Practical Implications**

The results of our study have significant practical implications, notably for top management in the Indian e-commerce sector and industrial experts in this field. Today's Indian e-commerce industry policymakers and managers are focused on business performance, also innovation, and environmental programs and policies. This study's conclusions have ramifications for both managers and practitioners.

The current study sheds light on an essential question: how are the e-commerce platforms involved in social responsibility, and sustainability in the environment? Additionally, technological development might help a country's economic growth. When making decisions, the administration must consider factors like estimating, environmental support, innovation in products, promoting continuous improvement, giving data for reporting reasons, and offering data for internal decision-making.

## **8.2 Theoretical Implication**

This study expands the existing literature on business efficiency by identifying the important factors that must be addressed to achieve consumer satisfaction. The e-commerce sector in Tamil Nadu was discovered to be in the early stages of creating and implementing its goals. The findings of this study indicate that the e-commerce business is improving in most aspects connected to the satisfaction of clients. As a result, to meet performance expectations, company managers should focus on the areas stated above. The e-business, on the other hand, has only a limited commitment to the ideals of sustainability and consumer retention. The proven variables discovered through confirmatory factor analysis add significantly to knowledge in the e-commerce business. According to the research, this scenario greatly moderates the relationship between CS and FA.

## **8.3 Limitations and Future Directions**

The present research may have multiple implications and contributions; still, there are several limitations that future researchers can solve. Given that the scope of this research was limited to the e-commerce industry in Tamil Nadu, India, and that it was a quantitative study in which data was collected from consumers who were all doing online shopping through websites, future research must focus on firm managers, intermediaries such as dealers, and agents to conduct a variety of qualitative studies. The researcher gathered data from the Indian e-commerce business for this investigation. Following the successful deployment of this study output, analogous information from different points of view may be acquired to evaluate the same hypothetical foundation in two alternative situations. In this study, the researchers only collected data from 142 respondents who had completely embraced internet purchasing platforms.

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