

Vital Success Factors for Online Retailers- A Literature Review and Future Agenda

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Abstract

This literature review paper attempts to study and find out the factors which are vital for the survival and success of online retailers. The article is based on a literature review and used the TCCM framework also along with the systematic review. TCCM uses a review based on Theory, Context, Characteristics, and Methodology. This study found a total of eighty-eight variables essential for the success of online retailers. These eighty-eight variables have been grouped into ten constructs. Taking care of eighty-eight variables/sub-factors grouped into ten constructs/factors will help online retailers in getting success in a competitive market. Literature review to develop comprehensive factors vital for the success of online retailers has been only a few in past. This review paper develops a comprehensive checklist for the success of online retailers.

Keywords *Online retailers; Success factors; Literature review.*

Introduction

By the 1990s, online retailing started due to the adoption of computers and the invention of the World Wide Web. Online retailing was facilitated by online payment in 1999 by PayPal (Ingene, 2014). Davidson and Vaast (2010) defined digital entrepreneurship as doing business based on digital media and other information and communication technologies. On the same line, online retailers are involved in retailing activities with internet services. The five categories include online retailers which started as (a) pure internet start-ups, (b) traditional store-based retailers, (c) catalogue retailers, including both emails and telephone-order companies, (d) combination retailers which have traditionally used both stores and catalogues, and (e) wholesale suppliers (Van *et al.*, 2016). E retailing passed through three phases worldwide – the incubation phase, the inflection phase, and the acceleration phase (Sharma and Flamind, 2015). Hagberg and Fuentes (2018) introduced the concept of retail

formation and explained the dynamic configuration process of retail formats and individual retailers. M-commerce and E-commerce have different liking among different age groups, M-Commerce is preferred by youngsters, and E-commerce is more popular among higher age people (Boardman and McCommick, 2018).

E-commerce provided opportunities and challenges regarding technology, customer relationship, pricing, organization structure, product and marketing, and supply chain (Reynolds, 2000). Major factors for the growth of electronic commerce in emerging economies are rapid penetration of technology, adoption of the online medium, convenience and choices to customers, cash on delivery, buy-back policies and increased real estate prices, higher operational cost, non-availability of good retail spaces and restricted growth of large physical stores (Sinha *et al.*, 2015). Barriers to entry are expected to be very low; digital start-ups do not require large prime space and costly equipment,

and operations can be flexible. Online commerce provides opportunities to even socially marginal people and rewards meritocracy (Dy *et al.*, 2017).

Global e-commerce sales were estimated to be around \$4.2 trillion by 2020, but getting success in e-commerce is not so easy. The competition is getting intense and online buying behaviour is also changing (Wertz, 2020). The number of grocery retailers across India in 2020 amounted to about 12.8 million (Statista, 2021). But the number of online retailers in India is very less in comparison to brick and mortar retailers. As mentioned in the literature online retailing has many benefits and is easy to start, it is expected that online retailers should be high in number.

This literature review paper has a research question that “what are the factors to be considered by online retailers to be successful in online retailing? This paper will include mainly pure online retailers; click-only retailing physical goods mainly. Though a few papers on success factors of online retailers are available, however, such papers were conducted in remote past and they are either country-specific, product-specific, or related to limiting factors. This review paper attempts to overcome such limitations and develops a comprehensive list of success factors.

Review methodology

This article is based on a literature review; the author has collected the already published research papers on the topic of the review paper. Suitable keywords were used to search for the research papers published on the topic. Keywords like online retailers, success factors for online retailers, challenges before online retailers, online retailers in India, digital entrepreneurs, closure of online retailers, failure of online retailers, small online retailers were used. A total of 54 research papers were found suitable and included in the literature review. Research papers that dealt with success factors

or critical factors of online retailers were retained. This review paper used the TCCM framework also; the TCCM framework uses review on the bases of Theory, Context, Characteristics, and Methodology (Paul and Rosado-Serrano, 2019). There are hardly a few research papers that are on the success factors of online retailers. Most research papers are related to a few or single dimensions of success factors of online retailers. Research papers from the journals published by Inderscience, Springer, Emerald, Francis and Taylor, Sage, and Wiley were collected. A search on Google Scholar was also made with the same keywords. The author has tried to search for research papers from the beginning of online retailing to 2020. Suitable tables and charts make review papers more authentic (Paul and Criado, 2020). Hence, suitable tables have been made concerning TCCM.

Online retailer

In this literature review, online retailers are pure online retailers, which means online retailers, click online, not omnichannel retailers or brick-and-click retailers. This review paper is about mainly pure online retailers dealing in physical products or goods. However, the success factors emerging in this literature review paper may be useful to retailers other than pure online retailers selling physical products.

TCCM based review

This review paper used the TCCM framework also; TCCM uses review on the bases of Theory, Context, Characteristics, and Methodology (Paul and Rosado-Serrano, 2019).

Theory

Review finds that past research studies related to factors important for the success of online retailers have used theories as mentioned in table 1.

Table 1: Theory used in past research papers

Theory used	No of papers	%
Technology acceptance model	1	2
Theory of planned behaviour	1	2
Nudge theory	1	2
Servqual	1	2
Commitment and trust theory	1	2
Cue utilization theory	1	2
Expectancy value theory	1	2
Herzberg's motivation/hygiene theory,	1	2
Innovation diffusion theory	1	2
Geographic breakeven theory	1	2
Consumer shopping value theory	1	2
Grounded approach	1	2
E-S-QUAL Scale	1	2
Not used	37	74

Important theories used in research papers included in the review are the technology acceptance model, theory of planned behaviour; nudge theory, commitment and trust theory, expectancy-value theory, Herzberg motivation theory, innovation diffusion theory, servqual, e servqual, and grounded approach. However, a large number of research papers did not use any theory in research papers.

Context

In context, countries, and industries mentioned in the past research papers, included in this review paper, have been analyzed and shown in table 2.

Table 2: Countries included in past research

Country	No. of papers	%
USA	15	30
India	13	26
UK	3	6
Sweden	2	4
Australia	2	4
Turkey	1	2
South Africa	1	2
Japan	1	2
Sri Lanka	1	2

Germany	1	2
France	1	2
Ireland	1	2
Thailand	1	2
Turkey	1	2
European countries	1	2
Not mentioned	6	12

Review finds USA and India are two main countries in which research studies were conducted, UK, Sweden, and Australia other main countries, list of industries/sectors in which research studies were conducted are given in table 3.

Table .3: Industries/Sector included in past research

Industry/ sector	No. of papers	%
Grocery	10	20
Book store	2	4
Multi-product	2	4
Apparel	1	2
Fashion	1	2
Boot store	1	2
Consumer electronics	1	2
Computer hardware	1	2
Online dating	1	2
Consumer software	1	2
Ticket brokerage	1	2
Food	1	2
Not mentioned	27	54

Review finds about 10 studies included in this study are based on online grocery stores. Online book stores and multi-production stores are also at a higher place. Other industries or sectors on which research studies have been conducted are given in the table. However, 54% of research studies did not mention the industry or sector included in the research study.

Characteristics

Research studies included in the review paper deals with the main broad variables as given in

table 4, Specific variables and corresponding research paper/author citation table has been given separately and used as a comprehensive list of vital success factor for online retailers. Six research papers are related to critical success factors, six research papers are related to the business model and strategies of online retailers, customer trust, customer experience, barrier and drivers of online shopping are among the major broad variable with the many papers are based on.

Table .4: Major/Broad variables included in past research

Major variable	Number of papers	%
Critical success factors	6	12
Online retailer business model and strategies	6	12
Customer trust	5	10
Customer experience	4	8
Barriers and drivers of online shopping	4	8
Retail formation and evolution	3	6
Service quality	2	4
Logistics	2	4
Channel preference	2	4
Financial management	1	2
Fulfillment time	1	2
The online buying decision process	1	2
Classification and description of online retailer	1	2
Nature of digital entrepreneurship	1	2
Online privacy	1	2
E-service complaints	1	2
e-commerce	1	2
E services cape	1	2
Benefits of using the online portal by a traditional retailer	1	2
Use of gap analysis and positioning map	1	2
Facebook	1	2
Beliefs of local grocery about the online grocer	1	2
Effectiveness of online tools	1	2
Impact of normative beliefs, age, and gender on online shopping	1	2
Web customers' willingness to engage in online shopping	1	2

Methodology

This section gives details of the research approach and research method used. Research studies have used both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Fifty percent

of research studies included in this review are based on a qualitative research approach while forty-six percent are based on a quantitative research approach and one research study used a mixed research approach.

Table 5 Research approach used in past research

Research approach	No. of research paper	%
Qualitative	26	52
Quantitative	23	46
Mixed method	1	2

Research methods used in qualitative and quantitative research approaches are given in Tables 6 and 7. Case study, in-depth interview, and review are major methods used by research

papers based on a qualitative approach. SEM, EFA, and Experiments are the main methods used by research papers based on a quantitative research approach.

Table 6: Qualitative methods used in past research

Qualitative research approach	No. of research paper	%
Case study	6	26
In-depth interview	4	17
Critical incidence story	2	9
Review	5	22
Focus group	1	4
Netnography	1	4
Ethnography	1	4
Content analysis	2	9
Linguistic inquiry and word count	1	4

Table 7: Quantitative methods used in past research

Quantitative research approach	No. of research paper	%
SEM	11	46
Experiment	4	17
Manova	1	4
Multiple regression	1	4
Ridge regression	1	4
EFA	4	17
Conjoint analysis	1	4
Kurshwali test	1	4

Review to develop a comprehensive list of success factors for online retailers

Consumer trust

Gaining the trust of the consumer has been an important factor in the success of online retailers. Various research studies have been conducted on the impact of consumer trust on online retailers. Punyatoya (2018) found in his research that consumer trust towards online retailers leads to customer loyalty. Previous researchers have found antecedents of consumer trust towards online retailers. Kim and Tadisina (2010) and Punyatoya (2018) mentioned website quality has an impact on generating consumer trust. Unknown web-based online retailers or start-ups must make good efforts to have a high-quality website to attract and retain customers (Kim and Tadisina 2010). Online retailer must build an online reputation (Kim and Tadisina 2010; Kureshi and Thomas 2019), at the same time company profile of online retailer also influence trust. The reputation of online retailers has a significant impact on the perception of product quality, perception of risk, and purchase intention (Kim and Choi, 2012). Research by Jun *et al.* (2004), Kim and Choi (2012), and Punyatoya (2018) highlighted that online organization credibility is an important factor of trust, and if customers have a credibility perception of online retailer's product reviews, customers will have better online purchase intent, hence, an online retailer must monitor its online product review credibility (Kim and Choi, 2012). Research by Tan *et al.* (2009) found

online retailers must handle customer queries and feedback effectively and be transparent to customers for generating consumer trust. The consumer will generate trust if online retailers shared the same values as customers and online retailers must have interactions with like-minded people and organizations in online communities (Mukherjee and Nath 2007; Tan *et al.*, 2009). Trust will be developed if online retailers make the promise that they can fulfill and retailers should try to remove the fear of faulty products (Singh and Soderlund 2020). To generate trust online retailers must be considered benevolent and customers must believe in the abilities of online retailers (Aeron *et al.*, 2019). Kim and Tadisina (2010) concluded online retailers can use third party support to gain trust, research mentioned that if unknown online retailers have an association with other organizations, persons, vendors, and customers who are trusted by customers, customers will also generate trust in unknown online retailer, however, this unknown online retailer must follow good business practices too. Wang *et al.* (2004) mentioned online retailers must use awards from neutral bodies and a seal of approvals from competent authorities to generate trust towards online retailers. At the same time, online retailers must make security disclosure. Table 8 has a list of variables related to consumer trust.

Customer focus, customer satisfaction, and customer experience

Past literature has mentioned the importance of online customer experience as an important

factor in customer satisfaction. Previous researchers have highlighted many variables that influence the online customer experience of online retailers. Dasanayaka *et al.* (2017) explained a significant relationship between customer focus and e-commerce success. Value addition to customers was considered the most important factor; hence, an online retailer must have customer focus always in mind. Online retailers must have a variety of product assortments as per the needs of customers (Colla and Lapoule, 2012). Baskaran (2011) concluded online retailer must have their brand, price, promotion, packaging, and labeling keeping in mind customer satisfaction and customer experience. Product assortment provided by online retailers has an impact on perceived risk guidance (Rishi *et al.*, 2018) and attractive product offers like gift vouchers, credit points, and discounts are also important (Singh *et al.*, 2017). Junet *et al.* (2004), Tan *et al.* (2009), and Sharma and Aggarwal (2019) found customer service as an important variable of online customer experience; customer service should be prompt and responsive. Online retailers must have a suitable return and refund policy (Trabold *et al.*, 2006; Singh and Soderlund, 2020). It should be easy for a customer to buy from an online retailer and customers are provided help and information even after buying products or services (Phonthanukitithaworn *et al.*, 2019). Being attentive to the customer (Jun *et al.*, 2004) and providing personalization (Scheepers 2001; Kim *et al.*, 2006; Sharma and Aggarwal, 2019) to the customer is important for customer satisfaction and customer experience. Pavure *et al.* (2016) explained customers must have enjoyment in doing business with online retailers and there should be ease of buying (Phonthanukitithaworn *et al.*, 2019). Online retailers must understand and meet customer expectations (Kureshi and Thomas, 2019) and online retailers should generate e WOM (Harris and Dennis 2011; Bhattacharya and Srivastava 2018; Sharma and Aggarwal, 2019). Grant *et al.* (2014) mentioned that service quality provided by online retailers is an important enabler of online food retailing. Table 8 shows a list of all variables included in this construct.

Logistics

Logistics play a very critical role in the success of online retailers. Previous research highlighted that online retailers must improve fulfilments efficiency and speed of shipping (Huang 2003; Goetzinger *et al.*, 2006; Kennedy and Coughlan, 2006). Zhang *et al.* (2019) defined fulfillment time as the time gap between order placement by a customer to delivery of the product to customer location and online retailers must have methods to reduce the fulfillment time. Providing timely delivery is critical for the success of online retailers (Singh *et al.*, 2017; Singh and Soderlund, 2020). Hirogaki (2015) highlighted the importance of delivery time window range, suitable receiving methods, and shipping charges. Japanese Customers gave more importance to cost than convenience. In Japan, the high shipping cost has been one of the important factors for inhibiting customers to buy online. It is important that how shipping and handling cost is dealt with if any problem occurs, how refunding of shipping and handling cost is done (Kim *et al.*, 2006). Online retailers must have cold distribution chains and reverse logistics (Weber and Badenhorst-Weiss, 2018). Kureshi and Thomas (2019) highlighted the importance of the variety of products, cost, and technical issues in inventory management for online retailers. The importance of diversified, efficient, and service-oriented logistics has been mentioned by Kim *et al.* (2006), Colla and Lapoule (2012), Grant *et al.* (2014), and Karadag (2015). Wollenburget *et al.* (2018) highlighted the requirement of different logistics for grocery and non-grocery online retailers. Table 8 has a list of variables in logistics.

Website quality and web content

Web sites play a significant role in influencing customers' attitudes, evaluation, and purchase intentions concerning online retailers (Hopkins *et al.*, 2009). Research by Junet *et al.* (2004), Tan *et al.* (2009), and Tandon *et al.* (2017) concluded that websites of online retailers must be convenient to use. The website must provide ease of searching, it must have in-stock status information and the website must provide ease of comparison (Kim and Stoel, 2005). Singh (2019) mentioned website must be easy to navigate; it must have a provision of an order cancellation management system (Singh, 2019). Pavure *et al.* (2016) mentioned the comfort level of

customers with a website, highlighted that websites of online retailers must have aesthetic appeal, and websites must provide playfulness and enjoyment to the customers (Singh, 2019). It must be easy for the customers to contact the online retailer (Jun *et al.*, 2004). Singhet *al.* (2017) mentioned having an effective portal system by the online retailer for its success. Tan *et al.* (2009) concluded that online retailers must have web content that is updated, easy to understand, and accurate. Website must not take time to load the pages, and navigation in pages on the website should not take time, website must be able to attract customers and be able to achieve the task for which the website is made (Sharma and Aggarwal, 2019). Consumers prefer to use websites for shopping if their social systems and groups have a positive opinion about its attributes (Khare *et al.*, 2012). The importance of website quality and web content has been highlighted by researchers Kim *et al.* (2006) and Grant *et al.* (2014). Variables listed in website quality and website content are given in Table 8.

Security and privacy

Online retailers to be successful must provide online security to the transactions of the customers. Providing online security and privacy measures is a driver of online retailing, security and privacy has a significant relationship with intention to buy (Tandon *et al.*, 2017). Tsai *et al.* (2011) concluded that customers want to buy more from online retailers which protects their privacy. Jun *et al.* (2004) mentioned that providing security to online transactions of customers is one service quality dimension of online retailers, customers should feel safe in providing personal information to the online retailer and customers must have a low-risk perception in online transactions. Mukherjee and Nath (2007) concluded privacy and security feature of a website of an online retailer is antecedents of trust of customers towards the online retailer. Kim *et al.* (2006) concluded that online retailers must disclose the security and privacy information, in brief, but complete and online retailers must highlight their ethics to the customers. Rishi *et al.* (2018) concluded transaction security provided by the online

retailer has a positive impact on perceived risk, perceived convenience, perceived compatibility, and perceived complexity. However, Trabold *et al.* (2006) found online privacy protection is useful in some sectors of relating like retailing for children, electronics, personal items for health care, but not so important for online retailing of books, clothing, and computer retailing. Table 8 shows variables listed in security and privacy.

Competition

Previous research work highlights that online retailers face huge competition and discusses different types of competitions. Lightfoot (2003) mentioned that online retailers face competition from big online retailers like Amazon and discussed the case of Egghead Software's transformation from a traditional retailer to an e-commerce company only, in which Egghead could not survive in the competition provided by a big online-only retailer like Amazon. Ring and Tigert (2001) mentioned online retailers face competition from brick and mortar retailers. Pure-play internet grocery retailers failed as they did not have a competitive advantage over traditional brick and mortar retailers, they could not develop a profitable business model, and their operating cost was higher. Hence, online retailers face competition from big online retailers and big offline retailers also. At the same time, online retailers face competition from local online and offline retailers too. Tractinsky and Lowengart (2003) concluded that to be successful online retailers must use marketing tools like perceptual maps and gap analysis, by this; online retailers will be able to find their position concerning competitors and may serve the market well. A list of Variables related to this construct is given in table number 8.

Financial management

Online retailers to be successful must manage their finances well. Kureshi and Thomas (2019) found in their interview-based research study that grocery retailers have the view that if they go for online retailing it would cost them additional by providing salary to employees needed for doing online work and the additional revenue by online retailing will be just equal to this expenditure hence, online retailers must

manage its cost and profit margin to be successful. Ring and Tigert (2001) concluded that higher operating cost is one challenge before pure-play online retailers; their research mentioned that pure-play online retailers failed as they could not develop a profitable business model, such retailers could not manage their operating cost per customer which was higher than operating cost in brick and mortar retailers. Pure play online retailers tried to sell at less cost and they could not recover their operating costs. Poor financial management has been one of the main causes of the failure of small and medium enterprises in Turkey and efficient utilization of available funds is important (Karadag, 2015). Table 8 has variables on financial management.

Technological infrastructure

Previous research found the role of suitable technological infrastructure for the success of online retailers. Grant *et al.* (2014) mentioned technology is needed for speed of order processing, ease of handling, ease of using the website, effective order processing, and delivery. Poor technological infrastructure results in developing more risk perception of customers towards website (Khareet *et al.*, 2012). Tandon *et al.* (2017) concluded that internet connectivity is still a problem; slow internet speed has been one barrier to the growth and success of online retailers. Variables related to technological infrastructure are listed in table 8.

E-business organization culture

Tanet *et al.* (2009) explained that to be a successful online retailer must commit to improving business. E-commerce owners must be ready to learn new business ideas, technology, and business opportunities (Tan *et al.*, 2009; Phonthanukitithaworn, *et al.*, 2019). Dasanayaka *et al.* (2017) concluded e-business strategy, e-business leadership important factors for the success of online retailers, however, concluded that less than half of e-businesses have an e-business strategy. Online retailers must have a long-term growth strategy (Huang, 2003). Online retailers must have a suitable business process (Huang, 2003) and they must attempt to improve the business

process (Tan *et al.*, 2009). Research by Tan *et al.* (2009), Dasanayaka *et al.* (2017), and Kureshi and Thomas (2019) said online retailers must have suitable technology and adequate content management. Kalia (2015) found factors like adequate market opportunity, good team management, competitive advantage, and organizational development. Tan *et al.* (2009) concluded the importance of control on business, right partnership. Online retailers to be successful must be ethical; consumer perception towards online retailers has four dimensions security, privacy, fulfillment, and non-deception (Roman and Cuestas, 2008). Online retailers must follow the concept of relationship marketing means having a high quality of customer reception (Colla and Lapoule, 2012) and it should use business intelligence to support customer relationship management (Roman and Cuestas, 2008). An online retailer needs to have required IT training (Tatpuje and Ganbote, 2019). All the variables related to this construct are mentioned in table 8.

Government support

Khareet *et al.* (2012) mentioned in their research study that lack of government support increases consumers' perception of risk toward online websites. So, the government should provide the need for technology and support concerning technology. Table 8 has variables on government support.

Findings and conclusion

Total eighty-eight variables (sub-factors) were found in the literature review, these variables were classified into ten factors or constructs as mentioned: consumer trust (seventeen variables), customer focus, customer satisfaction and customer experience (nineteen variables), logistic (nine variables), website quality (sixteen variables), e-business strategy (seventeen variables), competition (three variables), financial management (three variables), security and privacy (two variables), technological Infrastructure (one variable), government support (one variable). These factors/constructs are shown in figure 1 and all the variables/sub-factors in factors/constructs are shown in table 8.

Figure 1: Success factors for online retailers



Table 8: Ten factors and eighty-eight sub-factors for the success of online retailers

Consumer trust (17 Variables)	Customer focus, Consumer satisfaction and customer experience (19 Variables)	Logistics (9 Variables)	Website Quality and Web Content (16 Variables)	Security and Privacy (2 Variables)	Competition (3 Variables)	Financial Management (3 Variables)	Technological Infrastructure (1 variable)	E-Business Organization Culture (17 Variables)	Government Support (1 Variable)
Third party support	Brand	Shipping charges	Effective portal system	Transaction security	Competition from big retails like amazon	Cost	Slow internet speed	E business strategy	Lack of Government Support
Company profile	Price	Delivery time window range	Web content updated	Privacy	Competition from brick and motor retailers	Margin		E business leadership	
Website quality	Promotion	Apt receiving methods	Web content easy to understand		Marketing tools like perceptual maps and gap analysis	Operating cost		Suitable technology	
Online reputation	Packaging and labeling	Improve fulfillment efficiency	Web content accurate					Content mgmt	
Online organization credibility	Customer focus	Timely delivery	Web content relevant to users need					Business process	
Product review credibility	Value proposition	Shipping and handling cost if a problem occurs	Easy to contact					Long term growth strategy	
Handle customer queries, feedback effectively	Product assortment	Reverse logistics	My web site is convenient to use					Market opportunity	
Interactions among like-minded people and organizations in	Attractive product offers	Cold chain distribution	Easy to order					Organizational development	
Transparent to customers	Prompt and responsive customer service	Inventory mgmt	Build web site traffic					Good mgmt team	
Remove fear of faulty product	Attentive to customer		Ease of searching					Competitive advantage	
Shared same values with customers	Meeting customer expectation		In stock status info					Control on business	
Made the promise that I could fulfill	Personalization to customer		Ease of comparison					Right partnership	
Considered as benevolent	E WOM		Web site easy to navigate					Commitment to improve my business	
Customers believed in my ability	Communication with customer		Order cancellation mgmt system					Relationship marketing	
Made security disclosure	Return policy		Website provided playfulness and enjoyment					IT training	
Awards from neutral body	Refund policy		Website has aesthetic appeal					BI to support CRM	
Seal of approvals	Ease of buying							Ethical	
	Help and information to								
	Customers enjoy doing business								

Seventeen variables have been grouped into gaining consumer trust towards online retailers. Online retailers’ company profiles and reputations are important for consumer trust. Website quality should be good, easy to navigate, and updated. Online retailers must be considered ethical and benevolent. It should make the promises which it can fulfill. Online retailers must share the same values as that of

customers. Online retailers can take the help of third-party support, which means it can show the association with persons or organizations which are considered trustworthy by the customers. Customer focus, customer satisfaction, and customer experience are necessary for online retailers. Online retailers must be customer-focused, understand and fulfill customer expectations. Communication with customers

should be correct and timely. Personalization to the customer is vital, customer service before and after sales of service is also important. The value proposition should be such that customers enjoy business with online retailers.

Logistics is one important challenge before online retailers, it is an important cost and benefits point to online retailers, and customers want fast accurate, safe, and timely delivery of the product. Online retailers must have a provision of reverse logistics as customer returns are significant. Keeping updated inventory is also critical. Logistics is important between supplier to online retailer and online retailers to customers and from customers to online retailers.

Website quality and web content provide the role of salespersons, first encounter of a customer is with the website and web content of the online retailer, which can make or mar the interest and buying intention of the customer. Literature review finds website must be attractive, easy to find, easy to navigate, helpful in buying and contacting the online retailers. The website must display correct and needed information. All the necessary terms and conditions including security and privacy must be displayed in such a way so that customers can comprehend easily. Web content has a significant impact on buying and loyalty intention of the customers.

The business culture and strategy of online retailers are very important. Online retailers must have a long-term vision and strategy for their online business, online retailers must be committed to being successful in online business. Quality of leadership, organizational culture, and team-building correlate with the success of an online retailer.

Business intelligence must be used to gain insights into customers and competitors. The latest technology should be used and its training is a must with an online retailer and team. Online retailers face competition from big online retailers like Amazon, competition is provided by brick and mortar retailers, and mom and pop conventional retailers. Online retailers must give due importance, understand such competition and find ways to face such competitions. Offering a value proposition better than that of competitors and managing customer

relationships is significant for the success of online retailers.

Profitability is the aim of business, to be profitable online retailers must manage their finances. Key heads incurring high and significant costs be identified and try to reduce such costs. The operating cost must be managed by the online retailers. The poor technological environment is an obstacle to online retailing, it repeals the buying intentions of the customers, generates a perception of risk and lack of security. Lack of support by the government is another hindrance to the success of online retailing. Government must have a business environment suitable for online retailing.

Managerial implication

This literature review paper provides a comprehensive review of factors essential for the success of online retailers. A total of eighty-eight variables have been identified in the review. These variables are like a checklist to promoters and managers of online retailers, online retailers can use this checklist to see if they are considering and taking care of these variables and how they are performing concerning a variable and the variable where they need to improve. It is going to be very helpful to businesses that plan to foray into online retailing, at the same time this review paper is going to be helpful to new and established online retailers in managing, maintaining, and growing their online business.

Social implication

This paper will be helpful to society in general also, as unemployment is one big problem in many countries. Retailing is one such wide occupation which people plan to start. Online business activities are increasing rapidly. People can start online retailing at relatively less cost and with more ease than brick and mortar retailing. This literature review will provide necessary guidance to such persons who want to start online retailing but in the absence of brief but comprehensive knowledge on success factors of online retailing, they may have inhibitions.

Limitations

This paper is not free from limitations, this is a literature review paper, though utmost care has

been taken in the selection and review of past good quality research papers published on the theme of research, however, this research paper is dependent on previous research papers. This review takes into account mainly online retailers on physical products; research papers on online retailing of services are only a few in this review paper.

Findings, conclusion, and future agenda concerning TCCM

Theory

The main theories used in past research studies are technology acceptance model, theory of planned behaviour, nudge theory, commitment and trust theory, expectancy-value theory, Herzberg motivation theory, innovation diffusion theory, servqual, e servqual, however, the majority of research studies included in the review have not used any theory, so research for success factors for online retailer should be conducted with some established theory also like masstige theory, 7 P framework, etc.

Context

Most of the research has been conducted in USA, India, UK, Sweden, and Australia. About 20% of research papers are related to online grocery retailers, other important sectors covered are an online book store, multi-product store, etc. future research should cover the countries and industries or sectors less explored till now. Future research can be conducted on success factors on services online retailers.

Characteristics

Research studies included in the review are related to critical success factors, online business models, customer service, customer trust, customer experience, and research papers few in numbers are also related to other characteristics or variables. Future research should be conducted on success factors concerning new technology like artificial intelligence, hyper-automation, augmented reality, etc.

Methodology

Past research papers have used both quantitative and qualitative research approaches; the use of the qualitative approach is more than the use of the quantitative approach. In the future research can be conducted using a mixed-method approach.

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