

ABSTRACT

Why Online Shopping is Popular in Trinidad and what are the Implications on Local Retailers?

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This paper seeks to investigate “Why online shopping is popular in Trinidad and what are the implications on local retailers?” The study embraces a qualitative approach to examine the lived experiences of participants who shop online and the implications of online shopping on local retailers in Trinidad. Participants were selected based on a purposeful random sampling strategy. The methods of data collection used were focus groups and face to face interviews. The focus group exercise was used to gather data from the consumers while the face to face interviews were used to gather data from the local retailers.

Content analysis was used which revealed the most significant units of analysis from both participants. From the consumers’ viewpoint, the following were the main units of analysis: buying habits, factors influencing online buying, quality of product, online shopping concerns and local retailers whereas buying habits and categories of items sold, implications of online shopping on local retailers, promotional strategies and government intervention were the major units of analysis from the local retailers’ point of view.

This study revealed that Trinidad’s readiness to engage in ecommerce activities is favorable. The major factors influencing online buying in Trinidad were: reviews, cheaper prices, variety of products and quality of products. However, it was noted that reduction in sales, loss of customers and increased competition were the major implications faced by local retailers.

A deductive approach of data analysis was used in this study. The data collected and the finding noted were in support of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) but most importantly, it was in direct support of the Expectancy Confirmation Theory (ECT).

Keywords: electronic commerce; internet; online purchase; purchase intention; online purchase tax; online shopping, local retailers; Trinidad.