

## PREFACE

As they say, change is the only constant; the Indian shopping environment has never been an exception. The increased choice for the consumers in how they shop for goods and services is a notable development in this regard. Largely represented by the internet, the growth of information communication technologies (ICTs) has been a great facilitator for these changes.

The internet has transcended the physical boundaries of the conventional marketplace and brought shopping experiences up to one's arm's length. Price advantage, convenience and trust have primarily defined the adoption of online shopping mode by the Indian consumers. Online shopping has ventured into newer categories of products as well as markets and growing at a promising pace. Going by the latest trends in the market, virtual presence has become crucial for a marketer.

However, as the online shopping market matures, it may not be prudent to think that mere online presence or price advantage or convenience shall ensure long term sustenance for the marketer. If not more, equally important shall be to invest in the quality aspects of the online shopping experience. Thus, the concept of electronic service quality (e-SQ) has emerged in the literature.

The present study aims to determine the importance of various e-SQ dimensions as expressed by the online shoppers in five Indian cities viz., Bangalore, Delhi, Guwahati, Kolkata and Mumbai. Thereafter, segments of the respondents are being derived based on the importance they have attached to the e-SQ dimensions. The profiles of the segments are also highlighted. The work bridges an important gap in the literature in segmenting urban Indian online shoppers based on their preference towards electronic service quality.

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