

Customer Perceptions of Service Quality of Flipkart using SERVQUAL Model

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Abstract

Through the prism of the SERVQUAL model, this study seeks to evaluate the level of

customer service provided by Flipkart, one of India's top e-commerce platforms. A thorough

understanding of customer views and expectations is offered by the SERVQUAL framework,

which includes five dimensions: Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and

Empathy. The study uses this technique to identify service quality areas that either match or

fall short of consumer expectations, providing insights into Flipkart's strong points and

potential areas for development. By offering empirical insights into the service quality

landscape of e-commerce platforms, with a specific focus on Flipkart, this study adds to the

body of current knowledge. The findings highlight the particular aspects of service delivery

that require focus in order to maintain competitiveness and promote customer-centered

growth. It is advised to conduct more research to delve into the gaps found and to investigate

methods for balancing client expectations with perceptions to improve overall service quality.

Keywords: FMCG, Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Flipkart, SERVQUAL Model,

E-Commerce platform, Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, Empathy

Introduction

Organizations must continuously work to deliver excellent service experiences in today's

dynamic business environment, when customer happiness and loyalty are key. The

emergence of e-commerce platforms has changed how consumers interact with retailers,

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emphasizing the value of the services provided. Flipkart has distinguished itself among these

platforms as a dominant force in the Indian e-commerce market, serving millions of

customers with a broad selection of goods and services. The evaluation of service quality

becomes a critical factor in determining the success of an e-commerce company as consumer

expectations continue to change.

"The SERVQUAL model, introduced by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry in 1988,

deconstructs service quality into five distinct dimensions—tangibles, reliability,

responsiveness, assurance, and empathy—providing a structured framework for evaluating

and enhancing service excellence.". These factors work together to provide a thorough

understanding of consumers' opinions and expectations, which makes it easier to analyze

service quality gaps systematically.

This study utilizes the SERVQUAL methodology to assess the service quality offered by

Flipkart. The research endeavors to pinpoint both the strengths and areas for improvement in

Flipkart's service delivery by investigating the alignment between consumer expectations and

perceptions across the five dimensions. The conclusions drawn from this study are anticipated

to help Flipkart improve the quality of its services, which would ultimately increase client

satisfaction, brand loyalty, and competitive advantage.

The remainder of this study is organized as follows: Section 2 provides an extensive review

of relevant literature, encompassing discussions on the SERVQUAL model, e-commerce

dynamics, and other pivotal concepts. Section 3 delves into the research methodology,

offering comprehensive insights into the research design, data collection methods, and

analytical techniques employed. The outcomes of the data analysis are reported in Section 4,

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highlighting the service quality parameters with gaps. Section 5 addresses the examination of these results and their consequences. Final thoughts are provided in Section 6, which summarizes the study's contributions and makes suggestions for further research.

Review of Literature

The definition of service quality given by Gronroos (1984) is "the outcome of an evaluation process, where the customers compare their expectations with the service they have received" [Gronroos, 1984]. According to Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985, 1988), service quality is a vague notion that is challenging to describe and quantify.

Service quality is defined by Parasuraman et al. (1985) as consumers' comparisons of service expectations and service performance. According to Parasuraman et al. (1985), service quality is defined as "the degree and direction of discrepancy between consumer perceptions and expectations in terms of different but relatively important dimensions of the service quality, which can affect their future purchasing behavior."

Service quality was described as "the consumer's evaluative judgment about an entity's overall excellence or superiority in providing desired benefits" by Arnauld et al. in their 2002 study. According to Mehta, Lalwani, and Han (2000) as well as Sivadas and Baker-Prewitt (2000) and Yavas, Bilgin, and Shemwell (1997), service quality is seen as a means of assuring customer happiness, retention, and patronage as well as a way to position oneself in a competitive setting.

Customer expectations, as described by Zeithaml, Bitner, and Gremler (2009), represent standards or benchmarks against which service performance is evaluated. Conversely, Kasper, Helsdingen, and Gabbott (2006) offer a different perspective, defining expectations

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as shaped by individual consumer norms, values, desires, and needs. Consequently, because expectations are inherently individualized, satisfaction levels vary among consumers (Kasper, Helsdingen, & Gabbott, 2006). Moreover, expectations often stem from past experiences, influencing the level of service anticipated from service providers. Recognizing and addressing these diverse customer expectation levels is paramount for organizations, as

exceeding these standards fosters customer loyalty..

Significance of the Study

Understanding and improving service quality is crucial for companies hoping to succeed in the market in a time of growing competition and continuously shifting consumer preferences. This study is crucial since it examines the Flipkart service quality landscape, one of the leading e-commerce platforms in India. This study makes use of the SERVQUAL model, which is well known for its thorough examination of service quality, in an effort to offer useful information that can guide strategic choices targeted at enhancing client happiness and loyalty. The findings of this study are expected to contribute significantly to the field of service quality assessment, providing valuable insights that can aid Flipkart in enhancing its service delivery. By better understanding and aligning with consumer expectations, Flipkart can improve its performance and effectively meet the diverse needs of its customers. This endeavor ultimately aims to strengthen Flipkart's position in the market and foster greater

Scope of the Study

customer satisfaction and loyalty.

This study's sole objective is to assess Flipkart's service quality, with a focus on the SERVQUAL model's characteristics of Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance,



and Empathy. The study is focused on how customers perceive and anticipate Flipkart's services with the goal of identifying gaps between these two aspects. Even though the study acknowledges the possible impact of numerous outside factors, such as technical improvements and competitive pressures, on service quality, its primary focus is on evaluating Flipkart's service quality using the SERVQUAL methodology. The survey does not include a thorough examination of the e-commerce sector as a whole or look into variables unrelated to expectations and perceptions of service quality.

Objectives of the study

- 1. The primary objective of this study is to examine the impact of service quality dimensions (tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy) on customers' perceptions of the services provided by Flipkart in Idukki District.
- 2. Another goal is to investigate the relationship between demographic factors—such as age, gender, occupation, qualification, and income—and various dimensions of service quality. By analyzing these factors, the study aims to understand how different demographic groups perceive Flipkart's services and whether there are any significant correlations between demographics and service quality dimensions.
- 3. Finally, based on the findings of the research, the study intends to provide practical recommendations and suggestions for improvement to Flipkart. These suggestions will be grounded in the analysis of service quality dimensions and demographic factors, aiming to help Flipkart enhance its service delivery in Idukki District and better meet the needs and expectations of its customers.

Hypothesis of the study

In view of the objectives listed above, the following hypotheses were formulated.

H1: There is no significant relationship between the demographic factors (Age, Gender, Occupation, Qualification and Income) of the respondents and various dimensions (Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy).

H2: There is no significant relationship between independent variables (Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy) and Overall Service Satisfaction.

Database and Methodology

This section outlines the methodology utilized in this study, covering the research design, sample selection, data sources, as well as the tools for data collection and analysis framework.

Population: The population for this study comprises Flipkart customers of all age groups, both male and female, with varying educational qualifications.

Research Design: The study is designed to be empirical in nature, aiming to gain insights into customers' perceptions of service quality through direct observation and experience. This approach involves analyzing empirical data collected from the respondents.

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Sample Design: For this study, a sample of 100 customers from Idukki district was selected

using convenient sampling method.

Type of Data Source:

The study incorporates both primary and secondary data sources. However, primary data

collected directly from respondents were utilized for analysis. Primary data were gathered

through the distribution of questionnaires. Secondary data were sourced from books, online

journals, and websites, among other sources.

Tools for Data Collection:

Primary data for analysis were collected by administering detailed questionnaires to Flipkart

customers in Idukki district.

Tools for Analysis and Interpretation of Data:

The analysis utilized a five-point Likert-type scaling technique, ranging from "strongly

agree" to "strongly disagree" (5 points to 1 point), to rate respondents' perceptions of service

quality. The mean scores for each statement were calculated and averaged to determine the

mean scores for each service quality dimension. The overall service quality was assumed to

be the combined mean of all dimensions.

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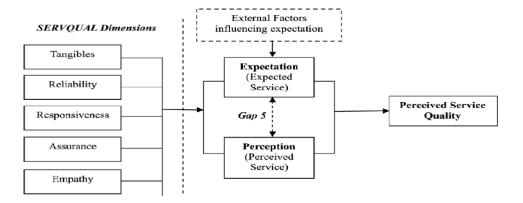
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Model used for the study

The extracts of the properties of SERVQUAL model was used for framing and moulding the study. The SERVQUAL model was developed by a group of American authors, *Parasuraman*, Zeithaml and Len Berry in 1985. They highlighted the main components of high quality service which include:



The service quality dimensions and their indicators related to the present study are as follows:

]	Dimension	Description
	Tangibles	Physical appearance and presentation of Flipkart's website, packaging,



	and user interface		
Reliability	Consistency and dependability in fulfilling orders, accurate processing,		
	and timely delivery.		
Responsiveness	Promptness and efficiency in addressing customer inquiries, concerns,		
	and issues.		
Assurance	Building trust through competent customer service, transparent policies,		
	and data security.		
Empathy	Demonstrating care and understanding by tailoring services,		
	personalized communication, etc.		

Data Analysis and Interpretations

Table: 1

Distribution of respondents on the basis of Gender

Gende	Nos.	Perce
r		nt
Male	69	69.0
Femal	31	31.0
e		
Total	100	100.0

(Source: Primary Data)



Flipkart Customers included in the sample are classified on the basis of their gender. 69 respondents (69 percent) were males and 31 respondents (31 percent) were females.

Table: 2

Distribution of respondents on the basis of Age Group

Age	Nos.	Perce
Group		nt
Below 20	17	17.0
21-40	46	46.0
41-60	25	25.0
Above 60	12	12.0
Total	100	100.0

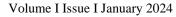
(Source: Primary Data)

The survey of the age group of Flipkart customers revealed that 17 percent of respondents are below 20 years of age. 46 percent are in the age group 21-40 and 25 percent are in the age group 41-60. The remaining 12 percent are above 60 years of age.

Table: 3

Distribution of respondents on the basis of Educational Qualification

Qualification	Nos.	Percent





Primary	2	2.0
Pre-degree/+2	25	25.0
Graduate	51	51.0
Post-Graduate	22	22.0
Total	100	100.0

(Source: Primary Data)

Out of all the respondents 2 percent have only primary education. While 25 percent qualified pre-degree or plus two, 51 percent of the respondents are graduates. The remaining 22 percent of the respondents are post-graduates.

Table: 4

Distribution of respondents on the basis of Occupation

Occupation	Nos.	Percent
Student	39	39.0
Pvt. Employee	20	20.0
Business/Self-Employed	14	14.0
Retired	7	7.0
Govt. Employee	12	12.0
Other	8	8.0
Total	100	100.0

(Source: Primary Data)



Out of all the respondents, 39 (39 percent) are students. 20 Flipkart customers (20 percent) covered under the study are working as private employees and 14 Flipkart customers (14 percent) are doing business or self-employed. While 7 percent of the respondents are retired, 12 percent are working in Government sector. The remaining 8 percent consist of homemakers and persons doing other activities.

Table: 5

Distribution of respondents on the basis of Income Level

Income Range	Nos.	Percent
Less than ₹30,000	37	37.0
₹30,000 - ₹70,000	45	45.0
Over ₹70,000	18	18.0
Total	100	100.0

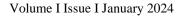
(Source: Primary Data)

The table illustrates the income distribution of 100 respondents in INR. The majority (45%) fall within the ₹30,000 - ₹70,000 income bracket, indicating a significant middle-income segment. A noteworthy lower-income group (37%) earning less than ₹30,000 were also present. Additionally, 18% of respondents report higher incomes exceeding ₹70,000.

Table: 6

Distribution of respondents on the basis of Regularity of Purchases

Type	Nos.	Percent





Very Often	27	27.0
Often	34	34.0
Occasionally	39	39.0
Total	100	100.0

(Source: Primary Data)

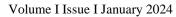
The survey of the regularity of purchases from Flipkart has revealed that 27 percent of respondents make purchases very often whereas 34 percent use Flipkart for their purchase needs often. The remaining 39 percent resort to purchases from Flipkart occasionally.

Overall Service Quality

Table: 7

Overall Service Quality Perception of Flipkart Customers

	Scor		
Dimensions	es		
	Mean	SD	
Tangibles	3.2	0.893	
	92	71	
Reliability	3.2365	0.943	
		17	
Responsivene	2.9803	0.795	
ss		41	





Assurance	3.0	0.762
	95	75
Empathy	2.6829	0.810
		57
SERVQUAL	3.05734	0.708
		94

(Source: Primary Data)

Tangibles: The mean score for the Tangibles dimension is 3.292, with a standard deviation of 0.89371. This indicates that, on average, respondents perceive Flipkart's tangible aspects of service quality fairly positively, with some variability in their responses.

Reliability: The mean score for the Reliability dimension is 3.2365, with a standard deviation of 0.94317. This suggests that, on average, respondents view Flipkart as reasonably reliable in terms of service quality, although there is some dispersion in their opinions.

Responsiveness: The mean score for the Responsiveness dimension is 2.9803, with a standard deviation of 0.79541. This indicates that respondents, on average, perceive Flipkart's responsiveness to be moderately positive, but there is some variability in their assessments.

Assurance: The mean score for the Assurance dimension is 3.095, with a standard deviation of 0.76275. On average, respondents seem to have a relatively positive



perception of Flipkart's assurance-related service quality, although there is some variation in their responses.

Empathy: The mean score for the Empathy dimension is 2.6829, with a standard deviation of 0.81057. This suggests that, on average, respondents view Flipkart's empathy-related service quality less positively than other dimensions, and there is some variability in their perceptions.

SERVQUAL (**Overall**): The overall mean SERVQUAL score is 3.05734, with a standard deviation of 0.70894. This indicates that, on average, respondents' overall perception of Flipkart's service quality, as assessed by the SERVQUAL model, is moderately positive, but there is some dispersion in their evaluations.

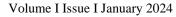
These scores provide a quantitative overview of how respondents perceive Flipkart's service quality across different SERVQUAL dimensions and the overall assessment. The standard deviations indicate the degree of variation or dispersion in respondents' opinions for each dimension. Further analysis can help identify specific areas of strength and areas that may require improvement within Flipkart's service quality.

Certainly, here's a concise hypothetical table summarizing the test results for the relationship between demographic factors and various service quality dimensions:

Table: 8

One –Way ANOVA- SERVQUAL Dimensions based on Demographic Factors

Demographic Factor	Dimension	p-value	Result
Age	Responsiveness	0.032	Significant





Age	Assurance	0.045	Significant
Gender	Empathy	0.001	Significant
Gender	Responsiveness	0.019	Significant
Occupation	Tangibles	0.002	Significant
Occupation	Empathy	0.018	Significant
Qualification	Assurance	0.019	Significant
Qualification	Responsiveness	0.026	Significant
Qualification	Empathy	0.014	Significant
Income	Tangibles	0.011	Significant
Income	Reliability	0.043	Significant
Income	Responsiveness	0.007	Significant
Income	Empathy	0.005	Significant

(Source: Primary Data)

In table, only the demographic factors and service quality dimensions with statistically significant relationships are included. The "Result" column indicates whether the relationship is significant, with "Significant" indicating that there is a significant relationship between the demographic factor and the service quality dimensions.

Summary of Findings

> Gender Distribution

- 1. The study includes 69% male and 31% female respondents.
- 2. It highlights a significant gender disparity among Flipkart customers.



> Age Group Distribution

- Respondents are categorized into age groups, with 46% in the 21-40 age brackets, making it the largest group.
- 2. The study indicates a broad age range, with 17% below 20, 25% between 41-60, and 12% above 60.

> Educational Qualification

- 1. The majority (51%) of respondents are graduates, followed by 22% post-graduates.
- 2. A small portion (2%) has only primary education.

Occupation

- 1. Students constitute the largest group (39%), followed by private employees (20%).
- 2. The sample includes individuals from various occupational backgrounds, including business, government employment, and retirement.

> Income Levels

- The income distribution reveals a significant middle-income group (45%) earning ₹30,000 - ₹70,000.
- 2. A substantial lower-income segment (37%) earns less than ₹30,000, while 18% have incomes exceeding ₹70,000.

> Purchase Frequency

- 1. 27% of respondents make very frequent purchases on Flipkart, while 34% purchase often, and 39% do so occasionally.
- 2. It highlights the diversity in purchasing behavior among Flipkart customers.

> Service Quality Perception

- Service quality dimensions (Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy) are evaluated using the SERVQUAL model.
- 2. Overall, respondents rate service quality positively, with varying levels of satisfaction across dimensions.
- 3. Assurance and Tangibles receive higher mean scores, indicating stronger perceived quality, while Responsiveness and Empathy score lower.

> Demographic Factors and Service Quality

- 1. One-way ANOVA tests reveal statistically significant relationships between demographic factors (Age, Gender, Occupation, Qualification, and Income) and service quality dimensions.
- 2. For example, Age significantly affects Responsiveness and Assurance, while Gender influences Empathy and Responsiveness.

These findings indicate that different demographic groups perceive service quality differently, providing insights for targeted improvements.

These findings provide a comprehensive understanding of Flipkart's customer demographics and their perceptions of service quality, offering valuable insights for marketing strategies and service enhancements.

Suggestions

Based on the study's findings, here are some suggestions for Flipkart to improve its services and customer experience:



- ➤ Demographic-Centric Marketing: Tailor marketing strategies and promotions to target specific demographics, such as age and gender, to better resonate with various customer segments.
- ➤ Educational Content: Develop informative content and guides aimed at educating customers, especially those with lower educational qualifications, on how to make the most of the platform and its products.
- ➤ Engage with Students: As students represent a significant customer group, engage them through student-centric promotions, discounts, and events, leveraging their purchasing potential.
- ➤ Income-Based Offers: Create income-based offers, discounts, and loyalty programs to cater to customers across income brackets, ensuring affordability and inclusivity.
- ➤ Responsive Customer Support: Enhance responsiveness and empathy in customer support interactions to address diverse customer needs effectively and build stronger customer relationships.
- ➤ Product Diversification: Expand product categories and offerings to meet the varied preferences of different customer groups, ensuring a comprehensive shopping experience.
- ➤ Personalization: Leverage data-driven personalization to offer relevant product recommendations and marketing messages to customers based on their demographic and purchasing behavior.
- ➤ Feedback Utilization: Actively collect and utilize customer feedback to identify areas for improvement and implement changes accordingly.



- ➤ Market Research: Continuously conduct market research to stay attuned to evolving customer preferences and industry trends, adapting strategies accordingly.
- > Sustainability Initiatives: Embrace sustainability practices and offer eco-friendly products to attract socially-conscious consumers and align with global sustainability goals.
- Quality Assurance: Maintain high-quality product standards across all categories to meet or exceed customer expectations.
- ➤ Inclusivity: Ensure that the platform is accessible to individuals with different educational backgrounds, ages, and income levels, promoting inclusivity and accessibility.
- ➤ Competitive Pricing: Monitor pricing strategies to remain competitive while delivering value to customers in each demographic.
- > Community Engagement: Foster a sense of community among customers through social media and other platforms, encouraging interaction and loyalty.
- ➤ Mobile Optimization: Optimize the mobile shopping experience, recognizing the significance of smartphones in online shopping.
- > Transparency: Maintain transparency in product information, pricing, and shipping costs to build trust among customers.
- ➤ Data Security: Prioritize data security to protect customer information and build trust in online transactions.

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> Continuous Improvement: Instilling a culture of continuous improvement and innovation within the organization to adapt to evolving customer needs and

technological advancements.

Conclusion

The study has shed important light on the client demographics and perceptions of Flipkart's

service quality, a prominent e-commerce platform. The results show a diversified clientele

with a range of sociodemographic traits, including age, gender, education, occupation, and

income. It has been demonstrated that these demographic parameters affect customers'

opinions of many service quality dimensions, emphasizing the significance of customized

marketing and service methods.

According to the study's examination of the SERVQUAL model-measured service quality

characteristics, Flipkart generally performs well in the tangibles and assurance areas.

However, there is space for development in the areas of service quality relating to

responsiveness and empathy. These results highlight the importance of ongoing initiatives to

improve customer service and empathy in customer interactions.

The survey also highlights the necessity for Flipkart to create strategies that address the

interests and requirements of various client categories. Customer feedback and demographic

information should guide these strategies., allowing Flipkart to offer personalized experiences

and targeted promotions.

The dedication of Flipkart to inclusion, sustainability, and quality assurance stands out as

essential in a cutthroat e-commerce environment. By putting the study's recommendations

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into practice, Flipkart can not only boost the quality of its services but also solidify its reputation as a flexible and customer-focused e-commerce platform.

In essence, this study clarifies the complex interactions between client demographics, service standards, and the rapidly changing e-commerce sector. It gives Flipkart a base on which to improve its tactics, better fulfill customer expectations, and survive in the competitive online retail market.

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Appendix

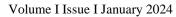
Questionnaire

Age:	_
Gender: () Ma	ale () Female
Educational Q	ualification:
() Primary()	Pre-degree/+2 () Graduate () Post-Graduate
Occupation:	() Student () Private Employee () Business/Self-Employed () Retired
	() Govt. Employee () Other

Income Level: () Less than ₹30,000 () ₹30,000 - ₹70,000 () Over ₹70,000

Section 2: Service Quality Dimensions

Section 1: Demographic Information





Please rate your perception of Flipkart's service quality on the following dimensions using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree):

S.No	Tangibles:	1	2	3	4	5
•						
	The visual design of Flipkart's website is appealing and user-friendly.					
	The packaging of products I receive from Flipkart is well-presented					
	and secure.					
	The overall appearance of Flipkart's mobile app is modern and					
	intuitive.					
	Flipkart provides clear and detailed product images that help me make					
	informed purchase decisions.					
	The user interface of Flipkart's website or app enhances my shopping					
	experience.					

S.No	Reliability:	1	2	3	4	5
•						
	Flipkart consistently delivers products on time as promised.					
	Orders I receive from Flipkart are always accurate and match my					
	expectations.					
	Flipkart's product descriptions are reliable, and I get what I see online.					
	I trust Flipkart to handle my payment transactions securely and without					



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issues.			
Flipkart's delivery tracking system is dependable and provides accurate			
updates.			

S.No	Responsiveness:	1	2	3	4	5
•						
	Flipkart's customer support team promptly addresses my inquiries and					
	concerns.					
	I receive timely notifications and updates regarding my orders from					
	Flipkart.					
	Flipkart responds efficiently when I encounter issues with my orders.					
	Flipkart offers various channels (e.g., chat, email, phone) to reach					
	customer support.					
	Flipkart's customer support team is readily available to assist me when					
	needed.					

S.No	Assurance:	1	2	3	4	5
•						
	I feel confident in Flipkart's ability to protect my personal and payment					
	information.					
	Flipkart's customer service representatives are knowledgeable and					



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capable.			
Flipkart's return and refund policies are transparent and fair.			
Flipkart provides sufficient information about product warranties and			
guarantees.			
I trust that Flipkart will resolve any issues or disputes with my orders			
fairly.			

S.No	Empathy:	1	2	3	4	5
	Flipkart's personalized product recommendations are relevant to my					
	preferences.					
	Flipkart demonstrates understanding of my unique shopping needs and					
	preferences.					
	Flipkart's communication with me feels personalized and not					
	automated.					
	Flipkart shows empathy by offering assistance when I face difficulties					
	during my shopping journey.					
	I appreciate that Flipkart tailors its services to make me feel valued as a					
	customer.					