

A STUDY ABOUT CUSTOMERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS ONLINE SHOPPING - A DEEPER INSIGHT

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Abstract: *The World has shrunk to the size of a small ball with advancements in technology. With this, the way a common man does his routine work has changed a lot. And with internet being on finger tips, we depend on it for every small till large deals, online shopping being no exception to it. Hence in order to know how an individual's choice changes with the level of satisfaction and what causes such dissatisfaction is what the core of this study. The research was conducted on the sample of 131 respondents, wherein a questionnaire was issued to them. The collected data was analysed with implementation of statistical tools like pie and bar charts, also the WAS. Finally it was revealed that level of satisfaction was high due to its convenience to shop anytime and for dissatisfaction reason being lesser privacy to financial information. It was also revealed that respondents had faced instances of poor product quality and other related issues, resulting in wrong perception towards the same.*

Keywords: - Customers' Perception, Online shopping, Problems.

Introduction

Consumer perception is just like the concept of sensory perception, as to how individuals sense the essentials relating to marketing and advertising, when it comes to online shopping. Just as sense organs help humans perceive and process different senses/ stimuli, consumer perception deals with how individuals form opinions about companies, their products offered, through the purchases they make and also their level of satisfaction. When the organizations are able to perceive what their customers feel about their product and them, it becomes easier for them to analyse and develop various competitive strategies to retain their existing customers and then attract new ones. While doing so, it is also necessary that they keep themselves updated and meet the market requirements. With this comes the existence of Online shopping, also referred to as "electronic retail" which allows consumers to directly buy goods or services from a seller over the Internet just by using a web browser. In India, online shopping has just evolved, with the new enhancing technology, wherein m-commerce, mobile apps, payment banks have a vital role to play. It is most preferred due to the convenience and wide choice it offers, quick transactions, and others. But there are few

limitations that affect the consumer perception, the same being, privacy and security issues, fake website, risk of losing money/product, etc.

Objectives

1. To understand the customers' perception towards online shopping
2. To know the various positive and negative factors forming their perception.
3. To understand the problems faced by the customers while shopping online.

Review of Literature

1. **Vikash and Vinod Kumar (2017)** in their paper on customers' perception towards online shopping focussed on as to why customers either prefer online or store shopping. By using factor analysis they revealed that customer demographics have a vital role to play in selection of online shopping means.
2. **M. Dhanalakshmi, M.Sakthivel and M. Nandhini (2017)** in their paper on customers perception towards online shopping with special reference to Salem district, focused on how social media, advertisements public relations, reviews have an impact on customers choice of purchasing product online or through traditional shopping.
3. **Dr.R.Shanthi and Dr. Desti Kannaiah (2016)** in their paper on consumers' perception on online shopping made a study on those large retail chains making up nearly 10% of market but exist due to e-commerce platform, highlighting student's attitude towards online shopping and their product preference on online shopping, thereby trying to help e-retailers to develop effective marketing strategy in order to attract and retain the customers.
4. **Dr.M.Rajesh and G.Purushothaman (2015)** in their paper on consumer perception in online shopping made a study with special reference to Kanchipuram. They made an attempt to study the marketing strategies of online shopping and tried to analyse as to how the demographic factors of the shoppers have an impact on online buying decision.
5. **Pratiksingh S. Vaghela (2014)** in his paper on consumer perception towards online shopping focussed on analysing the usage and also perception of customers by discriminating it gender wise. He finally said that several benefits offered make it a better option than manual shopping but with increased chances of frauds relating to credit card numbers and poor product quality, their perception changes.

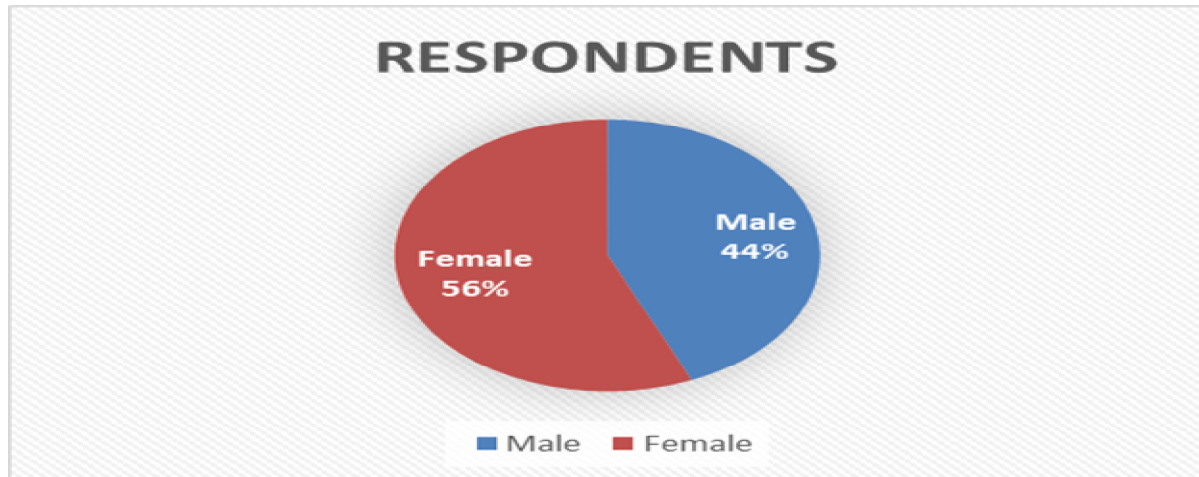
Research Methodology

The study is based on convenience sampling, wherein the sample drawn was 131 respondents. Data was collected through means of primary source wherein, a structured questionnaire was issued to respondents and also secondary sources were referred in for

understanding the same. Simple statistical tools like bar graph, pie charts, WAS were used for analysing the results.

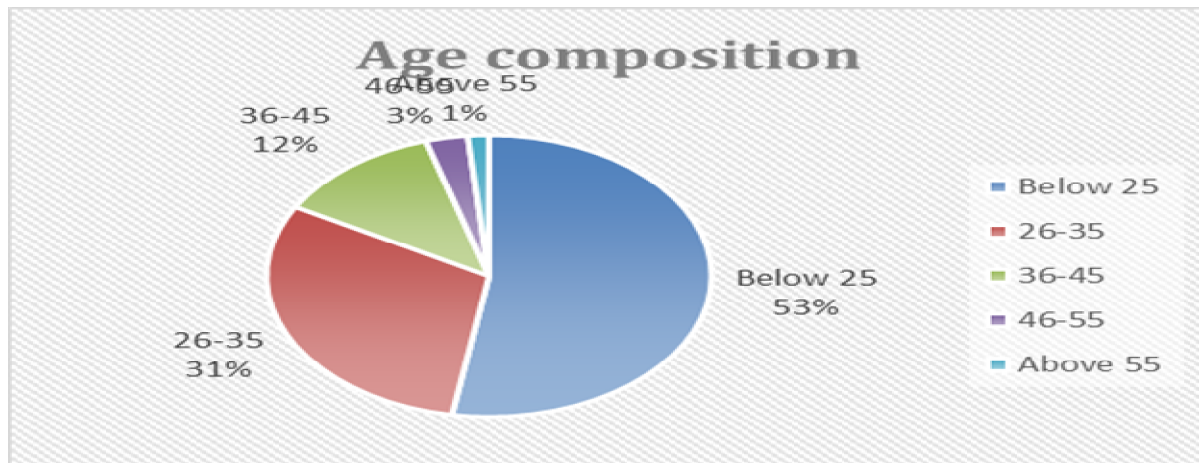
Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1:- Representing the composition of respondents



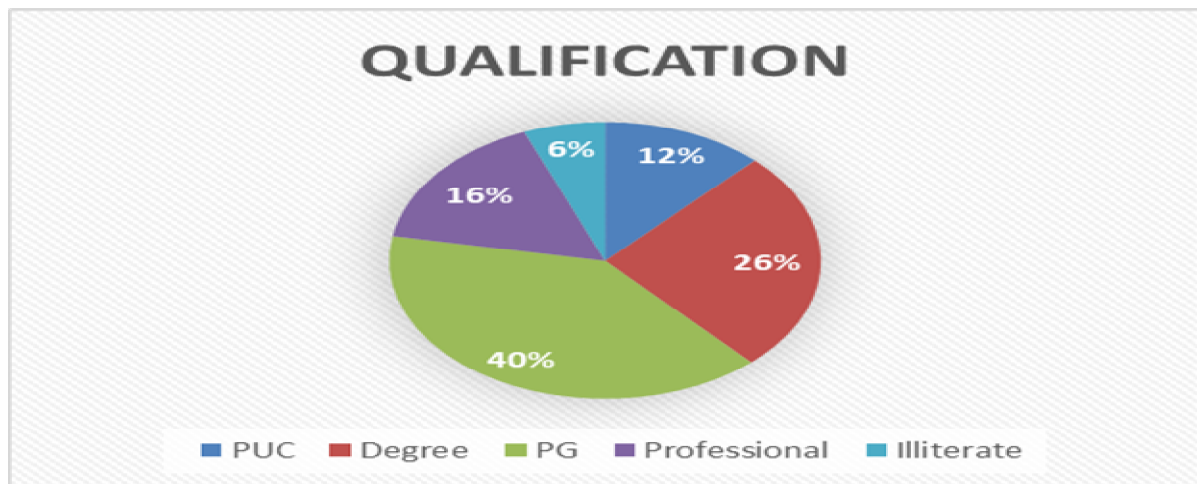
From the above pie chart, it is clear that out of the total of 131 respondents, 56% are female and rest 44% are male respondents. So, it can be inferred that both have a proportionate representation in the above analysis.

Table 2: - Representing the age composition of the respondents



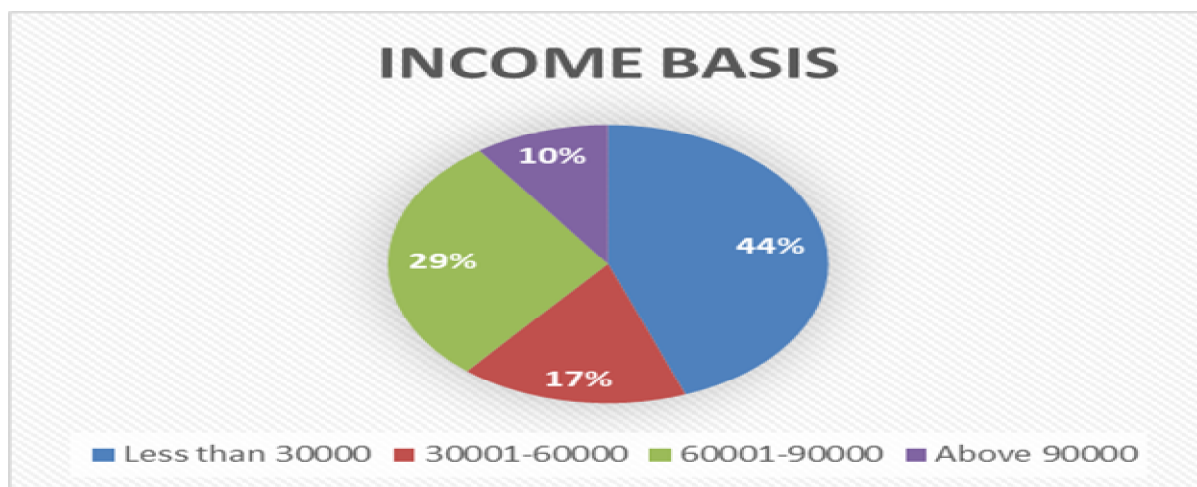
From the above chart we can tell that, out of total respondents majority(53%) fall in the age group below 25, then 31% of respondents in age group of 26-35, followed by 36-45 with 12% and finally the least belonging to the age group 46-55 and above 55 with 3%, 1% respectively. So it can be inferred that, majority of the respondents belong to the youths and it was difficult to get response from elderly people.

Table 3: - Representing the qualification of the respondents



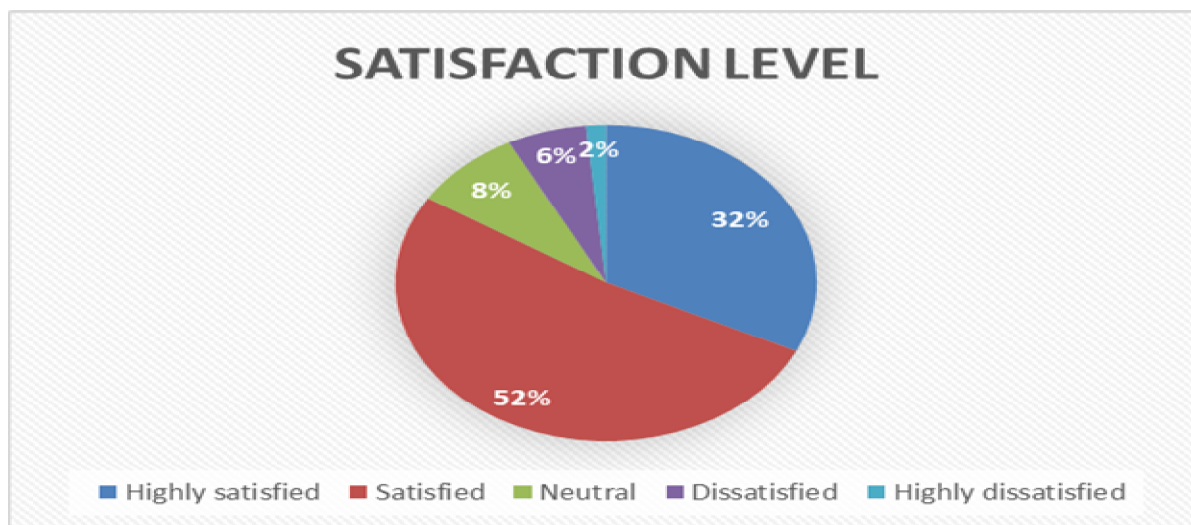
From above diagram, we can infer that with enhanced/ higher level of education, people are stimulated to go for modern means of purchasing products- via online, wherein 40% of respondents are Post graduates and 26% of them are Degree holders. Hence, it is evident that higher the level of education, higher is the use of online shopping.

Table 4: - Representing the composition of respondents on basis of their income



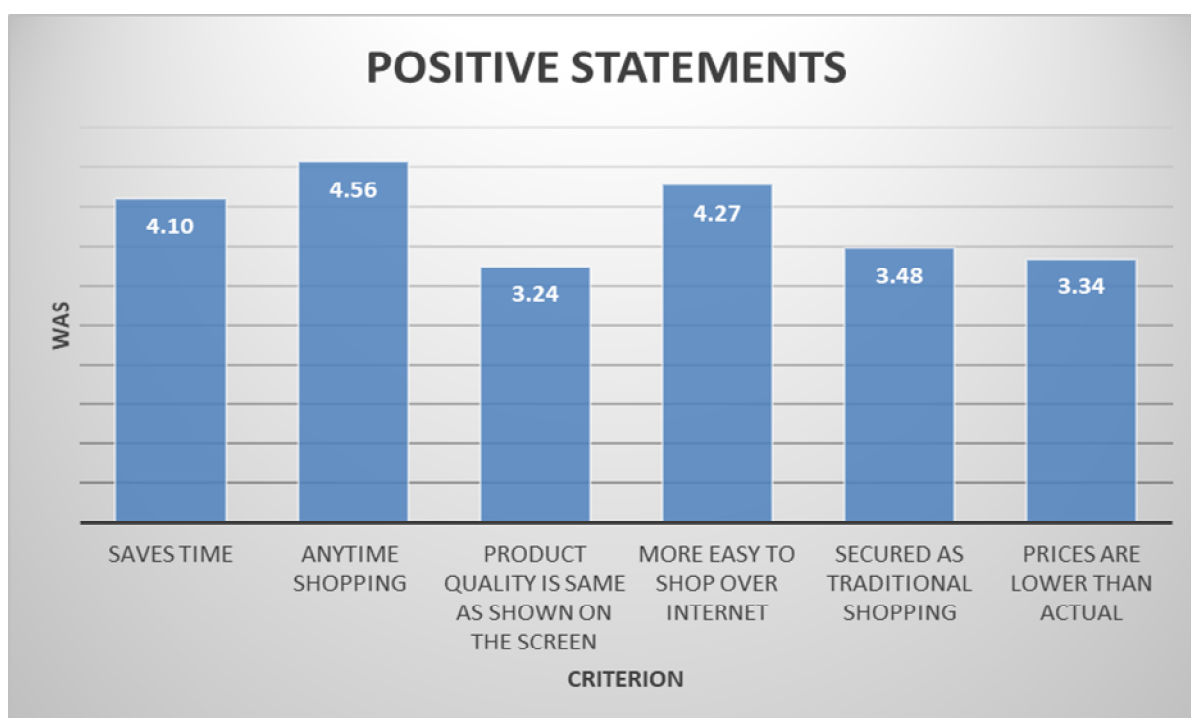
From the above pie-diagram, we can tell that lower the income higher is the intensity to purchase over online and vice-versa. It can be noted that majority of respondents fall in the income range of < 30000 and the least in the income range of above 90000.

Table 5: - Representing overall satisfaction level on basis of their past purchase behaviour



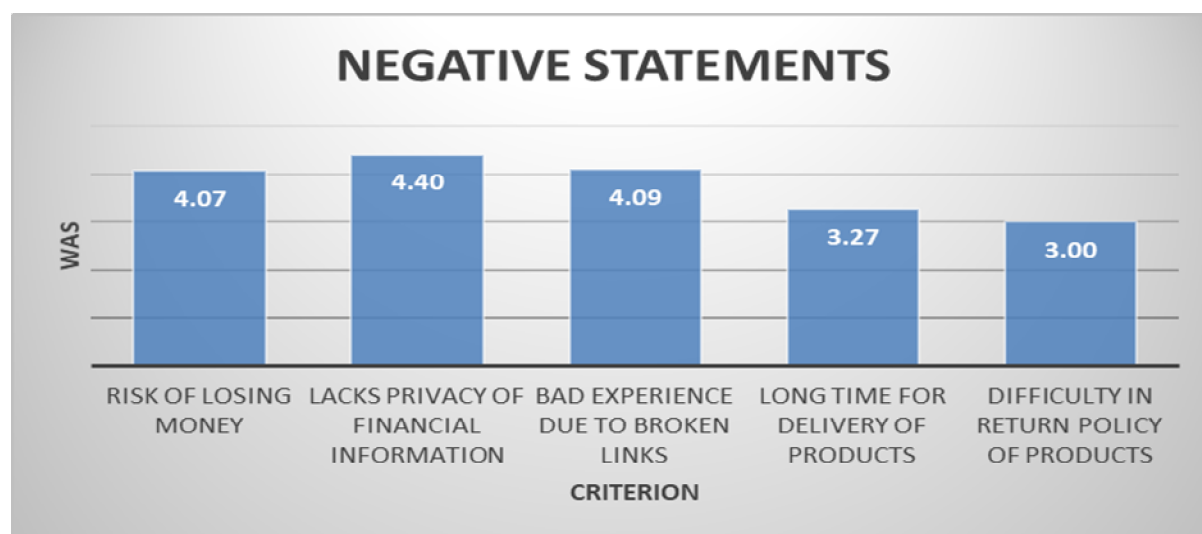
From above diagram, it is clear that majority of respondents were satisfied (52%) with their past purchase over online. Also it is clear that, 32% of them were highly satisfied, but it is worthy to note that about 6% and 2% of respondents were dissatisfied and highly dissatisfied with the same. Hence it can be inferred that several benefits of online shopping do exists, but along with that there exists several pitfalls too which reduce the overall satiety of customers and their purchase decision online.

Table 6: - Representing positive factors enhancing satisfaction



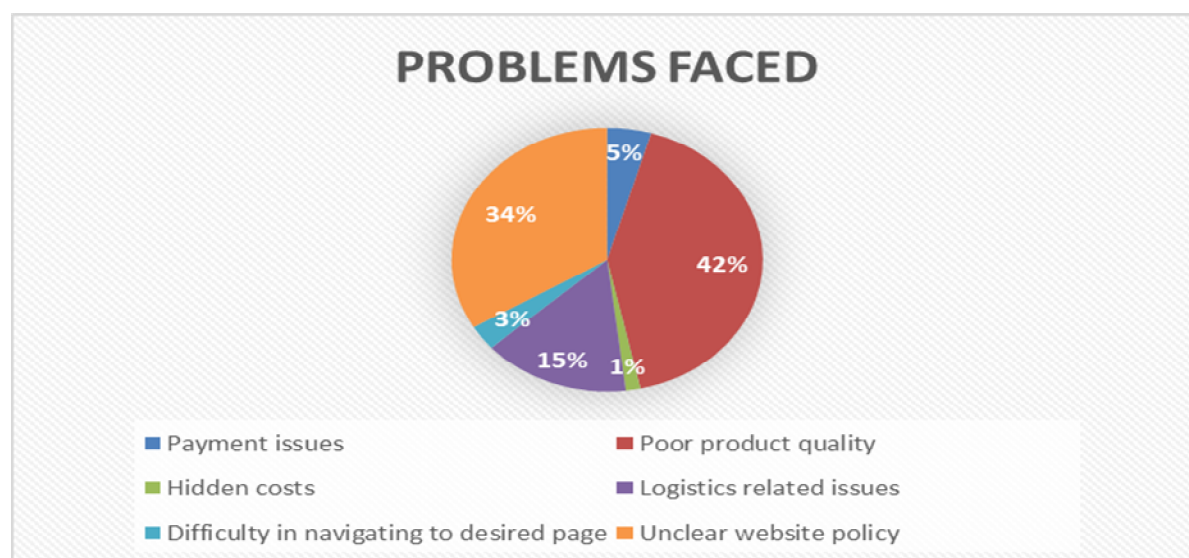
From the above bar chart, it is clear that customers level of satisfaction increases due to the very convenience of shopping anytime over internet with highest WAS of 4.56, next being the ease to shop online, followed by time saving mechanism with the WAS of 4.27 and 4.10 respectively. Moving to the least, there are three criterions whose WAS is near to each other. They being, secured as traditional shopping, then lower prices than actual and finally product quality is as same as shown on screen. But the last three factors have an influence on decision as satisfaction differs from an individual to other.

Table 7: - Representing negative factors reducing their level of satisfaction



From above chart, we can tell that the satisfaction level reduces with lesser security of private financial info, then second being the broken links while navigating to desired page, thirdly risk of losing money, finally high lead time and rigid return policy respectively.

Table 8: - Representing the problems faced during online purchase of products



From the above chart it was clear that majority of respondents, nearly 42% had faced the

problem of poor product quality, secondly 34% of respondents agreed that unclear website policies harm their interest while purchasing products, then nearly 15% of respondents had faced logistics related issues. It is worthy to mention that, only 8% of respondents taken together had faced issues relating to payment, hidden costs and difficulty while navigating to desired page.

Findings

- All the respondents were users of online shopping as a means to shop products online.
- It was revealed that, majority of the respondents belong to the youths and it was difficult to get response from elderly people.
- It was found that with enhanced/ higher level of education, people are stimulated to go for modern means of purchasing products- via online. Hence, it is evident that higher the level of education, higher is the use of online shopping.
- It was also evident that several benefits of online shopping do exist, but along with that there exist several pitfalls which reduce the overall satiety of customers and their purchase decision online.
- It is clear that customer's level of satisfaction increased due to the very convenience of shopping anytime over internet, next the ease to shop online, followed by time saving mechanism.
- It was also revealed that the satisfaction level reduced with factors like lesser security of private financial info, then second being the broken links while navigating to desired page, thirdly risk of losing money, finally high lead time and rigid return policy.
- From the above chart it was clear that majority of respondents, nearly 42% had faced the problem of poor product quality and nearly 34% of respondents had faced issues due to unclear website policies.

Suggestions

- Better awareness about online shopping is to be created so that even less educated can take advantage of such a medium of purchase.
- Better security mechanisms to be installed in order to protect the interest of prospective customers.
- Make sure that the lead time between placing of order till delivery is minimal.
- Make sure that product quality as shown on the screen is delivered to customer.
- Also see to it that there are no ambiguous policies/ terms and conditions on the website which finally harm the interest of such online buyers.

Conclusion

The above study it can be concluded that customers perception has a great bearing on the positive and negative factors as discussed above, finally affecting the customer's choice to purchase products online. Hence if organizations are focussing on the various problems faced by customers while shopping online, and trying to resolve such issues in hand, then there is a better scope of advancement to the organization, as this will bring in a positive change in their perception of the product and services so offered. If this is taken in consideration, in future, with most upgraded technology it would become easier for them to survive and sustain in long run.

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