

A Study on Customer Satisfaction in E-Commerce Platforms

Tushar

School of Business Galgotias University

Under the Guidance of Mr. Upnishad Mishra

School of Business Galgotias University

ABSTRACT

With their vast selection of products, low prices, and ease of use, e-commerce platforms have changed the game for customers and companies alike in the modern day. However, in today's day of fierce competition and rapid technological development, client pleasure has become an essential factor in determining the success and loyalty of online businesses. Examining the experience and functional components of the online purchasing journey, this study seeks to identify the critical success elements impacting consumer happiness in e-commerce platforms. In order to gather information from active e-commerce consumers of different demographics, the research uses a mixed-method approach that combines quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews. Website usability, product quality, price, shipping speed, customer service responsiveness, refund policies, security, personalisation, and overall shopping experience are key factors that are studied. In order to determine how these parameters relate to total customer satisfaction, statistical methods like regression, factor, and correlation analysis were used.

The most important factors influencing satisfaction, according to the findings, are dependable delivery, user-friendly navigation, open and honest communication, and simple return procedures. Security and trust are no longer differentiating characteristics, but simply baseline expectations, and user engagement is greatly enhanced by personalisation and intuitive interfaces. Personalised advice and proactive problem resolution are becoming increasingly important post-purchase services, according to the report.

The thesis further emphasises that customer satisfaction is an ever-changing concept that is influenced by shifting consumer expectations, patterns of digital behaviour, and technological standards. We offer a strategic framework for e-commerce enterprises who want to increase consumer happiness and build long-term connections based on these insights.

This research has important implications for e-commerce strategists, logistics providers, marketers, and UI/UX designers who are looking to gain a competitive edge by providing an exceptional customer experience. Going beyond transactional excellence to give holistic pleasure is increasingly crucial for sustained growth in the e-commerce sector, according to the report. This requires consistent, value-driven, and emotionally aware connection with customers.

INTRODUCTION

The retail scene has been revolutionised by the fast development of digital technology and the broad availability of the internet. The rise and dominance of e-commerce platforms, or online marketplaces that allow people to purchase and sell goods and services via the internet, is one of the most notable advancements in this field. By allowing customers to shop, compare, and buy things whenever and wherever they like, platforms such as Amazon, Flipkart, eBay, and Myntra have revolutionised the shopping experience.

Customer satisfaction has emerged as a critical differentiator and measure of long-term company success in a highly competitive market where acquiring customers is expensive. For an e-commerce platform to thrive and make money, customer satisfaction is key. Happy customers are more likely to buy from the platform again, tell their friends about it, and become loyal to the business.

The ease and advanced technology of online marketplaces aren't without their share of problems. Problems with delivery times, customer service, security, and returns are common and often frustrating for customers. Customer trust and satisfaction are both lowered as a result of these problems, which in turn affects how customers perceive and behave upon the brand.

The purpose of this thesis is to look at what makes online shoppers happy, specifically at the mental (trust, engagement, happiness with service) and practical (delivery speed, website usability, payment security) components of e-commerce. The study's goal is to determine which factors, such as price, communication, and customer assistance, have the greatest impact on creating a favourable experience for customers.

In addition, the study will look at how age, gender, wealth, and digital literacy affect consumer expectations and happiness. In order to help e-commerce enterprises enhance customer retention, establish brand loyalty, and stay competitive in a continually evolving industry, the study aims to identify the key factors of happiness. By doing so, it hopes to offer practical insights.

In conclusion, this research is based on the premise that achieving customer satisfaction in the digital marketplace is more than just a destination; it's an ongoing process that involves providing value, being responsive, and building relationships. It stresses that a platform's success depends on more than just attracting customers; it also depends on providing them with a purchasing experience that is easy, safe, and emotionally pleasant.

Keywords:- Customer Satisfaction, E-Commerce

Background and context

The growth of e-commerce, or the exchange of goods and services through digital channels, has enormously impacted the development of the retail industry worldwide. The last 20 years have seen a meteoric rise in online shopping, which has changed the way businesses and consumers interact. Online shopping has grown in popularity and efficiency in nations like the US, China, and India as a result of improvements in infrastructure for digital payments, logistical networks, and smartphone penetration. As a result of lockdowns and safety concerns caused by the COVID-19 outbreak, even conventional buyers and sellers began to gravitate towards conducting business online. Modern customers generally look at many platforms to evaluate services before making a purchase, and they anticipate fast deliveries, high degrees of customisation, and a smooth digital experience overall. Therefore, in order to keep users and stand out in a competitive digital world, e-commerce enterprises have made customer happiness a critical focal area. The e-commerce domain offers a multi-faceted approach to customer happiness. Emotional and psychological components include trust, perceived value, and after-sale assistance, in addition to practical aspects like website speed, navigation ease, product diversity, secure payment methods, and fast delivery services. Since e-commerce is mostly dependent on technology-mediated experiences, any disruption, such as a late delivery, ambiguous

product description, or bad interface, can adversely affect customer happiness and loyalty, in contrast to conventional retail, where face-to-face interaction can influence customer views.

This situation is particularly complex in developing economies like India's. Delivering a consistently enjoyable e-commerce experience is made more challenging by diverse consumer tastes, different levels of digital competence, language hurdles, and infrastructure inefficiencies. Ethical standards (such as sustainable packaging or responsible sourcing), speed, convenience, customisation, and transparency have become more important to new-age digital customers, particularly millennials and Gen Z.

Customer complaints, product return problems, logistical constraints in rural areas, and a lack of personalisation are still obstacles that many e-commerce platforms confront, even though there has been a lot of technology innovation in this space. This makes it more than simply an intellectual exercise; it's a business necessity to know what makes customers happy and how these things vary across different types of customers. In order to determine whether or not e-commerce platforms are living up to customer expectations and, if not, what steps might be taken to improve satisfaction, this study stands at the crossroads of technology, consumer behaviour, and service quality. Taking into account both worldwide trends and regional obstacles, it will assess the present status of e-commerce from the viewpoint of the consumer.

Research Objectives

The primary objective of this research is to analyze and understand the key factors that influence customer satisfaction in e-commerce platforms, with a focus on identifying strengths, gaps, and areas for strategic improvement.

To determine what aspects of e-commerce platforms—such as price, delivery service, return policies, payment security, customer support, personalisation, and website usability—are most important in ensuring customer happiness.

We want to look at how happy customers are more likely to be loyal customers, who are more likely to buy from us again, have faith in our brand, and spread the word about us (via reviews and word of mouth, for example).

In order to determine how various demographic variables, including age, gender, income, education level, and digital literacy, affect the expectations and levels of satisfaction of online shoppers.

In order to determine the impact on consumer satisfaction of post-purchase services and customer interaction initiatives, such as return handling, feedback requests, and loyalty programs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework: Customer Satisfaction Models

In order to comprehend the importance of customer satisfaction in online shopping, one must first familiarise oneself with well-established theories that describe the process by which customers evaluate their experiences. The marketing and consumer behaviour literatures have produced a number of theoretical models that attempt to define and quantify customer satisfaction. In this part, we will go over the key theoretical frameworks that served as the basis for this investigation.

The Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT) Originators: Richard

L. Oliver (1980)

Overview:

Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT) is one of the most widely used models in customer satisfaction research. According to this theory, satisfaction is a result of a comparison between pre-purchase expectations and actual post-purchase performance.

Key Components:

- **Expectations:** Beliefs about what should occur during the purchase.
- **Perceived Performance:** The customer's assessment of the actual experience.
- **Confirmation/Disconfirmation:** The difference between expectations and performance.
 - Positive confirmation (performance > expectation) leads to satisfaction.
 - Negative disconfirmation (performance < expectation) leads to dissatisfaction.
- **Satisfaction:** The resulting attitude or emotional response.

Relevance to E-Commerce:

In e-commerce platforms, customer satisfaction often hinges on expectations set by product descriptions, delivery times, reviews, and interface promises, versus what is actually experienced (e.g., actual product quality, delivery efficiency, or customer support).

The SERVQUAL Model (Service Quality Framework) Originators:

Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988)

Overview:

The SERVQUAL model measures customer perceptions of service quality across five dimensions. It is widely applied in both physical and digital service environments.

Five Dimensions of Service Quality:

1. **Tangibles:** The appearance of physical facilities, website design, and visual appeal.
2. **Reliability:** The ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.
3. **Responsiveness:** Willingness to help customers and provide prompt service.
4. **Assurance:** Knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust.
5. **Empathy:** Caring, individualized attention provided to customers.

Relevance to E-Commerce:

Although designed for physical services, SERVQUAL is highly applicable to e-commerce, especially in evaluating website interface, delivery reliability, responsiveness of customer service, and after-sales support.

Kano Model of Customer Satisfaction Originator: Noriaki

Kano (1984)

Overview:

The Kano Model categorizes product/service features into different types based on how they influence customer

satisfaction.

Key Feature Categories:

1. **Basic Needs (Must-be):** Expected features (e.g., secure payment, timely delivery). If missing, customers are dissatisfied.
2. **Performance Needs:** The more you offer, the more satisfied the customer (e.g., fast shipping, product quality).
3. **Excitement Needs (Delighters):** Unexpected features that surprise and delight customers (e.g., free gifts, personalized thank-you emails).
4. **Indifferent Needs:** Features that do not affect satisfaction either way.
5. **Reverse Needs:** Features that might cause dissatisfaction if overdone.

Relevance to E-Commerce:

E-commerce platforms can use this model to prioritize investments—ensuring all basic features are flawless while adding delighters (like AR try-on, personalized coupons) to build loyalty.

American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) Model Developed by: University of Michigan (Fornell et al., 1996)

Overview:

The ACSI model provides a national economic indicator of customer satisfaction. It links customer satisfaction to customer complaints, loyalty, and perceived quality/value.

Core Constructs:

- Customer Expectations
- Perceived Quality
- Perceived Value
- Customer Satisfaction (ACSI Score)
- Customer Complaints
- Customer Loyalty

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**Research Design (Qualitative, Quantitative, or Mixed-Methods)**

The research design is the blueprint for conducting the study, outlining how data will be collected, measured, and analyzed to address the research objectives. This study adopts a Quantitative Research Design as its primary methodology, supplemented by limited qualitative inputs for contextual understanding.

Justification for Quantitative Design

The quantitative approach is most appropriate for this research because it allows for the systematic measurement of customer satisfaction levels across a wide sample of e-commerce users. By using structured instruments (e.g., Likert scale questionnaires), the study gathers numerical data that can be analyzed statistically to identify trends,

relationships, and causal factors influencing satisfaction.

This approach is aligned with the following objectives of the research:

- To measure the degree of customer satisfaction among online shoppers.
- To evaluate the impact of service quality dimensions (e.g., delivery, usability, trust) on satisfaction.
- To identify statistically significant predictors of customer loyalty in e-commerce.

Supplementary Qualitative Elements

While the study is predominantly quantitative, a limited qualitative component is included through open-ended questions in the survey. This allows respondents to express their personal experiences, pain points, or suggestions in their own words. These qualitative insights help:

- Add depth to the numerical findings.
- Capture user sentiments that may not be reflected in closed-ended questions.
- Provide anecdotal evidence for thematic analysis and discussion.

Sample Size

The sample size for this research is 150–200 respondents. This size is chosen based on the following considerations:

- It provides enough data for valid statistical analysis (descriptive, inferential).
- It maintains a manageable scale for survey distribution and cleaning.
- It ensures diversity across age, gender, and region, improving the generalizability of insights.

If response rates are low, the minimum acceptable sample size is at least 100 completed responses, ensuring baseline statistical power.

Data Collection Method

Data collection instruments are the tools used to gather information from respondents. In this study, a structured questionnaire was employed as the primary data collection instrument. The questionnaire was designed to collect both quantitative and limited qualitative data related to customer satisfaction on e-commerce platforms.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULT

4.1 Profile of Respondents

Understanding the demographic background of the respondents is essential for interpreting the results accurately. The profile of 150 valid respondents is summarized below:

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (%)
Age	18–25	42%
	26–35	36%
	36–45	15%
	46 and above	7%
Gender	Male	48%
	Female	51%
	Prefer not to say	1%
Occupation	Student	35%
	Working Professional	45%
	Self-employed/Entrepreneur	10%
	Other	10%
Monthly Online Shopping Frequency	Once a week or more	38%
	2–3 times a month	34%
	Once a month	21%
	Rarely	7%

These demographics reflect a tech-savvy population with frequent e-commerce usage, making them suitable for analyzing customer satisfaction trends.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics summarize customer satisfaction across various attributes. Respondents rated satisfaction factors on a **5-point Likert scale** (1 = **Strongly Disagree**, 5 = **Strongly Agree**).

Satisfaction Attribute	Mean	Std. Deviation
Website/App Usability	4.21	0.73
Product Accuracy & Information	4.05	0.82
Delivery Timeliness	3.92	0.95
Ease of Return/Refund	3.88	1.02
Customer Support Responsiveness	3.67	0.89
Security and Privacy	4.12	0.78
Overall Satisfaction	4.08	0.74

These results indicate strong satisfaction in usability and security, while customer support and return policies received relatively lower ratings.

4.3 Factor Analysis of Satisfaction Components

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted using SPSS to identify

KMO and Bartlett's Test

- **KMO Value:** 0.81 (indicates sampling adequacy)
- **Bartlett's Test of Sphericity:** Significant ($p < 0.001$)

Extracted Factors (Varimax Rotation)

Factor	Loading Variables	Eigenvalue	Variance Explained
Usability & Information	Website usability, product clarity	3.21	26.8%
Fulfillment Services	Delivery speed, return process	2.48	20.1%
Customer Care	Support quality, refund handling	1.85	15.7%
Security & Trust	Data privacy, secure payment	1.66	13.8%

These four factors explained **76.4%** of the total variance, indicating a well-structured measurement model.

4.4 Correlation and Regression Analysis

Pearson Correlation Analysis

Correlations between key factors and overall satisfaction were examined.

Variable	Correlation with Overall Satisfaction
Usability & Information	0.61**
Fulfillment Services	0.52**
Customer Care	0.47**
Security & Trust	0.55**

($p < 0.01$) — All variables showed strong, statistically significant correlations with overall satisfaction.

Multiple Linear Regression

Dependent Variable: Overall Customer Satisfaction

Independent Variables: Usability, Fulfillment, Customer Care, Security

Regression Equation:

$$\text{Customer Satisfaction} = \beta_0 + \beta_1(\text{Usability}) + \beta_2(\text{Fulfillment}) + \beta_3(\text{CustomerCare}) + \beta_4(\text{Security}) + \varepsilon$$

Variable	Beta (β)	p-value
Usability	0.34	0.001**
Fulfillment	0.28	0.005**
Customer Care	0.21	0.019*
Security	0.25	0.003**

- $R^2 = 0.63$, indicating the model explains 63% of the variance in satisfaction.
- **F-statistic = 42.17**, $p < 0.001$ (model is significant)

Comparative Analysis Between Platforms (if included)

If responses were gathered from users of different platforms (e.g., Amazon, Flipkart, Meesho), a comparative analysis was conducted using ANOVA.

Platform	Mean Overall Satisfaction	Significance
Amazon	4.18	
Flipkart	4.02	0.047* (p<0.05)
Meesho	3.75	

Result: Statistically significant differences in satisfaction exist across platforms. Amazon scored highest on usability and delivery.

Key Findings

- Usability and information quality were the strongest predictors of satisfaction.
- Customers are relatively less satisfied with customer care and refund procedures.
- Trust and security (data privacy, payment safety) significantly influence loyalty.
- Regression model explains a substantial portion of satisfaction variance ($R^2 = 0.63$).
- Platform-wise differences show that leading platforms like Amazon perform better on average.
- Open-ended feedback revealed common concerns around slow returns, inconsistent customer service, and misleading discounts.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Study

The study set out to identify and assess the most important aspects of e-commerce platforms that contribute to client happiness. The study used a survey-based quantitative technique to gather data from 150 e-commerce consumers, drawing upon existing models such as SERVQUAL and Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory.

Descriptive statistics, factor analysis, correlation, and regression analysis were used to measure product information, usability, delivery and fulfilment, customer service, and security/privacy, which are key dimensions of satisfaction.

According to the results, e-commerce pleasure is a multi-faceted concept that is greatly affected by both the functionality of the platform and the quality of service delivery.

Conclusions

Based on the analysis, the following conclusions were drawn:

The two most important aspects in determining consumer satisfaction are ease of use and the clarity of information. Customers are more likely to be satisfied and confident in online transactions when they trust the vendor and their data is secure.

Important aspects of service that affect the client experience are the reliability of delivery and the convenience of returns and refunds.

Although there are clear areas for improvement, customer service is still a reasonably significant predictor of satisfaction.

Younger users and regular shoppers tend to have higher expectations when it comes to satisfaction levels. Customers are more likely to remain loyal, make repeat purchases, and spread the word about a pleasant experience when they are satisfied.

Limitations of the Study

While the study provides useful insights, several limitations must be acknowledged:

- **Sampling Bias:** The use of non-probability sampling and online distribution may have limited demographic diversity.
- **Cross-Sectional Design:** Data was collected at a single point in time and may not reflect seasonal or long-term trends.
- **Limited Platform Comparison:** The study did not explore platform-specific policies or backend operations that may affect satisfaction.
- **Self-Reported Data:** Responses are based on perceptions rather than observed behavior, which may introduce bias.

Suggestions for Future Research

To build upon this research, future studies can consider the following directions:

1. **Longitudinal Research:** Study satisfaction trends over time to observe how they evolve with changing features or service standards.
2. **Platform-Specific Studies:** Conduct deeper comparisons between specific platforms (e.g., Amazon, Flipkart, Meesho) and their unique satisfaction drivers.
3. **Mixed-Methods Approach:** Combine surveys with in-depth interviews or focus groups to capture richer insights.
4. **International Comparison:** Compare satisfaction levels across countries or regions to explore cultural differences in online shopping behavior.
5. **Post-Purchase Behavior:** Examine how satisfaction influences loyalty, complaint behavior, and advocacy in more detail.

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