ONLINE SHOPPING BEHAVIOUR OF CONSUMERS - A PERCEPTION ANALYSIS

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Introduction
Internet makes life more innovative and dynamic. It provides new ways to promote the business. Website is the panacea of online business as to show their services and products. Internet groups all competitors and consumers in one place. It brings new lane to promote, advertise products and services in market. The internet is the best way to save time and money through purchasing online within their range of budget at home or in anywhere. Online consumers don't have time limits to online shopping. They can compare the prices of goods and services, news, visit social net works and search information and so on. Online shopping behavior depends on internet knowledge and exposure.

Statement of the Problem
Today, vast developments are rampant in the information and technological industry. Competition increases day by day due to increase in the attention of consumers towards online shopping. The best retailer is based on their experiences on web. Online shopping basically based on individual thinking process and his perceptions. Consumer behavior is very different to understand both in online shopping and in traditional shopping. Both include social, cultural, personal and psychological factors but traditional shopping is much more influenced by these factors as compared to online shopping. It is due to the fact that online consumers are restricting with social and cultural environment and psychological factors. But, most of the online sellers don't know about social and cultural norms about the targeted audience. It is becoming increasingly imperative for retailers to provide strong online shopping experiences. Therefore, it is pertinent to identify the suitable ways to promote sales in this competitive era with the intention of fulfilling high level expectations of consumers.

Methodology
The present study is a descriptive study. Primary data has been collected from the respondents in Coimbatore city through well structured schedule. Convenient sampling method has been followed for the study as it is very difficult to find the population who purchase through online shopping. Hit and miss fashion has been adopted while eliciting the data from the respondents. Total sample size constitutes 500.

Objectives of the Study
The present study focuses on the perception of consumers towards online shopping in Coimbatore city.

Hypothesis of the Study
There is no association between the level of perception and the select demographic variables of the respondents viz, gender, age, marital status, educational status, occupation and annual income.

Methodology
Primary data has been collected from the respondents living in Coimbatore city. Pre-tested interview schedule has been administered to elicit required data and details from the respondents. As the online shopping consumers are scattered throughout the district, the data has been collected through hit and miss fashion by following convenience sampling method. The sample size constitutes 500.

Online Shopping Behaviour of Consumers
The respondents are classified into Low, Moderate and high based on the level of perception by applying the descriptive statistics. The respondents who obtain mean scores 'lesser than the standard deviation' (50.20 – 13.94) are classified as 'respondents having low level perception'. The respondents who receive mean scores 'greater than the standard deviation' (50.20+13.94) are classified as 'high respondents having high level perception'. The cut off values of high and low scores (36.27 to 64.13) are classified as 'the respondents with moderate level of perception' towards online shopping in the study area.

Level of Perception According to the Gender
Majority of the male respondents (67.70) and female respondents (66.90) fall under the brackets of moderate level of perception towards online shopping. It is also observed that 20.2 percent of the male respondents have low level perception whereas 23.6 percent of the female respondents are found with high level perception towards online shopping. Though online

shopping attracts the respondents irrespective of their gender, their perception is at the moderate level. The chi-square results reveal that the calculated value (17.251) is higher than the table value. So, the hypothesis is rejected and there is an association between the level of perception and gender of the respondents towards online shopping.

Level of Perception According to the Age Group of the Respondents
Moderate level of perception is assessed among the respondents irrespective of their age brackets constituting above 65 percent. However, 21.1 percent of the respondents falling in the age group of below 18 years have high level awareness towards online shopping. These young group respondents have more interest in using the internet. The chi-square results show that the calculated value (4.235) is lower than the table value. So, the hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is no association between the level of perception and age of the respondents towards online shopping.

Level of Perception According to the Marital Status of the Respondents
Moderate level of perception is observed among the respondents irrespective of their marital status. It is to be noted that 21.6 percent of the respondents falling under unmarried category have high level of awareness in shopping through online. On the other hand, the same proportion of this stratum has low level perception towards online shopping. Dynamic changes in the market environment, timeliness and the technical exposure determine the level of perception of the respondents. The chi-square results show that the calculated value (13.483) is more than the table value. So, the hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is association between the level of perception and marital status of the respondents towards online shopping.

Level of Perception According to Educational Status of the Respondents
Level of perception of respondents varies according to the educational qualification of the respondents. Educational qualifications of the respondents do not comply with their high level perception towards online shopping. 38.5 percent of the post graduates and 38.5 percent of the diploma holders evidence this fact. Professionals and post graduates have low level perception constituting 21.7 percent and 20.5 percent respectively. The chi-square results show that the calculated value (65.591) is higher than the table value. So, the hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is association between the level of perception and educational qualification of the respondents towards online shopping.

Level of Perception According to Occupation of the Respondents
Level of perception of respondents varies according to the occupation of the respondents. The respondents with different occupational status have different level of perception. Majority of the self employed (75 percent) have moderate level of perception whereas 37.50 percent of home makers have high level of perception towards online shopping. However, 82 respondents in total have low level perception towards online shopping due to lack of time and lack of interest. However, the home makers are very keen in using online shopping facility. The chi-square results show that the calculated value (34.6) is more than the table value. So, the hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is association between the level of perception and occupation of the respondents towards online shopping.

Level of Perception According to Annual Income of the Respondents
Majority of the respondents who earn annual income above four lakhs (76.20 percent) have moderate level of perception. Next to this, the respondents who fall in the income category between 3-4 lakhs have high level perception towards online shopping. The chi-square results show that the calculated value (20.214) is more than the table value. So, the hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is association between the level of perception and the annual income of the respondents towards online shopping.

Correlation between the Select Variables and the Perception of Consumers
The correlation analysis reveals that gender, educational qualification, occupation and annual income have a positive relationship with the level of perception whereas age and marital status of the respondents do not correlate with the level of perception of the respondents towards online shopping in the study area.

Conclusion
It is concluded that the extent to which consumers' perceptions of the online shopping experience confirm their expectations. Most consumers form expectation of the product, service and quality of the products before engaging in online shopping activities. These expectations influence their perception to shop at a certain internet store and consequently their decision making. The expectations of the consumers differ according to the demographic profile of the respondents. If the expectations of different strata of the consumers are met, the consumers achieve a high degree of satisfaction, which influences their online shopping behavior, decisions and purchasing activity and develops positive relationship between their demographic profile and their level of perception.

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Table – 1,Mean scores on the level of perception of respondents

Mean	SD	Low	Moderate	High
50.20	13.94	36.26	36.27-64.13	64.14

Table – 2,Level of perception according to the gender of the respondents

Gender	Level of Perception			Total
	Low	**Moderate**	**High**	
Male	65	218	39	322
	(20.20)	(67.70)	(12.10)	(100.00)
Female	17	119	42	178
	(9.60)	(66.90)	(23.60)	(100.00)
Total	**82**	**337**	**81**	**500**

Df: 2   Table Value:Five per cent level: 5.991
Calculated χ² Value:17.251   One per cent level: 9.210

Table – 3,Level of perception according to the age group of the respondents

Age	Level of Perception			Total
	Low	**Moderate**	**High**	
Less than 18	0	15	4	19
	(00.00)	(78.90)	(21.10)	(100.00)
18 to 29	61	232	56	349
	(17.50)	(66.50)	(16.00)	(100.00)
30 to 39	15	67	15	97
	(15.50)	(69.10)	(15.50)	(100.00)
Above 40	6	23	6	35
	(17.10)	(65.70)	(17.10)	(100.00)
Total	**82**	**337**	**81**	**500**

Df: 6   Table Value: Five per cent level: 12.592
Calculated χ² Value: 4.235   One per cent level: 16.812

Table – 4,Level of perception according to the marital status of the respondents

Marital Status	Level of Perception			Total
	Low	**Moderate**	**High**	
Married	45	240	44	329
	(13.70)	(72.90)	(13.40)	(100.00)
Unmarried	37	97	37	171
	(21.60)	(56.70)	(21.60)	(100.00)
Total	**82**	**337**	**81**	**500**

Df: 2   Table Value: Five per cent level: 5.991
Calculated χ² Value:13.483   One per cent level: 9.210

Table – 5, Level of perception according to educational status of the respondents

Educational Qualification	Level of Perception			Total
	Low	**Moderate**	**High**	
Professional	23	78	5	106
	(21.70)	(73.60)	(4.70)	(100.00)
Post Graduate	48	125	61	234
	(20.50)	(53.40)	(26.10)	(100.00)
Under Graduate	11	98	6	115
	(9.60)	(85.20)	(5.20)	(100.00)
Diploma	0	8	5	13
	(00.00)	(61.50)	(38.50)	(100.00)

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Schooling	0	19	2	21
	(00.00)	(90.50)	(9.50)	(100.00)
Others	0	9	2	11
	(00.00)	(81.80)	(18.20)	(100.00)
Total	**82**	**337**	**81**	**500**

Df: 10   Table Value: Five per cent level: 18.307
Calculated χ² Value:65.591   One per cent level: 23.209

Table – 6,Level of perception according to occupation of the respondents

Occupation	Level of Perception			Total
	Low	**Moderate**	**High**	
Government	3	19	4	26
	(11.50)	(73.10)	(15.40)	(100.00)
Private	49	181	27	257
	(19.10)	(70.40)	(10.50)	(100.00)
Self Employee	7	66	15	88
	(8.00)	(75.00)	(17.00)	(100.00)
Business	14	49	24	87
	(16.10)	(56.30)	(27.60)	(100.00)
Home Maker	0	10	6	16
	(00.00)	(62.50)	(37.50)	(100.00)
Others	9	12	5	26
	(34.60)	(46.20)	(19.20)	(100.00)
Total	**82**	**337**	**81**	**500**

Df: 10   Table Value:Five per cent level: 18.307
Calculated χ² Value: 34.600   One per cent level: 23.209

Table – 7,Level of perception according to Annual income of the respondents

Annual Income	Level of Perception			Total
	Low	**Moderate**	**High**	
Less than 1 Lakh	21	50	17	88
	(23.90)	(56.80)	(19.30)	(100.00)
Between 1 to 2 Lakhs	32	98	24	154
	(20.80)	(63.60)	(15.60)	(100.00)
Between 2 to 3 Lakhs	14	91	21	126
	(11.10)	(72.20)	(16.70)	(100.00)
Between 3 to 4 Lakhs	1	21	9	31
	(3.20)	(67.70)	(29.00)	(100.00)
More than 4 Lakhs	14	77	10	101
	(13.90)	(76.20)	(9.90)	(100.00)
Total	**82**	**337**	**81**	**500**

Source : Primary data
Df:8   Table Value: Five per cent level:15.507
Calculated χ² Value:20.214   One per cent level: 20.090

Table – 8, Correlation between the select variables and the perception of consumers

Variables	r	r²
Gender	0.151**	0.023
Age	-0.045	0.002
Marital Status	-0.085	0.007
Educational Qualification	0.144**	0.021
Occupation	0.110*	0.012
Annual Income	0.034	0.001

* Significant at five per cent level ** Significant at one per cent level.