



Preference of Youngsters Towards Fashion and Apparel E-Commerce in Cochin City

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INTRODUCTION

The internet is revolutionizing the way customers shop and make purchases on a global scale. Many businesses are adopting online strategies to cut marketing expenses, subsequently reducing the prices of their products and services to stay competitive in fiercely contested markets. Moreover, companies leverage the internet for transmitting, communicating, and disseminating information.

Due to the numerous advantages, an increasing number of consumers now prefer online shopping over traditional methods. In recent times, there has been a substantial shift in the buyer's decision-making process, with individuals conducting thorough online research before interacting with a sales representative. Furthermore, buyers increasingly make direct online purchases using smartphones, bypassing traditional brick-and-mortar establishments. The internet has streamlined and expedited business processes, leading to a global trend favoring online buying or e-commerce.

E-commerce not only simplifies product marketing but also facilitates feedback solicitation and customer satisfaction surveys. Customers utilize the internet not only for online purchases but also to compare prices, product features, and after-sale support from different retailers. Experts express optimism about the future of online commerce, considering the vast potential of current and future e-commerce customers. As more than two decades have passed since the inception of business-to-customer e-commerce, it continues to be a boon.

The online fashion and apparel industry have undergone a remarkable transformation, reshaping the way consumers explore, select, and purchase clothing. Over the past decade, technological advancements and the widespread accessibility of the internet have propelled this industry into a dynamic and influential space. The convenience, variety, and accessibility offered by online platforms have redefined traditional retail models, giving rise to a burgeoning e-commerce landscape for fashion.

Consumers now have the ability to browse an extensive array of clothing options from the comfort of their homes, breaking geographical barriers and offering a truly global marketplace. Online fashion retailers leverage advanced technologies, such as augmented reality and virtual try-on features, enhancing the shopping experience and mitigating concerns related to fit and style. Social media platforms also play a pivotal role, serving as influential channels for trend exploration, brand discovery, and peer recommendations.

Since consumers are the kingpin in the market, they have to be satisfied. Along with its growth, several things have caused concern in consumers. Quality of the products, timely delivery, quality services have a vital role in retaining the consumers to one particular app. Therefore, this paper studies various determinants that keep consumers (youngsters) satisfaction and their preference over selected online apps with reference to Cochin City. The scope of this study is consumer's preference and satisfaction of the online fashion and apparel industry among the youngsters in the Cochin City. The significance of this study is that we would be able to understand the preference of consumers and also the determinants of consumer satisfaction.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the trend of online purchasing among youngsters.
2. To evaluate the consumer's preference in the selected fashion and apparel online shopping apps.
3. To analyze the satisfaction level of consumers using selected fashion and apparel online shopping apps by examining how factors such as pricing, product quality, delivery process, customer support service, and convenience of the app influence their overall experience.

II. Literature Review

Guo Jun and Noor Ismawati Jaafar (2011), in the study A Study on Consumers' Attitude towards Online Shopping in China states that: consumer attitudes toward online shopping are significantly influenced by the reputation and marketing mix. According to Moudi Al Mousa's study (2011) investigates the inclination to engage in internet- based apparel shopping. The research also explores the impact of perceived risk on the intention to shop for apparel through the internet.

Elisabeta Ioanas and Ivona Stoica (2014), concluded that most consumers who buy online are indeed young, working in a company, most of them are females and have at least an account on social network. Murli Dhar Sharma (2015) the study says that the retail store industry has experienced an impact from online shopping, particularly affecting customer loyalty. A crucial factor influencing the retailer's shop is the provision of prompt services.

N. Anitha (2015), found in her study that online retailing is the process whereby consumers directly buy goods or services from a seller in real-time, without an intermediary service, over the Internet. Shubhangi Walvekar and Vishal Raut (2015), found in their study that. The evolving business landscape has seen consumers prioritize time optimization and comfort, resulting in a notable increase in online shopping. Despite this trend, consumer skepticism remains regarding online purchases.

Ida Ayu Debora Indri ani (2016), in the study analysis the factors influence consumer buying decision on online shopping clothing for consumer in Manado states that: it is highlighted that among twenty factors, three factors—namely product, refund, and perceived ease of use—play a role in influencing customers' buying decisions in online shopping. Anuja Choudhary (2017) this study says that the demographic factors like age, occupation, income, and family size were examined. The study revealed a statistically significant negative impact of age, indicating that younger female shoppers were more inclined towards online apparel shopping. Zahid Ahmed et. al (2017), in the study A study on the factors affecting consumer buying behavior towards online shopping in Pakistan Citation states that: domain- specific innovativeness significantly influences consumer buying intention, providing noteworthy and beneficial outcomes. This approach aims to enhance customer attitudes, specifically fostering an impulse purchase behavior.

Menal Dahiya (2017) Indicate that online shopping brings positive changes to people's lives by providing convenience. E-commerce allows for creative product promotion, reducing the expenses associated with offline advertising across various business areas. **Hien Cao (2018)**, in the study the growth of e-commerce and its impact on the fast fashion retailers' states that: It is considered as a transformative time in the fast fashion retail industry from 2015. The shoppers desire to shop, however, whenever they want no matter where they are, either in stores, online by any devices, voice activation or click and collect. **Swetha Parthasarathy (2018)**, in the study E-Commerce a boon to fashion industry? trending changes on consumers preference in India states that: When E-Commerce entered India, many retailers directly criticized that consumers would ever take to buying fashion apparels online.

III. Research Methodology:

This study is descriptive in nature. Descriptive research primarily focuses on collecting information without changing the environment. For this, primary data is used for analysis. Questionnaire method is selected for the study. 11 questions were prepared and distributed among 50 people of different age groups. Secondary data was collected from various books, journals and from the internet. As the population is infinite, the entire population could not be studied. The Participants are chosen based on the convenience of the researcher. The sampling method therefore used is convenience sampling under non-probability sample method.

The sampling unit consists of participants from youngsters in Cochin City within the age group of 18 and 25 (The age category of 18 to 25 is selected based on various research reports). Also, the consumer preference and satisfaction of selected apps like Ajoio, Myntra, Meesho, NYKAA, MAX. The sample size chosen for this study is "50". Data collected was analyzed using various statistical tools like tables, charts, graphs, percentages etc.. for easy representation of the data.

IV. Results Analysis:

1. Age

TABLE 4.1

AGE

RESPONSES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
18-20	32	64
21-23	18	36
24-25	0	0
TOTAL	50	100

Source: Primary Data

Age

50 responses

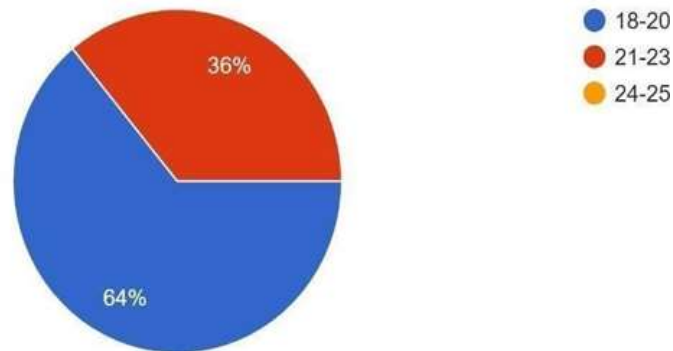


FIGURE 4.1. Age of the respondents

INTERPRETATION

Most of the people who filled this survey form comes under the age group of 18-20. Therefore, the major users of online delivery apps comes under the age group of 18-20, who are mostly college students. The rest of them comes under the age group of 21-23.

2. Gender

TABLE 4.2 GENDER

RESPONSES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
MALE	25	50
FEMALE	25	50
PREFER NOT TO SAY	0	0
Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data

Gender

50 responses

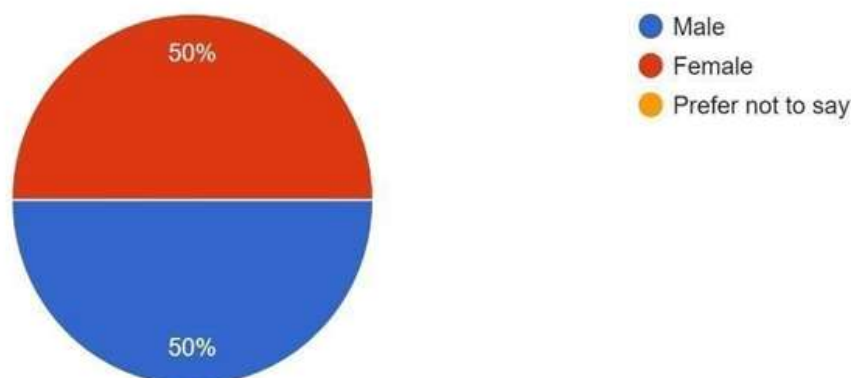


FIGURE 4.2: Gender of the respondents

INTERPRETATION

Out of 50 people who took part in the survey, about 50% were male and 50% were female. From this it is clear that there is an equal representation of individuals in respect of the gender.

3. Education Qualification

TABLE 4.3 EDUCATION QUALIFICATION

RESPONSES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
HIGH SCHOOL	7	14
DIPLOMA/BACHELOR'S DEGREE	42	84
MASTERS DEGREE OR ABOVE	1	2
TOTAL	50	100

Source: Primary Data

Education Qualification

50 responses

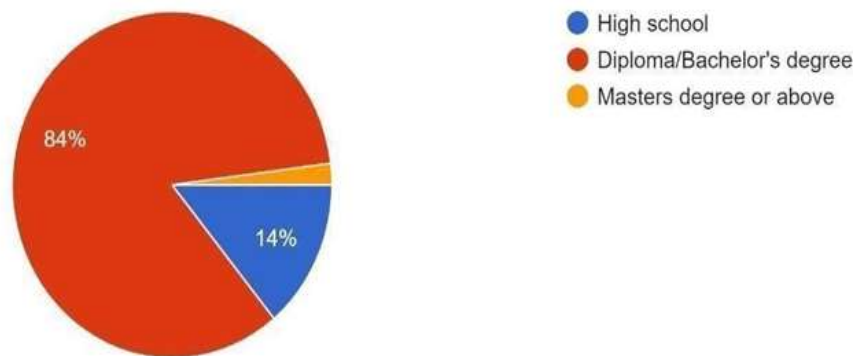


FIGURE 4.3 Educational Qualification

INTERPRETATION

42 people who took part in the survey were Diploma/ bachelor degree students.7 of them were high school students and About 1 of them comes under masters or above. Most of the people who used the online delivery apps were students. This depicts that the majority of the respondents to the questionnaire were well educated and aware.

4. Amount Spend for Online Purchase

TABLE 4.4

AMOUNT SPEND FOR ONLINE PURCHASE

RESPONSES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
LESS THAN 1000	19	38
1000-2000	26	52
MORE THAN 2000	5	10
TOTAL	50	100

Source: Primary Data

Amount spend for online purchase

50 responses

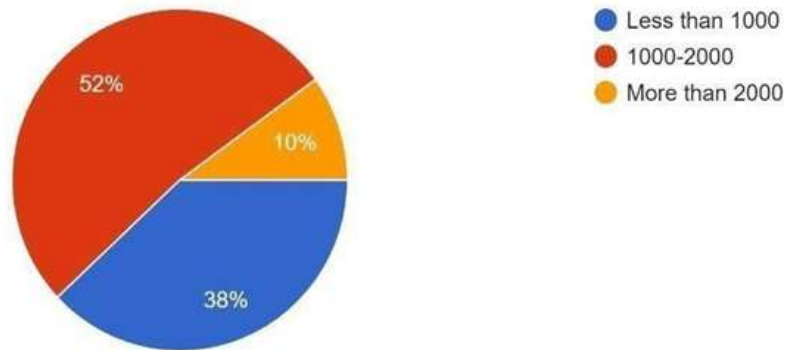


FIGURE 4.4: Amount spends for online Purchase

INTERPRETATION

The above table shows the average amount individuals are willing to spend on online shopping in a month. About 38% of respondents spend less than 1000, while 52% of the respondents spend between 1000-2000 rupees per month. The rest of them spend more than 2000 on online purchases each month.

5. Frequency of Online Purchase

TABLE 4.5 FREQUENCY OF ONLINE PURCHASE

RESPONSES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1-3	42	84
3-5	6	12
MORE THAN 5	2	4
TOTAL	50	100

Source: Primary Data

Frequencies of online purchasing in a month

50 responses

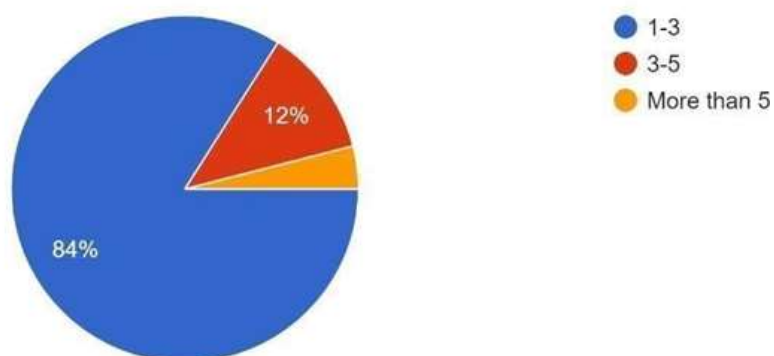


FIGURE 4.5. Frequency of online Purchasing in a month

INTERPRETATION

The above chart shows the frequency of online purchases. The chart shows that 84% of the respondents order 1-3 times a month. Only 12% of people order 3-5 times and 4% order more than 5 times a month. The number of people who order more than 5 times is very less as shown in the graph.

6. Reasons for Purchasing Online

TABLE 4.6

REASONS FOR PURCHASING ONLINE

RESPONSES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
CONVENIENCE	35	70
ECONOMICAL	15	30
OFFERS/DISCOUNTS	25	50
TOTAL	75	150

Source: Primary Data

Reasons for purchasing online

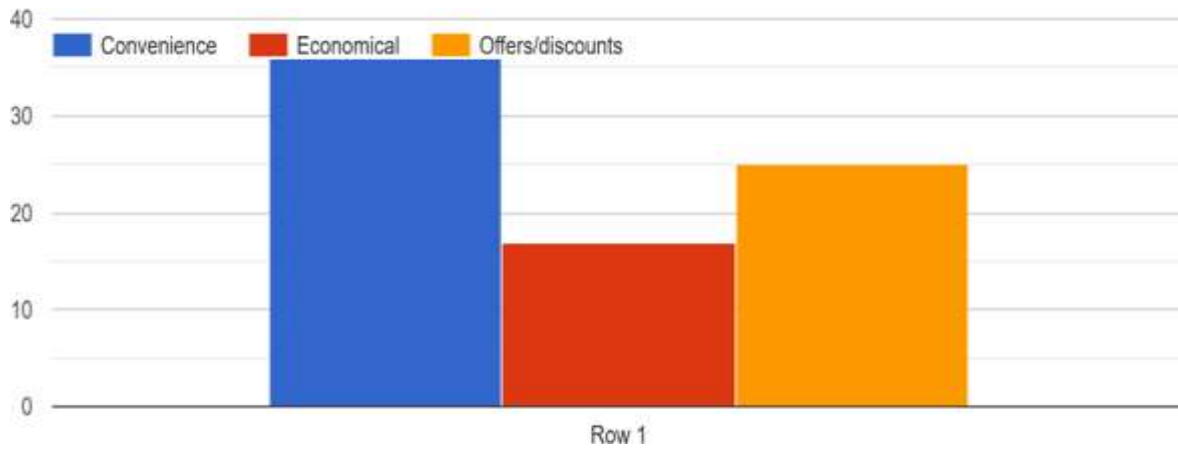


Figure no.4.6: Reasons for Purchasing Online

INTERPRETATION

Most of the people prefer purchasing online because it is convenient for them and convenience came up with 35 votes. Then comes offers/discounts that are provided in the app. It came up with 25 votes. It will allow customers to get products at a lower rate than what is available in the market. 15 people preferred using online apps because they were economical.

7. Consumer's most preferred online shopping platform

TABLE 4.7 CONSUMER'S MOST PREFERRED ONLINE SHOPPING PLATFORM

RESPONSES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
NYKKA	5	10
MAX	5	10
AJIO FASHION	11	22
MEESHO	11	22
MYNTRA FASHION	18	36
TOTAL	50	100

Source: Primary Data

Most preferred online shopping platform

50 responses

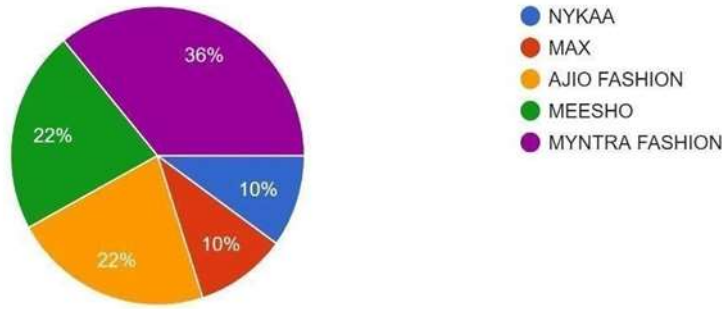


Figure No.4.7: Most Preferred Online Shopping Platform

INTERPRETATION

When asked to select their preferred online applications, respondents majorly preferred Myntra which is a recent major player in the online shopping market in India. Myntra came up with 18 votes. Ajio fashion and Meesho shares the second most preferred apps with 11 votes. NYKKA and MAX were the least preferred among all the options that were given.

8. Reason for choosing the preferred app

TABLE 4.8

REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE PREFERRED APP

RESPONSES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
OFFERS/DISCOUNTS	35	70
BRAND NAME	12	24
QUALITY SERVICE	30	60
EASY TO USE	12	24
TOTAL	89	178

Source: Primary Data

Reasons for choosing the preferred app

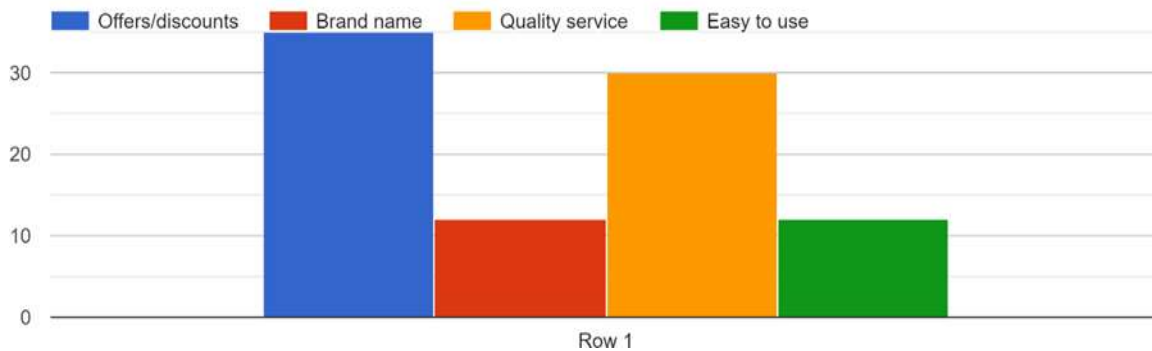


FIGURE 4.8: Reasons for choosing the preferred app

INTERPRETATION

The question was prepared in such a way that the respondents could choose more than one option. As per the respondents, offers/discounts and quality service are the most important feature they look for in an app which came up with the votes 35 and 30 respectively. Brand name and Easy to use are the next important feature which came up with 12 votes each.

9. Consumer's Satisfaction

a. PRICING OF THE PRODUCTS

TABLE 4.9.1

PRICING OF THE PRODUCTS

1) RATE YOUR EXPERIENCE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	3	6
2	2	4
3	14	28
4	22	44
5	9	18
TOTAL	50	100

Source: Primary Data

Pricing of the products

50 responses

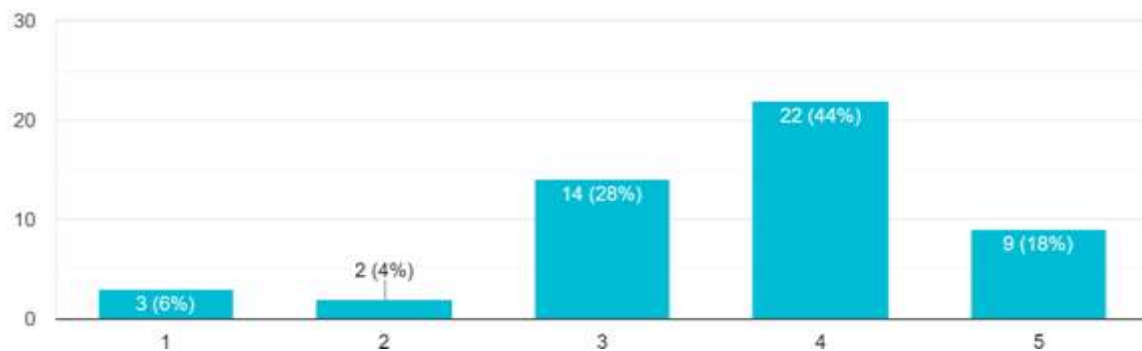


FIGURE 4.9.1:Pricing of the products

INTERPRETATION

The data collected from the satisfaction in the pricing of the products by the consumers in the selected apps:3 respondents rated 1,2 respondents rated 2,14 respondents rated 3, 22 respondents rated 4 and 9 respondents rated 5.

QUALITY OF THE PRODUCTS

TABLE 4.9.2 QUALITY OF THE PRODUCTS

RATE YOU EXPERIENCE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	0	0
2	6	12
3	8	16
4	29	58
5	7	14
TOTAL	50	100

Source: Primary Data

Quality of the products

50 responses

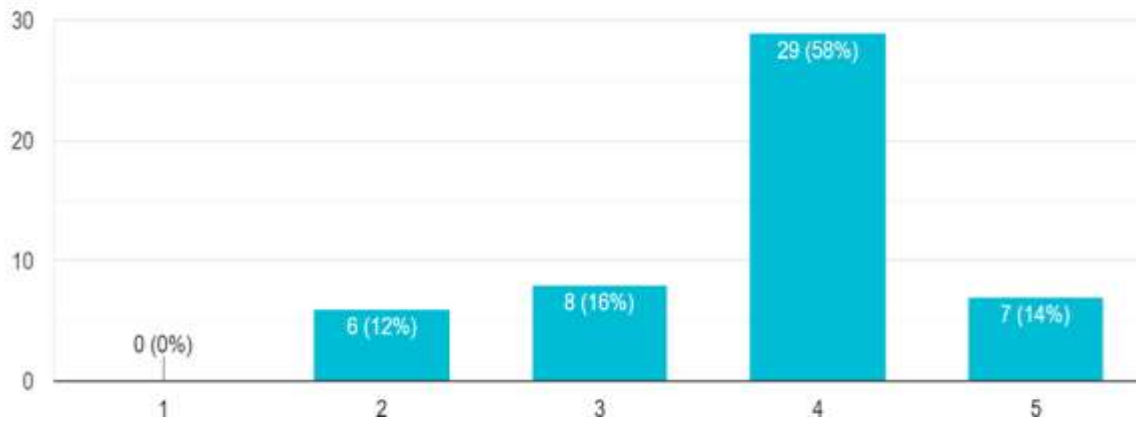


FIGURE 4.9.2:Quality of the products

INTERPRETATION

The data collected from the satisfaction in the quality of the products by the consumers in the selected apps:0 respondents rated 1, 6 respondents rated 2, 8 respondents rated 3,

29 respondents rated 4 and 7 respondents rated 5.

b. DELIVERY OF THE PRODUCTS

TABLE 4.9.3 DELIVERY OF THE PRODUCTS

RATE YOUR EXPERIENCE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	2	4
2	4	8
3	8	16
4	26	52
5	10	20
TOTAL	50	100

Source: Primary Data

Delivery of the products

50 responses

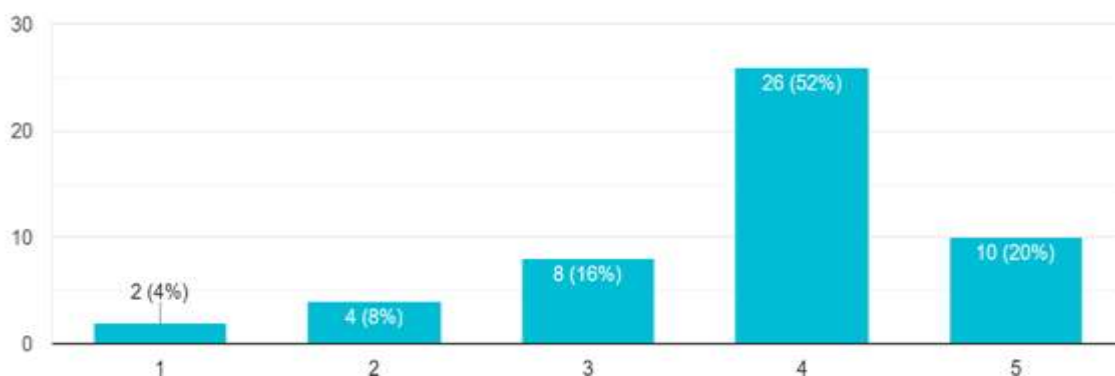


FIGURE 4.9.3: Delivery of the products

INTERPRETATION

The data collected from the satisfaction in the delivery of the products by the consumers in the selected apps:2 respondents rated 1, 4 respondents rated 2, 8respondents rated 3,26 respondents rated 4 and 10 respondents rated 5.

2. CUSTOMER SUPPORT SERVICE

TABLE 4.9.4 CUSTOMER SUPPORT SERVICE

RATE YOUR EXPERIENCE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	1	2
2	4	8
3	13	26
4	23	46
5	9	18
TOTAL	50	100

Source: Primary Data

Customer support service

50 responses

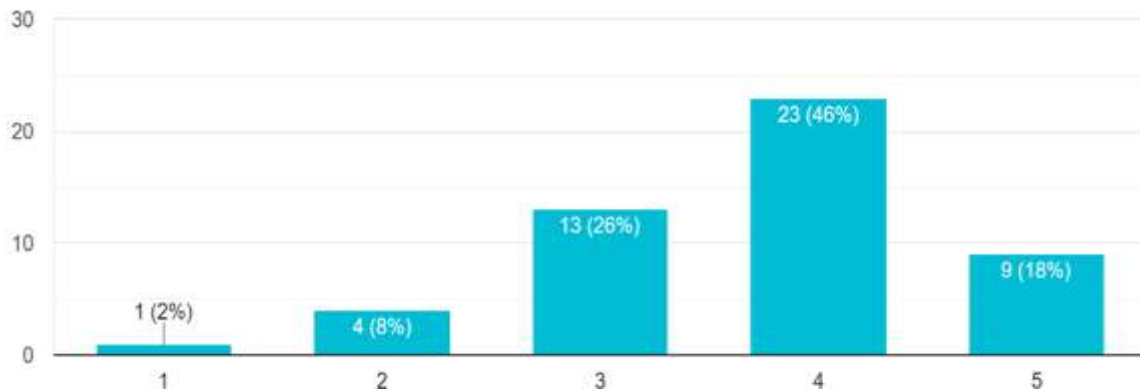


FIGURE 4.9.4: Customer Support service

INTERPRETATION

The data collected from the satisfaction in the customer support service by the consumers in the selected apps:1respondents rated 1, 4 respondents rated 2, 13 respondents rated 3, 23 respondents rated 4 and 9 respondents rated 5.

a. CONVENIECE IN USING THE APP

TABLE 4.9.5 CONVENIECE IN USING THE APP

RATE YOUR EXPERIENCE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	2	4
2	2	4
3	11	22
4	24	48
5	11	22
TOTAL	50	100

Source: Primary Data

Convenience in using app

50 responses

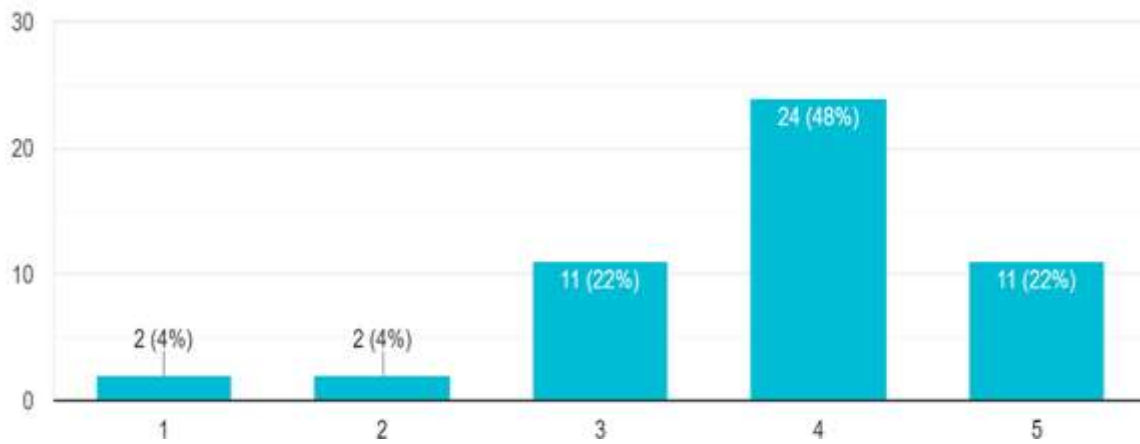


FIGURE 4.9.5: Convenience in using app

INTERPRETATION

The data collected from the satisfaction in the convenience in using the app by the consumers in the selected apps: 2 respondents rated 1, 2 respondents rated 2, 11 respondents rated 3, 24 respondents rated 4 and 11 respondents rated 5.

10. Satisfaction with the current features of the app

TABLE 4.10

SATISFSCION WITH THE CURRENT FEATURES OF THE APP

RESPONSES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
NOT VERY SATISFIED	2	4
MODERATELY SATISFIED	35	70
EXTREMELY SATISFIED	13	26
DISSATISFIED	0	0
TOTAL	50	100

Source: Primary Data

Satisfaction with the current features of the selected app

50 responses

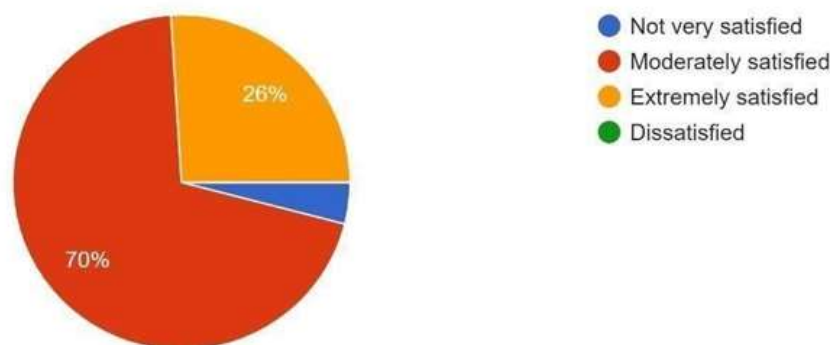


FIGURE 4.10: Satisfaction with the current features of the selected ap

INTERPRETATION

The above chart clearly shows that 70% of the respondents are moderately satisfied with the current features of the app, about 26% respondents are Extremely satisfied. While a few respondents of 4% are not very satisfied with the current features of the app due to various reasons like usability, app interface etc.

11. Would you recommend the app to other's

TABLE 4.11

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THE APP TO OTHERS

RESPONSES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
YES	48	96
NO	2	4
TOTAL	50	100

Source: Primary Data

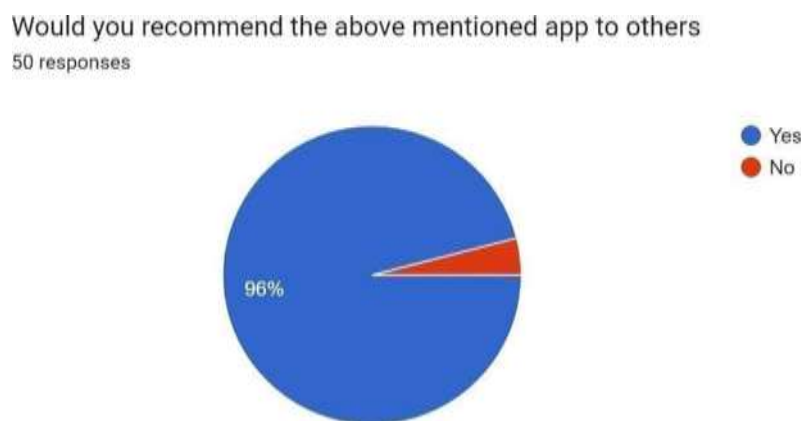


FIGURE 4.11: Recommendation of App to others

INTERPRETATION

The above pie chart clearly shows that 96% of the respondents are ready to recommend apps to others and only 4% do not want to recommend these apps to others. The poor- quality services, delivery of damaged or expired products, bad customer services, high delivery charge when the cart items are below the required price limit all affect their decision to use online applications and recommend it to others.

V. Discussion:

While identifying the trend of online purchasing among youngsters, Majority of the respondents (52%) spend between 1000 to 2000 for online purchase. Also the frequency of online purchase was 1 to 3 times in a month for most of them (84%). Most people preferred to buy online instead of going to stores and making purchases. This is because online purchases are more convenient for them (70%). Travelling expenses, time and energy could be saved when purchased online. Secondly, people (50%) prefer buying online because most of the mobile applications provide offers/discounts. Also, people find it more economical than the physical purchase.

Majority of the people (36%) preferred Myntra over the other apps. The second most preferred app was shared by AJIO Fashion and Meesho respectively (22%). Other apps like NYKKA and MAX were then preferred by some of them (10%). Respondents had various reasons for choosing the online applications. Most of them (70%) used online applications because of the offers/discounts it provides. Quality service were the next most important feature the respondents (60%) have given importance. The respondents (24%) also look for Brand name, easiness to use while making their decision to purchase from a particular application.

Majority of the respondents rated 3 to 4 out of 5 while examining the satisfaction of consumers, in different aspects of the preferred applications like pricing, quality, delivery of the product. The customer support service and convenience in using the app were also considered. Majority of the respondents (96%) are satisfied with the current features of the app and also, they would recommend the above app to others.

Since the majority of people opted for convenience as a reason for purchasing online, it should be made more convenient to keep the customers satisfied. More offers like no delivery charge, free packaging fee, etc. should be added more. Also, active buyers should be given more preference because in such a competitive market it is difficult to retain consumers to one particular market. If they are not treated properly there is a great chance for them to opt for other options.

Customer care services should be given greater importance. When consumers are not happy with the product or service immediate actions should be taken to rectify the mistakes. Unhappy customers are not good for any businesses. Safety in payment options should be guaranteed because at least some people could be not using online purchases because of the fear of losing money. Therefore, better awareness should be spread among the consumers. More payment options should be added to attract consumers.

Online retailers must focus on providing creative offers which encourages customers to buy from them again. Offers like 10% discount on next purchases, free delivery on next few purchases, cash back could be used by them. The website or the mobile application should be user friendly as well as more attractive features should be provided to them from time to time. The delivery boys should be trained to make deliveries carefully and it should be made important that they follow all the safety measures while delivering. Proper sanitation facilities should be provided to them so that cleanliness could be ensured in purchases. It can also create a better impression in the minds of the customers.

VI. CONCLUSION

For a business to grow, the satisfaction of consumers should be ensured. As part of the promotional activity, many businesses provide offers, coupons, and discounts to its customers. Also, quality services should be ensured on their part. To know the attitude of customers towards the business, customer satisfaction surveys are used. From this study it was found that participants are moderately satisfied with the services the online delivery apps offer. Thus, finding out what features potential buyers need and expect will help during product development and delivery. It will also help to identify which features will add value and which features consumers do not consider when making purchasing decisions, which can help increase overall customer satisfaction and repurchase. Knowing the strengths and weaknesses of the competition will help every business to enhance their services and work on their flaws to keep the business on the leading edge. Identifying new features, functionality, distribution methods and supporting services will improve customer satisfaction which will help to ensure continued success for the business

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The study is limited to a particular locality and the results cannot be generalized for any other locality. The study is limited to an age group of 18–25. This age group was chosen from the age category preferred for youngsters from various research reports as well as for the convenience of the researcher. The results could therefore be different for other age groups. This paper studies the consumer preference and satisfaction of some selected online apps namely Ajo, Meesho, Myntra, NYKKA, MAX. Therefore, this result cannot be applied to other apps.

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