

Consumers' Perception towards Online Shopping during COVID-19 Pandemic: A Study of Rohtak District

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ABSTRACT

The concept of social distancing has gained the importance globally as a preventive measure against COVID-19. E-banking, mobile banking and facilities such as unique payment transfer (UPI) have supported digitization of the economy. Online Shopping has become one of the most preferred platforms for shopping under the conditions of pandemic. The present study attempted to analyze the perception of consumers towards online shopping during COVID-19 pandemic. For the purpose of study, the data were collected via questionnaire from the respondents of Rohtak District. It is found out through the study that consumers did online shopping because of time-saving and availability of variety of products but during COVID-19 majority of the respondents felt safety issues, receiving of duplicate products, problems in exchanging the products and delay delivery etc. It is suggested that efforts should be made to bring awareness regarding online payment while buying and security should be maintained.

Keywords: COVID, consumer, perception, shopping.

INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization along with the development of e-commerce, many business organizations started their sales and marketing efforts for their products and services via internet. With nearly half of the Indian population being young and tech savvy, there has been an extra ordinary rise in the numbers of online shoppers. The recent growth in the mall culture in the country has in fact made consumers more aware about different options and encouraged them to search and eventually purchase online. The consumers generally visit online not only to reserve hotel rooms and buy air, rail or movie tickets, books and gadgets

The concept of social distancing has gained the importance globally as a preventive measure against COVID-19. E-banking, mobile banking and facilities such as unique payment transfer (UPI) have supported digitization of the economy. Online Shopping has become one of the most preferred platforms for shopping under the conditions of pandemic. It is a network of linked computers that enables millions of people to communicate, search for the information and purchase various goods and services (Taruna, 2017).

The COVID-19 crisis accelerated an expansion of e-commerce towards new firms, customers and types of products. It has provided customers with access to a significant variety of products from the convenience and safety of their homes, and has enabled firms to continue operation in spite of contact restrictions and other confinement measures. Despite persistent cross-country differences, the COVID-19 crisis has enhanced dynamism in the e-commerce landscape across countries and has expanded the scope of e-commerce, including through new firms, consumer segments (e.g. elderly) and products (e.g. groceries). Meanwhile, e-commerce transactions in many countries have partly shifted from luxury goods and services towards everyday necessities, relevant to a large number of individuals.

The quick speed of transactions and low transaction cost has enabled consumers to shop digitally (Shanthi & Kannaiah, 2015). With the help of one click of mouse, they can get their desired product. Due to lockdown mode of imparting education has shifted from physical mode to online mode. Following the concept of social distancing, many students and teachers are also purchasing mobiles phones through online shopping to support their studies According to market

research done prior to the Corona Virus, the growth of India's market in electronic commerce is increasing at a faster rate (approximately 200 U.S. dollars by the year 2026). Recent developments since the epidemic indicate that target can be accomplished much faster than initially expected, spurred by an increase in shoppers attracting online deliveries despite concerns of potential infections, if they go out from their homes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Islam, et al. (2021) studied the effect of Limited Quantity Scarcity (LQS) and Limited Time Scarcity (LTS) on consumers' emotional arousal and subsequent effect on impulsive and obsessive buying behaviours of consumers. For the purpose of study U.S., China, India and Pakistan were selected and study online surveys were conducted for the data collection. The results of the study revealed that LOS and LTS led to more impulsive and obsessive buying behavior and the impulsive buying moderated the relationship between perceived emotional arousal and behaviour outcomes in all selected countries except India.

Stanciu, et al. (2020) analyzed the changes in behaviour of food consumer during COVID-19 in Romania and found out that the visits of consumers to the outlets reduced by 60 per cent and the social interactions were limited to the work only. The study exhibited that the reasons for which consumers went outside were 70 per cent for the medicines, 35 per cent for food, 28 per cent for Banking facilities and 23 per cent to visit religious places. The author also concluded that due to the prevailed conditions of COVID-19, consumers were forced to choose online shopping even if they were reluctant to do it previously.

Ali (2020) stated that consumer behavior was affected by the COVID-19 worldwide. The author attempted to examine the correlation between COVID-19 and consumer behavior towards the electronic durable goods. For the purpose of study the sales data were collected from Samsung and the results of the study showed that there was an increase in the sales via online and there was a significant correlation between COVID-19 and consumer behavior towards the electronic durable goods. The author concluded that though the overall sales in Iraq were decreasing during COVID-19 but at the same time there was an increase in the online shopping rate of Iraqi consumers.

Rakshit & Paul (2020) studied the impact of COVID-19 on various sectors of economy as well as the reasons due to which India could be an emerging economy post pandemic and strategies for businesses to survive. It is highlighted through the study that COVID-19 had an adverse impact on all the sectors but still there were various factors such as Indian GDP, infrastructure facilities, cheap digital communication network, reliable products, etc. which could play a crucial role for Indian economy to be an emerging one in the global market. Also, the author determined various survival strategies which could be adopted by the Indian businesses to cope up with this pandemic crisis.

Sharma (2020) examined various issues and perspectives related to online marketing during COVID-19 scenario. The author identified various issues related to online marketing such as uncertainty regarding prediction of sales, product promotion, etc. The results of the study highlighted that soon online marketing and shopping would be normalized but the losses incurred due to this pandemic could be ignored.

Patil & Patil (2020) analyzed the impact of COVID-19 on consumer behavior and found out that 96.66 per cent respondents agreed that their behavior had changed due to this pandemic situation, 40 per cent respondents were concerned regarding the shortage of food, 93.33 per cent respondents shifted to alternative brands. The author concluded that there was a significant impact on COVID-19 on consumer behavior.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To analyze the perception of consumers' towards online shopping during COVID-19 in Rohtak District.

HYPOTHESIS

H_{01} : There is no significant difference between the perceptions of the consumers towards online shopping during COVID -19 on the basis of gender in Rohtak District.

H_{02} : There is no significant difference between the perceptions of the consumers towards online shopping during COVID -19 on the basis of age in Rohtak District.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference between the perceptions of the consumers towards online shopping during COVID -19 on the basis of experience of shopping in Rohtak District.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study is descriptive as well as analytical as it describes the present facts and findings and analyzes the collected data and information.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Convenient sampling was used to collect the data from respondents. A sample of 100 consumers was selected with the help of the convenient sampling.

Data Collection

Primary data were collected with the help of questionnaire from the consumers who did online shopping during COVID 19 in Rohtak District of Haryana. The questionnaire was prepared on the basis of some demographic factors such as age, gender, and experience of online purchasing. Out of the total consumers, 70 per cent were male and 30 per cent were female. Out of the total consumers 30 per cent respondents were below 20 years, 21 per cent were between the age group 20–25 years and 49 per cent were above 25years. Out of total respondents 32 per cent having less than 0 to1 years experience of e- shopping, 14 per cent of the respondents having 1 to 2 years experiences of e- shopping and 54 per cent of the respondents have more than 2 years of experiences of e- shopping.

Tools and Techniques

The collected data were analyzed with the help of Tabulation, Pie Chart, Percentage, Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal Wallis H test.

DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1.1
Frequency of online shopping increases due to COVID -19

	Yes	No	Total
Frequency	72	28	100
Percent	72	28	100

Source: Researchers calculations.

It is clear from the above table 1.1 that majority (72 per cent) of the respondents said that due to pandemic online shopping have increased whereas 28 per cent of respondents are not in favor of the above statement. The same is shown by the Figure 1.1.

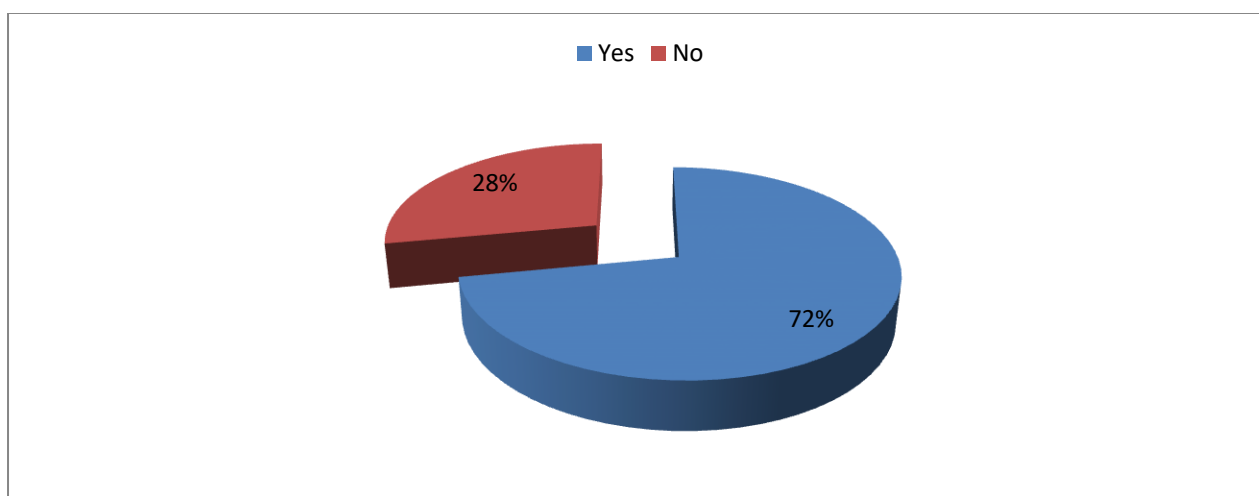


Figure 1.1

Table 1.2
Reasons of online shopping due to COVID -19

Reasons for e - Shopping	Convenience	Offers	Prompt Shipping	Easy Comparison	Time saving	Total
Frequency	14	7	11	38	30	100
Percentage	14	7	11	38	30	100

Source: Researchers calculations.

The table 1.2 exhibited that majority of the respondents (38 per cent) prefer online due to easy product comparability followed by time saving (30 per cent), Convenience (14 per cent), Prompt Shipping (11 per cent) and different offers (7per cent) and the same is exhibited by the following figure 1.2.

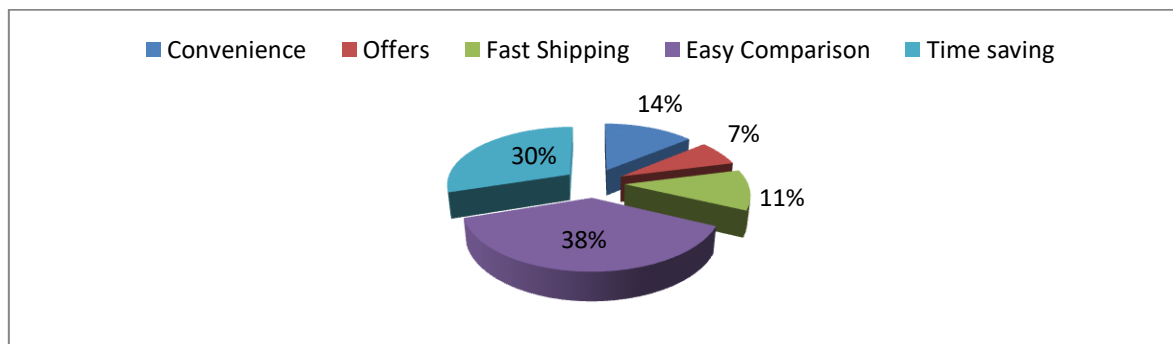


Figure 1.2

Table 1.3
Leakage of personal information due to online shopping during COVID -19

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Frequency	12	6	8	36	38	100
Percentage	12.0	6.0	8.0	36.0	38.0	100.0

Source: Researchers calculations.

It is highlighted with the help of the table 1.3 that majority of the respondents i.e. 74 per cent agreed and 18 per cent respondents disagreed that online shopping during COVID -19 led to leakage of personal information whereas a very few respondents (8 per cent) are neutral to this statement. The following figure 1.3 exhibited this statement.

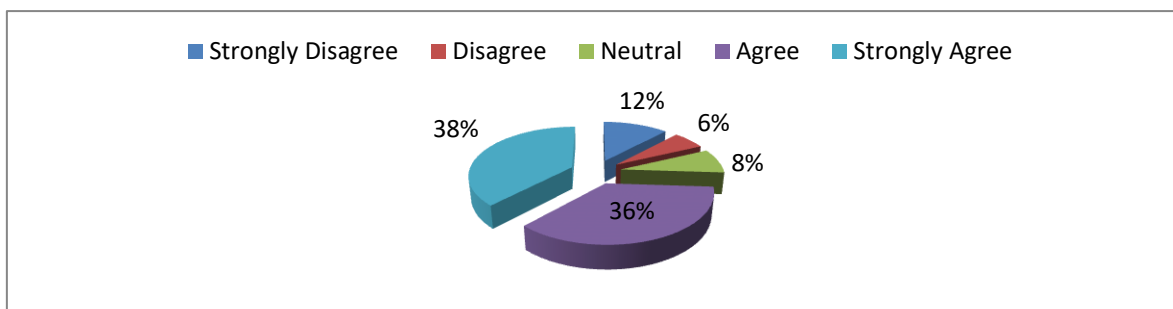


Figure 1.3

Table 1.4
Late delivery of product due to online shopping during COVID -19

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Frequency	6	8	8	31	47	100
Percent	6.0	8.0	8.0	31.0	47.0	100.0

Source: Researchers calculations.

The table 1.4 revealed that majority of the customers (78 per cent) believed that there was delay in receiving the products in online shopping and 14 per cent of them discard the statement and 8 per cent was indifferent to it which is also shown by the figure 1.4.

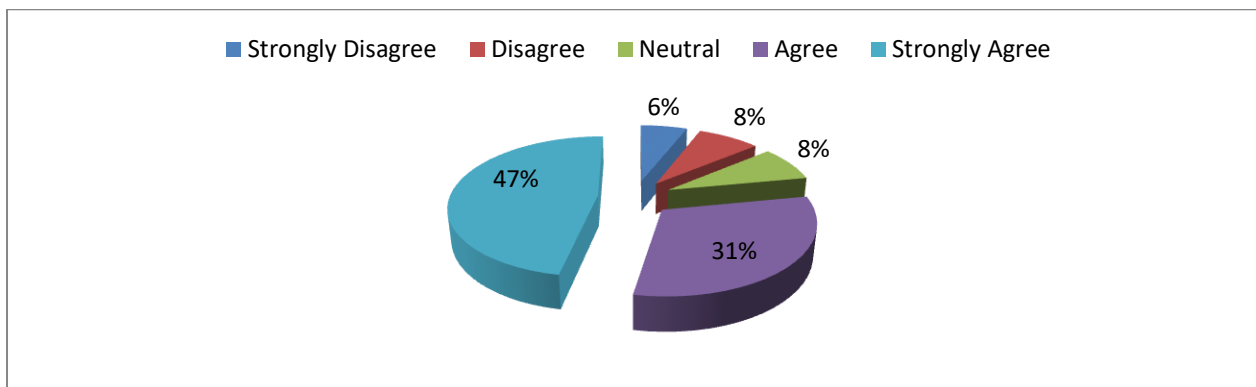


Figure 1.4

Table 1.5
Chances of fraud due to online shopping during COVID -19

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Frequency	13	20	15	38	10	100
Percent	13.0	20.0	15.0	38.0	10.0	100.0

Source: Researchers calculations.

The table 1.5 exposed that most of the customers (48 per cent) alleged that online shopping during pandemic increased the chances of fraud, while, 33 per cent of them discard the statement and 15 per cent was indifferent to it which is also shown by the figure 1.5.

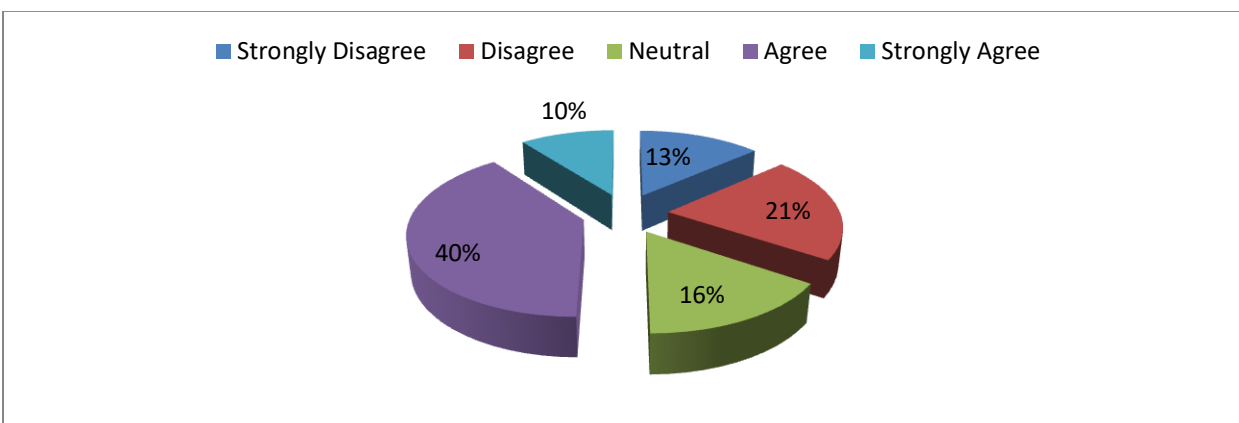


Figure 1.5

Table 1.6
No money back guarantee due to online shopping during COVID -19

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Frequency	3	52	16	14	15	100
Percent	3.0	52.0	16.0	14.0	15.0	100.0

Source: Researchers calculations.

It is tinted with the help of the table 1.6 that majority of the respondents i.e. 55 per cent denied with the statement that there is no money back guarantee in online shopping during COVID -19 and 29 per cent respondents agreed with this statement whereas some respondents (16 per cent) are neutral to this statement. The following figure 1.6 exhibited this statement.

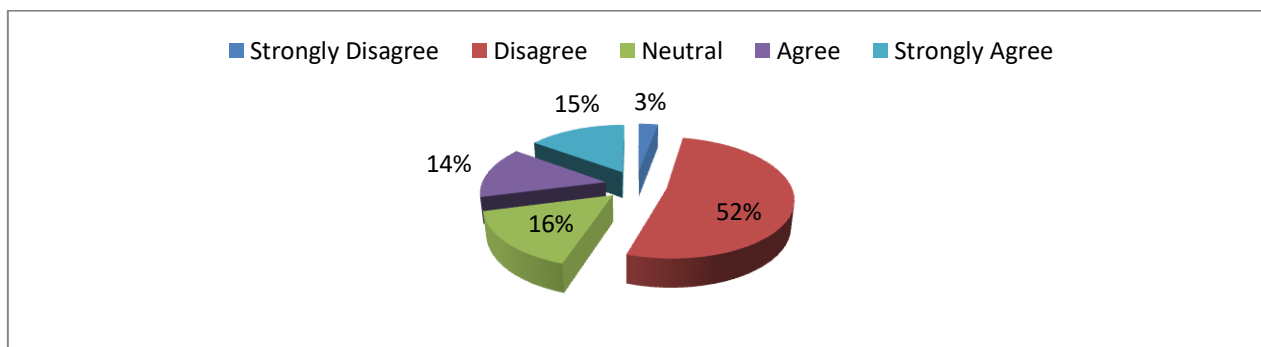


Figure 1.6

Table 1.7
Intricacy in exchanging the product due to online shopping during COVID -19

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Frequency	21	42	4	12	21	100
Percent	21.0	42.0	4.0	12.0	21.0	100.0

Source: Researchers calculations.

The table 1.7 explains that 33 per cent of the respondents favored that during COVID -19, they found problems in exchanging the products whereas 63 per cent of them disagree and only 4 per cent was neutral to the same which is portrayed by the figure 1.7.

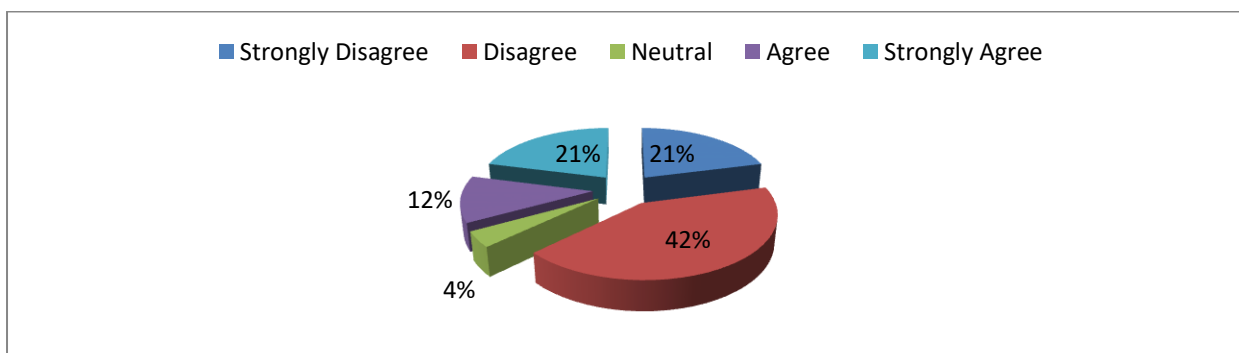


Figure 1.7

Table 1.8
Time wasting in product searching due to online shopping during COVID -19

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Frequency	4	9	10	24	53	100
Percentage	4.0	9.0	10.0	24.0	53.0	100.0

Source: Researchers calculations.

The table 1.8 revealed that majority of the customers (78 per cent) believed that online shopping was dissipate of time in product searching and 13 per cent of them discard the statement and 10 per cent was indifferent to it which is also shown by the figure 1.8.

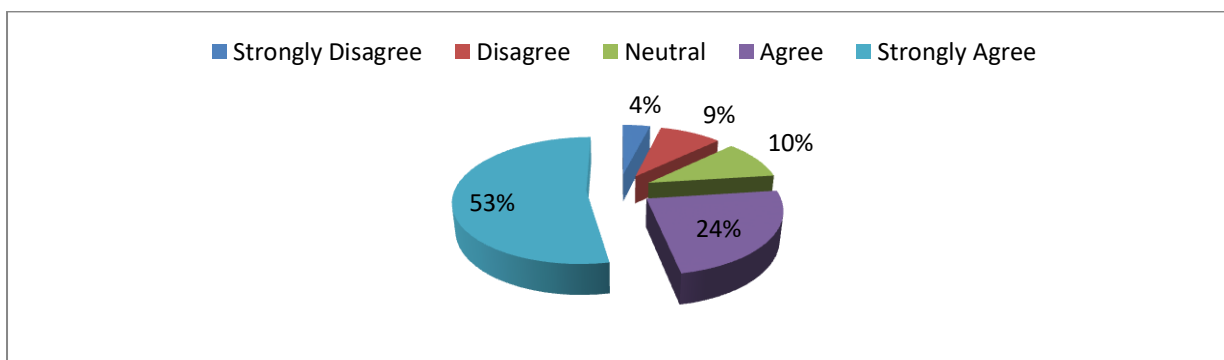


Figure 1.8

Table 1.9
Fake branded product due to online shopping during COVID -19

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Frequency	5	11	14	46	24	100
Percentage	5.0	11.0	14.0	46.0	24.0	100.0

Source: Researchers calculations.

The table 1.9 explains that 70 per cent of the respondents favoured that during COVID -19, they received fake branded products whereas 16 per cent of them disagree and 11 per cent was neutral to the same which is portrayed by the figure 1.9.

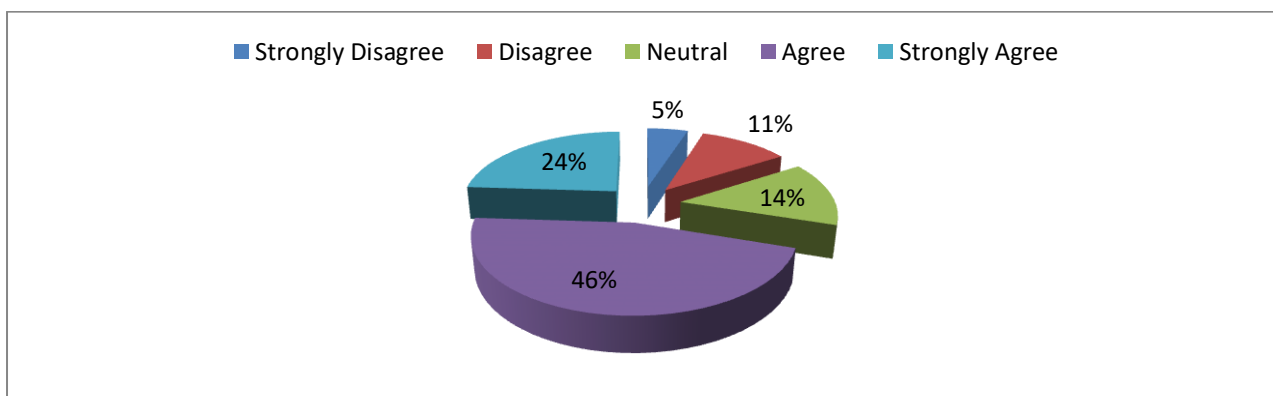


Figure 1.9

Table 1.10
Intricacy in grievances and complaints addressed due to online shopping during COVID -19

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Frequency	13	6	4	40	37	100
Percent	13.0	6.0	4.0	40.0	37.0	100.0

Source: Researchers calculations.

It is elaborated with the help of the table 1.10 that most of the respondents i.e. 77 per cent agreed and 19 per cent respondents disagreed that due to online shopping during COVID -19, they have to face problems as their complaints were not addressed properly whereas a very few respondents (4 per cent) are neutral to this statement. The following figure 1.10 exhibited this statement.

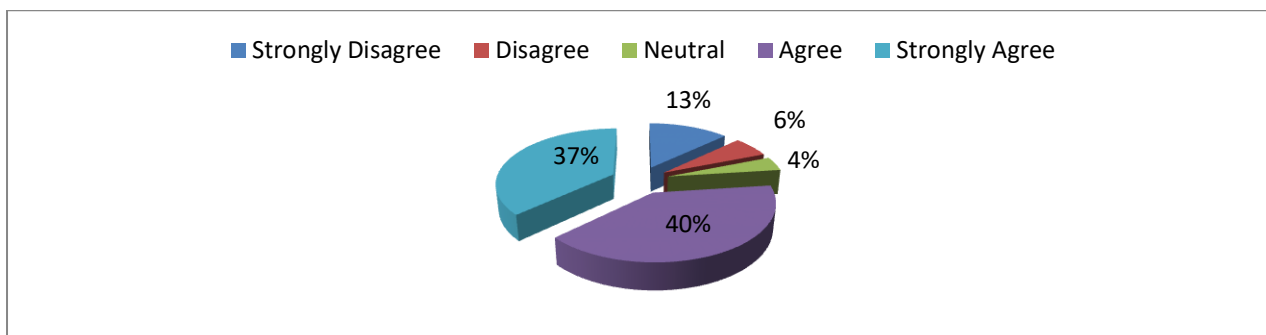


Figure 1.10

Table 1.11
Results of Mann-Whitney U test

Statements	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Frequency of online shopping increases	1016.000	1481.000	-.270	.787
Reasons of online shopping	969.000	3454.000	-.652	.514
Leakage of personal information	1031.000	1496.000	-.156	.876
Late delivery of product	996.500	1461.500	-.428	.669
Chances of fraud	923.000	3408.000	-1.017	.309
No money back guarantee	980.000	1445.000	-.566	.571
Intricacy in exchanging the product	1028.000	1493.000	-.186	.853
Time wasting in product searching	1034.000	3519.000	-.131	.896
Fake branded product	789.500	3274.500	-2.059	.040
Intricacy in grievances and complaints addressed	1021.000	1486.000	-.234	.815

Source: Researchers calculations.

It is shown with the help of the table 1.11 that significant values of all the statements related to perception of consumers regarding online shopping during COVID -19 on the basis of gender were greater than 0.05, hence the null hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no significant difference between the perceptions of the consumers due to online shopping during COVID -19 on the basis of gender.

Table 1.12
Results of Kruskal Wallis H test

	Experience			Age	
	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.	Chi-Square	Asymp. Sig.
Frequency of online shopping increases	1.131	2	.568	.261	.878
Reasons of online shopping	.214	2	.898	.162	.922
Leakage of personal information	1.968	2	.374	.580	.748
Late delivery of product	2.926	2	.232	1.863	.394
Chances of fraud	4.375	2	.112	2.771	.250
No money back guarantee	1.170	2	.557	3.260	.196
Intricacy in exchanging the product	.537	2	.765	.720	.698
Time wasting in product searching	1.601	2	.449	.694	.707
Fake branded product	3.892	2	.143	2.100	.350
Intricacy in grievances and complaints addressed	.507	2	.776	.083	.960

Source: Researchers calculations.

It is elaborated with the help of the table 1.12 that significant values of all the statements related to perception of consumers regarding online shopping during COVID-19 on the basis of age and experience were greater than 0.05, hence the null hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no significant difference between the perceptions of the consumers towards online shopping during COVID -19 on the basis of age and experience.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined the perception of customer regarding online shopping during COVID-19 in Rohtak District. It is analyzed through the study that consumers did online shopping because of time-saving and availability of variety of products but during COVID-19 majority of the respondents felt safety issues, receiving of duplicate products, problems in exchanging the products and delay delivery etc. It is suggested that efforts should be made to bring awareness regarding online payment while buying. The companies and government should take initiatives for marketing and advertising apparatus of online purchasing and complaints of the consumers should be addressed on time and sellers should be authorized by the parent company to avoid fraud transactions and duplicity of the products.

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