Customer's Satisfaction via Online Shopping Environment: The Case of China

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Abstract

The increase in Internet technology popularity due to the advancement of information technology is bound to rise at an unprecedented pace in China. The development of E-commerce has become an important part of people everyday lives in certain sectors of business activities such as online advertising, online shopping, online promotional advisory and service. This study examines critical factors in online shopping that affect customer satisfaction. The philosophy of positivism was used to evaluate the online shopping behaviour in a Chinese context. The philosophy defines a structural method that combines logical deduction with accurate and well-known observation of personal character and behaviour. The data on the level of customer satisfaction collected by E-mail and survey. The results of the validity and reliability test, Pearson's correlation and Multiple Linear Regression analyses suggested that online shopping websites' privacy, delivery system and service quality would improve customer satisfaction in China. The Companies must carefully develop the E-commerce environment in terms of customer behaviour in China, emphasizing the factors that have a significant impact on their online customer satisfaction.

Introduction

The Internet connection is rapidly spread all over the world though there are some restrictions as law enforcing by the jurisdiction authority in every country. The users of www have been multiplying so rapidly that it has become the daily walks of life. Some may use Internet for entertainment, but the incredible spread of Internet is no longer confined to this and all businesses get more opportunity by E-commerce part of Internet. The success of business must depend on the satisfaction of customer Gerbing, D.W. (1988) and Anderson, (2015). So, it is very critical issue in the business success. The brick and mortar and the brick and click companies are tremendously changing. According to Morgan Stanley (2017), online shopping for an Internet user is related to the digital maturity of the user, which, per se, is a function of how long the user has been online (Okeke,2019).

The International self-trade is a trade that focuses on the continuous improvement in science and technology. The E-commerce allows all people to engage in the process of international trading. Furthermore, the research shows that the internet users accelerate and the upgrading business (CNNIC, 2014). Nowadays the rate of E-commerce engagement is higher than before because of the advancement of technology. The Internet users in past years were 46.03% in China and it shares 21.97% in the world. According to (Internetlivestats.com, 2015) shows that total Internet users are about 649 million which increased 4% in 2013. It is expected that the Internet users will be increasing in the future and in the year 2016 and 2017 will be around 700 million (China Internet Watch, 2014).

The survey shows that the Internet users in China are higher than the Internet users in USA and Russia. In the online environment, users expect that the websites should be simple, easy to understand and free of risk (Mathewson and Moran 2016). Figure 1 shows the Internet users in China are 649 million, USA are 280 million, Russia is 84 million which is different from other countries. It demonstrates that China is behind other countries, such as Russia. It is therefore very necessary for China to fill the gap. Although China is facing enormous Internet users, it must focus on customer satisfaction in order to increase the rate more than in other countries.
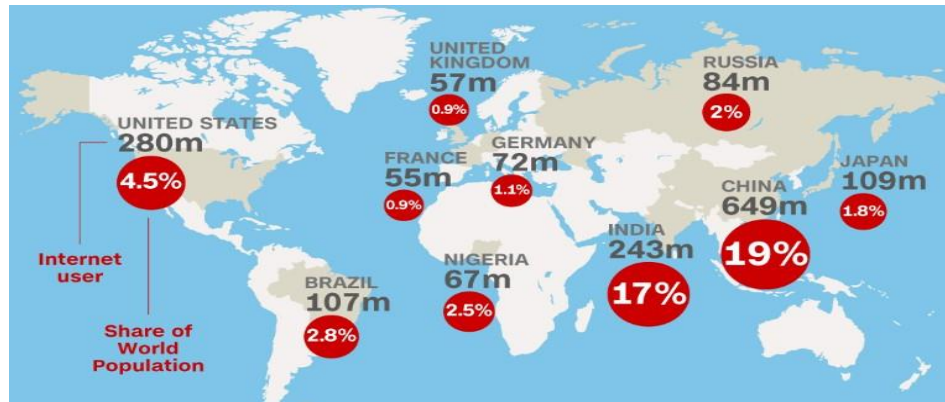
Figure 1. The Internet Usage Pattern in 2015

This research focuses on the customer satisfaction in online shopping in China. It includes the factors that influence the customer satisfaction in online shopping over studies by King (2006) and Malhotra (2013). The objective of this study is the analyzing the influence of E-Commerce on customer's satisfaction and this will help the practitioners to investigate the issues in the customer satisfaction in China.

Literature Review

E-commerce is the process by which the products of companies are sold online. Today, Internet is becoming more popular due to the development of information technology and its profound application in business. E-commerce remains at an unparalleled pace and the focus of the Internet in commerce is more important than ever. The information and communication technological progress which initiated mainly in America but growing rapidly in emerging economies such as China. The E-commerce offers extreme opportunities in businesses by which customer satisfaction and customer loyalty could be secured and remained. Therefore, many companies carefully analyse the E-commerce environment in terms of customer behaviour, to understand the factors that have a significant impact on customer satisfaction (Hong et. al, 2019).

According to Hsieh et al., (2013) stated that internet is influencing people's daily life. People's daily activities have gradually shifted from physical conditions to virtual environment. It is clear that the online shopping industry is growing rapidly throughout the world, especially in China, particularly in the late five years. But the word online shopping is a common phenomenon in the 21st century. Online shopping means simply buying from a company or a seller via virtual media and leaving home. In addition, online shopping can be called an E-transaction. This means that anyone can send orders to the company by using Internet and then receive the product from the company in a very short time (Mohammed, A. 2014; Khairudin, & Amin, 2019).

Internet is available throughout the world in this modern age. People throughout the world are now moving faster with the Internet. Modern consumers are getting more and more tedious, they want to be able to shop anywhere, at any time and from the place of their choice. They demand

personalized shopping journeys to suit their needs as they move around and across numerous channels in the online and offline paths (Deloitte, 2015). Internet is a vast medium of connecting people with other part of the world with a single click. By Internet anyone is able to buy product without leaving his seat and without time limitation. Internet technology and its applications play an important role in accelerating the power technology which consumers are experiencing better engagement with products and services (Jan and Ammari, 2016; Royo-Vela and Hünermund, 2016; Rita et al.,2019).

In addition, Online shopping represents the information of products and services of an industry in China as well as other part of the world. Within a very short time, it will be the world's leading industry. For example, Amazon is a successful online industry in United Stated which has huge effect in people's life (Wang, 2017). Certainly, the more users connect to the Internet, the more likely they would be to transact online. According to Sushma (2017), an enormous increase in online shopping is expected by 2020, with half the online shopping population.

The online shopping system also provides to convenience customers and suppliers. Based on Chaing and Dholakia (2014) carried out a study in which they examined the purpose of customers to purchase goods online for their shopping though online shopping was not like present format. Sometimes consumers take product's snapshots, scan product bar codes and access online search engines like Google, to get additional information or compare prices (Bachrach et al., 2016). Because of the many competitors who offer online shopping to customers, these businesses often offer discounts and special discount to get customers' attentions. This will entail integrating the strong aspects of in-store experience (measurements, touch-and-feel, guided shopping, etc.) with those of online channel (comparison shopping, ordering, delivery, etc.) (Sopadjieva, Dholakia, and Benjamin, 2017). Rajah (2018) in doctoral dissertation discussed the Customer Satisfaction towards Online Shopping.

In the South African's MasterCard survey on online shopping, 65 percent of respondents reported that promotional offers, discounts or free gifts are important when choosing an online retailer (Goldstuck, 2013). In Malaysia, according to (Muhammad et. al, 2018), sales promotion explains a medium percent of the variation in online impulse buying. Sales promotion has a medium explanatory power to predict online impulse buying which explains 17.4% of the variance. Online shopping also allows people from anywhere in the world to do online shopping. Iyer and Eastmen (2014) pointed that the population of senior who are more literate, more knowledgeable and who are more aware of the technology and those who have a positive behaviour towards online shopping and internet are more into online shopping. In case of China, Alibaba's immense growth in the Chinese market was mainly driven by an increase in the income levels of consumers during the manufacturing boom in the economy (Nair, 2017). Aslam et al. (2019) underlined the Factors Influencing Consumers' Trust and Loyalty in E-commerce.

Consumers still fear prepaid orders, and the preferred method of placing orders online is cash on delivery (Sahil, 2016). Online marketer grabs this opportunity to be the leader in business-to-business transaction along with the business to Consumer transaction. At the end of 2017, online

retail was industry (Forrester Research, 2018). However, 45% of people in China make purchase of luxury goods online (Team, 2015) and China is moving forward with this target. Fast moving consumer goods, non-food grocery goods, household goods, infants' formula and personal care products are sold in online market. Online retail companies focus on increasing the perceived usefulness of online shopping experience for the e-shoppers. According to Akamai Report (2017), online Web performance is important for the online retail companies to provide seamless and reliable web experience to their customers. The growing middle-class people are more encouraged to make frequent online purchase. China hopes to fulfil their target up to 70% online shopping by 2020 (Chen, Yan and Fan, 2015).

Factors Affecting Online Shopping

Online shopping becomes relevant in the last decade. The business online proves that they are benefiting customers. Main factors of online shopping as following:

1. Online Shopping in China

The fundamental points for E-business suggest a quick development. These markers incorporate number of Internet clients, PCs and in addition phone lines and cell supporters. As China is an expansive nation with a low populace thickness, appropriation and conveyance issues are widespread (Gibbs, 2002 and Akram, U. et al., 2017; Khairudin, & Amin, 2019). This is because of immature foundation in the focal and western inward areas. Moreover, China has been accomplishing heavenly development around there because of solid backing from the administration. With the start of E-business in China, retail storeowners have awesome numerous choices to offer their items, which are given by producers, merchants, and the suppliers through global exchange. It offers the purchasers various decisions to choose from extensive variety of E-business item.

The expense of production has lessened extraordinarily, and wage has expanded in global exchange. On the other hand, the E-business market in China is still in its early stage. Traders in China are receiving E-business but have yet connected to E-trade as their central channel to develop their businesses. Customers for the most part confine themselves to vast organizations or brands which represents under 1% of the aggregate E-trade market in China. In addition, because of globalization the degree to which China's worldwide exchange and ventures bears an effect is wide. It is because of globalization that the worldwide business sector has an immediate way to deal online with, to gain present day innovation and hence decrease the issues of dispersion and shorten inside coordination costs.

2. Convenient

Online shopping is much more convenient than offline shopping. Instead of taking out your vehicle and visit shop to shop you can just sit at home and do the shopping and also save lots of time. Online shopping makes things more convenient. We can have a lot of choice over there in

any kind of material that want to deal with online shopping. Besides, online shopping gives many choices to choose the things which we are looking. The growth of online shopping and advertising by the smart phones are ruling all over the world by revealing all its features on internet and attract the people to buy more and more for elders, youngers and even for children (Zandi et al., 2018).

3. Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is the main element in business and the positive feedback of a customer is about a product or service. So, this means how perfectly the product or service can meet the expectations of the customers over the competitors. In the current world the customer service has come as an important aspect in doing business. It is not matter whether it is online or offline business. Customer satisfaction stands at the top of the mind of the management and all the management of all the companies are trying their level best to serve the customer with the best priority of the satisfaction.

So, the importance of the customer satisfaction is more and more significant than any other components. Many companies have built separate CRM (Customer Relationship Management) division to maintain the relationship with the customer to know either their customers are happy with online shopping or not. Thus, this customer satisfaction becomes an important issue for many researchers. Nowadays the online business competition becomes the customer satisfaction competition for many competitors.

4. E-Satisfaction

The satisfaction literature as a whole has been criticized for its inconsistent use of consumer satisfaction definitions (Giese and Cote, 2000 and Lim, Y. J. et al., 2016). Organizations can quantify this worth by taking a gander at consumer loyalty, and variables that influence this fulfilment are client need, esteem and cost. Organizations follow the quick advancement of innovation as an opportunity to accomplish consumer loyalty and devotion much simpler and with lower expenses. The E-commerce adoption model embodies the antecedents and consequents of E-satisfaction that determine such other important concepts in E-commerce as information and system satisfaction (Delone and McLean, 2003 and Hu, M., Rabinovich, E., and Hou, H. (2015) intention to purchase online (Venkatesh, et al., 2003 and Rajesh Iyer and Jacqueline, Eastman 2014).

5. Pricing

Online shopping gets an inherent advantage in pricing which they can pass their price directly to customer and generally offer a lower price to customer than offline market. Even when shipping charges are included with lower costs. Hence, determines the level of online shopping. Lower the price- higher the mood to demand, higher the price lowers the demand. So, buying and selling both are simultaneously affected by the price of product.

6. Service Quality

Electronic service quality (E-SQ) is important in influencing customer evaluations and judgments regarding online transaction and the quality of e-service delivery in the virtual marketplace. The E-SQ is highly concerned due to it highly related with the success of an internet-based company such as online shopping in Business-to-Customer. Online shopping in B2C involves online shoppers accessing the online vendor's websites to purchase a product; therefore, the extent to which their needs are fulfilled is important. The transactions between online shoppers and online retailers are conducted through websites and the smooth transactions are achieved by high level of E-SQ. Website's quality plays a key role in determining the web experience of the customers. In other words, a website is seen as one of the online retailer's instruments for delivering quality of electronic services to online shoppers. Service quality is something that can be offered by the seller to the customers in order to make the customers satisfied.

7. Website Design

A good-looking website is another crucial factor for the customer satisfaction in the context of the online shopping. When any customer visits the website, he or she may want to see a good-looking website design. Cause, a beautiful website can attract a significant number of customers to the online shopping. In fact, not only Chinese people, but also from around the world seek the website should be designed so good that he or she can know each and well details of the products on the website. It means that website should provide all details information to make customers clear all about the products.

8. Privacy of Customer Information

As a result, security has become one of the most important reasons that cause consumers to hesitate or fear using e-purchase and it has played a dominant role in influencing their attitude towards online shopping. Smith et al. (1996) and Clemes, M. D., Gan, C., & Zhang, J. (2014), identified four factors of online privacy: unauthorized secondary use of personal information, improper access of digitally stored personal information, collection of personal information, and errors in collected personal information. It considered online privacy concerns to include anonymity, intrusion, surveillance, and autonomy. In sum, there are many factors that are hard to control in protecting consumer's privacy in the virtual environment. Thus, in comparing with traditional offline privacy, online privacy is more difficult to protect. That is the reason why some consumers still refuse to accept online shopping. "Security" perception and privacy "assurance" with Internet shopping demonstrates to have the biggest impact on e-satisfaction. Most researchers also agree that the security problems (i.e. personal data transmission and payments with credit cards) are the major risks affecting online transactions, acting as the principal barriers to electronic commerce. To reconcile the risk of shopping on line, it should

offer reward in the form of cash backs, points or shopping rewards on purchases and payments (Zandi et al., 2019).

9. Delivery Time

The product ordered by the customer in online shopping takes some days to deliver the product to the customers, this is a major factor which affects the online shopping. People want a good delivery time; they prefer to get a product in a short time of duration. Duration is the second major factor affecting the demand of product. However, fast delivery service makes customers satisfy.

Theoretical Framework

The research framework for this study involves independent variables of customer expectations of product price, website design, payment of the online business and product quality. The customer satisfaction over the online shopping in China is the dependent variable.
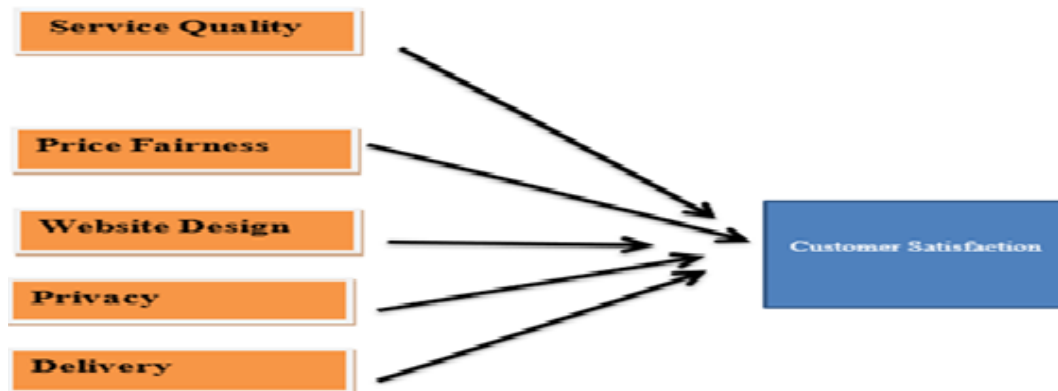

Figure 2. Research Framework for Online Shopping in China

The contribution of this study analysing the factor effects as service quality, price fairness, website design, privacy and delivery together on customer satisfaction for online Shopping in China. So, it's a contribution to the marketing literature and practice for online Shopping in China.

Methdology

The Philosophy of the Research

The positivism philosophy has been applied to evaluate the online shopping behaviour in the Chinese context. The data for analysing the customer behaviour had been collected through email, questionnaires and survey methods (Wang, O., and Somogyi, S. 2018). The Positivism is the structural method, which is the combination of logical deduction with precise well-known observation of the personal behaviour. The Positivism is useful method for uncovering the truth and make able for controlling and predicting. The important aspects of this philosophy are

measurement, tools and procedure because the reality is constant. The Realism demonstrates the objectivity and self-interest of nature. The research method of this study is empirical analysis. The regression method is used to express the relationship between variables, so the SPSS software and Multi Regression was used.

Population and Unit of Analysis

Our population was all over people in China who had access to online shopping. The sample size was derived from this population.

Sample Method

The Simple Random Sampling has been used in this study by respondents with experience in E-shopping in China.

Primary Data Collection Method

The technique is quantitative in nature and we determined the critical factors affecting the satisfaction of customer in online shopping. In order to collect valid data, the collection of data should be confined in China. We would post the questionnaire in the website to invite the respondents join the survey. The online shopping customers would notice to attend the survey accordingly.

Results

Gender

The respondents of the research are both male and female showing that both male and female are involved in online shopping and this involvement can be both direct and indirect. The below table 1 shows the participation in numbers:

Table 1. Gender Frequency

Gender	Frequency
Male	130
Female	145

Income Level

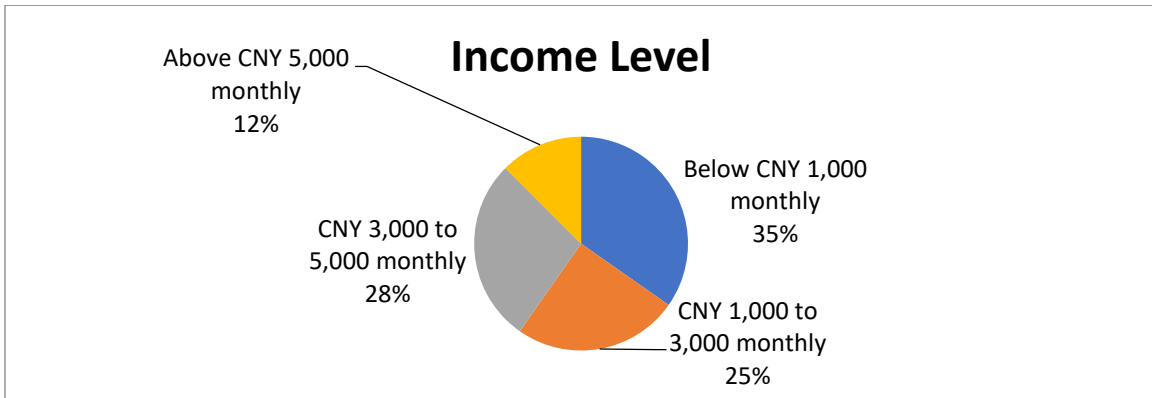Income level shows the earning of respondents their purchasing power as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Pie Chart of Income Level Frequency

It is evident from the frequency table and the pie chart that most of the population earned below CNY 1000 who were high school graduates while the others earned more were the teachers.

Service Quality

In this study, the analysis of SQ1 includes "most of the Chinese online marketing has a good service quality", SQ2 as "I will prefer the online company which has better service quality", SQ3 given the statement as "better service quality increase the satisfaction level" and SQ4 stating "Service quality of a particular online company ensure us a happy shopping". The range of the mean and mode in every section remained from 5.053, 5.36, 5 to 6, and 1.22 to 1.40. It indicated that Service Quality has strong effect over the customer satisfaction of online shopping in China as presented in figure 4.
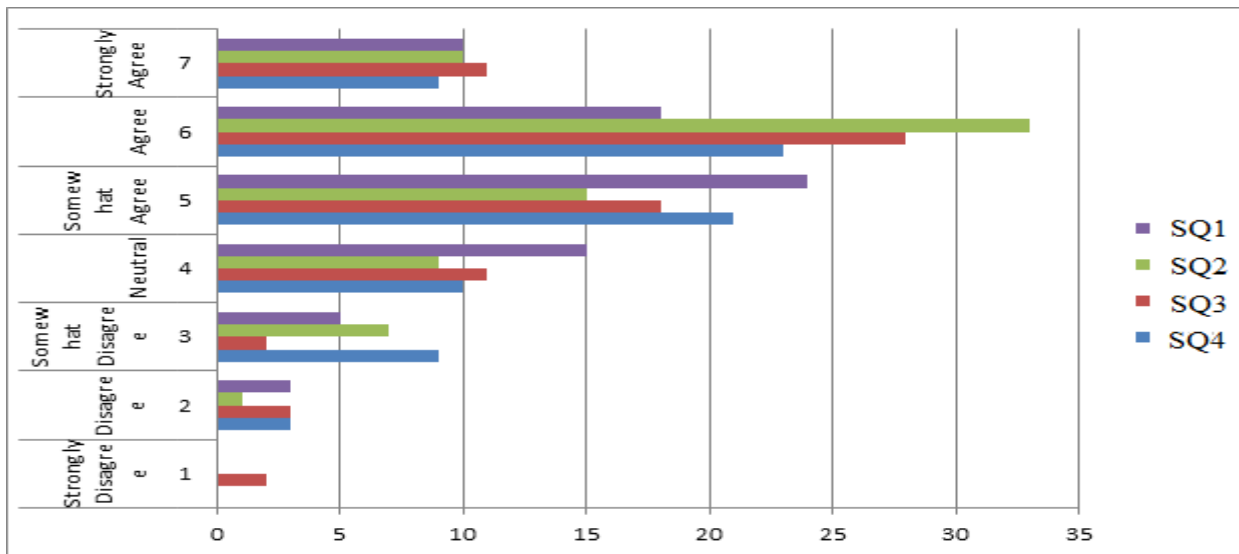

Figure 4. Response Frequency of Service Quality

Privacy of Customer Information

The P1 analysis represented that "most of the Chinese online marketing had a good Privacy for the customers", P2 stated that "I will prefer the online company which has better Privacy system" and P3 was as "Better Privacy system increase the satisfaction level". The range of mean and SD in every section remained from 5 to 5.2, and 1.3 to 1.5, the mode remains same in each section and it was 6%. It indicated that privacy had strong effect over the customer satisfaction of online shopping in China (figure 5).
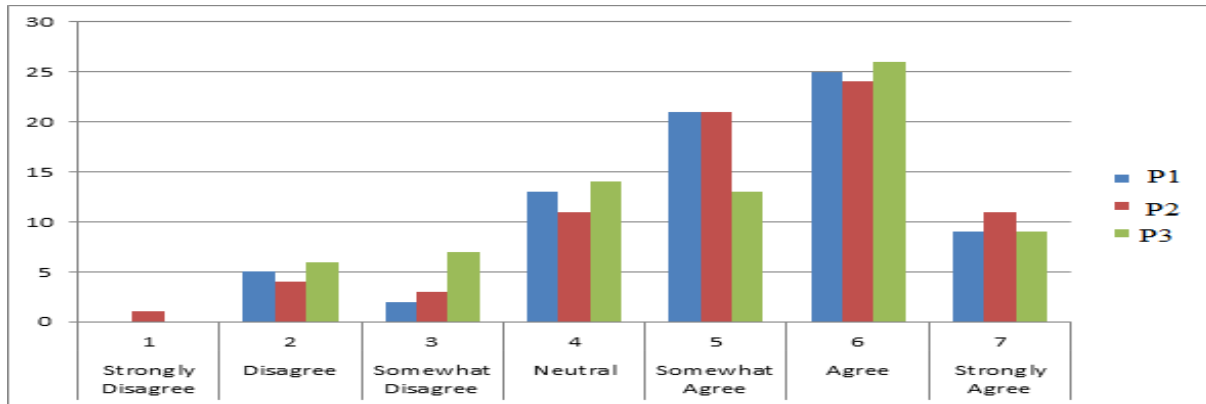
Figure 5. Level of Privacy

Delivery

The research included the analysis of D1 stating "Most of the Chinese online marketing had a good delivery system", the D2 stating "I will prefer the online company which has better delivery system", D3 was as "Better delivery system increase the satisfaction level" and D4 asked respondents' opinions on "delivery system of a particular online company ensures us a happy shopping". The range of mean and SD in every section remained from 4.92 to 5.04, and 1.14 to 1.42 and the mode remained same in each section and it is 5. It indicated that delivery has strong effect over the customer satisfaction of online shopping in China (figure 6).
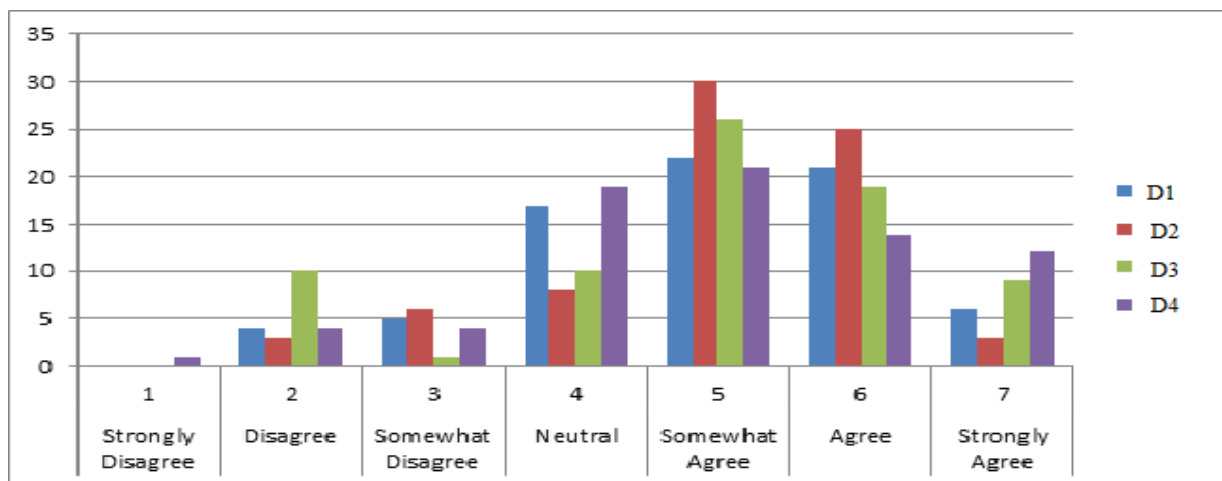
Figure 6. Level of Delivery

Website Design

The analysis of Website Design includes WD1 section as "most of the Chinese online marketing had a good website design", WD2 stating as "I will prefer the online company which has an ease of use on the website", WD3 given as "Better and user-friendly web design increase the satisfaction level" and WD4 represented as "Better and user-friendly web design of a particular online company ensure us a happy shopping. The range of mean, mode and SD in every section remain from 4.63 to 5.01, 5 to 6 and 1.28 to 1.46. It indicated that Website Design had strong effect over the customer satisfaction of online shopping in China., as shown in figure 7.
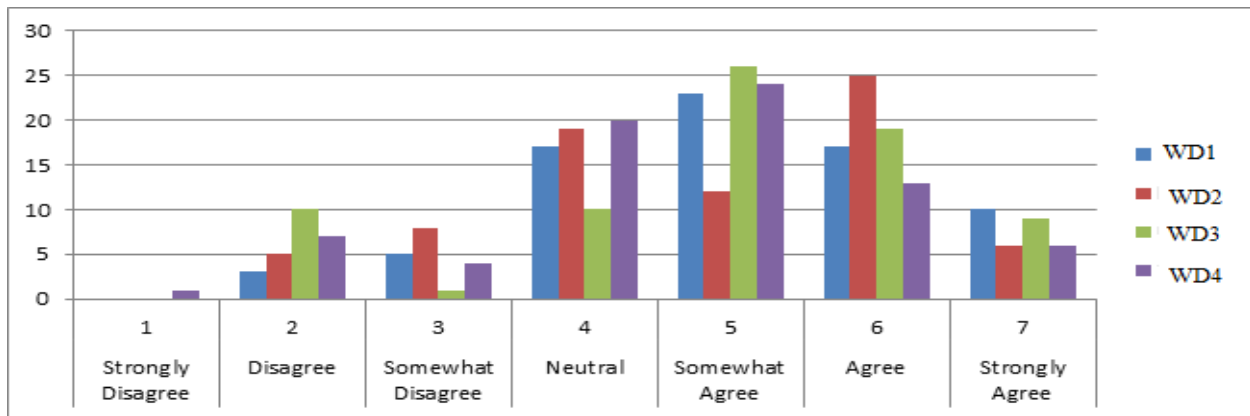

Figure 7. Frequency of Website Design

Customer Satisfaction

The CS1 section analysis as "I Am satisfied with the service quality of Chinese online companies", CS2 "the privacy and safety system give us satisfaction of safe shopping", CS3 stated "prompt and good delivery system add a dimension in the customer satisfaction level" and CS4 stated "I am satisfied with the online shopping in China". The range of mean, mode and SD in every section remain from 5.04 to 5.24, 5 to 6 and 1.33 to 1.59. It indicated that privacy, delivery, service quality and web design had greater influence over the customer satisfaction of online shopping in China (figure 8).
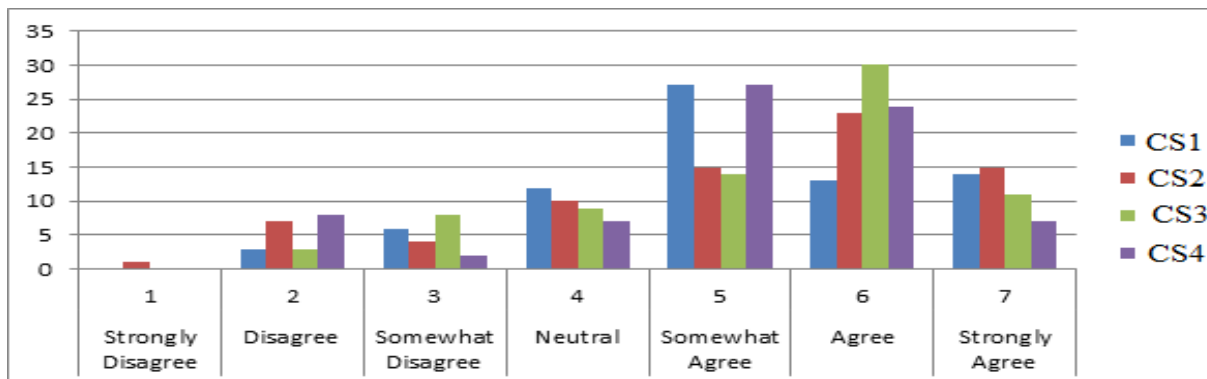

Figure 8. Frequency of Customer Satisfaction

Correlations Analysis

The coefficient table showed the correlation rate among the service quality and Privacy that was 0.782 and 0.708 with delivery. The correlation rate between customer satisfaction and delivery system was 0.652 and with privacy 0.649. All the relations among the variables were positive and it indicated that independent variables had positive strong effect over the dependent variable.

Table 2. Correlations Analysis

		SQ	P	D	WD	CS
SQ	Pearson Correlation	1.000	0.782	0.708	0.654	0.458
P	Pearson Correlation	0.782	1.000	0.762	0.649	0.548
D	Pearson Correlation	0.708	0.762	1.000	0.742	0.652
WD	Pearson Correlation	0.654	0.649	0.742	1.000	0.600
CS	Pearson Correlation	0.458	0.548	0.652	0.600	1.000
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

Regression Analysis

The regression value was 0.562183 that it indicated the independent variable of online shopping variable had moderate influence by 56.2183% over customer satisfaction as the dependent variable (Table 3).

Table 3. Model Summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.768276	0.590249	0.562183	0.672026
a. Predictors: (Constant), SQ, P, D, WD				

Based on the results as represented in table 4, the privacy and service quality had the greatest positive effect on the customer satisfaction with Sig. 0.06 and 0.17 accordingly but web design had negative effect on consumer satisfaction with beta of -0.01.

Table 4. Coefficient

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
			Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.29	0.52		0.56	0.58
	SQ	0.18	0.13	0.18	1.39	0.17
	P	0.24	0.13	0.27	1.93	0.06
	D	0.13	0.15	0.12	0.85	0.40
	WD	-0.01	0.13	-0.01	-0.04	0.97
a. Dependent Variable: CS						

Reliability Test

The Cronbach's alpha coeffecient value for Customer Satisfactionas was 0.747, Service Quality 0.823, Price fairness 0.822, Web design 0.799, Privacy of Customer Information 0. 812, Delivery of product 0.811. This showed the internal consistancy all of the IV and DV variables were greater than 0.7, so the varibles are internally consistant.

Conclusion

The results of this study suggested that online shopping dimensions of website privacy, delivery system and service quality would improve customer satisfaction in China. The Companies must carefully develop the E-commerce environment in respect to the customer behaviour by emphasizing the factors which carry significant impact on their online customer satisfaction (Nik Khadijah et al., 2018).

Customers take into account product rate, comfort and product know-how and return policy as predominant benefits for patron re-purchase intention in on-line shopping. There is so much risk in shopping from E-retailers whose need to be minimized for customer repurchase intention. Online store managers should offer consumers considerable choices and supply with competitive product prices. In our survey, Chinese buyers were extremely sensitive to the rate and pricing. The managers of E-store should influence buyers through social media with advertising and promotions for discounts. This study differs from the other studies, analyzed the factor effects as service quality, price fairness, website design, privacy and delivery together on customer satisfaction for online Shopping in China. This can help the literature of customer satisfaction.

Comfort is very important, especially for new buyers to buy a product online. This should be in a short time with quick process. The rapid supply plays an important role in holding up the pride of the Chinese customers. In order to satisfy customers in today's aggressive e-commerce, online shops must keep a close eye on timely delivery and the service provider. Delayed supply and a lack of knowledge on the purchasers' considerations and expectations will justify dissatisfaction with consumers. According to Nik Khadijah et al., (2018) the factors that influence customer repurchase intention towards e-commerce are more complicated and different from the factors towards traditional commerce.

Based on this finding, companies should take into account the factors like service quality, price fairness, website design, privacy and delivery to improve the customer satisfaction in online Shopping. The limitation of this study is the limitation of methodology and proxy of variables. Macroeconomic factors on the customer satisfaction are the possible future research avenues. Consumers influenced by the good promotion provided by the online retail store, they will have the intention to buy impulsively (Muhammad et.al, 2018).

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no potential conflict of interest regarding the publication of this work. In addition, the ethical issues including plagiarism, informed consent, misconduct, data fabrication and, or falsification, double publication and, or submission, and redundancy have been completely witnessed by the authors.

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