

# A qualitative study on the reasons for online product return in India

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**Abstract** - The latest development in the Internet of things and peoples tendency to buy things online, several players started online retailing and attracts customers by providing several offers. At the same time they face tremendous risk in managing the products returns and that cutting the profit by huge level. Though the online providers several measures in reduce the returns still it is not clear to capture the mindset of the millennial. A purposive sampling is adopted to capture the reasons for online return from twenty nine respondents and uni-variate and bi-variate analysis was done and this study provides some in sight to reduce the online returns.

**Key words:** online, return, products, qualitative, quality.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years due to the advancement in the Internet of things there is a tremendous increase in the purchase of almost all items through online. Though the online companies managed to send their products to any part of the country by their own logistics or by some other logistics agencies, managing return of the products is still a daunting task for the companies who operate online. The online retailing industry has become highly popular among the Z generation with a very short span of time. As per Acharaya(2016) the reasons for popularity and growth are attractive offer, advertisements, flexible services, low delivery time, huge product ranges, easy payment system such as cash on delivery. Shaikh(2017) in his article has stressed on online shopping as an emerging new platform for shopping purpose, as per author buyers are gradually changing their shopping habits and moving towards online mode especially during festive seasons because of heavy discount, promotional offer, cash back offer and new experience of shopping. Hence, an attempt is made in this study to capture the main reasons for return while purchasing online among the millennial in the present context in the country.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies try to capture the behavior of the customers who return the products they purchased through online. Customers return behavior were classified into two broad categories – legitimate return behavior and opportunistic return behaviour (Pei, 2018). Compared to brick and mortar stores online retailers face much problem and their profits shrink because of online return. Several online retailers have their own return policy while trying to influence the customers for buying products from their platform it is equally important for them to manage the online returns also. Thirty percent of all online orders end

up being returned, as against just 8.89% of brick and mortar sales (Rudolph, 2016),

Glanfranco Walsh( 2017) found in his study that product return negatively affect customer satisfaction, customer trust and word-of-mouth. Product returns can detrimentally affect relationship with customers. Dissatisfaction with a product results in an emotional dissonance that is positively related to product return. The two primary reasons for return are the expectation of the customer not being met and the customer finding a better product or price (Powers 2015)

Raman, (2014) in his study has found, convenience to shop online to be the most important factor for the female shopper who prefer online while risk of doing transactions online and reliability is the factors which affect online shopping in India. Situational factors are also involved in online clothing buying in the form of convenience, economy of time and absence of seller intervention as per Marcu, (2017). Many consumers who search for different online shops abandon their purchase intention or may not continue to use online shops due to one reason or other ( Omotayo, 2018). Consumers tend to use online information sources, which appear to be more important than offline channels to them due to the perceived easy availability of goods and services, convenience, information, available services, and time and cost efficiency (Alatawy, 2018).

### Objective

The objective of the present study is to identify the reasons for the product return that were purchased through online.

## III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The data for this study were collected from twenty nine respondents those who are pursuing post graduate and living in Bangalore . The respondents were in the age group of 20 – 29 years and were selected through a purposive

sampling. A detailed questionnaire was prepared to collect the data from these respondents and they were asked about the recent (two months) purchase of products to a maximum of three products in online and any return, reason for the return were collected. Statistical package for social science (SPSS) were used to analyse the data and the results were presented in terms of uni-variate and bi-variate analysis.

#### IV. RESULTS

The table 1 gives the demographic details about the study population. From the study it is found that sixty six percent of the respondents were less than twenty two years old and the remaining thirty five percent were more than twenty three years old. Fifty nine percent of the respondents were male and the remaining forty one percent were female. Sixty two percent of the respondents preferred online payment while the remaining thirty eight preferred cash on delivery. Forty one percent of the respondent returned the product while the remaining fifty nine percent had not returned the product.

Table 1. Percentage distribution of the respondents by demographic and other variables.

Variables	percentage
<b>Age</b>	
Less than 22 years	65.5
More than 23 years	34.5
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	58.6
Female	41.4
<b>Online pay</b>	
Yes	62.1
No	37.9
<b>Cash On delivery</b>	
Yes	34.5
No	65.5
<b>Products returned</b>	
Yes	41.4
No	58.6
Total	29

Source: as per data collected by the researcher

##### Bivariate Analysis

The table No 2 indicates that respondents with higher age (more than 23 years) returned the products they purchased online (60%) compared to those less than 22 years. Female respondent tend to returned the products more (50%) compared to male counterparts (35.3%). Those who pay online tend to return low (28%) compared to those who had not pay online (64%).

Those who opted for online products through cash on delivery returned more (70%) compared to those who don't opted for cash on delivery (26.3%) and is statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ).

Table 2 :Percentage distribution of demographic and other variables by products returned online.

Variables	Online return	
	Yes	No
<b>Age</b>		
Less than 22 years	31.6	68.4
More than 23 years	60.0	40.0
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	35.3	64.7
Female	50.0	50.0
<b>Online pay</b>		
Yes	27.8	72.2
No	63.6	36.4
<b>Cash On delivery*</b>		
Yes	70.0	30.0
No	26.3	73.7

Source: as per data collected by the researcher

\* $p < .05$

While analyzing the main reason for online return of various items, the study reveals that for apparel size and quality were the main reason for returning the items, and for other items only quality was the main reason to return the product.

#### V. CONCLUSION

The study reveals that those who prefer cash on delivery tend to return the product more and customers in the young age group and female customers tend to return more than the other. These customers may be purchasing more apparel and size and quality were the more predominant issues for returning the product they purchased through online.

So the online merchants will have to focus on these things like giving a proper size fit and describe the quality of the products will also reduce in the return of items.

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