E- Customer Satisfaction in Online Purchase of Laptops: A Thematic Analysis Approach

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Abstract

Purpose: Online purchasing and selling, technology-driven corporate processes, information transmission, and customer service are the four main focuses of e-commerce leading to online customer satisfaction.

Objectives: The goals of the current study involve finding correlation patterns in consumer buying preferences in branded laptops (HP, Dell, Asus & Lenovo) assess the expectations of the buyers from the online shopping giant like Amazon, understand the sentiments of buyers' feedback & analysing the customer satisfaction through their feedback with reference to the hybrid working arrangement across corporate sectors post pandemic.

Methodology: 80 online customer reviews of the branded laptops were collected through secondary research in the form of texts from Amazon India applying deductive method of research within a study period of June 2023 through January 2024. Thematic Analysis was applied using tools like Code Co-Occurrence Analysis, Code–Document Analysis, Sentiment Analysis, Word Cloud & Semantic Network through Atlas.ti V23 software.

Key Findings: The Quality, Battery life and Reliability of the product are the three key factors in determining the online customer satisfaction through when purchased from E-Commerce giant, Amazon India. Customer Experience, Satisfaction & Product features are the key themes of Online customer satisfaction.

Implications: Online merchants in luring in fresh customers for online shopping and inspiring the generated lead customers into loyal customers. They can raise customer satisfaction after a transaction and subsequently attract more online shoppers through enormous measures by addressing the complaints expressed by the customers.

Key Words: Hybrid Working, Online Customer Satisfaction, Online Shopping, Customer Experience, Thematic Analysis

1. INTRODUCTION

Online shopping refers to the process of purchasing goods or services over the internet. It is a convenient and efficient way to buy products from the comfort of your home or workplace, without having to physically visit a store. Online shopping websites and marketplaces offer a wide range of products, from everyday items to luxury goods, and often provide detailed product information, customer reviews, and other tools to help you make informed buying decisions. Payment can be made using credit cards, PayPal, or other secure methods. Products can be shipped directly to your doorstep, or sometimes picked up in-store (Vasic *et.al.,* 2019).

E-commerce (electronic commerce) refers to the buying and selling of goods and services, or the transmitting of funds or data, over the internet. It encompasses all online transactions, allowing businesses to reach a global customer base, provides a more efficient and cost-effective way to conduct transactions, and offers customers the convenience of shopping from their homes or workplaces. Key components of e-commerce include a website, shopping

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cart, payment processing system, and a secure transaction mechanism to protect customer data (Taher G, 2021).

A hybrid mode of work arrangement is a combination of remote (or remote) work and on-site work. This type of work arrangement gives employees the flexibility to work from home or another location outside of the office, while also requiring them to attend in-person meetings or work on-site as needed. It allows for a balance between work-life flexibility and the need for in-person collaboration and face-to-face communication (Alexander *et.al.,* 2021). ***RQ:*** Examine the key themes of online customer satisfaction in purchasing Laptops from Amazon during hybrid working arrangement among the e-commerce consumers?

Customers use their own devices to browse an online store, place orders, and pay for goods and services. A growing trend in ecommerce is attributed to the quick development of digital technology, increased digital education, popularity of mobile apps, and rising use of mobile devices and the internet (Ali BJ, 2020). The goals of the content analysis involve (a) Finding thematic patterns in consumer buying preferences in branded laptops (b) Assess the experiences of the buyers from the online shopping giant like Amazon. (c) Understand the sentiments of buyers' feedback. (d) Analysing the online customer satisfaction through their feedback.

Qualitative research comprises of collecting and analysing non-numerical data in the form of text, images, videos, transcripts of interview questions and many more in understanding concepts, opinions, or experiences that can be applied to gather in-depth insights into a research problem or to generate new ideas for research. A qualitative systematic review gathers research on a subject, searching methodically for research evidence from primary qualitative studies and synthesising the results. Qualitative data can take any form of texts, videos, images, photos, and audio. The common process involved in qualitative data analysis includes preparation & organization of data, review & exploration of data, developing data coding system, assigning codes to data, and lastly identification of recurring themes (Busetto *et.al.,* 2020).

1.1 Online Shopping

Online shopping has become increasingly popular in recent years due to its convenience, flexibility, and wide range of products available. Online shoppers can easily compare prices and product features, read customer reviews, and make purchases 24/7 from the comfort of their own homes. Online shopping can also offer savings, such as lower prices and reduced shipping costs, compared to traditional brick-and-mortar stores. However, there are also potential drawbacks to online shopping, such as the risk of fraud, the inability to physically inspect products before purchasing, and the possibility of shipping delays or damages. Overall, online shopping offers consumers a convenient and efficient way to purchase products and services, but it is important to be aware of the potential risks and to take steps to protect personal information and ensure a positive shopping experience (Hsieh *et.al.,* 2018).

The important factors from the Technology Acceptance Model such as perceived usefulness (PU) and ease of use (PEOU) as well as other variables theoretically related to digital engagement such as mistrust, perceived risk (PR), perceived enjoyment (PE), and legal

framework (LF) accounted for variation in online shopping intentions in Pakistan, with a focus on affiliates of a major metropolitan university. All six independent factors PU, PEOU, PR, PE, mistrust, and LF in the model independently predicted whether a consumer would shop online, supporting the theoretical model by illuminating the relationship's anticipated slant (Akhlaq & Ahmed, 2015).

1.2 Online Customer Experience

The online customer experience refers to the overall impression and interaction that a customer has with a company's website, products, and services through the internet. It encompasses various touchpoints, such as website design, navigation, product information, customer service, and the checkout process. A positive online customer experience can lead to increased customer satisfaction, loyalty, and repeat business, while a negative experience can result in decreased customer satisfaction and decreased sales. Companies strive to enhance the online customer experience by using various techniques, such as user-friendly website design, detailed product information, personalized recommendations, efficient checkout processes, and accessible customer service. It is important for companies to regularly assess and improve their online customer experience to ensure that it meets the needs and expectations of their customers (Lemon et.al., 2016).

The widespread use of mobile devices and social media, together with recent advancements in E-Commerce and M-Commerce technology, have made it possible for businesses to improve customers' buying experiences and their contact with brands whenever and wherever they choose. Globally, a sizeable amount of potential money is lost as a result of bad online consumer experiences, which prevents e-commerce from growing to its full potential. Customers should be "hooked" by e-commerce enterprises through offering engaging online experiences. One of the most crucial and competitive outcome variables for modern businesses is the customer's experience (Bilgihan et.al., 2016).

The method of using data from an online survey of both frequent and infrequent online shoppers was investigated in the study, which focused on the rapidly growing sector of online customer experience (OCE). In order to understand how antecedents for affective and cognitive experience states influence outcomes like online shopping satisfaction and repurchase intentions, the study looks at a model of antecedents for these states. The model also looks at the connection between perceived risk, trust, satisfaction, and repurchase intentions. The study potentially provides a deeper knowledge of OCE by providing information on two important shopper groups in e-retailing. The OCE regions are highlighted in the research along with how they affect managers' ongoing use of the online channel (Martin et.al., 2015).

Attention was paid to investigate how customer experience (such as flow and perceived privacy risk) and customer loyalty are impacted by two elements of service integration in omnichannel shopping, namely service consistency and service transparency. To support these correlations, hyperbolic discounting theory and flow theory are both used. A 786-useful response online survey was used to get the data. Our data show that only the influence of service transparency on flow is significant, but service consistency has a direct and significant impact on flow and perceived risk (Quach et.al., 2022).

1.3 Digital Consumer Behaviour

Digital consumer behaviour refers to the ways in which consumers use digital technologies and platforms to research, purchase, and engage with products, services, and brands. It encompasses the entire digital journey of a consumer, including awareness, consideration, purchase, and post-purchase stages. It is influenced by a variety of factors, such as personal preferences, online search behaviour, social media influence, online reviews, and mobile usage (Jilkova & Kralova, 2021).

Understanding digital consumer behaviour is important for companies as it can help them to better target their audience, enhance their online presence, and improve the customer experience. Companies can use data analytics, customer feedback, and market research to gain insights into digital consumer behaviour and make informed decisions about their digital marketing and e-commerce strategies (Blaya C, 2019). The use of consumer behaviour analysis in business is being driven by the impact of e-commerce on consumer behaviour and the need to attract more customers and enhance their shopping experiences. There has been a noticeable shift in consumer behaviour, albeit much of it is expected to persist after the pandemic. Customers have been forced to re-evaluate their buying patterns as a result of the lockdown, including their knowledge of costs, propensity for local goods, and emotional shift toward online shopping (Veeragandham *et.al.,* 2020).

Website design, dependability, responsiveness, trust, and personalisation are the elements of e-service quality based on the literature review. 278 devoted visitors to three well-known websites participated in a survey. The measurement model was utilised to validate the link between the dimensions, and the structural equation model was used to assess the questionnaire's reliability and validity. Customer satisfaction and purchase intention were found to be statistically significantly correlated with both customer satisfaction and total e-service quality. E-Service quality had a major impact on the overall service quality is trust (Dhingra *et.al.,* 2020).

The impact of consumers' perceived economic benefits on perceived effectiveness of e-commerce platforms (PEEP) in predicting sustained consumption was studied on a methodical framework based on the uses and gratification theory with the border condition of pandemic dread included. According to this study, pandemic dread has a beneficial moderating influence on the connections between PEEP, economic gains, and sustainable consumption. It makes a contribution by looking at how economic advantage mediates the relationship between PEEP and sustainable consumption, which depends on the severity of pandemic anxiety (Tran L TT, 2021).

The perceived hazards associated with offline channels as well as the perceived advantages and relative attractiveness of digital ones were made more intense by the fear of contamination and the inability to leave the house to purchase necessities and non-essentials. The market has migrated toward online channels as a result of this dynamic. Study was based on online survey with 18 participants during exploratory interview, 327 responses were created through online survey that resulted in confirming the link between a seamless customer experience (from pre- to post-sales) and a satisfying shopping trip (Bozzi *et.al.,* 2022).

1.4 Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction refers to the extent to which a customer is happy with a product, service, or overall experience provided by a company. It measures the customer's overall level of contentment and can be influenced by factors such as product quality, price, delivery speed, customer service, and brand reputation. Measuring customer satisfaction is important for businesses as it provides insight into the success of their products, services, and overall customer experience, and can help identify areas for improvement. High levels of customer satisfaction can lead to increased customer loyalty, repeat business, and positive word-of-mouth, while low levels can result in decreased customer loyalty and negative reputation (Duarte *et.al.,* 2018).

Online customer satisfaction refers to the level of pleasure and contentment that a customer experiences with an online store or marketplace, its products, and services. It is influenced by various factors, such as website design and navigation, product information, checkout process, delivery and returns, and customer service (Eger *et.al.,* 2021).

Companies strive to increase online customer satisfaction by providing a seamless and convenient online shopping experience, offering a wide range of products and services, and delivering excellent customer service. Measuring online customer satisfaction can be done through various methods, such as surveys, customer feedback, and data analytics. By regularly monitoring and improving online customer satisfaction, companies can build strong customer relationships, increase customer loyalty, and drive online sales (Todri V, 2022).

1.5 Customer Experience

Customer experience refers to the overall perception and interaction that a customer has with a company, its products, and services over time. It encompasses various touchpoints, such as product quality, customer service, advertising, and in-store or online shopping experiences. A positive customer experience can lead to increased customer satisfaction, loyalty, and repeat business, while a negative experience can result in decreased customer satisfaction and decreased sales (Rita *et.al.,* 2019).

The online customer experience refers to the overall impression and interaction that a customer has with a company's website, products, and services through the internet. It encompasses various touchpoints, such as website design, navigation, product information, customer service, and the checkout process. A positive online customer experience can lead to increased customer satisfaction, loyalty, and repeat business, while a negative experience can result in decreased customer satisfaction and decreased sales (Zhao *et.al.,*2019). Customer experience management (CEM) is one of the consumer sectors' most promising marketing strategies. However, the concept of CEM is poorly understood, dispersed over a number of contexts, and inadequately distinguished from other marketing management concepts in various studies contributed to the literature (Homburg *et.al.,* 2017).

The COVID-19 epidemic has altered consumer buying and retail routines. The way that consumers browse for and purchase goods and services is changing as they learn to improvise and form new habits that will be influenced by new regulations and procedures. Technology advancements, shifting demographics, and creative ways consumers have learned to deal with

the blending of the lines between work, play, and education will all contribute to the emergence of new habits (Sheth J, 2020).

1.6 Content Analysis

Content analysis is a research method used to study the content of communication materials such as text, images, or speech. The aim is to identify patterns, themes, or biases in the data, to understand the message being conveyed or the underlying motivations or attitudes. It can be applied in various fields such as media studies, sociology, psychology, and marketing research (Krippendorff K, 2019).

A thorough examination and content analysis of 130 publications from reputable and pertinent academic journals that were published in the previous three decades was done. The results of the content analysis revealed that the bulk of the chosen articles indicated hazards for building projects, mostly infrastructure projects in Asia and Europe, and that the risks were typically either stated without any categorization or were classed based on their nature (Siraj & Fayek, 2019).

Braun (2006) and Clarke (2012) proposed a six-phase thematic analytic process namely, familiarizing oneself with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing potential themes, defining and naming themes, and finally producing the results as a report as described in Figure 1.

Fig. 1: Six-Phase Thematic Analytic Process
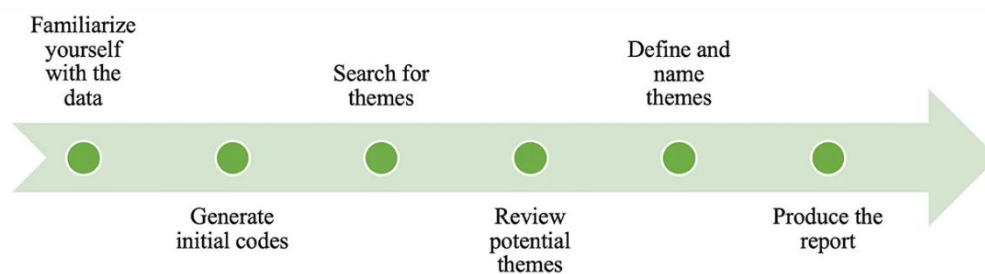
Source: (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2012)

1.7 Research Gap

The previous contribution to the literature has focused on the various models of customer satisfaction based on the service quality integrated with technology like TAM (Technology Acceptance Model) (Singh *et.al.,* 2018), Customer Experience Management (CEM) (Mansoor *et.al.,* 2020), E- SERVQUAL (E-Service Quality) (Rahayu KS, 2021) and many more. The online customer satisfaction of the customers in shopping laptops are often concerned with screen quality, battery life, battery backup, value for money, speed, sound quality, etc. However, there are limited evidences of textual reviews considered for the online customer satisfaction especially from E-Commerce website failing to establish relationship between customer reviews and customer satisfaction applying qualitative research methods.

Therefore, the current study aims at filling this gap by examining the most influencing themes developed from the online textual reviews of the customers in determining the online customer satisfaction among the branded laptops when purchased from Amazon India.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The researchers used a Grounded Theory of Qualitative research approach in the study to examine the customer satisfaction in online shopping in India during the hybrid working arrangement between June 2023 through January 2024. The emphasis was on gathering extensive data on a subject of interest and building ideas deductively. Qualitative Data collection method in the form of E-Commerce customer reviews of verified branded laptop buyers from Amazon India were obtained using the secondary research approach of text gathering.

Thematic approach facilitates the researcher to code the themes directly into the data without the process of extracting codes and building categories (Saldana, 2013). To find and evaluate patterns and themes in qualitative data, Content Analysis through Thematic Analysis Approach was used to examine the information gathered from the online retailer Amazon India.

The conceptual analysis was focused in the analysis of concepts, themes that appear across the several texts from the online reviews collected from the customers. The words, issues, phrases etc. are carefully examined in terms of quantifying the occurrence of the coded concepts. The frequency of occurrence is expressed as total number, probability, percentage. This approach was implemented as they proved to be effective in identifying and exploring important concepts or themes in the data, facilitates in describing the data, and establishing relationship between the variables (Klepek & Bauerova, 2020).

The Qualitative research methodology adopted for the study is broadly grouped into three stages as illustrated in Figure 2.
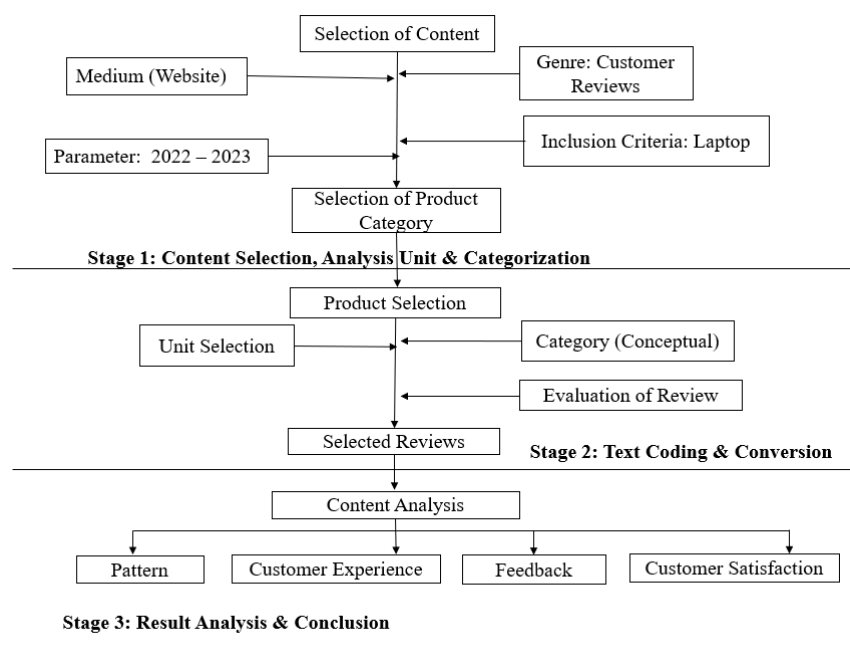
Fig. 2: Research Methodology of Qualitative Research

2.1: Stage 1: Content selection, arriving at the analysis unit & categorization.

The goals, messages, and outcomes of communication material were investigated by researchers using content analysis. Inferences about the authors and readers of the texts they study are another possibility. It was used to calculate the frequency of particular words, phrases, topics, or ideas in a collection of old or recent writings. The medium chosen to analyze the text depending on the research question happens to be the E-Commerce Website (Amazon India) and genre being the online customer reviews.
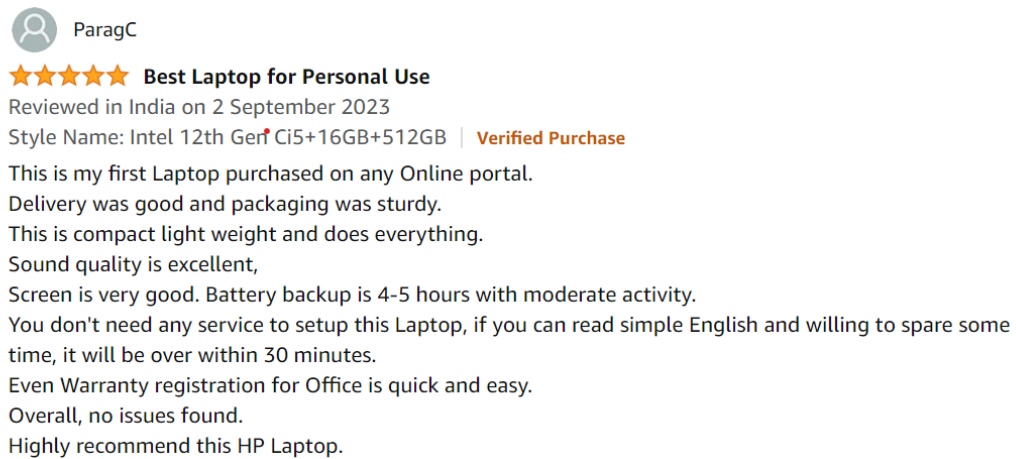
The inclusion criteria for the research considers only the category of Electronic Goods (Laptop) sold through the retail e-commerce giant, Amazon India during the period between June 2022 through January 2023.

2.2: Stage 2: Text coding and Conversion

The verified purchasers of branded Laptops shopped online were considered for the further process in the second stage. Deductive content analysis of a document from the paragraph was considered as the unit of the current study. One of the most widely used approaches, qualitative document analysis can be applied to almost any field. The codes derived from the theoretical concerns in the context of the research, two of the most popular types of content analysis are thematic and evaluative content analysis, which apply content-wise to all codes, such as themes or evaluations (Kuckartz, 2014).

A review is essentially a paragraph that customers have typed. There could be several sentences in each of these paragraphs. Depending on the words used, a sentence can be rated as positive, negative, or neutral (Sarkar & Patil, 2020). Coding is the process of organising and labelling the qualitative data in order to distinguish between various themes and the connections among them. It enables in identifying the words or phrases that stand in for significant (and recurrent) themes in each response when one code's consumer feedback (Lindgren *et.al.,* 2020).

Contribution to literature contributed that sampling among a homogeneous population may only require qualitative sample sizes of ten. Others claim that researchers often use qualitative sample sizes of 20–30 to employing a grounded theory approach to qualitative inquiry, determine data saturation. According to Marshall and colleagues, a sample size of 20 is considered little for a grounded theory approach to qualitative research and a sample size of 40 is considered substantial for the same kind of study (Armborst A, 2017). Hence, the dataset used for this experiment involves 100 online reviews from E-Commerce customers collected between June 2022 through January 2023. 80 reviews reflected to be from the verified purchasers in complete paragraph were treated as apt in further analysis to arrive at the results representing the population. A sample online from the customer has been illustrated in Figure 3.

Fig. 3: Screenshot of Sample Review from Amazon India

ParagC

⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐ **Best Laptop for Personal Use**

Reviewed in India on 2 September 2023

Style Name: Intel 12th Gen Ci5+16GB+512GB | **Verified Purchase**

This is my first Laptop purchased on any Online portal.
Delivery was good and packaging was sturdy.
This is compact light weight and does everything.
Sound quality is excellent,
Screen is very good. Battery backup is 4-5 hours with moderate activity.
You don't need any service to setup this Laptop, if you can read simple English and willing to spare some time, it will be over within 30 minutes.
Even Warranty registration for Office is quick and easy.
Overall, no issues found.
Highly recommend this HP Laptop.

2.3: Stage 3: Result Analysis & Conclusion

Patterns, Customer Experience, Customer Feedback, and Customer Satisfaction were treated as the key themes of the content analysis in examining the most influencing factors customer satisfaction on the online purchases of branded Laptops through Amazon India. Code Co-Occurrence Analysis, Code–Document Analysis, Sentiment Analysis, Word Cloud & Semantic Network were the applied tools in the current study using Atlas.ti V23 software to arrive at the results and conclusion.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Co-occurrence rules enable in discovering and grouping concepts that are strongly related within the set of documents or records. This technique reveals an underlying relationship that is potentially strongly and co-occur when they frequently appear together in a set of records and documents. The co-occurrence between Customer satisfaction & performance (40), customer satisfaction & quality (42), customer satisfaction & reliability (41). The co-occurrence between performance & quality (41) and reliability & performance (40). The co-occurrence between reliability & quality (40). Figure 4 explains the Code Co-Occurrence Analysis between the chosen codes.

Fig. 4: Code Co-Occurrence Analysis

	customer satisfaction	performance	quality	reliability
customer satisfaction		40	42	41
performance	40		41	40
quality	42	41		42
reliability	41	40	42	

It can be inferred that the customer reviews collected through the feedback mechanism confirms that customer satisfaction are related to the quality, performance and reliability while shopping the branded laptops online during the hybrid type of alternative working arrangement post

pandemic. Quality, performance, and reliability of the product shopped online plays an important role in determining the customer satisfaction (Tzeng *et.al.,* 2021).

Document Analysis is a qualitative research technique used in the study as a process in evaluating electronic document containing the Customer reviews on the branded laptops shopped, with an intention to interpret, understanding the themes, and developing results from the information (Morgan,2022). The online shopping of branded Laptop emphasized the performance of the product in terms of the quality, reliability, and battery life based on the reviews of the customers who were verified resulting that these factors are key components in determining the shopping experience of the customers leading to customer satisfaction. The density of these codes pertaining to customer satisfaction on the quality, reliability, and battery life while examining the performance of the product through code-document analysis as illustrated in Figure 5.

Fig. 5: Code-Document Analysis
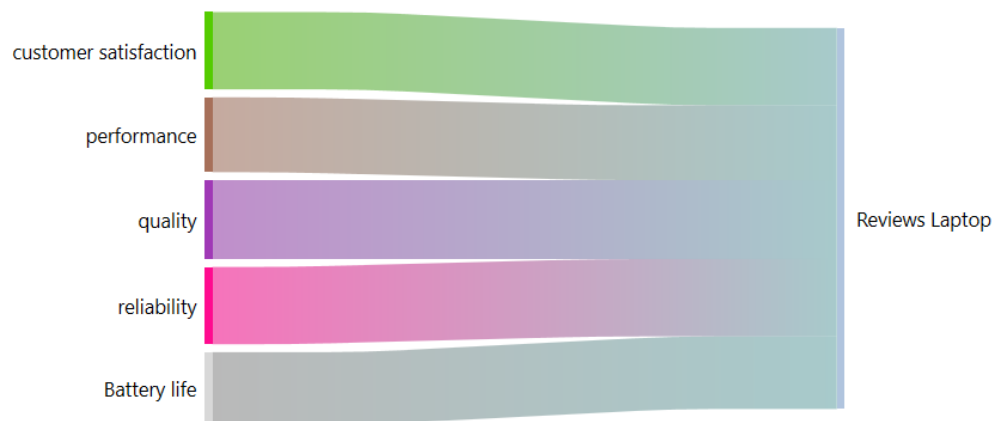
Sentiment analysis, often known as opinion mining, is a Natural Language Processing (NLP) method for identifying the positivity, negativity, or neutrality of data. This technique facilitates in investigating the sentiments on textual data to track the perception of their brands and products in customer reviews and to better understand their target market (Gan Q *et.al*, 2017). The sentiments of the customers reviews were grouped into "Positive", "Negative", and "Neutral" for the study.

Fig. 6: Sentiment Analysis of Customer Reviews
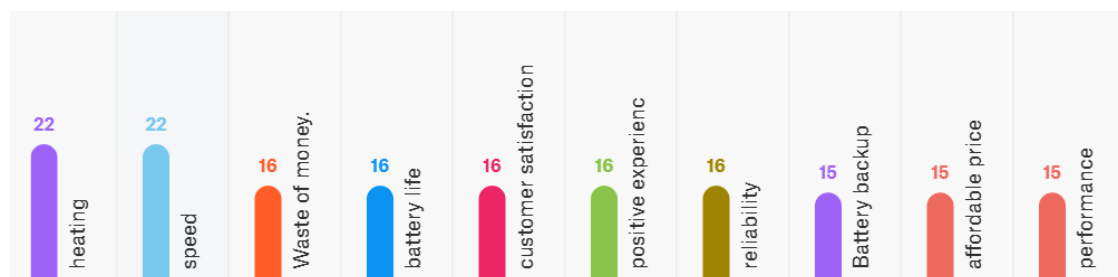
The sentiments of the customers were examined to interpret their subjective emotions, feelings, views, opinions, happiness, and dissatisfaction from the reviews collected towards the branded laptop demonstrated in Figure 6. The codes pertaining to heating of the laptop, and waste of money reflected the negative sentiments of the customers from their reviews. The codes containing customer satisfaction, battery life, reliability, and performance projected the positive sentiments of the customers from their reviews. However, codes namely speed, battery backup, positive experience, and affordable prices portrayed the neutral sentiments of the from their reviews.

The word appears larger in the graphic created the more frequently the keyword occurs in the text being analysed as the effectiveness of the word cloud is theoretically grounded in the learning model of graphical organizers. They are text-based pictures in which the size of a word or phrase corresponds to its frequency. The process of conceptually coding replies into a word or brief phrase is the first stage in representing data as word clouds (Yang L *et.al.,* 2020).

Fig. 7: Word Cloud of Customer Reviews

The word cloud described in Figure 7 explains the maximum occurrence of the word, "good", "quality laptop" appear in larger font size justifying the satisfaction of the customers from their reviews. The words coded as performance, backup, battery, and experience showcases the secondary layer of maximum occurrence among the customer reviews of the branded laptop product purchased online from Amazon. The smaller font size words namely slow, card, replace, bought, etc indicate the lesser occurrence in the reviews of the customers towards their online purchase of the product. Hence, it does confirm that customers are satisfied with the product based on the factors of quality, performance, and battery.

Semantic Network technique was applied to build categories of codes using a built-in network of words establishing the relationships as the terms are concrete resulting in either synonym or hyponym. This mechanism identifying the possible senses of each concept in the semantic network examining the partial and complete between the concepts (Kenett & Faust, 2019).

Fig. 8: Semantic Network Model of Customer Reviews
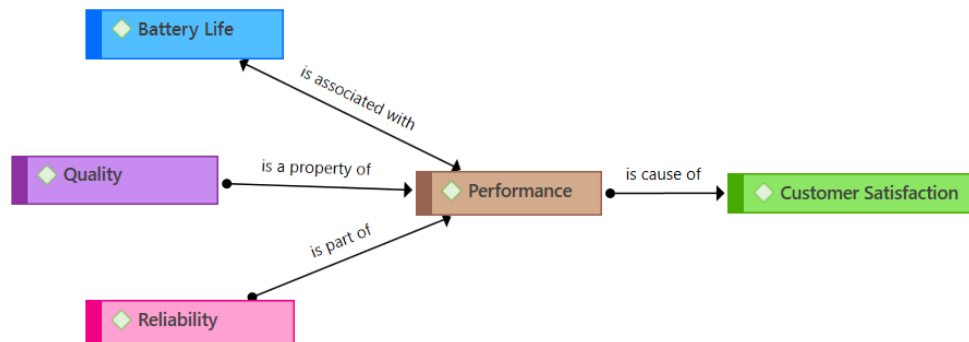
Figure 8 illustrates the semantic network model of customer reviews built on the key factors comprising of battery life, quality, reliability and performance of the laptop determining the customer satisfaction. The codes in the reviews pertaining to battery life is associated with the performance of the product, quality is a property of the performance of the product, and reliability on the purchased product is part of the expected performance of the product. Quality, Reliability, and Battery life are the key codes in the network determining the performance of the branded Laptops shopped online by the customers through Amazon. This effective performance of the product is the cause leading to the customer satisfaction in the network.

4. CONCLUSION

Companies strive to enhance the customer experience by understanding customer needs and preferences, continuously improving products and services, and providing excellent customer service. Customer experience management involves the use of data and technology to design, measure, and improve the customer experience.

4.1 Theoretical Implications of the Study

The online shopping experience and customer satisfaction from the earlier studies reflect mostly on the quantitative research methods applied in establishing relationships between the dependent and independent variables. The current study emphasizes on two important theoretical implications. Firstly, the study illustrates the relationship between the online customer reviews and their satisfaction from the evidences of Word Cloud and Code-Occurrence analysis. It is inferred that customer satisfaction are determined based on system quality, information quality, service quality, product quality, and delivery service post purchase. Secondly, the product quality of the laptops is obtained from the speed, reliability, heating of device, value for money. The customer experience reflects their positive experience while shopping, preferences available on website, and pleasant experience during the process of shopping.

4.2 Practical Implications of the Study

The E-Commerce retailers have to pay more attention in understanding the customer behaviour and preferences, improving the product descriptions and visuals, evaluating the market trends with demands, optimizing their search engines, and analysing the customer satisfaction and feedback. This study will aid online merchants in luring in fresh customers for online shopping and inspiring current ones to include it into regular purchases. Online retailers can raise client satisfaction after a transaction and subsequently attract more online shoppers.

4.3 Scope for Further Research

The aspiring researchers in this domain are welcome to focus on application and integration of advanced technologies. The advent of augmented reality (AR) has completely revolutionised online shopping. With this kind of technology, consumers can actually see the product they're looking at, which aids in their decision to purchase. Application of Artificial Intelligence enables Customer-centric, automated purchasing experiences are made feasible by artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning. On-Site personalization facilitates the information gathered by AI is what enables a consumer to receive tailored product suggestions and thorough customer service.

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