A Study on User Perception and Awareness Towards Online Courses

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Abstract - The rapid growth of digital technology has significantly transformed the education sector, leading to increased adoption of online courses across different learner groups. This study examines user perception and awareness towards online courses, focusing on satisfaction, trust, learning experience, flexibility, and convenience. A descriptive research design was adopted using primary data collected from 124 respondents comprising students and working professionals. Data were gathered through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using percentage analysis, reliability testing, chi-square, correlation, and ANOVA. The results indicate high awareness and familiarity with online courses, primarily driven by social media and online advertisements. While flexibility and accessibility motivate adoption, factors such as certification trust and instructional quality influence satisfaction levels. The study highlights that online learning has become an essential educational mode; however, improvements in interaction, certification credibility, and learning engagement are required to enhance user experience. The findings emphasize the importance of learner-centric strategies for sustainable growth of online education platforms.

Keywords: Online Courses, User Perception, Awareness, E-learning, Customer Satisfaction, Digital Education

I. INTRODUCTION

The evolution of digital technology has reshaped traditional education systems, giving rise to online learning platforms that provide flexible and accessible educational opportunities. Online courses have emerged as an alternative to classroom-based learning, enabling learners to acquire knowledge regardless of time and location. Platforms such as Coursera, Udemy, edX, and Indian EdTech providers have expanded learning opportunities for students and professionals alike.

The growth of online education is closely linked with technological advancements, increased smartphone penetration, and affordable internet access. Initially, distance learning began through correspondence courses in the 19th century and later evolved through radio and television-based education. With the advent of computers and the internet, online education gained momentum, particularly with the introduction of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs).

The COVID-19 pandemic further accelerated the adoption of online learning as educational institutions worldwide shifted to digital platforms. Although online education offers flexibility, cost efficiency, and diverse course offerings, challenges such as digital divide, reduced learner engagement, and concerns over certification credibility persist.

This study focuses on understanding user perception and awareness towards online courses by analyzing factors such as satisfaction, trust, learning experience, and flexibility. Additionally, insights gained during the internship at Outlook Publishing India Pvt Ltd provided exposure to digital marketing and customer engagement strategies, supporting practical understanding of user behavior in digital environments.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study follows a descriptive research design to evaluate user awareness, perception, and satisfaction regarding online courses. Both primary and secondary data were utilized.

Sources of Data

Primary Data:
Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to 124 respondents, including students and working professionals who had experience with online courses. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure variables such as satisfaction, trust, flexibility, and learning experience.

Secondary Data:
Secondary information was obtained from academic journals, research articles, online reports, and EdTech publications. Internship exposure at Outlook

Publishing India Pvt Ltd also contributed contextual insights.

Sample Size and Technique
Convenience sampling was adopted due to accessibility and time constraints. A total of 124 valid responses were analyzed.

Tools Used for Analysis
- Percentage and frequency analysis
- Cronbach's Alpha for reliability
- Chi-square test
- Pearson and Spearman correlation
- One-way ANOVA

These tools helped examine relationships between demographic variables, satisfaction, trust, and learning effectiveness.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study analyzed responses from 124 participants to evaluate awareness, satisfaction, trust, and learning effectiveness of online courses.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Particulars	Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Age	18–26 Years	120	96.8
	Above 26 Years	4	3.2
Gender	Male	87	70.2
	Female	37	29.8
Education	Undergraduate	59	47.6
	Postgraduate	52	41.9
	Others	13	10.5

Discussion: Majority of respondents belong to the 18–26 age group and possess higher education qualifications, indicating strong adoption of online courses among students and early professionals.

Table 2: Awareness Towards Online Courses

Awareness Level	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Highly Aware	72	58.1
Moderately Aware	42	33.9
Low Awareness	10	8.0
Total	124	100

Discussion: About 92% of respondents are highly or moderately aware of online courses, reflecting widespread exposure through social media and digital advertisements.

Table 3: User Satisfaction Level

Satisfaction Level	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Highly Satisfied	46	37.1
Satisfied	52	41.9
Neutral	18	14.5
Dissatisfied	8	6.5
Total	124	100

Discussion: Nearly 79% of users are satisfied or highly satisfied, indicating positive perception of accessibility, flexibility, and learning convenience.

Table 4: Trust in Online Course Certification

Trust Level	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
High Trust	45	36.3
Moderate Trust	56	45.2
Low Trust	23	18.5
Total	124	100

Discussion: Moderate trust dominates, suggesting that while users value online education, concerns regarding certification credibility still exist.

Table 5: Relationship Between User Satisfaction and Learning Effectiveness

Variable	Coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value
Constant	1.08	3.92	0.000
User Satisfaction	0.64	7.81	0.000

Discussion: User satisfaction significantly influences learning effectiveness ($p < 0.05$), highlighting that quality content and teaching methods are key drivers of successful online learning.

IV. CONCLUSION

Online education has become a vital component of modern learning systems, offering accessibility and flexibility to diverse learner groups. The study reveals that while users are highly aware and familiar with online courses, satisfaction is influenced more by instructional quality and credibility than by flexibility alone. Trust in certification and learner engagement remain critical challenges.

To enhance user experience, online education providers must focus on improving course quality, strengthening certification credibility, and

incorporating interactive learning features. The study confirms that online education plays a significant role in lifelong learning and professional development, but sustained growth depends on learner-centric strategies.

V. APPENDIX

Survey Overview:
Demographics: Age, Gender, Education
Awareness Sources: Social media, advertisements, referrals
Key Variables: Satisfaction, Trust, Flexibility, Learning Experience
Statistical Tools: Percentage analysis, Correlation, ANOVA, Cronbach's Alpha

VI. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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