

ONLINE VS. OFFLINE SHOPPING – A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Abstract: Shopping is presumably the most established term used to discuss what we have all been doing throughout the long term. Web based shopping has become a mainstream shopping technique since the time the web has proclaimed a takeover. The expansion in innovation gives great freedoms to the vender to arrive at the client in a lot quicker, simpler and in economical way. Internet shopping is arising extremely quick in these days. Numerous examinations have centered that the high touch items that the buyer feels when they need to contact, smell or attempt in using the item. It requires the direct shopping at the buying stage since it is impossible in the internet shopping. This manuscript paper centered to dissect the critical contrast between internet shopping and direct shopping bunches as far as segment, innovation use, accessibility and opinion of the shopper.

Keyword: Internet shopping, Direct shopping, Innovation

1. Introduction

Shopping has become very vital in today's life. Few get the essentials from shopping, whereas others get something else. It is found as a stress buster, a path to satisfy the urge of the mind or a path to free from our daily routines of life. Shopping is presumably the oldest term used to discuss what we have all been doing throughout the long term. In olden days, the terms such as trading, bartering and even market was used. The web has opened up a more extensive and seriously captivating business sector to the current buyers. There are two sorts of shopping: conventional shopping and On-line shopping. These days an increasingly number of people are using internet shopping, due to the universality of the computer. By a single click of our choice many items are viewed on the screen. There is not need for us to walk a long way or plunge into the crowds to buy goods. Just a click of the mouse, choices are made and goods are delivered to the required address. Online shopping has become vital because of the fact it provides convenience shopping to the customers. The advances in technology have paved a way to the seller to reach the buyer very fast and economically. Direct purchasing is also continuing since many customers wish to examine the product and wants to take ownership of the goods as soon as the payment is made for the goods. In the present world loyalty of customers depends on the quality delivery of goods, enhanced value of goods and customer delight. The essence of this study is to know the buyer's choice of shopping on the internet and at direct retail outlet. However online shopping is as ease for customers because of less pricing than direct shopping. Customers should choose the mode of shopping that would satisfy their needs and desires.

2. What is Online Shopping?

Online shopping is a form of electronic commerce which allows consumers to directly buy goods or services from a seller over the Internet using a web browser or a mobile app. Consumers find a product of interest by visiting the website of the retailer directly or by searching among alternative vendors using a shopping search engine, which displays the same product's availability and pricing at different e-retailers. As of 2020, customers can shop online using a range of different computers and devices, including desktop computers, laptops, tablet computers and smartphones.

3. What is Traditional Shopping?

The facility to choose physically and buy a product when we like it are the advantages of direct shopping. This is the reason why still customers prefer traditional shopping. Lack of trust, touch and feel and security issues are few reasons why customers don't prefer online shopping.

4. Literature review:

- **2008** – Increase in growth of online shopping by 17% from the last year in the US, with ecommerce sales figures around \$204 billion. In the same year Group on is launched as is Magneto – so anyone could have a go at creating their own online store.
- **2013** – UK shoppers spent a whopping £91 billion online.
- **2014** – In 2014, 198 million U.S. consumers bought something online in the first quarter alone, (com Score) which is 78% of the U.S. population age 15 and above.

- **2015** – Today’s shoppers combine online shopping with real life shopping, using access to Wi- Fi and the show rooming trend. They often make purchases in a retail stores at the same time as using mobile devices to buy something online. In fact, this Forbes report tells us that 74 per cent of people use their mobile.
- **2020** - Many Indian shoppers known to be cost-conscious and conservative as a part of their value system, are generally not attracted to making quick decisions based on promotions and advertisements. Moreover, online shoppers, many-a-times, come across problems concerning product delivery timelines and customer support services (Khare, 2016; Arpana, 2020). Customers’ perception of risk toward online web sites is aggravated due to the inferior IT set-up used by several e-tailers, resulting in the hacking of personal information (Retail Economic Times of India, 2020; Staff, 2020).

5. Advantages of Online Shopping

- ✚ **Convenience:** Buyers can purchase items staying in their homes. Easy to cancel the transaction.
- ✚ **Non influential shopping:** In direct marketing, the sales executives try to influence the buyers in making decisions of purchase. Whereas in online shopping no such influence is possible.
- ✚ **Saves time:** The customers do not have to spend time on travelling to purchase goods. They can conveniently purchase from their place of stay thus saving time. Customers can type keywords or use search engines to search for the products that would satisfy their desires.
- ✚ **Comparative shopping:** Customers can compare the different company products featuring different colour, usage, price, service etc..
- ✚ **Availability of online shop:** The mall is open on all time. So, time does not act as a barrier, wherever the vendor and buyers are.

6. Factors affecting Online Shopping

- ✚ **Delay in delivery:** Long duration and lack of proper inventory management results in delays in shipment. Though the duration of selecting, buying and paying for an online product may not take more than 50 minutes, the delivery of the product to customers doorstep takes about 1-3 weeks. This frustrates the customers and prevents them from shopping online.
- ✚ **Lack of significant discounts in online shops:** Physical stores offer discounts to customers and attract them so this makes it difficult for e-tailors to compete with the offline platforms.
- ✚ **Lack of touch and feel of merchandise in online shopping:** Lack of touch-feel-try creates concerns over the quality of the product on offer. Online shopping is not quite suitable for clothes as the customers cannot try them on.
- ✚ **Lack of interactivity in online shopping:** Physical stores allow price negotiations between buyers and the seller. The showroom sales attendants the representatives provide personal attention to customers and help them in purchasing goods. Certain online shopping mart offers service to talk to a sales representative.
- ✚ **Lack of shopping experience:** The traditional shopping exercise provides lot of fun in the form of show-room atmosphere, smart sales attendants, scent and sounds that cannot be experienced through a website. Indian generally enjoy shopping. Consumers look forward to it as an opportunity to go out and shop.
- ✚ **Lack of close examination in online shopping:** A customer has to buy a product without seeing actually hoe it looks like. Customers may click and buy some product that is not really required by them. The electronic images of a product are sometimes misleading. The colour, appearance in real may not match with the electronic image. People like to visit physical stores and prefer to have close examination of good, though it consumes time. The electronic images vary from physical appearance when people buy goods based on electronic image.

7. Advantage of Offline Shopping

Customers are not required to wait for the arrival of the goods purchased. It is delivered immediately soon after the payment is made. After sales service is at its best. Product returning or exchanging is also made simpler in traditional shopping.

8. Factors Affecting Offline Shopping

Less variety is available for customers. This is due to the limitation of retail space available to the retailer. Comparative shopping is not made easy. Customers miss out heavy discounts that are generally offered by online marketers. Thus, if customers care for money then is would be best to opt for online shopping. If customers are more concerned of after sales service then they should opt for offline shopping.

9. Pros and Cons of Online and Offline shopping

Pros of Online Shopping

1. With online shopping, you have access to a wide range of products. From clothes and shoes to household necessities, everything is just a click away.
2. You can shop at any time of the day. The online shopping store is at your service 24/7.
3. You get exclusive deals on online products, which are not available at stores.
4. No cash? From PayPal and Google Pay to credit and debit card, there are plenty of other ways to pay online.
5. There are plenty of filters available to narrow down your search to what exactly you need. Convenient, isn't it?
6. You can also compare products to be hundred percent sure before you buy them.

Cons of Online Shopping

1. It is hard to check the quality and fabric of the product. You pretty much have to rely on the product details available on the website.
2. One of the most irritating parts of online shopping is waiting for delivery. You have no control over the delivery process, and there are several factors like weather, damaged product, and more that lead to a delay.
3. With cyber-crimes increasing, you can never really trust the internet. So, there is a risk of your credit card details being misused.
4. Since you can't try the garment you are buying, there could be a size and fitting issue. Then there is the process of returning, but what if you get the wrong size again.

Pros of Offline Shopping

1. There is nothing like the joy of going into a store and trying on new clothes.
2. While shopping offline, you can check if the outfit or the product you are buying fits your taste or not. You can inspect the product closely before buying it.
3. You don't have to wait days or weeks to get the item delivered to you. You select something and you carry it home with you.
4. Need to purchase a dress immediately? You can rely on physical stores for that. With online shopping, you can never do that.
5. Don't you hate it when the online companies constantly spam you with emails and messages? With offline shopping, you don't have to worry about that. You can relax and have some privacy.
6. Not satisfied with the purchase? Just visit the store and get it replaced. No need to wait for the delivery guy to pick it up and bring the item days later.

Cons of Offline Shopping

1. Going from one shop to another can be exhausting and time-consuming. Sometimes, you spend hours roaming around looking for a dress, but you don't find anything.
2. Discounts and offers are given only for a short period. You probably won't get as big a discount on an item as you can on an online website.
3. Sometimes malls and markets are so crowded that you can barely walk. Imagine being dragged along if you hate crowded places and sweaty people (a nightmare).

10. Objectives of Study

The objectives of the present study include:

- (a) To analyze the difference between both online and offline customer groups in terms of innovation, product availability, demographics and customer attitude.
- (b) To explore the factors influencing customers to switch from offline to online shopping.
- (c) To explore the factors influencing consumers to shop solely online and offline mode.
- (d) To study whether the customer qualification affects the online shopping and offline purchasing.

11. Research Methodology

It describes the sampling plan, research instruments used for the collection of data pre- testing of questionnaire, the use of statistical tools and techniques for the analysis of the collected data.

12. Scope:

Scope was limited to the geographical boundary of the Chennai.

13. Need of Study:

This study was conducted to find out the differences of consumer behavior after the COVID-19 pandemic towards both online and offline shopping.

14. Research Design

It is an arrangement of plan, which guides the collection of data and analysis of data. The purpose of research design is to ensure that the data collected is accurate and relevant. Any research work requires clarity of objective to be achieved effectively research. The descriptive design used for this survey.

15. Selection of Population

The study has been conducted in the Chennai area. The population for this research is student, job consumers and home consumers.

16. Research Instruments

For the purpose of research, questionnaire was used to interview the respondents. The questionnaire was developed so as to obtain responses relevant to objects of the research. While designing the questionnaires every attempt was made to make it precise so that the purpose of filling up the responses does not consume time. To find the general attitude, perception, beliefs and intention of people towards their perception, a questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire, which was administered to the respondents for the purpose of collection primary data, was a structured one.

17. Data Collection Method

Primary Data: The primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire.

Secondary Data: The secondary data was collected from past records, journals, websites, newspapers and reference books.

18. Limitations of the survey

Due to resources and time constraints the study was limited to the only Chennai area. Since the sample size was 250. So finding and concluding of the study are only suggestive not conclusive in spite of the best and honest efforts. Basically, based on primary data, hence we cannot argue that the research is applicable in each condition, time and place.

19. Data Analysis and Interpretation

1. Age of the respondents:

Options	Respondents	Percentage
18 to 25 years old	180	72%
Over 26 years	70	28%
Total	250	100%

2. Gender of the respondents:

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Male	150	60%
Female	100	40%
Total	250	100%

3. Trust of respondents of online shopping:

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	205	82%
No	45	18%
Total	250	100%

4. Preferences of respondents choice of shopping:

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Online shopping	250	100%
Offline shopping	0	0
Total	250	100%

5. Respondents preferences over websites for online shopping:

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Flipkart	50	20%
Snapdeal	50	20%
Shopclues	0	0%
Amazon	125	50%
Myntra	17	7%
Voonik	8	3%
Total	250	100%

6. Criterion considered by respondents during offline shopping:

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Salesman advice	38	15%
Price	55	22%
Quality	112	45%
Payment facility	45	18%
Total	250	100%

7. Criterion considered by respondents during online shopping:

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Delivery	105	42%
Price	38	15%
Quality	57	23%
Payment security	50	20%
Total	250	100%

8. Respondents attitude towards bargaining:

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	175	70%
No	75	30%
Total	250	100%

9. Respondents reason for choosing offline shopping:

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Better return policies	88	35%
Prefer to touch product	92	37%
No product disappointment	20	8%
Discounts	50	20%
Total	250	100%

9. Respondent's duration of using internet services:

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Less than one year	168	67%
More than one year	82	33%
Total	250	100%

10. Respondents reason for choosing online shopping:

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Saving valuable time	150	60%
Organizing finance	18	7%
Shipping gifts directly	50	20%
Finding items which might not see in stores	32	13%
Total	250	100%

11. Respondents travel preferences during offline shopping:

Options	Respondents	Options
Less than 10 miles	218	87%
More than 10 miles	32	13%
Total	250	100%

20. Findings of the study:

The primary object of this study was to compare online and offline shopping modes. The findings are:

- ❖ The survey showed, 72% of respondents are 18 to 25 years old and 28% were above 26 years old.
- ❖ The survey showed, 60% of respondents were male and 40 % were females.
- ❖ Out of data surveyed, 82% respondents expressed a positive trust towards online shopping whereas 18% of respondents showed their distrust towards online shopping.
- ❖ 100% of respondents showed their preferences towards online shopping.
- ❖ The survey shows that, 50% of respondents use Amazon, 20% of online shopping respondents use Flipcart , 20% of online shopping respondents use Snapdeal , 7% of online shopping respondents use Myntra and 3% of online shopping respondents use Voonik for shopping.
- ❖ Analysis showed 45% of respondents think that quality,22% consumers think that price,18% consumers think that payment facility and 15% consumers think that salesman advice is the most important criterion when they buy in offline shopping.
- ❖ Analysis showed 42% of respondents think that delivery,23% consumers think that quality, 20% consumers think that payment security and 15% consumers think that price is the most important criterion when they buy in online shopping.
- ❖ Out of data surveyed 70% of respondents prefer to bargaining while 30% do not.

- ❖ The surveyed showed 37% of respondents think that they can touch the product,35% think that there are better return policies,20% think that there are discounts on their shopping and 8% think that there is no disappointment about the product in offline shopping.
- ❖ The surveyed showed 60% of respondents think that they can save their valuable time,20% think that there is the facility of shipping gifts directly,13% think that they can see those items that might not see by them in stores and 7% think that they can organize their finance easily in online shopping.
- ❖ Analysis showed 67% of respondents are using internet from less than 1 year while 33% are using internet from more than one year.
- ❖ Analysis showed 87% of respondents are willing to travel less than 10 miles and 13% are willing that they can travel more than 10 miles for offline shopping.

21. Conclusion

Online shopping is a new experience during the pandemic and has greatly impacted the lives of consumers in its short time of existence. Online shopping has made consumers more effective and efficient in their shopping behaviour and has driven businesses to a new level, forcing many to make the necessary adjustments and changes to reach the new market of knowledgeable consumers. The results of this survey underscore the need for businesses to take the online market seriously.

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