



## Comparative Study of Online and Offline Shopping Behaviour among Undergraduate Girl Students

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### Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

### Article Information

DOI: 10.9734/AJAEES/2022/v40i111735

### Open Peer Review History:

This journal follows the Advanced Open Peer Review policy. Identity of the Reviewers, Editor(s) and additional Reviewers, peer review comments, different versions of the manuscript, comments of the editors, etc are available here: <https://www.sdiarticle5.com/review-history/93460>

Original Research Article

Received 07 September 2022

Accepted 09 November 2022

Published 14 November 2022

### ABSTRACT

**Aim:** The study aims to analyze the shopping behaviour (Online and Offline Shopping) of the students studying in remote and hilly area during the peak of pandemic.

**Study Design:** The study comprises of a descriptive research design.

**Place and Duration of Study:** The study was carried out in West Garo Hills District of Meghalaya which is located distantly from the capital city, Shillong during 2020-21.

**Methodology:** Purposive sampling technique was used to collect 60 samples from a college in Sangsangre, a small village in Tura.

**Results:** The findings of the study reveal that respondent shop mostly during discount and offer season online, number of purchases made is more than one in a week and almost all respondent relies on online shopping to purchase almost any product namely Habiliments, Electronic gadget, Books except for groceries, furniture and jewelry. Festive ads attract respondent go for online. Amazon and Myntra services are most preferable online portal.

**Conclusion:** It is evident that with the changing in the retail business due to digitalization and worldwide lockdown, customer behaviour also changes irrespective of the location.

*Keywords: Online shopping; offline shopping; customer; behaviour; decision making.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Consumption is a phenomenon that can be described in both habitual and contextual concept. The impact of context cannot be overstated as four main contexts viz. sociological, technological, enforcement of rules and regulations and natural disasters regulates consumer habit. Sociological perspective of consumption is affected by life situation such as marriage, having children and also includes workplace, community, neighbours and friends. Technology is another context that alter consumer habits remarkably. The emergence of new technologies disrupts traditional way of purchasing and the ways business operate. In recent years due to increase usage of smartphone and internet, ecommerce grows tremendously therefore impact on how we shop and consume products and services. The next to discuss is the enforcement of rules and regulations that is under the four main context that influences consumption habits. This includes all of policy and interventions aiming to provide information so as to influence customer decisions. This is done in public and shared spaces and includes information campaigns, labelling, pricing standards and even ministerial statements. For example, information campaign on unhealthy products, tobacco, alcohol and warning label on every cigarette package. It can also encourage the use of societally beneficial products and services such as ITC's waste recycling programme, 'Well Being Out of Waste (WOW)', single-use of plastic ban, importance of solar energy and electric vehicles, and regarding vaccination of children. The last context are ad hoc natural disasters and regional conflicts. Earthquakes, drought, flood and global pandemics such as the Covid-19 pandemic that we are currently encountering comes under Natural disaster while regional conflicts include World War II, Post-Colonial India and Indo-Pakistan War. All of them had strike significantly on both consumption and production as well as the supply chain. We all are aware and evident before our eyes how covid 19 and worldwide lockdown impact our daily life in every way even our behaviour as customer because we rely almost everything on online services. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the shopping behaviour (Online and Offline Shopping) of the students studying in remote and hilly area during the peak of pandemic.

Shopping behaviour is a complex and multidimensional concept [1, 2] that includes personal factors which can be discussed based on gender aspect regarding how they perceived as customer [3] According to a study by Chen Yu and Seock [4, 5] it is evident that the primary segmentation of market is based on gender and therefore plays significant role in the study of consumer behaviour to improve marketing strategy for example pink products for girls and blue for boys. To study behaviour based on gender is a key for all round development as of today due to industrialization, women involve in almost all the activities of any field from household chores to making policy of a country [6]. The role of farm women in both selling and purchasing of products on online portals is witness everywhere [7, 8] and besides being a homemaker, the role and decision of women is paramount in every field [9] and as a customer as well in the dimension of consumer behaviour.

Progressing wave in digitalization constantly transform the retail sector in many ways [10, 11]. Even though the progressing digitalization had to come to life since a couple of decades back, the outbreak of the Covid-19 accelerates the digitalization process by forcing businesses to adapt to a required digital way of operating within weeks. The pandemic abruptly interrupts almost everything from a family level to that of global political and economic order [12]. Like many other sectors, consumer services sectors such as retailing, hospitality, and tourism have also faced the hardship seriously [13]. The unprecedented global lockdowns affect and limit every individual's daily activity [14] due to which it also affects as a customer therefore consumer services firms are altering their strategy and unfold the new technologies and platform to meet the changing consumer demand. New business model such as "Contactless delivery" and "social cinema" comes with the current need of customers resulting from the new consumption pattern.

The constant change in retail industry is a well-known phenomenon due to which consumers today are encountering dilemma while deciding the medium of shopping (offline or online). The decision of the mode of shopping should be determined based on individual convenient to satisfy their needs and desire [15]. Due to individual differences, preferences differ some prime concern is on time-efficient shopping pool

with a wide range of products and options, whereas others value first-hand interaction with sales associates and the ability to touch and feel the product prior to purchase (Levin, Levin & Wellner, 2005). According to [16] almost all the customer desire to evaluate and have direct contact with the product before purchase. Customer select how and where to purchase based upon individual preferences prior to pandemic in which most people decide to opt for traditional store for more authentic experience [17]. Although we witness the shift and change in traditional store where the annual visit of physical store decreases according to a data by PWC (2016), however, because of the better product evaluation, most consumers still opt for traditional physical store.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

To achieve the study's objectives, the descriptive research design was chosen. During 2020-21, the research was conducted in Meghalaya's West Garo Hills District, which is located far from the state capital of Shillong. The study area was chosen because Tura town is located far from the capital city, Shillong, and the region is hilly, with limited transport options. Purposive sampling procedure was adopted to select the study area and simple random sampling was adopted to select the total sample for the study. Total 60 girl students from a college of Tura were selected as the sample to collect the required information because women involve in almost all the activities of any field from household chores to making policy of a country [18]. Data was collected with the help of interview schedule consisting of structured questions through google form. The collected data was tabulated and analyzed in terms of frequency, percentage. Comparative analysis is used as it is widely used in social science research for example Lal et al. [19] compared pooled number of milch cattle, buffaloes, livestock holdings and milk production before and after the national Calamity of 2008 in Bihar (n=160).

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Nature of Shopping

The present study analyzed the nature of customers' shopping behaviour. The data in Table 1 is interpreted as follows:

#### 3.1.1 Frequency of shopping – offline and online

According to the data, respondents who shopped offline regularly and whenever need arises share

the same percent i.e., 33.33 percent while 25 percent shopped occasionally and 8.33 percent shopped only during offers and discounts.

For online, 40 percent shopped during offers and discounts and 30 percent shopped whenever need arises. While 16.67 and 13.33 percent go for online shopping occasionally and regularly respectively.

#### 3.1.2 Number of purchases in a month

According to the data, 53.33 percent shopped offline once in a month while 23.33 and 20 percent of them went once in a fortnight and once in a week respectively. And only 3.33 shopped more than once in a week.

For online, 40 and 30 percent of the respondents shopped more than once in a week and once in a week respectively. While 16.67 and 13.33 percent shopped once in a fortnight and once in a month respectively.

#### 3.1.3 Products usually purchase – offline and online

According to the data, 100 percent of the total respondents purchased habiliments, electronic gadget, jewellery, furniture and groceries via offline. Products like medicine, household equipment, foot wear and cosmetics purchase in the percentage of 93.33, 85 and 70 respectively from offline store. But none of the respondents purchased book offline. Cent per cent of the respondents purchased products such as habiliments, electronic gadgets, books and foot wear via online. Household equipment, cosmetics, medicine and groceries purchased in the percentage of 91.67, 71.67, 66.67 and 35 respectively. While none of the respondents purchased furniture and jewellery via online.

#### 3.1.4 Type of advertisement mostly attracts to purchase – offline and online

Advertisement plays a major role for making a site or a brand in the market. Moreover, advertisement attracts its customer towards them to make income. According to the data, a sale ad scores the highest (55%) and then comes the festive ads (26.67%) and discount ads (18.33%) for in-store shopping. The type of advertisement that attracts online customer according to the data was festive ads (50%), which give the customer a reason to buy their products at reasonable prices as majority of the population do their shopping. Also, the sales ads bring more customers nearly 26.7 percent of total customer gets attracted to it. Discount ads and other types

of ads share the same percent i.e., 11.67 percent of attracting customers online.

### 3.2 Respondents' Most Preferred Online Portals

The analysis of data indicates that 100 percent of the total respondents used both Amazon and Myntra while the next most used web portal is Nykaa (95%) and AJIO (76.67%). 46.67 percent of respondent used Flipkart while Jabong and lenskart share the same percentage i.e., 28.33 percent. Ebay and Snapdeal are used by 11.67

and 6.67 percent of the total respondents and also notice that KOOVS and Meesho is not used by any of the respondents. 15 percent of the total respondents use another portal than mentioned in the table like Purple, ZARA, H&M and many more. Additionally, all the respondent used smartphone to purchase from their preferable application or online portal as mobile has given momentum to online shopping these days even farmers are extensively using mobile to fetch on time need-based information apropos agriculture [18].

**Table 1. Nature of shopping**

Sl. No.	Characteristics	Category	Offline Shopping		Online Shopping	
			f	%	f	%
1.	Frequency of shopping	Regularly	20	33.33	8	13.33
		Occasionally	15	25	10	16.67
		Whenever needed	20	33.33	18	30
		During offers and discounts	5	8.33	24	40
2.	Number of purchases in a month	Once in a month	32	53.33	8	13.33
		Once in a fortnight	14	23.33	10	16.67
		Once in a week	12	20	18	30
		More than once in a week	2	3.33	24	40
3.	Products usually purchase	Habiliments	60	100	60	100
		Electronic gadget	60	100	60	100
		Books	0	0	60	100
		Cosmetics	29	48.33	43	71.67
		Furnitures	60	100	17	28.33
		Groceries	60	100	21	35
		Medicine	56	93.33	40	66.67
		Household equipment	51	85	55	91.67
		Jewelry	55	91.67	41	68.33
		Foot wear	42	70	60	100
4.	Type of advertisement mostly attracts to purchase	Discount ads	11	18.33	7	11.67
		Sale ads	33	55	16	26.67
		Festive ads	16	26.67	30	50
		Others	0	0	7	11.67

**Table 2. Respondents' most preferred online portals**

Particulars	Respondents (N = 60)	
	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Amazon	60	100
Myantra	60	100
Ebay	7	11.67
Flipkart	28	46.67
Snapdeal	4	6.67
Jabong	17	28.33
AJIO	46	76.67
KOOVS	0	0
Nykaa	57	95
Lenskart	17	28.33
Meesho	0	0
Any other	9	15

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study helps to understand that customer satisfaction is important for any organisation because it helps the organization's positive reputation in the market. According to the following sections, respondents shop online primarily during discount and offer seasons, make more than one purchase per week, and almost all respondents rely on online shopping to purchase almost any product, excluding groceries, furniture, and jewellery. Festive advertisements entice respondents to shop online. Amazon and Myntra are the most preferred online portals during the peak of pandemic. The emergence of the novel disease Covid-19 has accelerated the digitalization process by forcing businesses to adapt digitally. This process influences consumers' decisions to shop online versus in-store. It is obvious that it affects customers everywhere, regardless of whether they live in a village, town, or city.

#### COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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*Peer-review history:*  
*The peer review history for this paper can be accessed here:*  
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