

AN IMPACT OF COVID 19 ON OFFLINE SHOPPING: CONSUMERS' PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

The Retail Sector is one of the fastest growing sectors in India. It is the backbone of the economy and about 10 per cent of the country's GDP. The Indian retail market is estimated to be valued at US\$ 600 billion and one of the top five retail markets in the world by economic value. The growth of the retail sector in India is one of the fastest globally. Every customer is very particular about their products. Their choices vary based upon their preferences towards online shopping. Traditional shopping has its own advantages and disadvantages. On the other hand, traditional shopping allows customers to physically examine products which otherwise online shopping lacks. Consumers may use both online and traditional modes of shopping depending on their preferences at a particular moment, which results in fundamentally different behaviours across the modes of shopping. Now-a-days there is a stiff competition between Online and Offline shopping. There are some consumers who prefer Online shopping over Offline shopping and vice versa. Lot of effort needs to be taken to study the behaviour of consumers and to study their preferences accordingly. Offline shopping is a traditional way but online shopping is a newly emerged concept in the 21st century. Online shopping is trending. Because of the covid 19 many people switch to online shopping. Today's generation prefers online shopping to offline shopping as compared to previous generations. With every new concept covering the positive and negative, today's generations are choosing online shopping over offline shopping because of the covid19. This study will help the researcher get a complete picture about the most preferred shopping mode among the consumers.

KEYWORDS: Online Shopping, Offline Shopping, Impact of Covid on Retail

INTRODUCTION

Retail Sector:

The Retail Sector is one of the fastest growing sectors in India. It is the backbone of the economy and about 10 per cent of the country's GDP. The Indian retail market is estimated to be valued at US\$ 600 billion and one of the top five retail markets in the world by economic value. The growth of the retail sector in India is one of the fastest globally. Every customer is very particular about their products. Their choices vary based upon their preferences towards online shopping. Traditional shopping has its own advantages and disadvantages. On the other hand, traditional shopping allows customers to physically examine products which otherwise online shopping lacks. Consumers may use both online and traditional modes of shopping depending on their preferences at a particular moment, which results in fundamentally different behaviours across the modes of shopping.

Traditional shopping:

One has to leave home, either walk or take a ride to the store or shopping centre in order to buy what one wants. It enables one to see the actual product before paying the money. One could get the actual product that he or she likes with the money. Some of the benefits of traditional shopping includes: Traditional way of shopping in the locals or showrooms gives the happiness that online shopping can never give, one can try the dresses in the trial room and this gives immense happiness, one can actually feel the dress, see the dress material, quality and texture and see if it meets the expectation and then can decide whether to buy or not, one can also check whether the dress fits properly or not. While traditional shopping, the shop's staff gives personalized attention and keeps asking what one likes. And love the way they show the dress. When one gets confused, they recommend which dress will look good and which dress will not. In traditional shopping, one can shop the product quickly and can bring home that time only and then can show it to the family and friends. Nowadays, consumers are very much possessive about oneself. Most of them need to try on the clothes which they buy and this is only possible in traditional shopping. But due to Covid 19 pandemic, it is very much risky to try on clothes and the shops usually are closed so there are less chances of opting for traditional shopping. For testing data, the researchers gathered secondary data and first-hand information, primary data was collected through questionnaire method. A questionnaire method was used to administer responses to collect reliable data. The sampling method used for the study was Convenience and Snowball method and also testing with the chi-square method.

Online shopping:

It means a process of buying and selling of products and services through the Internet. Online shopping has become the fastest-growing industry and Internet users have reported that online shopping is one of their primary uses of the Internet. With the help of online shopping, the consumers can purchase clothes, shoes, books, airline and event tickets, foods, computer hardware and so on. Majority of the time it is assumed that transaction security, personal privacy, product price, product quality, convenience, accessibility, promotions and advertisement, delivery time, quality comparison and reputation of the company are the important variables in online shopping. With the growth of online shopping, there are various opportunities and challenges to online business retailers and consumers. Instead of having to physically visit different stores to compare prices or rely on circular pamphlets in newspapers, a consumer is able to search and retrieve needed information through the internet. The development of the internet has created a paradigm shift of the traditional way people shop. A consumer is no longer bound to opening times for specific locations; he can become active virtually any time and place and purchase products or services. The number of internet users is constantly increasing which also signifies that online purchasing is increasing.

In the present study researcher attempted to collect relevant data on impact of covid 19 on offline shopping in order to arrive at some concrete inferences.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

1. To evaluate the impact of covid 19 on the retail sector.
2. To understand the consumers perspective about the impact of covid 19 on offline shopping.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

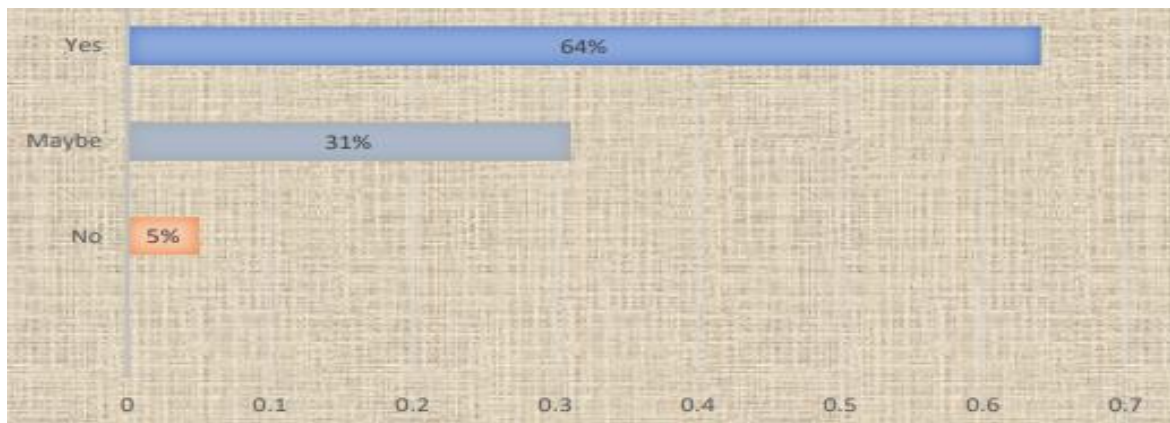
Present research paper reviews certain studies conducted relating to online shopping and offline shopping. For collection of secondary data researchers attempted to evaluate some books, journals, internet site and articles. All this has helped the researchers to thoroughly understand the topic and pen down some important points for the present study. For gathering first-hand information, primary data was collected through questionnaire method. A structured questionnaire was used to administer responses to collect reliable data. The sampling method used for the study was Convenience and Snowball method. The primary data gathered from respondents is statistically analysed and tested and is further be presented in the form of graphs

and charts to make it more explanatory. Researchers have made an attempt to use descriptive frequency analysis for analysing the data and chi-square test was used to test hypothesis of the study. There were total 100 respondents, 50 male and 50 female from different age groups.

DISCUSSION

Chart 1.1

Impact of Covid 19/pandemic on the mode of shopping

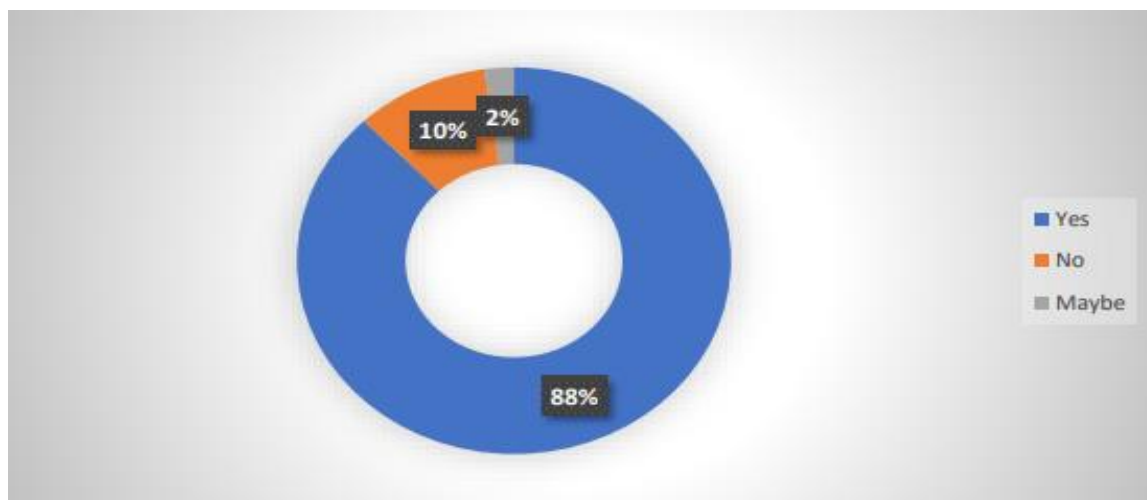


Source: Compiled from primary data collection, 2022.

From the above Chart 1.1, it can be observed that during the pandemic, 64 per cent of the respondents agreed that COVID 19 had a deep impact on the mode of shopping, 31 per cent respondents felt that COVID did have a little effect on mode of shopping and only 5 per cent respondents did not think COVID had any impact on mode of shopping.

Chart 1.2

Effect of Covid 19 on Offline shopping



Source: Compiled from primary data collection, 2022.

It can be observed from the above chart that before COVID, 88 per cent of the respondents opined that covid has an impact on offline shopping, only 10 per cent of the respondents expressed that it does not have any impact on offline shopping and there only 2 per cent who have no specific opinion about it. Results above seem really extreme as till the time Covid had not entered the India, Indian were really not bothered about online, offline or retail purchases in specific as such but as covid hit the Indians, they started giving thought to online shopping or offline shopping and a shift is observed from offline to online for many retail purchases.

Chart 1.3

Reasons for offline shopping post COVID

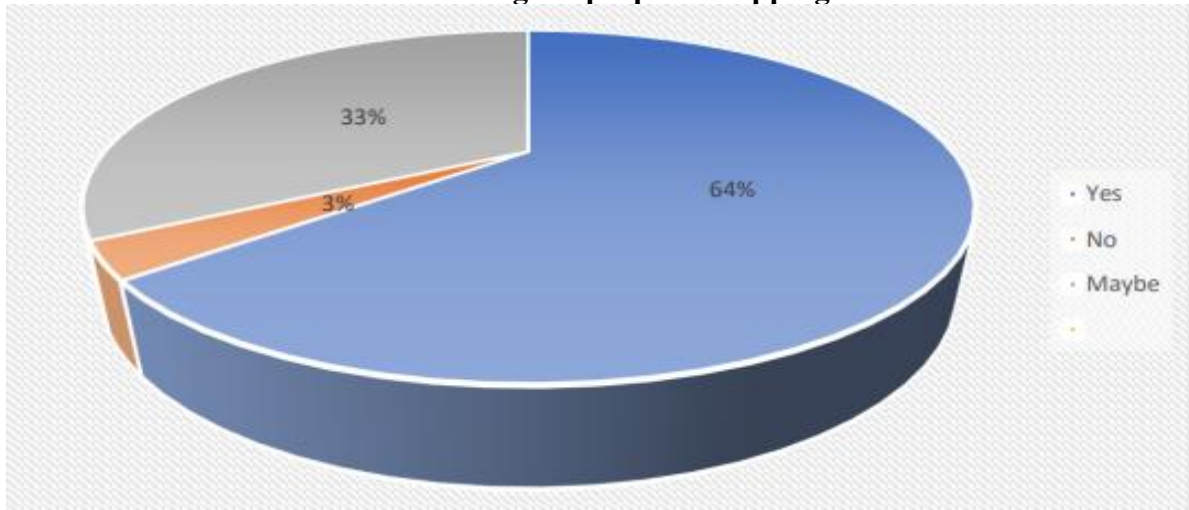


Source: Compiled from primary data collection, 2022.

The above table shows that post lockdown, 88 per cent of the respondents again started to buy offline because shops have opened up and products can be tried, 70 per cent of the respondents switched to buying offline because of wide variety available, 54 per cent respondents were buying because people generally liked going to market, whereas other 43 per cent of the respondents are prefer offline shopping as they like market vibes.

Chart 1.4

Covid and Change in people's shopping habits

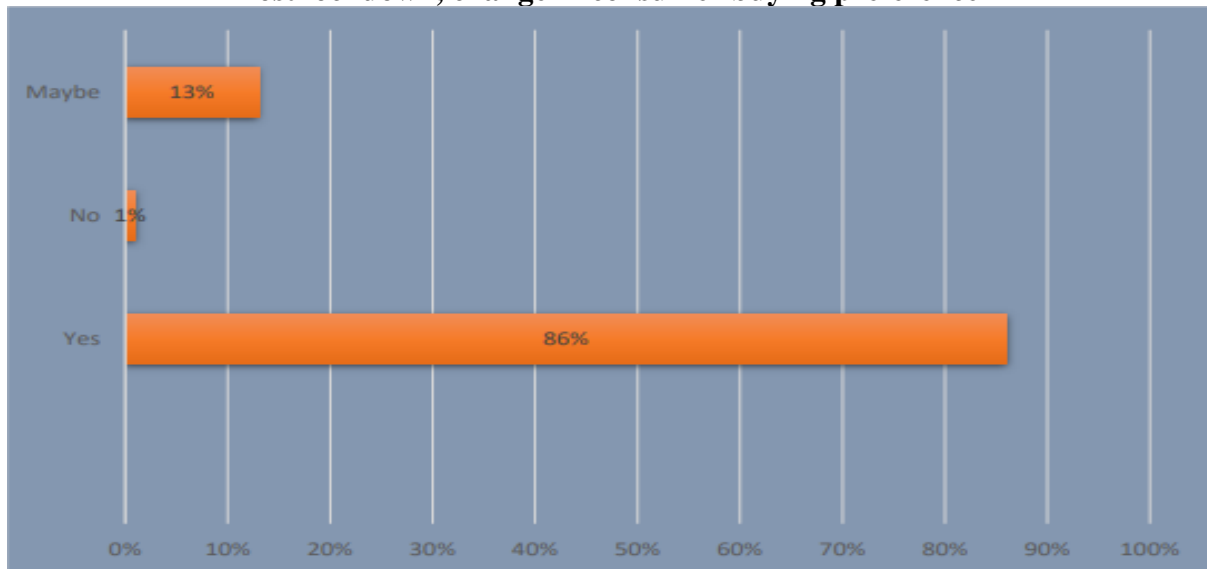


Source: Compiled from primary data collection, 2022.

Chart 1.4 depicts the change brought about by Covid on people's shopping habits. 64 per cent of the respondents have changed their shopping habits, 33 per cent of them have not changed their shopping habits much where there are 3 per cent of the respondents who have not changed their shopping habits at all.

Chart 1.5

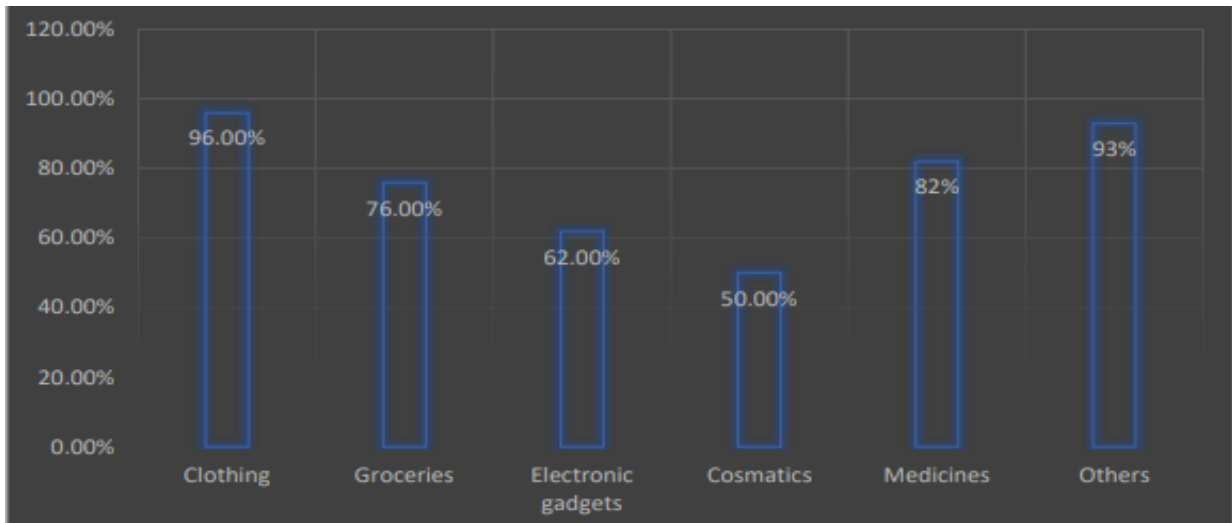
Post lockdown, change in consumer buying preference



Source: Compiled from primary data collection, 2022.

Chart 1.5 shows that 86 per cent of people preferred to buy via offline shopping, whereas 19 per cent of the respondents' buying preferences were both -online and offline whereas there were other 13 per cent of the respondents who did not prefer buying offline at all.

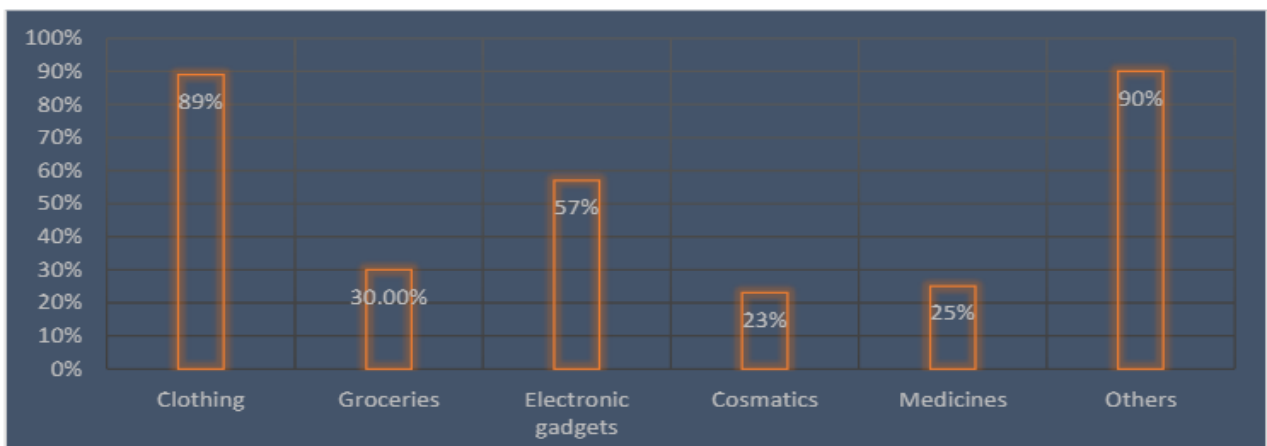
Chart 1.6
Types of goods purchased offline



Source: Compiled from primary data collection, 2022.

From the above Chart 1.6, it seems that maximum of 96 per cent of the respondents buy clothing products offline, 93 per cent of the respondents prefer buying products like shoes, undergarments, lingerie etc., 82 per cent were buying medicines, 76 per cent bought groceries, 62 per cent preferred buying electronic gadgets and 50 per cent of the respondents preferred to buy cosmetics offline.

Chart 1.7
Types of goods purchased online



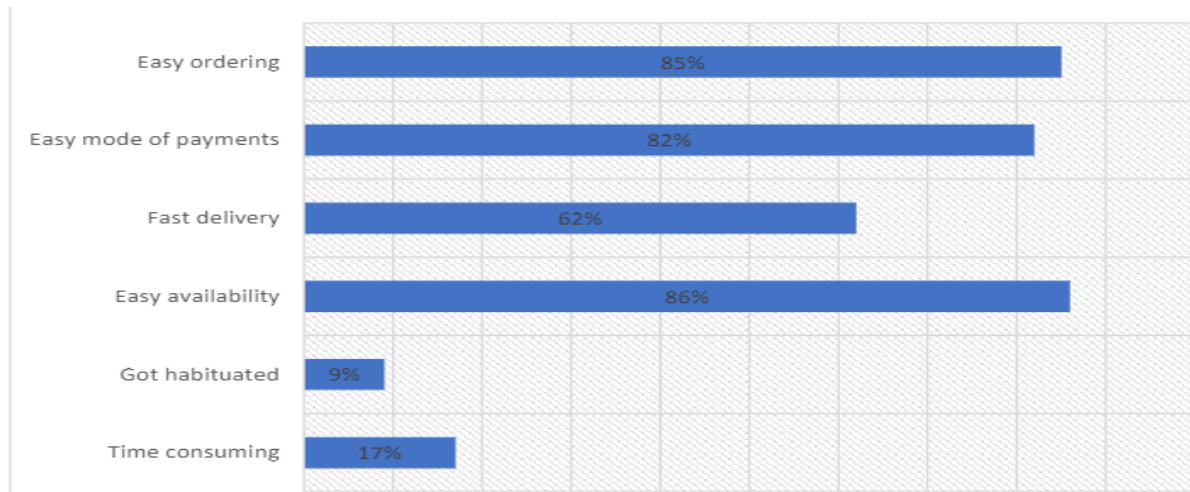
Source: Compiled from primary data collection, 2022.

From the above Chart 1.7, it is observed that 90 per cent of the respondents preferred buying various miscellaneous things like shoes, lingeries, sunglasses, footwear accessories etc, 89 per cent of the respondents buying clothing products, 57 per cent were preferred to buy electronics,

30 per cent were buy groceries, 25 per cent were buy medicines and 23 per cent of the respondents were preferred buying cosmetics online.

Chart 1.8

Reasons for online shopping post COVID



Source: Compiled from primary data collection, 2022.

From the above Chart 1.8, we can strongly conclude that 86 per cent of the respondents buy online because of easy availability of products, 85 per cent of the respondents prefer buying online because it is easy to order, 82 per cent respondents preferred because of easy mode of payments, 62 per cent of the respondents buy it because of fast delivery, 17 per cent respondents buy online because it's less time consuming and 9 per cent because they had got habituated with online shopping.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Statement of Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis(H₁₀): Effect of covid 19 on offline shopping and Gender are not significantly associated with each other.

Alternate Hypothesis(H₁₁): Effect of covid 19 on offline shopping and Gender are significantly associated with each other.

Variables:

Gender of the respondents: Female and Male

Effect of Covid 19 on Offline shopping: Yes or No or Maybe

Calculation of chi-square test:

Observed frequencies

Effect of Covid 19 on offline shopping.	Female	Male	Grand total
Maybe	2	8	10
No	2		2
Yes	46	42	88
Grand total	50	50	100

Expected frequencies

Effect of Covid 19 on offline shopping.	Female	Male	Grand total
Maybe	5	5	10
No	1	1	2
Yes	44	44	88
Grand total	50	50	100

Since 0.0915 is greater than 0.05, thus we accept Null Hypothesis.

Therefore, with the help of Chi-square test, we can conclude that effect of covid 19 on shopping and gender of the respondents has no association with each other.

CONCLUSION

To survive, switching traditional shopping or trade toward digital was one factor that captured the attention across the globe on a larger scale.

During the pandemic online Shopping, increases the opportunities to the sellers and buyers to find innovative ways to sell and buy their products and services. One of them is online shopping which utilizes the benefit of the internet for the faster and economical way of doing business during the pandemic lockdown. The Internet is attracting the consumers of the retail market. It is way far from the traditional business where the buyer sees the product physically, touches and feels the quality, nature of the product. Those facilities are not available for online purchasing. It is found out through the study that gender of the respondents doesn't have any association with the effect of covid 19 on offline shopping.

SUGGESTIONS

1) To match the competition created by online shopping sites, local retails should also start with their delivery apps, delivery on calls or even online delivery sources. This will bring them more business.

2) The main advantage of offline shopping is that the customers can bargain with the retailers according to their price range which cannot be done in online shopping.

3) Generally, merchants and Kirana stores should highlight that they 'credit' services which are not available online.

4) Offline shopping can be encouraged if all the shopkeepers start offering-

- Free home delivery
- Exchange of products within a stipulated time
- Quick delivery of products
- Discounts
- Sales promotional offers

5) Offline outlets should create a database and call people to remind them of their services.

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