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A Comparative Study on Online Shopping Vs. Offline Shopping in Villupuram District

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ABSTRACT

E-commerce is a business-to-consumer (B2C) mode of trading goods and services. Online shopping is on the rise due to the convenience of time-saving, easy payment methods, and a wide variety of products. In emerging nations like India, online shopping has grown more convenient due to the rising use of smartphones. In India, however, people have begun using the Internet to make purchases of goods and services because they find offline shopping to be more satisfying. Consequently, it's necessary to find the causes of these contradictory customer behaviors. This study aims to compare the current state of online and offline buying in Villupuram, Tamil Nadu. Both primary and secondary sources of information were used in this research. Shopping offline continues to be the most popular option in Villupuram, despite the growing popularity of online shopping. Comparing online and offline buying gives the study an idea of consumer satisfaction as well.

Keywords: E-commerce, Consumer satisfaction, Online shopping, Offline shopping.

Introduction

Shopping is an essential part of our daily lives. In today's world, nobody can imagine life without the Internet, even in small villages. It spreads like the wind. The strength of technology is the power of technology. Technology is the power of shopping. Online shopping is the consequence of this technology. Online shopping brings many changes to the traditional market. It offers a wide range of products, convenience, product category comparison, and ease of finding at one location. Online shopping occurs when a customer purchases products or services through a digital platform. It involves going to a seller's website, selecting a product, and arranging delivery.

"Shopping" is the most common term used to describe what we have done all these years. In ancient times, "trading" or "bartering" and "market" were also used. Online and offline/traditional shopping are the two main categories of shopping. In the 21st century, online shopping has taken on a vital role in our lives. One of the main motivations for this is convenience. When you shop online, you can purchase nearly anything you to buy while traveling or getting ready for bed.

The act of buying goods and services using the Internet is known as online shopping. It was first developed by Michael Aldrich in 1979, and the first products to be sold online were books (Palmer &Kimberly, 2007). The World Wide Web was created by Tim Berners and made available for commercial use. In 1994, many technological innovations emerged, such as Online banking, Pizza Hut's first online store, and Intershop's first online buying platform. SSL (Secure Sockets Layer) is an internet security protocol developed by Netscape. In 1995, Amazon launched the first online website for shopping. eBay was also introduced in the year 1995.

A lot of nations use Internet shopping now, and some are just getting started. The first software, still in use today, was called "Swreg." In the book The Future Shop, the author discusses how new technologies will alter consumer behavior and how they will shop. In 1992, the book was released. The book's primary focus is on the future developments in e-commerce. 1994 is regarded as the year that online commerce took off. Yahoo was introduced in this year. There were about 12,000 domain names registered on the internet in 1995. Next, Yahoo introduced the Yahoo shop online in 1998, and Google joined the e-commerce world.

In order to make an online purchase, the consumer has to have access to the internet and a working payment method. Amazon, Myntra, and Flipkart are just a few of the well-known online retailers. These online shops draw customers in with their inexpensive prices and huge selections.

Customers feel fulfilled whether they shop online or offline. The technological revolution and the COVID-19 pandemic have made online shopping popular among buyers. This has opened the door for sellers to take full advantage of market opportunities. The goal of profit maximization is easy and

affordable. It is not necessary to make huge investments to start a business. Large-scale buying is possible in online sales due to their ability to attract and keep large customers on their side. Traditional "brick and mortar" sellers can maintain their success by excelling in unique areas like good personal customer relations, physical touch, visual impact, bargaining power, and payment facilities.

Online shopping is generally more common among those with greater incomes and educational attainment. Online shopping is also more common among those who are well-educated and internet savvy. The way that consumers feel about internet buying is evolving along with technology. There are no boundaries between countries when it comes to online buying. In the modern world, customer satisfaction, product value, and delivery quality all have a significant impact on customer loyalty. This study attempts to ascertain the rationale behind consumers' decisions to shop at direct retail stores and online.

Due to the cheaper rates, shopping online is far more affordable than shopping in person. Customers need to select a purchasing strategy that fits their requirements and preferences. In this digital age, it's amazing to see how easily accessible everything has become. From groceries to gadgets, the internet has made our lives more convenient. Nowadays consumers want more personalized experiences as they become more conscious of the benefits of digitization.

Review of Literature

Miss. Jayashri Sadanand Lokhande (December 2022), researched the topic "Online shopping and offline shopping: A comparative study": Examining the variables influencing customers' decisions to transition from offline to online and vice versa is the primary goal of this study. The study's overall findings show that respondents' opinions of internet purchasing are generally favorable. The study's conclusions show that businesses must treat their online marketplaces seriously. The research utilized a questionnaire as the primary data collection tool. She concluded that, as women make more online purchases than males, online businesses should focus more on their female audience as a result of this study.

Ms. Supriya Mahajan et al, (April 2018), "A comparative study on online and offline shopping", The primary goal of this study is to identify the variables that influence respondents' decisions to make offline and online purchases. To accomplish the goals of the study, a descriptive research design has been employed in this investigation. This study employed a convenience sampling technique, and the sample was drawn from several regions within Punjab. Convenience quality, online trust, income, variety, offers, and instant gratification were the factors affecting online shopping. This study suggests offline shopping medium needs some changes, like more variety in the product, availability of the product on time, and complete knowledge of the product to the seller.

Ashish Baghla (2018), "A study of consumer behavior towards online shopping: An analysis of commerce students". This study's primary goal is to determine how satisfied people are with their online purchasing experiences. The research makes use of both primary and secondary sources. Eighty commerce students were selected at random from different regions in order to conduct telephone interviews to gather primary data. The study finds that incentives like cash-back deals, free e-currency like Paytm cash or Goibibo cash, freebies, etc. are important draws for online shoppers. According to this study, the business should supply the goods under the specs and images displayed on its website. Finally, it can be said that there is a lot of untapped potential for the future in the expanding sphere of online purchasing.

Dr. Raja Sarkar et al. (2017), "Online shopping vs. offline shopping: A comparative study". This study is concentrated on the comparison of online and offline shopping based on certain parameters such as convenience, variety, consumer review, comparison shopping, discounts, availability of unique products, tangibility and trialability, shopping experience, delivery of products, and return of products. This study relies on data obtained from secondary sources. According to this study, the concept of omnichannel strategy has started taking center stage, whereas retailers are trying to remain present in both online and offline channels to tap the demands of a maximum number of customers.

Miss Sukhwinder Kaur et al. (2018), "Comparative study on online vs. offline shopping". A questionnaire was utilized to gather primary data for the study, which employed descriptive analysis. The research was restricted to the Moga region of Punjab due to limitations in resources and time. Despite the finest and most sincere efforts, the study's findings and conclusion are just suggestive, not definitive, because the sample size was limited to 40. This study's primary goal is to examine the notable distinctions between online and offline customer groups concerning availability, technological use, consumer attitudes, and demography. According to the survey, most customers are only willing to drive ten miles or fewer for in-person purchases.

Research Gap

The purpose of this study is to determine consumer preferences for offline and online purchasing with particular reference to Villupuram. It has 102 samples in all. Online purchasing offers time and money savings. Technology advancements have led to a rise in internet buying. Primary data for the study were gathered using a questionnaire. The goal of this study is to find out how individuals in Villupuram feel about customer satisfaction and what they think about both offline and internet buying. According to the study's findings, nearly all of them had done both online and offline shopping. This study indicates that although consumers find internet shopping to be helpful and time-saving, they also experience numerous server issues and unsuccessful transactions.

Statement of the Problem

A comparative study between online and offline shopping and to study consumer behavior towards each of these modes of shopping. Customer preferences are hard to find these days. Online and offline reviews differ in terms of the product, price, and quality. When it comes to online or offline purchasing, there are a lot of benefits and drawbacks for customers. Knowing the priorities and preferences of shoppers is aided by this study. Whichever shopping mode they choose will help the buyer understand the course of action to take in order to maximize their benefits.

Objective of the Study

- To compare consumer satisfaction towards online and offline shopping.

- To determine the most preferable medium for shopping.

- To ascertain the most effective form of advertisement for driving both offline and online purchases.

- To find out the major websites selected by consumers for online shopping.

Research Methodology:

The whole study is based on both primary and secondary sources of data. The study compares the behavior of customers towards online and offline/traditional shopping. To get the current attitude of people towards online shopping, the "Questionnaire Survey" method of data collection was implemented. Reaching a broad range of populations with the questionnaire method is less expensive and easier to use. The social media platform was utilized in this study to connect with a wide range of people. Primary data was analyzed, and the results were based on the "Percentage Method". Responses were received from the Villupuram district, and due to time constraints, the sample size was limited to 102 respondents. The research also includes secondary data collected from books, journals, and various websites. A convenience sampling technique was used in this study.

Result and discussion

The study describes the customers' perception of online shopping and offline shopping in Villupuram. The objective was to understand the attitudes and knowledge of people towards online shopping and offline shopping and also to determine the satisfaction level towards online and offline shopping.

Table 1

Socioeconomic variables

S.no	Variables		No. of respondents	Percentage
1.	Gender	Male	44	43.1
		Female	58	56.9
		Total	102	100
2.	Age	Below - 20	55	53.9
		21 - 30	31	30.4
		31 - 40	5	4.9
		Above 40	11	10.8
		Total	102	100
3.	Educational qualification	Schooling	19	18.9
		UG	54	52.9
		PG	17	16.7
		Others	12	11.8
		Total	102	100
4.	Marital status	Single	74	72.5
		Married	28	27.5

		Total	102	100
5.	Family Annual Income	Below 100000	56	54.9
		100000 -300000	32	31.4
		30000 - 50000	11	10.8
		Above 500000	3	2.9
		Total	102	100

Source: Primary data.

Interpretation: It is clear from Table 1 that, out of 102 respondents, 58 shoppers (56.9 percent) are female, and 44 shoppers (43.1 percent) are male. 55 shoppers (53.9 percent) are in the age group below 20, and 31 shoppers (30.4 percent) are in the age group above 21–30 years. 28 shoppers (27.5 percent) are married, and 74 shoppers (72.5 percent) are unmarried. 56 shoppers (54.9 percent) earned below Rs. 100,000, and 32 shoppers (31.4 percent) earned between Rs. 100,000 and Rs. 300,000. 54 respondents are pursuing undergraduate degrees, and 17 respondents are pursuing postgraduate degrees.

Table 2

 Opinion of the customers

S.no	Statement	Yes	May be	No	Total
1.	Online shopping is a platform that saves your time and energy	54 (52.9%)	38 (37.3%)	10 (9.8%)	102 (100%)
2.	Online shopping is generally less expensive compared to shopping at physical stores.	50 (49%)	41 (40.2%)	11 (10.8%)	102 (100%)
3.	Online buying has turned into a compulsive habit.	44 (43.1%)	30 (29.4%)	28 (27.5%)	102 (100%)
4.	Get irritated due to unnecessary botheration by an online website after the moment you browse an item	45 (44.1%)	34 (33.3%)	23 (22.5%)	102 (100%)
5.	Ask your close ones about the product for their opinion before purchasing online	55 (53.9%)	29 (28.4%)	18 (17.6%)	102 (100%)
6.	A lack of interest in online shopping encourages offline shopping.	43 (42.2%)	29 (28.4%)	30 (29.4%)	102 (100%)
7.	Offline shopping is more credible and authentic than online shopping	54 (52.9%)	31 (30.4%)	17 (16.7%)	102 (100%)
8.	Suggest others opt for online shopping	36 (35.3%)	37 (36.3%)	29 (28.4%)	102 (100%)
9.	Shopping online is just as safe as offline.	32 (31.4%)	34 (33.3%)	36 (35.3%)	102 (100%)

Source: Primary data.

Interpretation: The table shows that the data was received from 102 respondents. Out of 102 respondents, the majority (54) say that Online shopping saves shoppers time and energy. Out of 102 respondents, 50 said that compared to offline shopping, online shopping is less expensive. 44 participants said that online buying turned into a compulsive habit, and 30 respondents chose that maybe it's become an addiction to them. 45 get irritated due to unnecessary botheration by an online website the moment they browse an item. Out of 102 respondents, more than half (55) asked their close ones about the product for their opinion before purchasing online. 43 respondents say that a lack of interest in online shopping encourages offline shopping. 54 say that offline shopping is more credible and authentic than online shopping. 37 shoppers may be suggested to others to opt for online shopping. 36 shoppers said that shopping online is not as safe as offline.

Table 3

Shopping Experience of the Customers

S.no	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
1.	Online shopping is expected to become more popular than offline shopping.	11 (10.8%)	41 (40.2%)	35 (34.3%)	5 (4.9%)	10 (9.8%)	102 (100%)
2.	Offline shopping will disappear in the future.	21 (20.6%)	30 (29.4%)	24 (23.5%)	22 (21.6%)	5 (4.9%)	102 (100%)
3.	Online shopping is a platform where consumers can access the latest trends.	22 (21.6%)	49 (48%)	24 (23.5%)	6 (5.9%)	1 (1%)	102 (100%)
4.	Goods that are not available on cash on delivery (COD) restrict purchasing behavior.	8 (7.8%)	23 (22.4%)	34 (33.3%)	18 (17.6%)	19 (18.6%)	102 (100%)
5.	Bad experiences with online shopping led to a lack of trust in the online world, and service providers persuaded consumers to make offline purchases.	12 (11.8%)	27 (26.5%)	31 (30.4%)	19 (18.6%)	13 (12.7%)	102 (100%)
6.	Happy with the features and design provided by online shopping sites	6 (5.9%)	27 (26.5%)	42 (41.2%)	13 (12.7%)	14 (13.7%)	102 (100%)

Source: Primary data.

Interpretation: Table 3 shows that out of 102 respondents, 41 agree that online shopping is expected to become more popular than offline shopping, 30 agree that offline shopping will disappear in the future, 49 respondents agree online shopping was a platform where consumers reach the latest trend, 27 agree that a bad experience in online shopping led to lack of interest in the online world and service providers persuade consumers to make offline purchases, and 14 strongly disagree that shoppers are not happy with the features and design provided in online shopping websites.

Table 4

Customers opinion on shopping

S.no	Statement	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
1.	The products are of good quality in online shopping	9 (8.8%)	20 (19.6%)	41 (40.2%)	24 (23.5%)	8 (7.8%)	102 (100%)
2.	Rating is given to Online shopping	10 (9.8%)	13 (12.7%)	62 (60.8%)	11 (10.8%)	6 (5.9%)	102 (100%)

Source: Primary data.

Interpretation: The survey showed that 41 respondents rated product quality as good and 8 respondents rated product quality as poor on online websites. 62 respondents thought online shopping was good, and 6 respondents rated poor for online shopping.

Table 5

Using the internet per day

Statement	No. of respondents	Percentage
Less than an hour	14	13.7
2 – 4 hours	50	49
5 – 7 hours	22	21.6

| More than 7 hours | 16 | 15.7 |
| Total | 102 | 100 |

Source: Primary data.

Interpretation: The table shows that the majority of shoppers (50) use the Internet for 2–4 hours per day. 14 respondents used less than an hour, 22 respondents used 5 to 7 hours of Internet per day, and 16 respondents used more than 7 hours of Internet per day.

Table 6

The most preferable medium for shopping

Statement	Number of respondents	Percentage
Online	39	38.2
Offline	63	61.8
Total	102	100

Source**:** Primary data.

Interpretation: Table 6 shows that out of 102 respondents, 63 preferred an offline mode of shopping, and 39 preferred an online mode of shopping.

Table 7

Browsing the shopping websites

Statement	No. of respondents	Percentage
Daily	8	7.8
Every Alternate Day	19	18.6
Twice a week	13	12.7
Once a week	17	16.7
Rarely	45	44.1
Total	102	100

Source: Primary data.

Interpretation: Table 7 shows that out of 102 respondents, 45 rarely browse shopping websites. 19 respondents browse every alternate day, 13 respondents browse twice a week, 17 respondents browse once a week, and 8 respondents browse online websites daily.

Table 8

The average number of years purchasing online.

Statement	No. of respondents	Percentage
Less than a year	31	30.4
1 – 2 years	27	26.5
2 – 3 years	20	19.6
3 – 4 years	9	8.8
More than 4 years	15	14.7
Total	102	100

Source: Primary data.

Interpretation: Table 8 reveals that of the 102 participants, 31 have been making purchases over the Internet for just over a year. 27 respondents purchased 1–2 years, 20 respondents purchased 2–3 years, 9 respondents purchased 3–4 years, and 15 respondents purchased more than four years on the online websites.

Table 9

Purchasing for the last 3 months on an average from online shopping websites.

Statement	No. of respondents	Percentage
Less than 4	39	38.2
4 - 7	13	12.7
7 - 10	8	7.8
More than 10	12	11.8
Not at all	30	29.4
Total	102	100

Source: Primary data.

Interpretation: Table 9 shows that out of 102 respondents, 39 respondents purchased less than 4 times from online shopping websites in the last 3 months. 12.7% of respondents purchased 4 to 7 times, 7.8% of respondents purchased 7 to 10 times, 11.8% of respondents purchased more than 10 times, and 29.4% of respondents purchased not at all from the online websites for the past three months.

Table 10 -Preferred online shopping websites

Statement	No. Of respondents	Percentage
Amazon	53	52
Flipkart	54	52.9
Meesho	41	40.2
Myntra	16	15.7
Snapdeal	17	16.7

Source: Primary data.

Interpretation: Table 10 clearly shows that most online shoppers prefer Amazon and Flipkart for shopping for online products, 40.2% of respondents preference was for Meesho, 15.7% of respondents preference was for Myntra, and 16.7% of respondents preference was for Snapdeal websites for shopping.

Table 11 - Ever concerned about

Statement	No. of respondents	Percentage
Time of Delivery	44	43.1
Return Policy	38	37.3
Review of product	40	39.2
Never be concerned	28	27.5

Source: Primary data.

Interpretation: Table 11 shows that 43.1% of respondents are concerned about the time of delivery for shopping. 37.3% of respondents were concerned about the return policy. 39.2% of respondents were concerned about the review of products, and 27.5% of respondents were never concerned about purchasing products.

Table 12

Method of payment preferred for shopping

Statement	No. of respondents	Percentage
Cash on delivery	78	76.5
Credit card	27	26.5
Debit card	19	18.6

Internet transaction	21	20.6

Source: Primary data.

Interpretation: The survey showed that 76.5% of respondents chose cash on delivery as a method of payment. 26.5% of respondents chose credit cards for payment, 18.6% of respondents chose debit cards for making payments, and 20.6% of respondents chose Internet transactions for shopping.

Table 13

The important factor while buying through offline shopping.

Statement	No. of respondents	Percentage
Salesman advice	24	23.5
Price	45	44.1
Quality	77	75.5
Payment facility	14	13.7

Source: Primary data.

Interpretation: Table 13 shows that 75.5% of respondents purchased offline because they considered quality to be an important criterion for offline shopping. 23.5% of respondents purchased because of the salesman's advice 44.1% of respondents purchased because of the price of the product, and 13.7% of respondents purchased because of the payment facility.

Table 14

The important factor while buying through online shopping.

Statement	No. of respondents	Percentage
Delivery	34	33.3
Price	46	45.1
Quality	56	54.9
Payment facility	27	26.5

Source: Primary data.

Interpretation: Table 14 shows that 33.3% of respondents purchased online because of the delivery, 54.9% of respondents purchased because of the quality, 45.1% of respondents purchased because of the price, and 27% of respondents purchased because of the payment facility.

Table 15

The type of advertisement mostly attracts to purchase offline.

Statement	No. of respondents	Percentage
Discount ads	47	46.1
Sale ads	26	25.5
Festive ads	41	40.2
1 + 1 offer	36	35.3
Gift ads	21	20.6

Source: Primary data.

Interpretation: Table 15 shows that 46.6 % of respondents bought offline because of discount ads, 25.5% of respondents bought because of sale ads, 40.2% of respondents bought because of festive ads, 35.3% of respondents bought because of 1+1 offers and 20.6% of respondents bought through offline because of gift ads.

Table 16

The type of advertisement mostly attracts to purchase online.

Statement	No. of respondents	Percentage
Discount ads	54	52.9
Sale ads	21	20.6
Festive ads	33	32.4
1 + 1 offer	40	39.2
Cash back offer ads	32	31.4

Source: Primary data.

Interpretation: Table 16 shows that 52.9% of respondents bought online because of discount ads, 39.2% of respondents bought because of a 1 + 1 offer, 20.6% of respondents bought because of sale ads, and 32.4% of respondents bought because of festive ads.

Table 17

Willing distance to travel to shop in offline mode

Statement	No. of respondents	Percentage
Less than 5 miles	28	27.5
5 - 15 miles	21	20.6
15 - 30 miles	25	24.5
More than 30 miles	28	27.5
Total	102	100

Source: Primary data.

Interpretation: Table 17 shows that out of 102 respondents, 28 respondents were willing to travel less than 5 miles, 25 respondents were willing to travel 15–30 miles, 21 respondents were willing to travel 5–15 miles to shop in offline mode and 28 respondents were willing to travel more than 30 miles to shop in offline mode.

Limitations of the study

The study is related to the shopping experience of consumers. The study's sample size is limited to 102 respondents. The research is restricted to Villupuram, Tamil Nadu. The only method used to gather the data was a structured questionnaire. The responses that were received from the respondents serve as the only basis for this study. The veracity of the response determines the study's accuracy.

Findings:

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

- According to the survey, most participants (53.9%/) are under the age of 20.
- The survey showed 56.9% were female.
- The survey shows that the majority of respondents use Flipkart for online shopping.
- Analysis showed a lot of customers consider quality as the most essential criterion when they purchase offline and online.
- The Discount ads attract customers in both online and offline shopping.
- The study shows that the majority of online shoppers opted to pay with cash on delivery.

Suggestions

The respondents indicated that traditional methods of shopping are safer than online ones. Therefore, online service providers should take action to strengthen payment security protocols and ensure that customers are completely satisfied with the things they purchase.

The preferred payment method for both online and offline purchases is cash on delivery. Though the government encourages the public to use digital payments, it is not preferred by all. So digital literacy should be encouraged, and the benefits behind it should be highlighted to have a cashless economy like in Western countries.

Amazon and Flipkart are discovered to be the customer's preferred websites, followed by other websites. In order to enhance the customer's attention on other websites, invite options to be introduced by other online shopping service providers in order to entice users to their websites.

Conclusion

The Government has focused on transferring the economy into a digital economy, yet physical/traditional or offline shopping is preferred by customers. People found offline shopping more satisfactory. They can check the quality of products physically and buy locally manufactured products easily through offline shopping. The study reveals that discount ads mostly attract to purchase online as well as offline. Online shopping is an increasing trend due to less time consumption, varieties of products available easily and the customers can compare prices of products without any problem. But there are some drawbacks regarding online shopping such as security, quality of products, and delivery of products that must be sorted out. To improve the satisfaction level of online shopping, it must be more secure and more products should be added by sellers to fulfill the needs of customers.

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