

Online versus offline shopping behavior of young consumers for branded apparel: A comparison based on demographic profile

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Abstract -We're heading towards a world where online and offline shopping experiences are melding. Major and smaller brick-and-mortar retailers have an online presence, while "traditional" Internet-based companies are dipping their toe offline. All major stores are online, providing an alternative experience for their customers. Retailers need to stop seeing online shopping and offline shopping as an "either/or" scenario. Users expect both experiences to be equally pleasant, and companies need to cater to both worlds. Online and offline shopping are both here to stay. The objective of this research is to compare the difference in the consumer behaviour for online versus offline shopping for branded apparel category based on demographic profile to enable marketers devise suitable marketing strategies to attract the consumers based on variables (gender, income). The study conducted is primary research based on specially designed parameters to test the above variables based on 200 respondents collected using random sampling technique. The analysis and findings are based on interpretations using SPSS software.

Key Words: consumer behaviour, branded apparel, young consumers, online shopping, offline shopping

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 WHAT IS ONLINE SHOPPING?

"Online shopping is the process of buying goods and services from merchants over the Internet."

Since the emergence of the World Wide Web, merchants have sought to sell their products to people who spend time online. Shoppers can visit online stores from the comfort of their homes and shop as they sit in front of the computer. Consumers can buy a huge variety of items from online stores, and just about anything can be purchased from companies that provide their products online. Books, clothing, household appliances, toys, hardware, software, and health insurance are just some of the hundreds of products consumers can buy from an online store. Online shopping sites makes shopping one of the easiest tasks possible. Example Myntra.com, Amazon.com.

Many people choose to shop online because of the convenience. For example, when a person shops at a store, he has to drive to the store, find a parking place, and walk throughout the store until he locates the products he needs. After finding the items he wants to purchase, he may often need to stand in long lines at the cash counter.

1.2 WHAT IS OFFLINE SHOPPING?

It means sales of goods and services from single point (malls, markets, departmental stores) directly to the consumer in small quantities for his use. Example Big Bazar, Reliance Trends, Pantaloons)

1.3 YOUNG CONSUMERS?

The young people's marketplace is fast-moving and characterized by an increasingly sophisticated and brand-aware audience. Young Consumers (YC) offers ideas, insights and information on key issues across the whole youth market, from the initial stages of preparing for parenthood to kids, tweenies, teenagers and young people up to the age of 34.

1.4 CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR?

"Consumer behaviour is the study of how people make decisions about what they buy, want, need, or act in regards to a product, service, or company."

It is critical to understand consumer behaviour to know how potential customers will respond to a new product or service. It also helps companies identify opportunities that are not currently met. Understanding consumer behaviour allowed the pro-active companies to increase their market share by anticipating the shift in consumer wants.

1.5 CONCEPT OF BRANDING

If being fashionable or up to date with fashion has become the order of the day it is not only because of the ladies. Men who were not very dress conscious till a few decades back have suddenly become fashion conscious. Gone are the days of purchasing material and having it stitched from tailors.

Today readymade garments have made their way into almost every male wardrobe. With the increasing fashion trends in the global scenario Indian men are also becoming increasingly stylish. India is home to numerous top clothing brands that are both domestic and international (Nike, H&M, Adidas, Zara, Gucci, Tommy Hilfiger, Louis Phillipe, Van Heusen, Pantaloons, Levi's, Forever 21 amongst many more.)

Brand is a "name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of other sellers." [The American Marketing Association (AMA)] It is often important to refer back (or forward) to specific sections. Such references are made by indicating the section number, for example, "In Sec. 2 we showed..." or "Section 2.1 contained a description..." If the word Section, Reference, Equation, or Figure starts a sentence, it is spelled out. When occurring in the middle of a sentence, these words are abbreviated Sec., Ref., Eq., and Fig.

At the first occurrence of an acronym, spell it out followed by the acronym in parentheses, e.g., charge-coupled diode (CCD).

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Specific objectives of the research are:

2.1 To compare the difference in the consumer behaviour for online versus offline shopping for branded apparel category based on gender.

2.2 To compare the difference in the consumer behaviour for online versus offline shopping for branded apparel category based on income.

3. HYPOTHESIS

Following null hypothesis are tested in study:

3.1 H₀: There is no significant difference among the gender i.e. male and female consumer in offline shopping and online shopping.

3.2 H₀: There is no significant difference among the income in offline shopping and online shopping

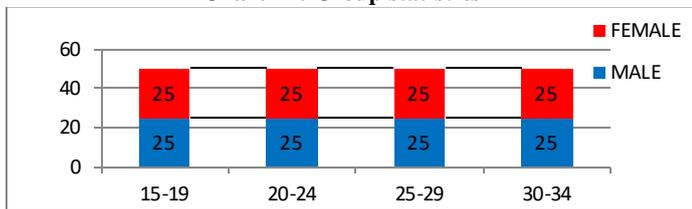
4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on 200 sample size collected through random sampling technique in Delhi and other areas around Delhi for the purpose of study. Data is collected through primary research technique based on demographic profile of consumers on the basis of gender, location and income parameters. The findings and analysis is done based on results obtained through SPSS Software.

5. FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

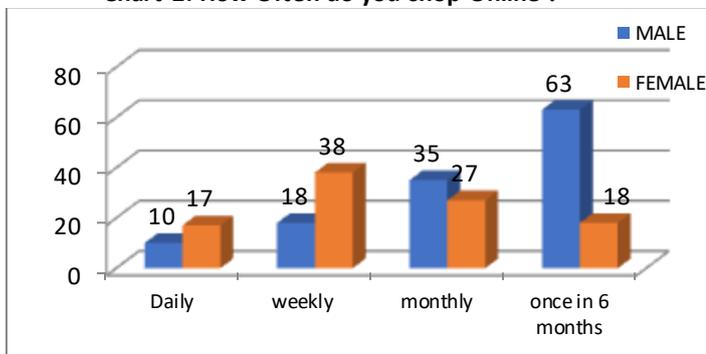
5.1 The following results based on gender variable:

Chart -1: Group statistics



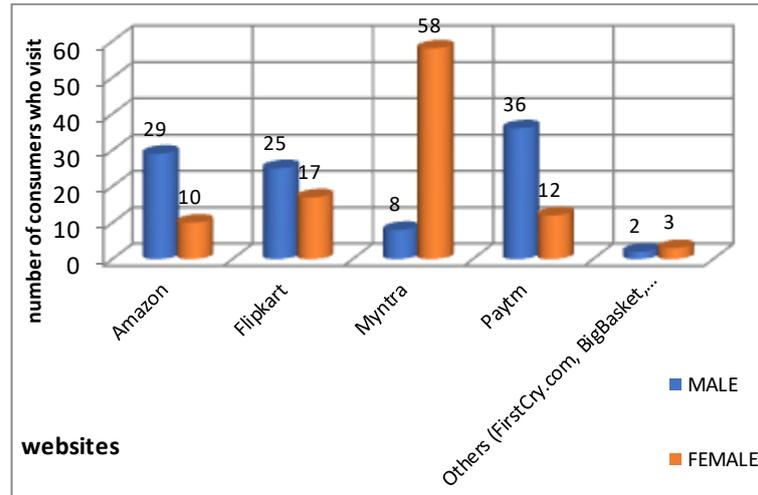
This shows the sample size is equally distributed between age groups and the gender, to have real picture of the situation. The total sample size is 200 distributed in equal stratas.

Chart-2: How Often do you shop Online ? *



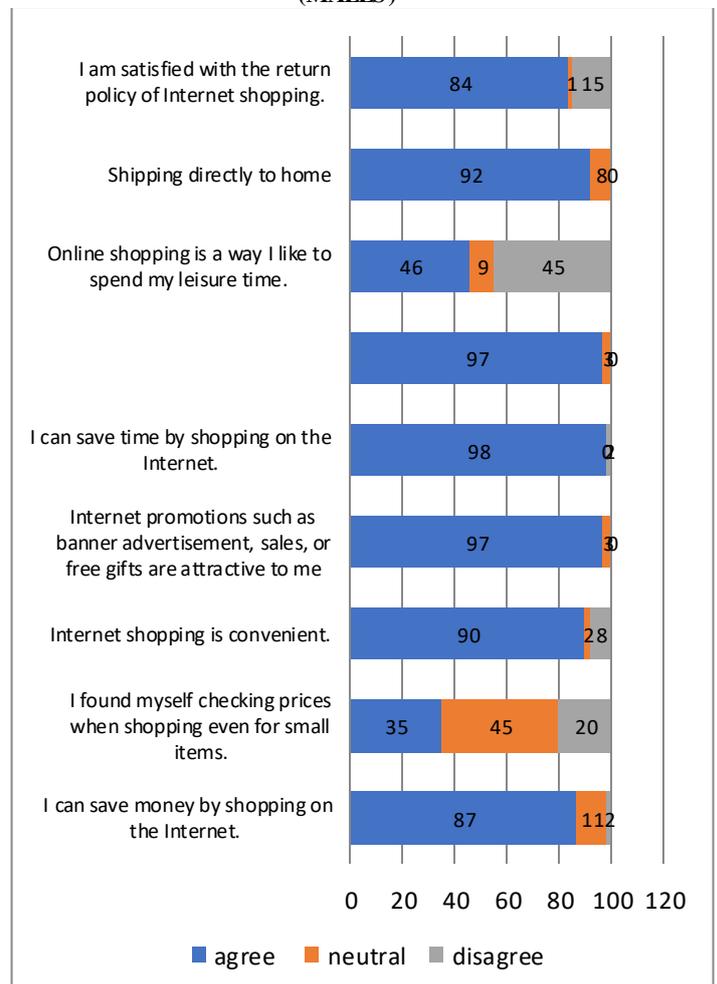
This shows that based on gender perspective females are more frequent in shopping online as compared to males. The %age of males who shop once in 6 months is as high as 63% which shows females are much attracted towards online shopping.

Chart-3: Which websites do you generally visit?

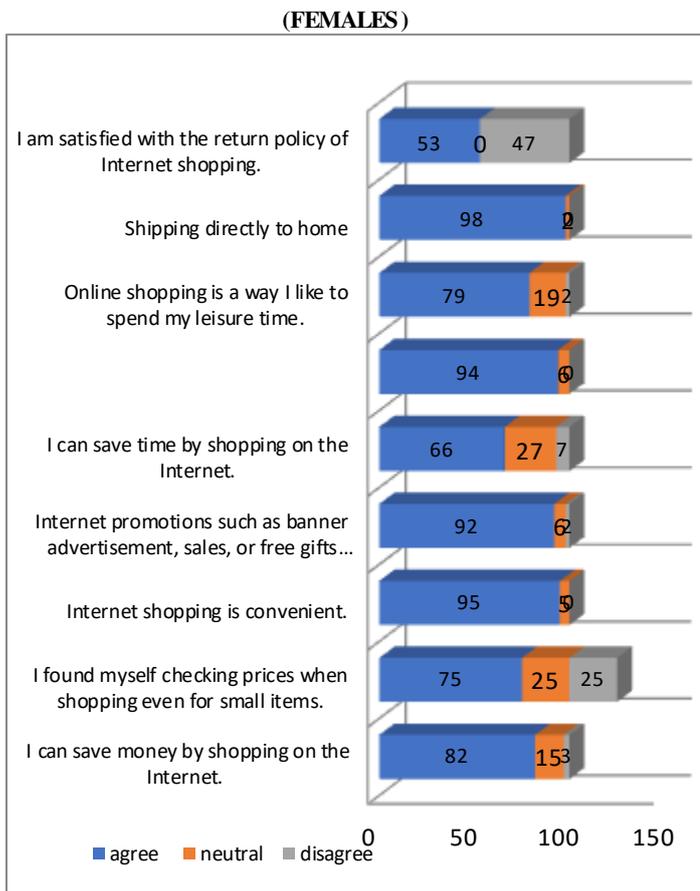


The results show that Myntra is the most visited websites as many as 58% females shop on this website which reflects the interest in apparel. Also, Paytm is the most preferred website amongst males with 36% males shop using Paytm which reflects their interest in cashback schemes offered by this website also today, post demonitisation Paytm became the most preferred website for online transactions. The other websites preferred was FirstCry.com and BigBasket.

Chart -4: Reason why you chose online as compared to offline shopping (Likert scale of 1-3 3- agree, 2-neutral, 1 disagree) (MALES)

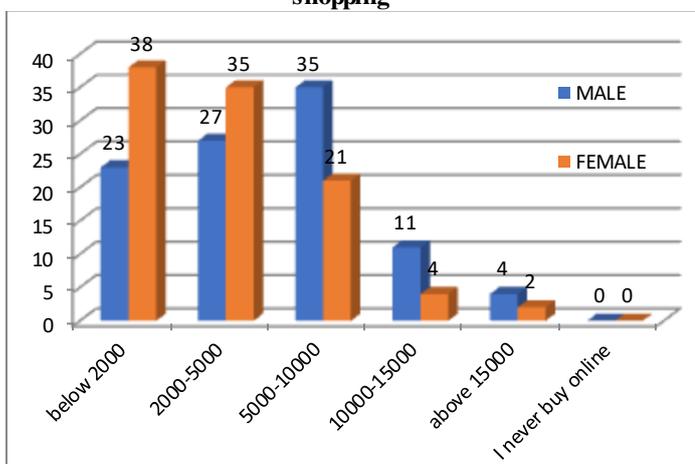


The results in chart 4 show that males are much satisfied with the return policy of online shopping as compared to females (53%). Females are found to check prices of small items more than males. Online shopping is both convenient as well as offers good promotional offers for both males and females. As many as (98%) males say it saves time, while only, (66%) females believe so. Majority of females spend their leisure time doing online shopping. For other reasons both males and females are indifferent in their opinion.



5.2 The following results based on **income variable**:

Chart -5: How much money do you spend on online shopping



The results show that 38% females spend below 2000, 35% females spend between 2000-5000. More males are found to spend as much as 35% between 5000-10000, 10000-15000 and above 15000 than females.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The results and findings conclude that there is a significant difference in online versus offline shopping behaviour of males and females and also between the expenditure spent on online and offline shopping based on income level. Females are more frequent in shopping online as compared to males. The %age of males who shop once in 6 months is as high as 63% which shows females are much attracted towards online shopping. This shows that female as a target customer for the marketers is much more effective. Myntra is the most visited websites as many as 58% females shop on this website which reflects the interest in apparel. Also, Paytm is the most preferred website amongst males with 36% males shop using Paytm which reflects their interest in cashback schemes offered by this website also today, post demonitisation Paytm became the most preferred website for online transactions. The other websites preferred was FirstCry.com and BigBasket. This shows that websites catering to females is much more visited and sought by the consumers. As such marketers can take female segment as the key selling proposition in their websites. Also, as evident from the response of online shopping, males are much satisfied with the return policy of online shopping as compared to females (53%). This shows, it is easy and much effective to sell to males as compared to females. The dissatisfied female segment needs to be catered much efficiently by the marketers. Females are found to check prices of small items more than males. Online shopping is both convenient as well as offers good promotional offers for both males and females. This shows that promotional discounts, festival offers, coupons, gift vouchers play eminent role in increasing online as well as offline shopping by the consumers. As many as (98%) males say it saves time, while only, (66%) females believe so. This shows females spend more time doing online as well as offline shopping. Majority of females spend their leisure time doing online shopping, which makes it an attractive market to sell the products. For other reasons both males and females are indifferent in their opinion. However, when it comes to the expenditure spent on shopping as many as 38% females spend below 2000, 35% females spend between 2000-5000. More males are found to spend as much as 35% between 5000-10000, 10000-15000 and above 15000 than females. This shows that due to income variation the expenditure spent by males is much more than females which makes it an attractive market segment for high value products.

The results of the study shows that both males and females have significant differences in shopping behaviour and also in terms of amount they spend on shopping.

7. LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

The following limitations were faced during the conduct of study:

- 7.1 Study is restricted to Delhi
- 7.2 Sample size is kept small
- 7.3 Sample size and data might not be representative of the population
- 7.4 Response of respondents was biased and subjective
- 7.5 Many respondents were not vocal in sharing their actual views
- 7.6 Mindset of people vary depending upon their age, gender, location, income etc.

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