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Impact on Online Shopping pre and post Covid-19 era with special reference to Lucknow city

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Abstract

Online shopping is the process of buying goods and services from vendor over the internet. Instead of visiting the physical store consumer purchase good or product through mobile app. COVID-19 pandemic brought a major change across the world as well as consumer habit. With the closure of physical stores, the level of in store shopping decline leading to a significant increase in online shopping. During covid-19 the trend of online shopping increased even after covid 19 people continue to shop online because it is more convenient and time saving. In the context of pre- and post-covid-19 scenarios, this paper shows the growth in online shopping and change in consumer preferences post covid-19. A random sample of 128 responses from Lucknow city was taken to identify the relationship between the consumer shopping behaviour and customer satisfaction. The results show the clear shift in the taste and preferences and shopping habit of consumers.

Keywords: *Online Shopping, E-Commerce, covid-19*

Introduction

The advent of the internet carried a rebellious transformation in the way we shop, with online shopping steadily gaining momentum over the years. However, the tectonic shock of the COVID-19 dramatically quickens this shift, basically altering the scene of retail in ways we could hardly have imagined. Then came COVID-19, a global crisis that forced lockdowns, social distancing measures, and extensive fear of contamination. Overnight, what was once an ease became a requirement. Physical stores closed their doors, parting consumers with little choice but to turn to online stages for their shopping needs. This unpredicted flow in demand stunned some retailers while pushing others to record heights of success.

Before the pandemic, online shopping was already growing tendency, offering benefit, variation, and often modest pricing compared to outdated brick-and-mortar stores. Consumers appreciated the ability to look and purchase products from the comfort of their homes, without the limitations of time or location. E-commerce hulks like Amazon had already established themselves as leading players, improving consumer expectations and driving smaller retailers to familiarize or face obsolescence.

In response to this flow in demand, online retailers had to familiarize and create at early rapidity. Supply chain difficulties, logistical tests, and instable consumer preferences required agile responses. Retailers financed deeply in technology, raged up their digital marketing efforts, and discovered new fulfilment methods such as curbside pickup and same-day delivery to meet evolving consumer prospects.

As the world slowly occurs from the tracker of the pandemic, the impact on online shopping persists. While some consumers strongly return to in-person shopping experiences, many have grown familiar to the suitability and flexibility of online shopping and are unlikely to abandon it entirely. The pandemic served as a substance, quickening the expected shift towards a more digital-centric retail landscape.

Looking ahead, the lessons learned from this experience will form the future of online shopping, driving additional innovation and development in the retail sector. From increased reality shopping experiences to sustainable e-commerce practices, the promises are endless as retailers struggle to meet the ever-changing needs and expectations of today's consumers in a post-COVID world.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Desarda Sheetal and Shitole Vijaykumar Mukesh (2022) in their paper titled "Impact of covid 19 on online shopping in India: A special reference to apparel sector" concluded that the covid-19 pandemic has

brought a drastic change in the buying habits of consumers. The paper stated that buying fashion and experiential products like apparels online which they were reluctant to buy online earlier and the trend will continue in future. However, 'increasing competition' is a major challenge in front of online apparel sellers. They should come up with innovative strategies and exclusive products to beat the competition. Consumers are at a profit as they will have wider choices and better shopping experiences.

Dr. Vijai C and Nivetha P (2020) in their research paper titled "A study on coronavirus (covid 19) Impact of consumer buying behavior with special reference to Chennai city" concluded that COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally changed the world. People are living differently, buying differently and in many ways. Retailers are closing doors. Consumers across the globe are observing products and brands over a new lens system. Most of the respondents strongly decide COVID-19 influence on purchasing behavior and the majority of the respondents spending the money only essential goods during COVID-19, the respondents purchasing more fruits and vegetables during COVID-19. Most of the respondents prefer to use online payment for purchasing, COVID 19 reduced the expenditure and saved.

Harikumar Gayathri and Ashok R (2021) in their paper titled "Analysis of customer satisfaction regarding online store portals for grocery shopping during covid 19 in Chennai" concluded that most of the customers are more satisfied with online shopping portals which were supplying groceries and essentials at the doorsteps of the customers during this isolation. Protection and cleanness were also a major factor in the thoughts of the clients who purchased from online grocery web portals. Convenience is the key factor for the customers who shopped online than other factors.

Sangeetha K, Kumar Senthil CB and Kandeepan E (2023) in their paper titled "Dimensions of covid19 impacts on online shopping behaviour of consumers" suggested that internet customers are dedicated to doing their purchasing on a daily basis. Customers who shopped online as a result of COVID -19 showed more consistent purchase behaviour as a direct result of the pandemic. There is a growing correlation between engaging in online buying behaviour and characteristics of reflexive consumers. The investigation revealed that the researched variables have a link that has a tendency to become more robust.

Prasanna Deva S (2021) in their paper titled "A study on corona virus (covid 19) Impact on consumer buying behaviour with special reference to Chennai city" concluded that the research findings showed a sudden increase in products' consumption in certain sectors like health care, disinfection, media, etc. It was seen that during a pandemic circumstance, individuals were not slanted to go through the cash, particularly when

the item is needed in mass and is out of the purchaser's estimated budget. Based on this study's findings, most of the respondents strongly agree COVID-19 impacts buying behaviour. The majority of the consumers are spending only on essential goods during COVID-19, and the majority of the respondents are purchasing personal care products. Due to stay-at-home and social distancing orders, customers relied even more on digital platforms, and their mobile phones became a lifeline to the outside world.

Objective

- Covid 19 is pushing people to do online shopping beside this, it is also examined in this study that if people will continue buying product online with the same rate in future when covid 19 is over.
- Identify the relationship between online shopping behaviour and customer satisfaction.
- To analyse the impact of covid 19 on online shopping
- To analyse the impact of shopping before and after covid 19 with reference to Lucknow city.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study's core objective is to find out the impact on online shopping pre and post covid 19 era. Special reference with Lucknow city.

Samples and sampling technique

The present research purely based on questionnaire method using goggle forms. The data have been collected from 128 respondents.

Sources of Data:

The primary data were collected through structured questionnaire from 128 respondents using Google Form and secondary data was collected through the secondary sources like websites, report etc.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

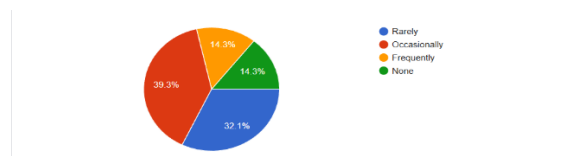
Table No 1.1: Age wise classification of the respondents

S.no	Age	Percentage of respondents
1	15 to 25	78.6%
2	25 to 35	7.1%
3	35 to 45	7.1%
4	45 above	7.1%
Total		100%

INTERPRETATION

The above table 1.1 shows that 78.6% of the respondents are belong the 15 to 25 age group, 7.1% of the respondents are in the 25 to 35 age groups, 7.1% of the respondents are in the 35 to 45 age group and 7.1% of the respondents are above 45 age group. It is found that the majority of respondents are 15 to 25 years age group.

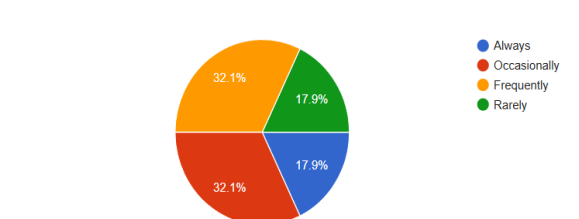
Figure No. 1.2: How often people shop online before covid 19



INTERPRETATION

The above figure 1.2 shows that 32.1% of the respondents rarely shop online before covid, 39.3% of the respondents occasionally shop online before covid, 14.3% of the respondents frequently shop online before covid and 14.3% of the respondents shop online as per their requirement.

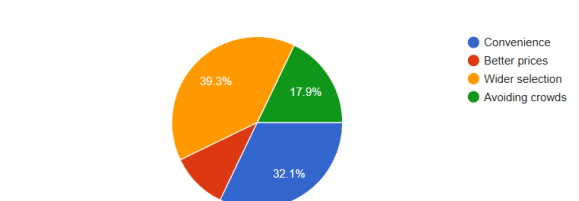
Figure No 1.3: How often people shop online after covid19



INTERPRETATION

The above figure 1.3 shows that 17.9% of the respondents started using online shopping more after covid, 32.1% of the respondents occasionally shop online after covid, 32.1% of the respondents frequently shop online and 17.9% of the respondents rarely shop online after covid.

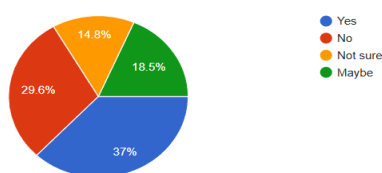
Figure No 1.4: What factors influenced people decision to shop online.



INTERPRETATION

The above figure 1.4 shows that 32.1% of the respondents feel convenient while shopping online, 10.7% of the respondents feels that prices of the online products are better than the offline products, 39.3% of the respondents feel that they have wider selection in online shopping platform, 17.9% of the respondents shop online to avoid crowds.

Figure No 1.5: Have these factors changed since the pandemic began?



INTERPRETATION

The above figure 1.5 shows that 37% of the respondents feels that their preferences are change after covid, 29.6% of the respondents feels that their preference of shopping online were not change after covid, 14.8% of the respondents were not sure whether their preferences are changed and 18.5 of the respondents feels maybe their preferences are changed after covid.

Table No. 1.6: What type of items people usually purchase before covid 19

S.no	Options	Percentage of respondents
1	Clothing and Accessories	66.7%
2	Electronics	14.8%
3	Groceries	11.1%
4	Home furnishing	7.4%
Total		100%

INTERPRETATION

The above table 1.6 shows that 66.7% of the respondents purchase cloths and accessories while shopping online, 14.8% of the respondents purchase electronic items online, 11.1% of the respondents purchase groceries online and 7.4% of the respondents purchase home furnishing online.

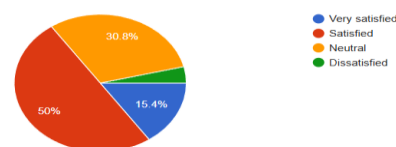
Table No. 1.7: Have your online shopping habits shifted to different types of items after the pandemic?

S.no	Options	Percentage of respondents
1	Yes	29.9%
2	Mostly	11.1%
3	For few items	33.3%
4	Not sure	25.9%
Total		100%

INTERPRETATION

The above table 1.7 shows that 29.6% of the respondents think that their online shopping habit shifted towards different of items after covid, 11.1% of respondents think that their online shopping habit shifted towards most of the items, 33.3% of the respondents think that their online shopping habit shifted after covid only for items few items and 25.9% of the respondents were not sure whether their online shopping habit shifted towards different items.

Figure No. 1.8: How many people are satisfied with their online shopping experience before covid.



INTERPRETATION

The above figure 1.8 shows that 15.4% of the respondents was very much satisfied with their online shopping experience before covid, 50% of the respondents were satisfied with their online shopping experience, 30.8% of the respondents feels that their online shopping experiences was neutral before covid and 3.8% of the respondents were dissatisfied with their online shopping experience before covid.

Table No 1.9: How many people are satisfied with their online shopping experience after covid.

S.no	Options	Percentage of respondents
1	Increased	61.5%
2	Decreased	0%
3	No change	26.9%
4	Not sure	11.5%
Total		100%

INTERPRETATION

The above table 1.9 shows that 61.5% of the respondent satisfaction level is increased after covid, 0% of the respondent satisfaction level is decreased after covid, 26.9% of the respondents thinks that there is no change in their satisfaction level after covid and

11.5% of the respondents were not sure whether their satisfaction level is changed after covid or not.

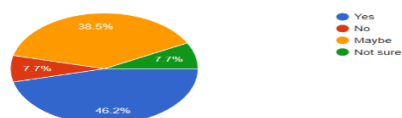
Table No. 1.10: How has your overall spending on online purchases changed since the pandemic?

S.no	Options	Percentage of respondents
1	Increased significantly	65.4%
2	Decreased significantly	3.8%
3	Stayed the same	26.9%
4	Not sure	3.8%
Total		100%

INTERPRETATION

The above table 1.10 shows that 65.4% of the respondents thinks that their online spending after covid is increased significantly, 3.8% of the respondents thinks that their online spending has decreased significantly, 26.9% of the respondents thinks that their online spending after covid has stayed the same and 3.8% of the respondents are not sure whether their spending has increased or decreased after covid.

Figure No 1.11: Do you anticipate continuing to shop online at the same frequency in the future, compared to precovid-19 times?



INTERPRETATION

The above figure 1.11 shows that 46.2% of the respondents will continue to shop online as it is in future, 7.7% of the respondents will not continue to shop online in future, 38.5% of the respondents says that maybe they will continue to shop online and 7.7% of the respondents were not sure whether they will continue to shop online in future

Table No: 1.12 How has the reliability of online deliveries been since the covid-19?

S.no	Options	Percentage of respondents
1	Improved	76%
2	Stayed the same	24%
3	Decline	0%
4	Very poor	0%
Total		100%

INTERPRETATION

The above table 1.12 shows that 76% of the respondents feels that the reliability of online deliveries has improved since the onset of covid 19, 24% of the respondents feels that the reliability of online deliveries stayed the same, 0% of the respondents think that the reliability of online deliveries has declined or become very poor since the onset of covid 19.

Table No 1.13: Have you tried any new online shopping platform or services since the onset of the pandemic?

S.no	Options	Percentage of respondents
1	Yes	65.4%
2	No	7.7%
3	Sometimes	26.9%
4	Often	0%
Total		100%

INTERPRETATION

The above table 1.13 shows that 65.4% of the respondents have tried new online shopping platform since the onset of covid, 7.7% of the respondents did not try any new online shopping platform, 26.9% of the respondents sometimes tried new online shopping platform and 0% of the respondents reported often trying new online shopping platform.

Table No 1.14: If yes, what motivates you to try these new platforms or services?

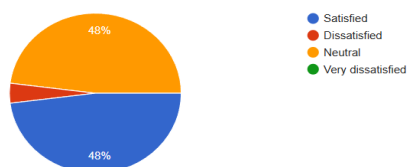
S.no	Options	Percentage of respondents
1	Better deals/ offers	56%
2	Recommended by friends/ Family	16%
3	Conveniences	16%
4	Other	12%
Total		100%

INTERPRETATION

The above table 1.14 shows that 56% of the respondents were fascinated by better deals and offers which motivate them to try new online shopping platform, 16% of the respondents tried new online shopping platform based on recommendation from family and friends, 16% of the respondents feel

convenient while trying new online shopping platform and 12% of the respondents were motivated by other means.

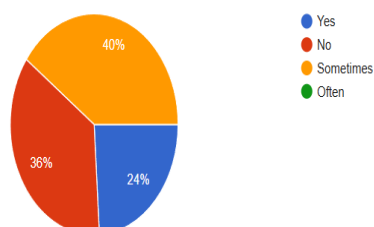
Figure No 1.15: How satisfied are you with the customer service provided by online retailers during the covid-19?



INTERPRETATION

The above figure 1.15 shows that 48% of the respondents were satisfied with the customer services provided by online retailers during covid 19, 4.4% of the respondents were dissatisfied with the customer services provided, 48% of the respondents feel neutral about the customer services and 0% of the respondents were dissatisfied with the customer service provided by online retailers during covid 19.

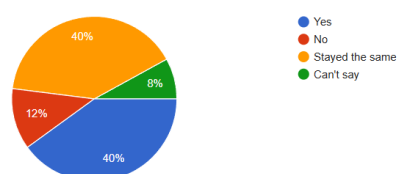
Figure No 1.16: Have you encounter any difficulty or challenges while shopping online during the pandemic?



INTERPRETATION

The above figure 1.16 shows that 24% of the respondents face difficulty while shopping online during pandemic, 36% of the respondents do not face any difficulty while shopping online, 40% of the respondents sometimes faced difficulty while shopping online and 0% of the respondents were often face any difficulty while shopping online.

figure No 1.17: How has your trust in online shopping, security and privacy changed since the pandemic?



INTERPRETATION

The above figure 1.16 shows that 40% of the respondent trust has increased since the onset of pandemic, 12% of the respondent trust has decreased and 40% of the respondent trust has stayed the same since the onset of pandemic and 8% of the respondents can't say whether their trust has increased or not.

Table No 1.18: Which payment method do you prefer when shopping online?

S.no	Options	Percentage of respondents
1	Online payment Debit/ Credit	24%
2	Cash on Delivery	52%
3	Digital Payment	24%
4	EMI	0%
Total		100%

INTERPRETATION

The above table 1.18 shows that 24% of the respondents prefer online payment method while shopping online, 52% of the respondents prefer cash on delivery to shop online, 24% of the respondents prefer digital payment methods like debit card and UPI payment method to shop online and 0% of the respondents prefer EMI while shopping online.

Figure No 1.19: What factor influence people choice between online payment and cash on delivery?



INTERPRETATION

The above figure 1.19 shows that 24% of the respondents feel secure to pay online while shopping through online platforms, 28% of the respondents prefer convenience, 12% of the respondents trust seller while shopping online and 36% of the respondents prefer cash on delivery while shopping online.

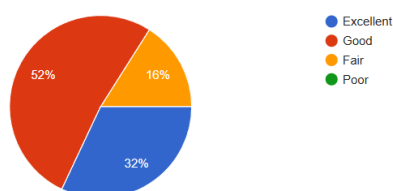
Table No. 1.20: Have you encounter any issue with online payments (e.g. fraud, technological issue)?

S.no	Options	Percentage of respondents
1	Yes	28%
2	No	48%
3	Sometimes	20%
4	Often	4%
Total		100%

INTERPRETATION

The above table 1.20 shows that 28% of the respondents faced issues while shopping online, 48% of the respondents did not face any issues while shopping online, 20% of the respondents sometimes faced issue while shopping online and 4% of the respondents often faced issues while shopping online.

Figure No. 1.21: Overall, how would you rate your online shopping experience during covid-19?



INTERPRETATION

The above figure 1.21 shows that 32% of the respondents rated their online shopping experience as excellent, 52% of the respondents stated that their experience was good, 16% of the respondents reported fair experience and 0% of the respondent experience was poor while shopping online.

Limitation of the study

- Information is gathered from Lucknow city only.
- This study is limited to 128 respondents.
- Due to constrain of time this study does not cover more respondents.

Suggestion

Before COVID-19, online shopping was growing progressively, driven by suitability and the increasing digitalization of commerce. However, the pandemic caused a histrionic surge in online shopping as lockdowns and social distancing actions forced consumers to trust heavily on e-commerce for a wide range of needs, including essentials like groceries and medical supplies. This period saw a substantial shift in consumer behavior, with a wider demographic, including older adults, accepting online shopping. Retailers rapidly improved by enhancing their digital platforms, refining logistics, and offering new services like contactless payments and curbside pickup. Post-pandemic, these changes have resulted in a lasting conversion of the retail landscape, with online shopping preserving a higher baseline level of activity linked to pre-pandemic times, underscoring its critical role in modern consumer habits.

Conclusion

The covid-19 pandemic has essentially changed the world as we know it. Before covid-19, online shopping was already rising progressively, driven by factors such as suitability, wider product selection, and competitive pricing. However, the pandemic faster this trend dramatically. Lockdowns, social distancing measures, and fear of infection encouraged many consumers to shift their shopping habits online out of necessity.

After covid-19, online shopping has become even more entrenched in daily life. Many consumers who were initially unwilling to shop online have now experienced its convenience and are likely to continue doing so. Retailers, both large and small have known the importance of having a strong online presence and have capitalized heavily in their e-commerce capabilities.

Many traditional retailers fought to adapt to the surge in online shopping and faced financial difficulties or even closure. However, some have successfully applied omnichannel strategies, blending their physical and online presence to offer customers a continuous shopping experience.

Overall, the pandemic has faster the digital transformation of the retail industry, making online shopping an essential part of the new normal. This shift implications for businesses, consumers, and the economy as a whole.

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