

## THE CUSTOMER BEHAVIOUR ON ONLINE CONSUMPTION: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PRE AND POST-COVID PERIOD WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CHERTHALA THALUK IN ALAPPUZHA DISTRICT

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### ABSTRACT

*This paper deals with the scope of Online shopping which allows consumers to directly buy goods or services from a seller over the internet using a web browser or a mobile app. Consumers find a product on the internet by visiting the website of the retail directly or by searching among alternative vendors using a shopping search engine, which displays the same products availability and pricing at different e-retailers. As of 2024, customers can shop online using a wide range of different devices such as desktop computers, laptop, tablet and smartphones. An online store enables the customers to browse the wide range of products and services, images of products and services, images of products, information about specific features, price of the products. It also enables the shoppers to use 'search' features to find specific models, brands, price or items. In order to complete the transaction, customers must have an internet and valid method of payments, such as debit card, credit card or even cash on delivery.*

**Keywords:** Online Shopping, Consumer behavior, Covid 19, Shopping Behavior, Post Covid, Pre Covid

### INTRODUCTION

At the turn of third millennium, we are poised at one of the most significant changes in our lives-the move to an internet -based society. Almost everything is changing -at home, in school, at work, etc. The Internet for so long has been used as a medium for communication, education and entertainment. Along with these uses, the internet from a few years ago has also become a medium of exchange of products and services between a seller and a buyer.

Online shopping is a form of electronic commerce which allows consumers to directly buy goods or services from a seller over the internet using a web browser or a mobile app. Consumers find a product on the internet by visiting the website of the retail directly or by searching among alternative vendors using a shopping search engine, which displays the same products availability and pricing at different e-retailers. As of 2024, customers can shop online using a wide range of different devices such as desktop computers, laptop, tablet and smartphones.

An online store enables the customers to browse the wide range of products and services, images of products and services, images of products, information about specific features, price of the products. It also enables the shoppers to use 'search' features to find specific models, brands, price or items. In order to complete the transaction, customers must have an internet and valid method of payments, such as debit card, credit card or even cash on delivery.

According to the new data, the pandemic has accelerated the shift away from physical stores

to digital shopping by roughly five years. Department stores, as a result, are seeing significant declines. In the first quarter of 2020, department stores sales and those from other 'non - essential' retailers declined by 25%. This grew to a 75% decline in the second quarter. The pandemic has also helped refine which categories of goods consumers feel are essential. Clothing, for example, declined in importance as more consumers began working and schooling from home, as well as social distancing under government lockdowns. However other categories, including groceries, alcohol and home improvement materials, accelerated by 12%, 16% and 14% respectively.

### SCOPE OF THE STUDY

In recent years online shopping has become very popular. During the covid 19 period most of them are depend on the online shopping. In march 2020, much of the world went into lockdown, forcing many businesses to temporarily shut down. Countries are gradually relaxing restrictions, but the future is still uncertain. Even businesses that are reopening have restrictions enforcing social distancing, the wearing of mask and limits there is limit of customers to enter a space at one time. When traditional shopping becomes difficult, or may even scary, people are increasingly inclined to online shopping. The growth of technology has made these a part of everyday lifestyle. The advent of the plastic money, debit or credit card and smooth access to the World Wide Web has brought the shops from around the world to the desktop. While it comes to personal purchases, peoples are very particular that they get best products available in the market and seek all the possible ways to secure the best products. Peoples who are well versed in the use of internet and active in social media, knows about online market and would have tried at least some of them. The study is very relevant because it can give a clear picture of the future of online market in India and emerging trends in this particular field.

### OBJECTIVES

- To analyse the shopping behavior of people in pre covid and post covid periods.
- To examine the benefits of online shopping over offline shopping.
- To analyse the problems faced by the people through online shopping.
- To analyse the comparison of changes in price and quality of goods in online market and offline market

### METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on primary data as well as secondary data. Cherthala thaluk in Alappuzha district is taken for sample study. Primary data have been collected from 50 people from Cherthala thaluk through questioners. These peoples were selected through random sampling method. Secondary data was collected from the internet and articles. For the analysis various statistical tools like tables, diagrams and percentage methods were used. In order to ascertain whether there is a statistically significant difference between two or more categories or treatments, an ANOVA is used.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

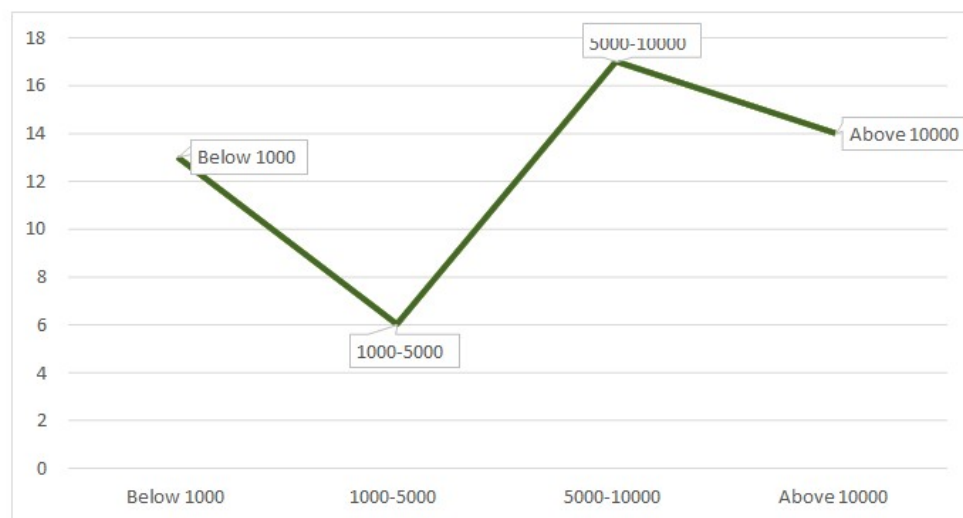
1. **Kang and Johnson (2023)** Emphasize that the credibility of social media influencers plays a crucial role in affecting consumer purchasing decisions. Influencers who are perceived as trustworthy, knowledgeable, and authentic are more effective in promoting products and services. Credibility is built over time through consistent and honest

communication with their audience

2. **Milne and Bahl (2023)** Highlight the critical importance of data privacy in the digital age, particularly as online shopping and digital transactions become increasingly prevalent. The study emphasizes that consumers are more aware and concerned about how their data is collected, stored, and used by online
3. **Ivanov and Dolgui (2020)** Discusses the importance of supply chain in online shopping resilience and flexibility, suggesting that businesses should invest in technology and infrastructure to better handle such disruptions
4. **Sheth (2020)** Suggests that brands that effectively communicated safety measures, ensured product availability, and provided reliable delivery services managed to strengthen customer loyalty.
5. **Carrigan and Attalla (2022)** Indicates that transparency about online shopping practices and ethical sourcing can influence purchasing decisions. Retailers that communicate their commitment to ethical practices are more likely to build trust and loyalty with consumers.

## DATA ANALYSIS

**Chart 4.1-INCOME**

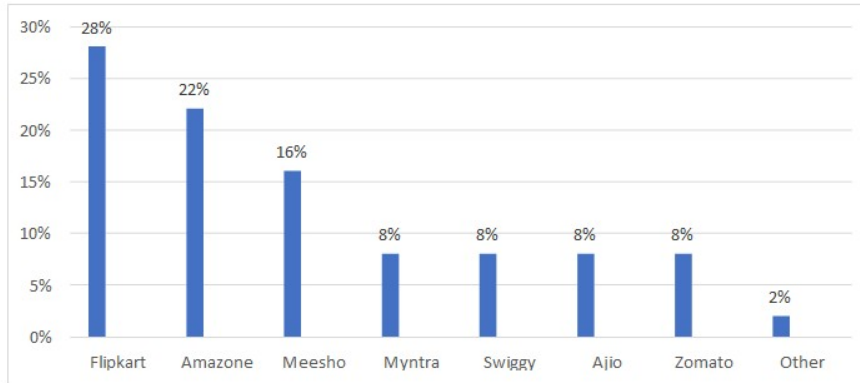


Source: Primary data

## INTREPRETATION

It shows that 26% of respondents have income below 1000, 12% of respondents have income between 1000-5000, 34% of respondents have income between 5000-10000, and 28% of respondents have income above 10000.

**Chart 4.2-MOST FAVOURITE SHOPPING APP**

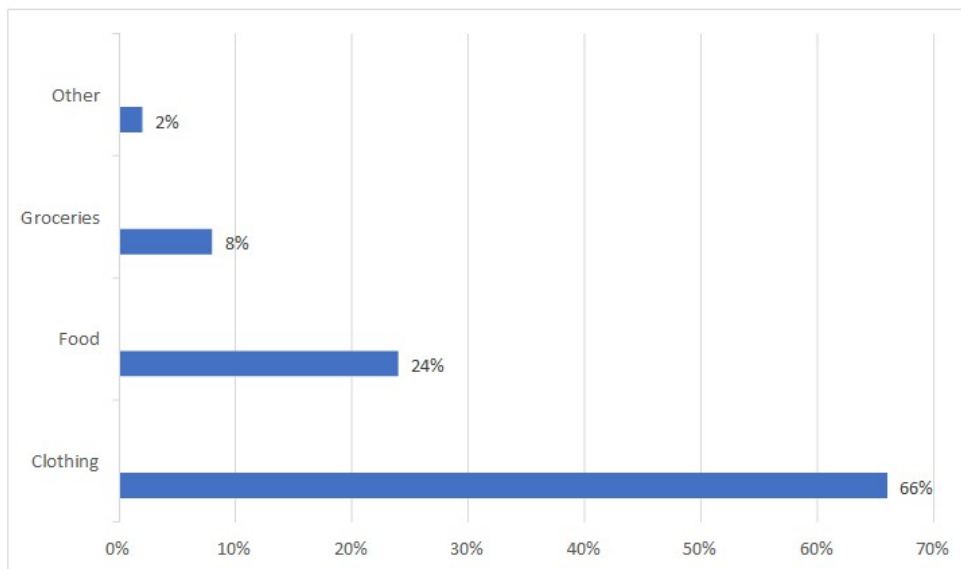


Source: Primary data

#### INTERPRETATION

The table shows 28% of respondents purchase products from Flipkart, 22% of respondents purchase from Amazon, 16% purchase from Meesho 8% purchase from Myntra, Swiggy, Ajo and Zomato least 2% purchase other websites or apps.

**Chart 4.3-MOSTLY PURCHASED FROM ONLINE MARKET**



Source: Primary data

#### INTERPRETATION

The table shows 66% of respondents mostly purchasing clothing, 24% are purchasing food items, 8% are purchasing groceries and only 2% are purchasing other items from online market.

**Chart 4.4-REASON FOR ONLINE PURCHASE**

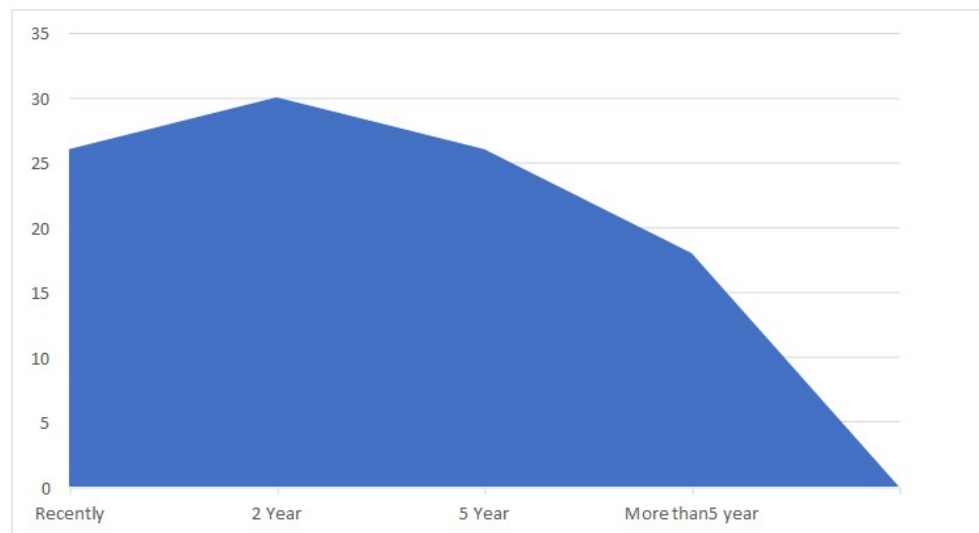


Source: Primary Data

#### INTERPRETATION

It shows that 48% of respondents consider cheap rate at online shopping, 30% consider quality of the product, 18% consider products usages and only 4% consider the durability of the products.

#### Chart 4.5-ONLINE SHOPPING STARTED

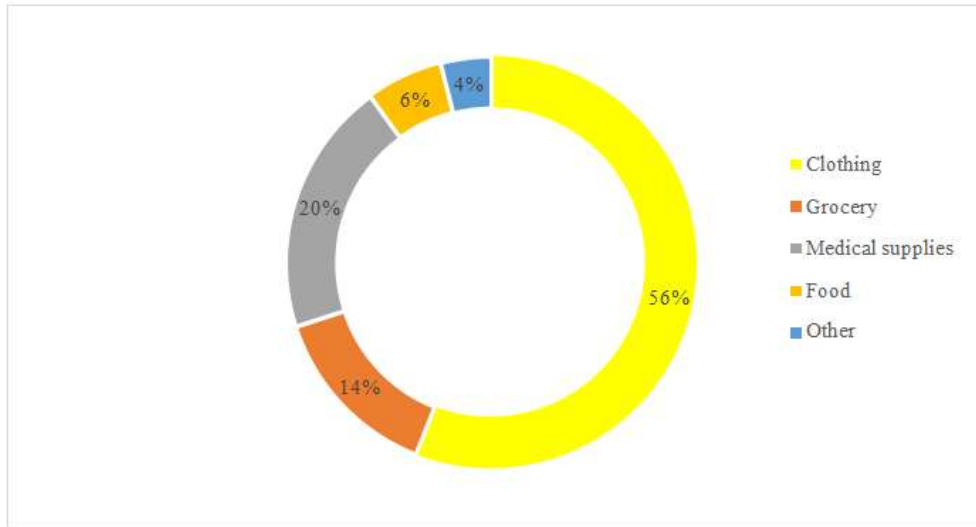


Source: Primary data

#### INTREPRETATION

From the above table 4.6 shows 26% of respondents are recently shopping at online market, 30% are shopping online for 2 years, 26% are shopping online for 5 years and only 18% are shopping online for more than 5 years.

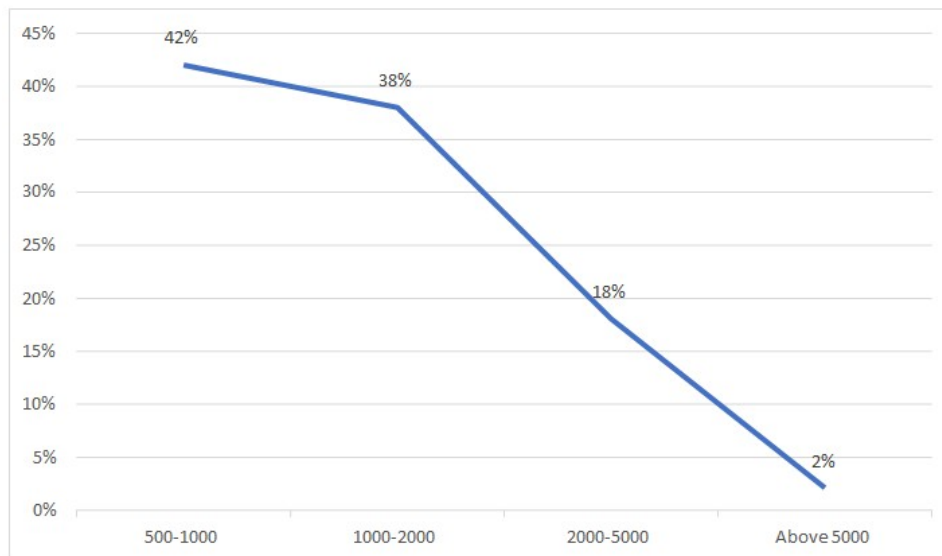
#### Chart 4.6-PRODUCTS PURCHASED BEFORE COVID



### INTERPRETATION

It shows that 56% of respondents are purchased clothing before covid 19, 14% are purchased grocery, 20% are purchased medical supplies, 6% are purchased food items and 4% are purchased other items.

**Chart 4.7 -SPEND TO ONLINE MARKET BEFORE COVID**

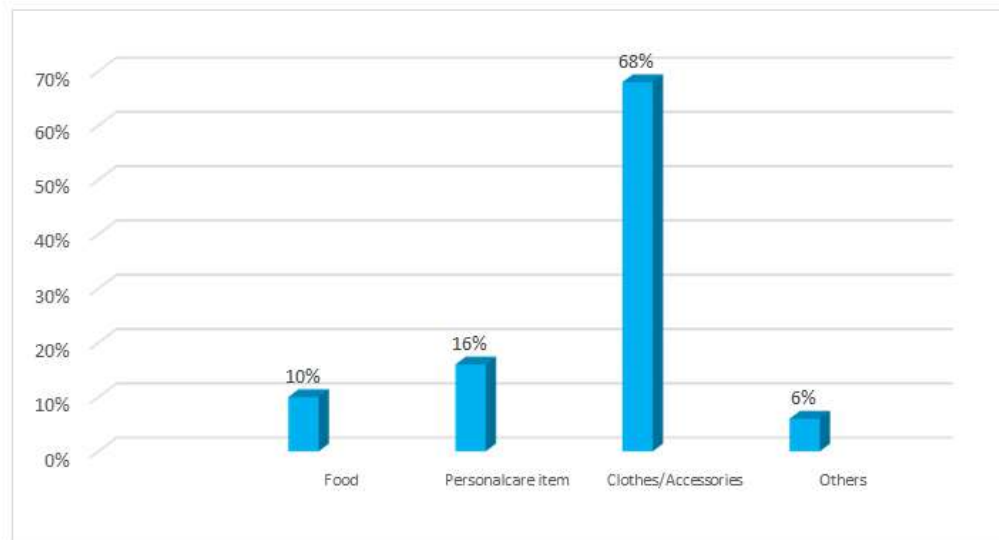


Source: Primary data

### INTREPRETATION

It shows that 42% of the respondents spend 500-1000 for online shopping before covid 19, 38% spend 1000-2000, 18% are spend between 2000-5000 and only 2% spend above 5000.

**Chart 4.8-PRODUCTS PURCHASED SINCE THE START OF OUTBREAK**



Source: Primary data

#### INTREPRETATION

It shows that 68% of the respondents purchase clothes/ accessories from the online market since the start of outbreak of covid pandemic, 16% purchase personal care items, 10% purchase food items and 6% purchase other items.

**Table 4.1-SPEND ON PRODUCTS AFTER COVID**

Money	No. of respondents	Percentage
1000-4000	37	74%
4000-7000	8	16%
7000-10000	2	4%
Above 10000	3	6%
Total	50	100%

Source: Primary data

#### INTERPRETATION

The above table shows 74% of the respondents spend 1000-4000 for online shopping after covid 19 outbreak, 16% spend 4000-7000, 4% spend 7000-10000 and 6% spend above 10000 after covid 19 outbreak.

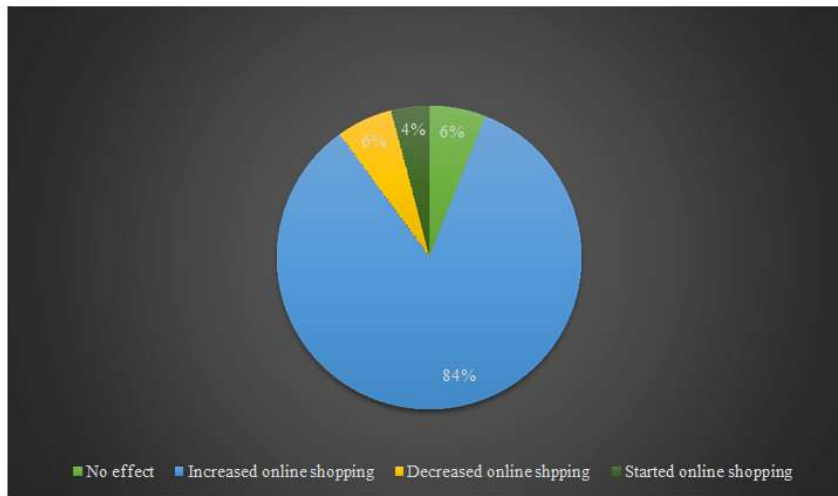
**Table 4.2-THE EFFECT OF COVID 19 ONLINE SHOPPING**

Effects	No. of respondents	Percentage
No effect	3	6%
Increased online shopping	42	84%
Decreased online shopping	3	6%
Started online shopping	2	4%

Total 50 100%	50	100%
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Source: Primary data

**Chart 4.9**



### INTERPRETATION

It shows that 84% of the respondents increased their online shopping due to covid outbreak, 4% has started online shopping, 6% has decreased and 6% has no effect.

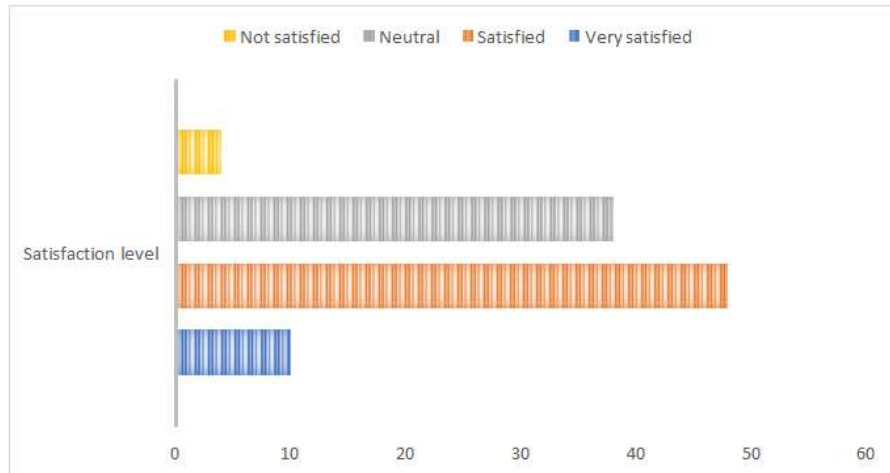
**Table 4.3-SATISFIED WITH SERVICES**

Satisfaction level	No. of respondents	Percentage
Very satisfied	5	10%
Satisfied	24	48%
Neutral	19	38%
Not satisfied	2	4%
Total	50	100%

Source: Primary data

**Chart 4.10**





### INTERPRETATION

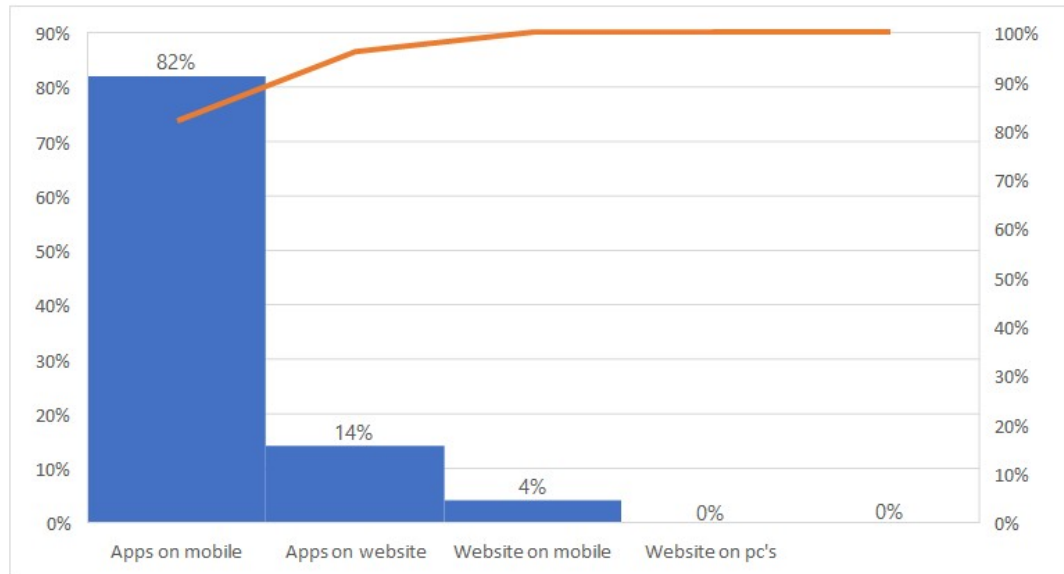
It shows that 10% of the respondents are very satisfied with quality and services of online shopping, 48% are satisfied, 38% have neutral effect and 4% are dissatisfied

**Table 4.4-MOST OFTEN SHOP ONLINE**

Site/Apps	No. of respondents	Percentage
Apps on mobile	41	82%
Apps on websites	7	14%
Websites on mobile	2	4%
Website on pcs	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Source: Primary data

### Chart 4.11



### INTERPRETATION

It shows that 82% of the respondents purchase from Apps on the mobile, 14% are from the apps on website and only 4% from the website on mobile.

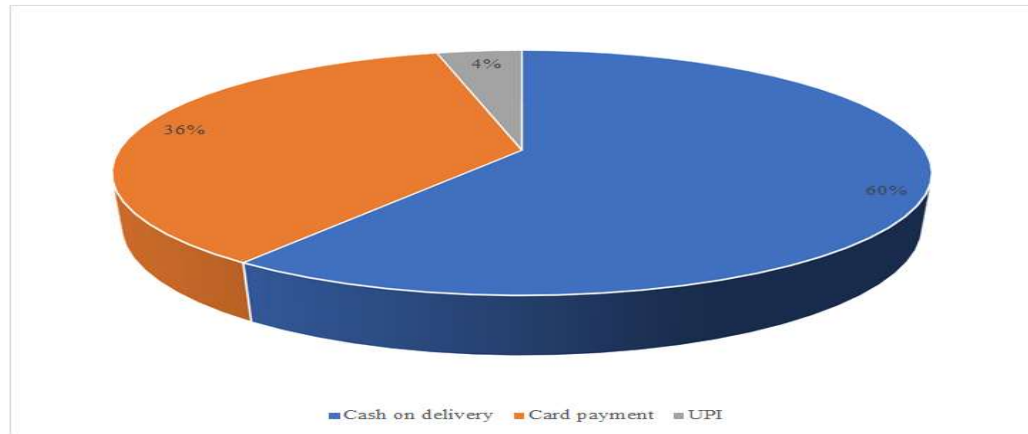
### PAYMENT METHODS

**Table 4.5**

Methods	No. of respondents	Percentage
Cash on delivery	30	60%
Card payment	18	36%
UPI	2	4%
Total	50	100%

Source: Primary data

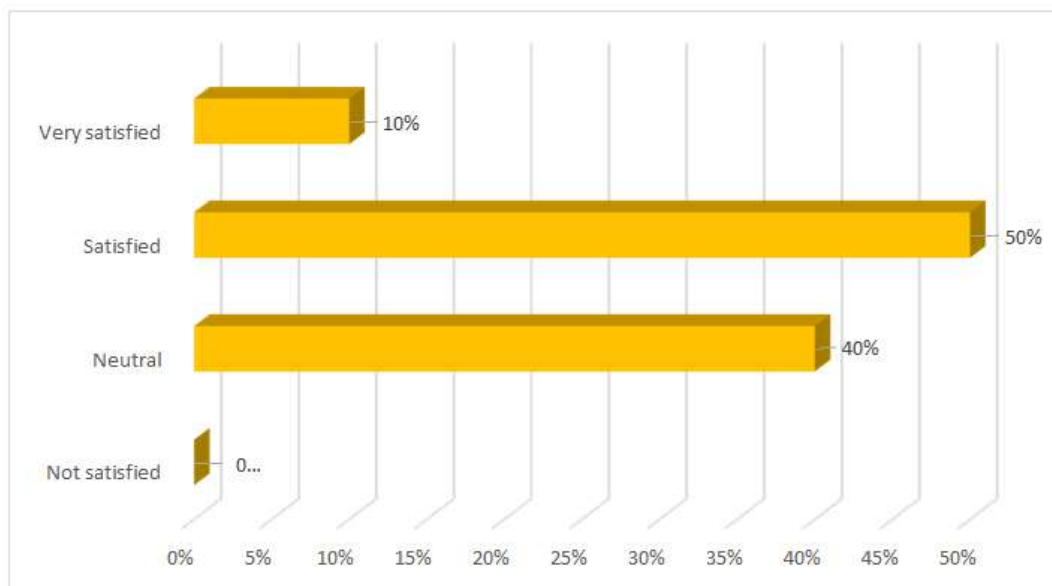
### Chart 4.12



### INTREPRETATION

It shows that 60% of the respondents use cash on delivery for purchasing, 4% use UPI and 36% use card payments.

**Chart 4.13-SATISFIED WITH PRICE OF ONLINE SHOPPING**



Source: Primary data

### INTREPRETATION

It shows that 10% of the respondents are very satisfied with the price of online product, 50% are satisfied and 40% has neutral effect.

**Table 4.6-DIFFERENCE IN PRICE BETWEEN PRE & POST COVID**

Price	No. of respondents	Percentage
Price increased	27	54%
Price decreased	16	32%

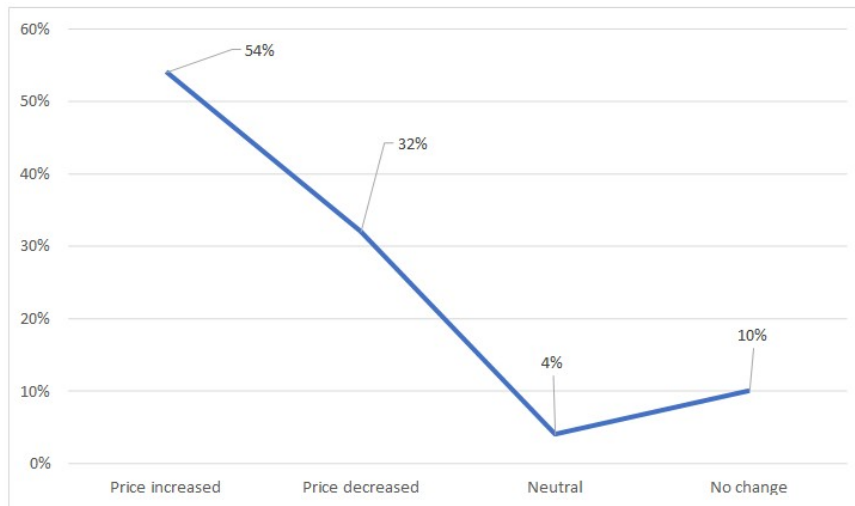
Neutral	2	4%
No change	5	10%
Total	50	100%

Source: Primary data

### INTERPRETATION

It shows that 10% of the respondents have no change in the price of online product between pre and post covid, 32% have opinion with reduction in price, 54% of them responded increased price slightly and 4% of them responded the price level is neutral.

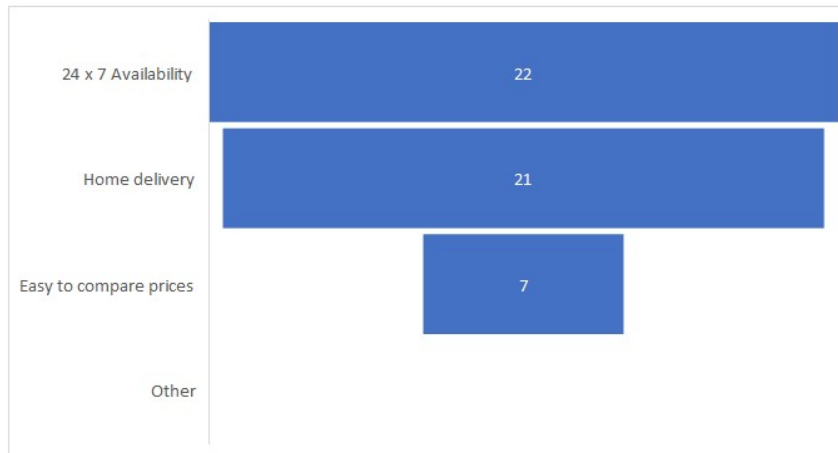
**Chart 4.14**



**Table 4.7-BENEFITS OF ONLINE SHOPPING**

Benefits	No. of respondents	Percentage
24 x 7 Availability	22	44%
Home delivery	21	42%
Easy to compare prices	7	14%
Other	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Source: Primary data



**Chart 4.15**

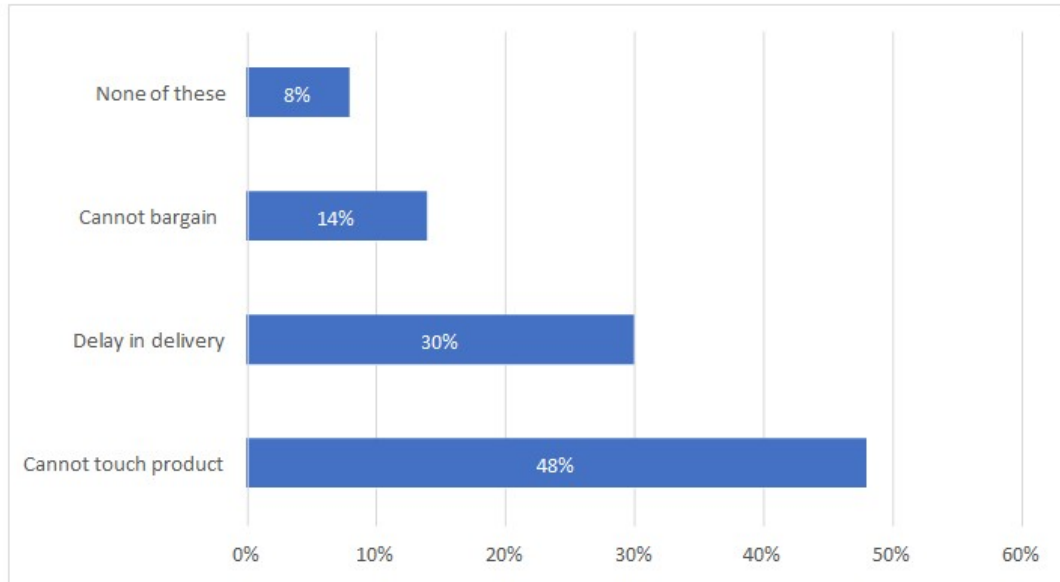
**INTREPRETATION**

It shows that 42% of the respondents' benefits home delivery, 14% of them are easy to compare, 44% of them 24 x 7 availability of online market.

**Table 4.8-PROBLEM FACED IN ONLINE MARKET**

Benefits	No. of respondents	Percentage
Cannot touch products	24	48%
Delay in delivery	15	30%
Cannot bargain	7	14%
None of these	4	8%
Total	50	100%

Source: Primary data



**Chart 4.16**

#### **INTREPRETATION**

It shows that 48% of the respondents faced problem of cannot touch the product through online shopping, 14% of them with cannot bargain, 30% of them with delay in delivery and 8% of them faced with other problems.

#### **HYPOTHESIS TEST**

Following is the hypothesis set for the purpose of the study:

##### **Hypothesis 1:**

**H0:** There is no significant difference between age and spending habit of consumption.

**H1:** There is a significant difference between age and spending habit of consumption. ANOVA (Analysis of Variance)

Analysis of Variance, or ANOVA for short, is a statistical technique that examines whether the means of three or more groups differ significantly from one another. In order to ascertain whether there is a statistically significant difference between two or more categories or treatments, it is frequently utilized to compare means across them. To determine this, an ANOVA is used to evaluate the variation within each group in comparison to the variation between groups. A one-way ANOVA uses one independent variable, while a two-way ANOVA uses two independent variables. The assumptions of ANOVA are Normality of population, Homogeneity, Randomness and Independence of error.

##### **Demographic cross analysis: Age and spending habit of consumption**

Age wise cross analysis is carried out in the following Table 4.20, using one way ANOVA Test. Opinions expressed by the respondents may vary according to demographic characteristics. Cross analysis is carried out using the variable Age and spending habit of consumption

**Table 4.9 ANOVA Test**

Source of variations	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Mean squares	F
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Between sample	SSC=240.67	2	120.33	1.79
Within sample	SSE=603	9	67	
Total	SST=843.67	11		

An independent sample one-way ANOVA test is carried out for testing the above hypothesis and the result are exhibited in the Table 4.20 The result indicate that test is not significant as the F value is less than the table value and we accept the null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>).

### MAJOR FINDINGS

- Out of 50 respondent's majority are females.
- 18-28 age category are the main consumers.
- Flipkart is the most preferred by the respondents in the online market.
- Most consumers mainly consider features like quality and cheap rate while shopping in the online market.
- 86% responds during covid period online consumption is better.
- Majority of the respondents started their online shopping after the outbreak of covid 19.
- Before covid 19, most of the respondents purchase clothing from the online market. And majority of them spend money between 500-1000.
- After the outbreak of covid 19, purchasing clothes from online market has increased and their spending money also increased.
- More than 70% of the respondents increased shopping from online market and many of them started online shopping after the outbreak.
- Many consumers like online shopping but all of them are not highly satisfied with products quality and their services. Majority are just satisfied and neutral satisfaction to online shopping.
- As online shopping can do through many apps and websites, most of them purchase from apps on the mobile.
- Online shopping has many payment options. Card payment and UPI are also provided by online shopping but most of the respondents use cash on delivery.
- We can compare prices of same products through different online markets. Many respondents are just satisfied with its prices and only few of them are highly satisfied with prices.
- After the outbreak of covid 19, some respondents have the opinion that price of the products is increased slightly. And many of them have opinion to no change in price.
- 24×7 availability, home delivery, easy to compare prices and no direct contact with dealers are the main benefits of the online shopping. During covid pandemic period these are mainly consider by the consumers shopping at online.
- Out of many positives, there are some negatives to online shopping. Most the respondents suggest the problem that cannot touch the products. Some products cannot replace once it purchased.

### CONCLUSION

This paper examined how the covid pandemic has changed the way consumers use e-commerce in the semi urban areas. Following the pandemic, more than half of the survey respondents now shop online. Nowadays, one of the biggest transformations using technologies is the online

shopping system. It also has almost the same size of the market as a general physical market possesses. An online shopping system is a process in which people are being provided with the options of purchasing goods & services directly from the seller, all in a real time environment. The e-commerce is increasing speedily despite having some barriers and becoming more competitive day by day. This paper attempts to investigate the shopping behavior of rural and urban people during the outbreak of covid pandemic. Product, time saving, payment, no direct contact with dealers and some factors significantly influences the consumers internet buying behavior.

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