

Omni Channel Marketing: A Future

Anushka Agrawal¹, Astha Rao², Lakshita Sivakoumar³,
Dr. Rajdeep Singh Khanuja⁴

^{1,2,3,4}National Institute of Fashion Technology, Bhopal (M.P.) India.

ABSTRACT

Due to pandemic the world of retailing has been changed. The arrival of e-commerce and additional digital channels like social media channels and mobile browsing has changed the consumer behaviour towards shopping stigma. Although multi-channel marketing was popular and accepted by many in past decade, now we can witness a move to a new marketing scheme known as Omni channel marketing. Omni channel marketing gives customer a wish and emotion, from customization options to choose from, without doing a lot of searches in market. As pandemic era came, consumers also require a different mode of shopping where they have to maintain about social distancing and their own safety, so that they are not being deprived from their frequent shopping habits. In this case, we are analysing that if people are ready to accept this full-time online service which will give them comfort, customization, safety, savings and also the same shopping experience online.

Key Words: Online services, Post Covid shopping, Safety, Convenience

I INTRODUCTION

Omni channel marketing is a medium of retail and marketing where the consumer experience it consistently both online and offline. It creates an additional benefit of creating deeper client relationships and probably growing new markets. It cans attraction to the range in customers' buying orientations with an intention of offering an unbroken cross-channel experience."Technology has really affected how the market used to work because of pandemic. Omni channel marketing focuses on providing a consistent and relevant shopping experience across different marketing sectors, which is highly customer-centric and based on the unique choices and tastes of each user. Sometimes people are afraid to shop online because they feel, they might have problem with sizing, problem with material, shipping or maybe exchange or return policy. So, to overcome these drawbacks of online shopping and providing the customer satisfactory shopping experience, brands should adopt Omni channel marketing. With the flourishing, acceptance of Omni channel marketing. This paper presents specific research based on a questionnaire, which has a target to show the readiness of customers to adopt the Omni channel marketing strategies as lately the customer is the key to the modern marketing process.

II LITERATURE REVIEW

- (a) In "From Multi channel marketing to Omni channel marketing" by Peter C. Verhoef, P.K.Kannan, published in March 2015, researchers have shared that according to consumer behaviour, in the world of marketing, multi-channel marketing was highly accepted by people. But now, upgrade in technology and social media and digital platforms, marketing practices are on a move to Omni channel.
- (b) In "Recasting the customer experience in today's Omni-channel environment" by Melero²⁰, Verhoef published in 2016, researchers share that the Omni channel concept is considered as an evolution of multichannel retailing. While multichannel retailing creates a boundary between the physical and online store, in the Omni channel environment, customers have freedom among channels (online, mobile devices, and physical store)
- (c) In "Fitting international segmentation for emerging markets: conceptual development and empirical illustration" by Schlager and Maas published in 2013, researchers share that because of increasing use of new technologies in retailing, consumer shopping habits and expectations are also changing. A new multi device, multiscreen consumer has emerged who is better informed and demands Omni channel brands. Research has shown that Omni channel consumers are a term as global mascots.
- (d) In "Despite the increase recorded in research on information and communication technology (ICT) and multichannel" by Neslin, Verhoef in 2015, researchers shared that it is crucial to continue research in the field of Omni channel consumer behaviour and, especially, to find how consumers' attitudes toward technology can change the purchasing decision process in the new era
- (e) According to Harvard Business Review, 73 percent of all customers use multiple channels during their purchase journey. Only when the customer has gathered as much information as possible from a variety of sources to support their purchase decision, will they decide to buy from a retailer.
- (f) In "Introduction to the special issue information technology in retail: toward Omni channel retailing" by Piotrowicz, W., and Cuthbertson, R. in 2014, researchers shared that Customers wants a consistent, uniform, and integrated experience, doesn't matter of what channel they

use; they are willing to move seamlessly between channels—traditional store, online, and mobile—depending on their preferences, their current situation, the time of day, or the product category.

- (g) In “From multi-channel retailing to omni-channel retailing: introduction to the special issue on multi-channel retailing” by Verhoef, P. C., Kannan, P. K., and Inman, J. J. in 2015, researchers said that another important change is that the different channels are blurring together as the natural boundaries that once separated them begin to disappear. They are thus used seamlessly and interchangeably during the search, purchase, and post-purchase process, and it is difficult or virtually impossible for firms to control this usage.
- (h) In Press conference , Lemon and Verhoef, said “Our study helps to the current literature on Omni channel consumer behaviour by adapting the previous UTAUT models to include two new factors in order to determine how the technologies used during the shopping process affect the intention to purchase in an Omni channel context. The results have practical impact for Omni channel retailer managers for the best management and marketing strategies for improving a key part of their business, namely, the creation of a holistic shopping experience for their customers. Specifically, retailers need to properly define not only which technologies they will invest in, but also how they will encourage the acceptance thereof, as this acceptance is an important predictor of purchase intention. In particular, in-store technology has to be focused on creating a new integrated customer experience, using technology that is practical, enjoyable, and interesting in order to ensure that innovative customers perceive that the new Omni channel stores facilitate and expedite their shopping journey.”

III OBJECTIVES RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

(a) Objectives of the study

The objectives of this research are:

- (i) To analyse the consumer behaviour and preference over the Omni channel marketing post COVID.
- (ii) To study the preference of consumer for Omni channel marketing over the traditional marketing practices.

(b) Data Collection Sources- Primary sources of data were the following:

- (i) An online questionnaire
- (ii) A few personal interviews with people in the industry.

Secondary sources of data were sourced by the following:

- (iii) Articles from different writers and editors
- (iv) Existing research of different brands
- (v) Case study of various brands
- (vi) Comparative study of the pre COVID-19 and post COVID-19 situation in consumer behavioural.
- (vii) Taking current scenario of lockdown for several months, we studied how people have become aware of spending their money wisely.

(c) Limitations of the study

- (i) Due to pandemic and lockdown, we could not visit stores physically.
- (ii) As the new normal says "work from home and virtual meets" a proper subjective and objective study was difficult to carry out.
- (iii) As the only source of information remained virtual so the authenticity of the data got affected

IV DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

According to the survey conducted the following were the respective responses. Total 100 responses were recorded.

The survey conducted suggested that initially during the survey consumers opted for offline shopping more than online and also that most of the consumers shop once in a while or occasionally.

It was suggested that 67% of the people out of 100 responses preferred shopping offline which is through stores malls.

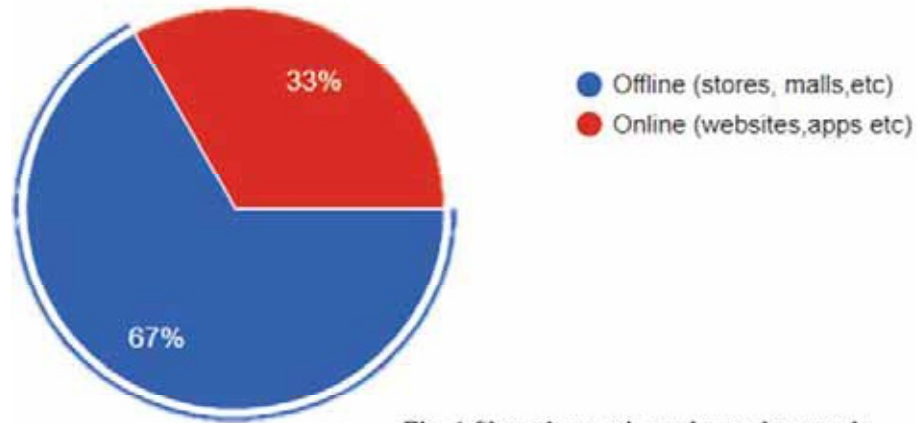


Fig. 1 Shopping options chosen by people

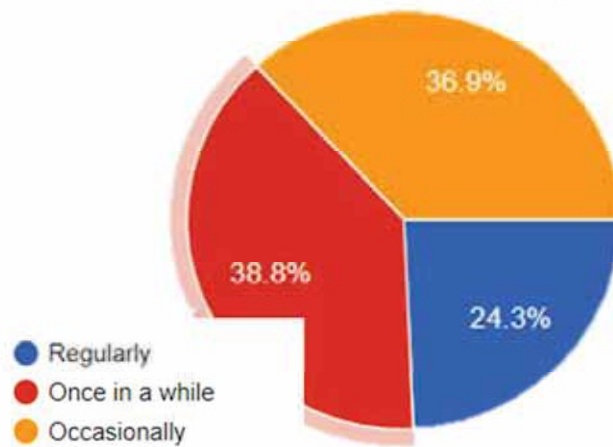


Fig. 2 Preference for online shopping

Further to find out the reason whether the consumer prefers to shop online we asked them if they shopped online, the reasons why they did so and what they preferred buying online.



Fig. 3 Preference for online shopping

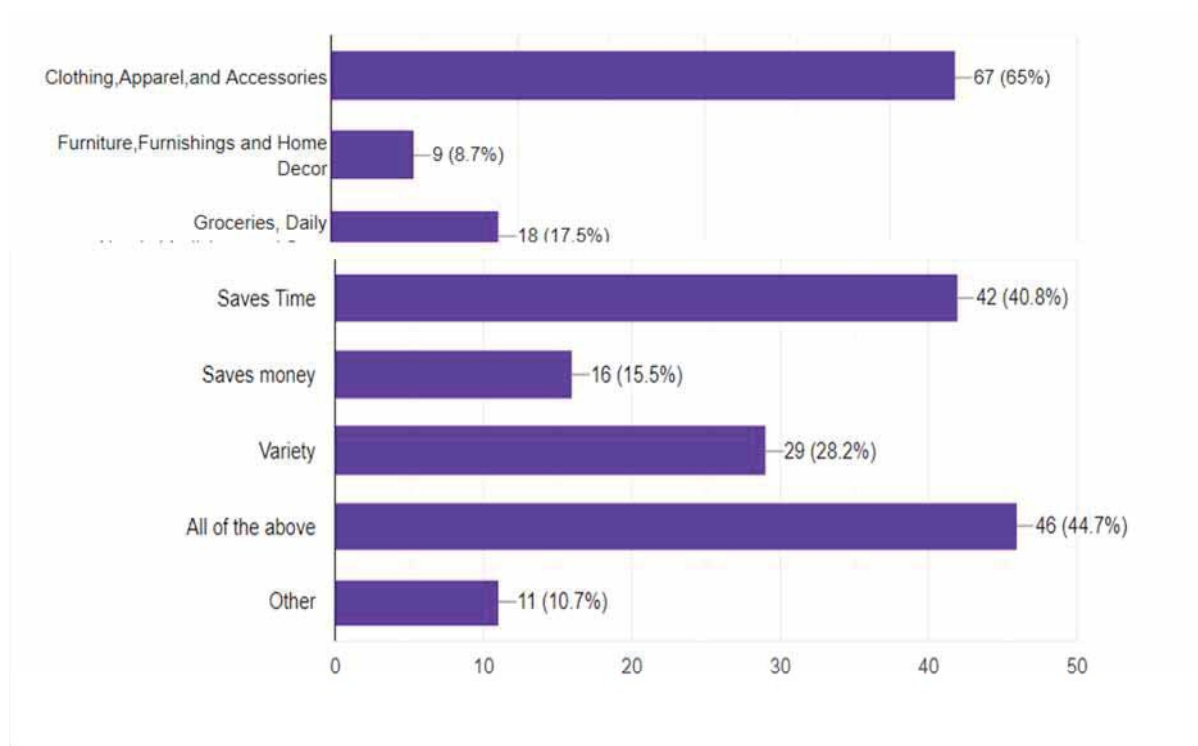


Fig. 4 Reasons for online shopping

As the Fig 1 suggests 67% of the consumers mostly end up buying clothing, 8.7% of the consumers buy furniture and home décor, 17.5% of the consumers end up buying groceries and 31% of the consumers buying all the things online.

To understand the situation of the pandemic we asked our consumers a few more questions and answers were analysed as shown in fig 5 to 7



Fig. 5 Mode of shopping during the pandemic

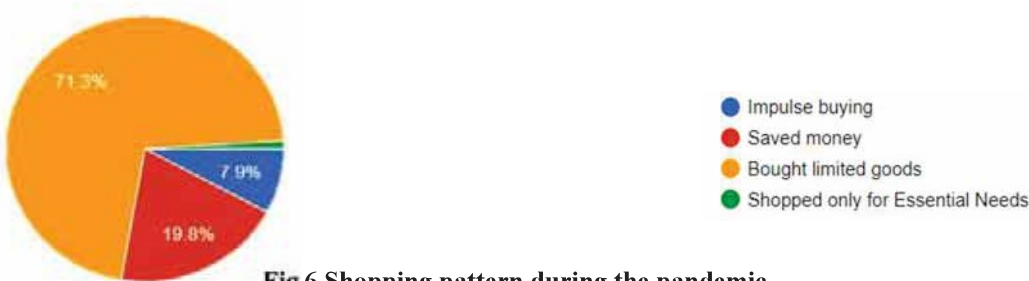


Fig6 Shopping pattern during the pandemic

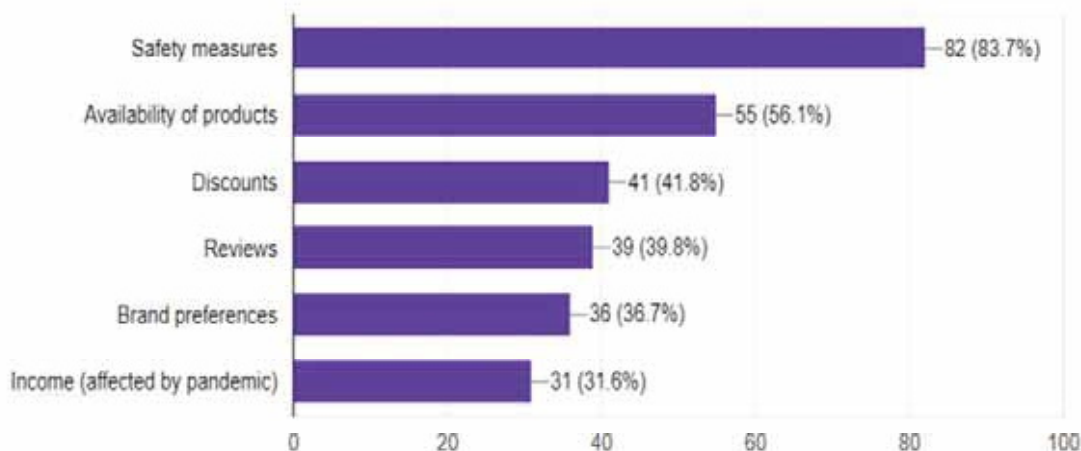


Fig. 7 Factors considered while buying

The study considering the situation of the pandemic concludes that most of the consumers brought limited things offline and considered the safety measures as a major factor.

We asked our survey participants if they would prefer if their favourite store or brand goes online and provides the same experience it provides offline and therefore 82% of the people said a yes as shown in Fig.8

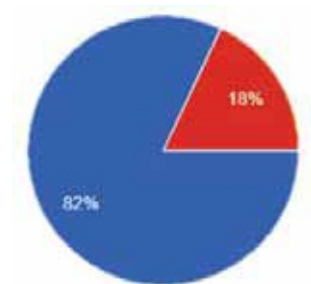


Fig. 8 Choice for online if favourite stores is available online

V SUGGESTIONS

- (a) The suggestion to offline store or brand is in this post COVID situation due to safety measures and social distancing; people might won't take risk of shopping online so in that case brands can increase their Omni channel marketing channels to maintain their customer loyalty for their customers.
- (b) As personalisation /customization has been an ongoing need for many customers, in that case brand's Omni channel can directly target the customer's choice of colour, choice of trends, choice of patterns in order to make sure to keep them connected to their respective brands.
- (c) In the advent of online shopping, still many orthodox shoppers are there who feels online shopping is a mess and a non-suitable process. In order to attract them to online shopping by showing them a comparison between the offline goods/ products and online goods/ products.
- (d) With continuous changes in terms of technology and the fast-moving future ahead it is necessary to amplify marketing channels and expand them

further to keep up with the times, brands must employ an Omni channel experience which accurately reflects the customer journey.

VI CONCLUSION

The pandemic has changed all of our lives drastically which makes us realise that Omni channel retailing and marketing is the need of the future. The consumers want a consistent experience. They want things to be simpler, easily accessible and presented to them without any confusion. Omni channel marketing values the consumer experience above everything else. With continuous changes in terms of technology and the fast-moving future ahead it is necessary to amplify marketing channels and expand them further. To keep up with the times, brands must employ a Omni channel experience which accurately reflects the customer journey. A lot of brands are in the process of adapting Omni channel marketing and retailing which concludes to the fact that this will be the future of marketing.

REFERENCES

- [1] Bhalla, R., 2014. The Omni-channel customer experience: driving engagement through digitisation. *Journal of Digital and Social Media Marketing*, 1(4), pp. 365-372.
- [2] Verhoef, P. C., Kannan, P. K. and Inman, J. J., 2015. From multi-channel retailing to Omni channel retailing: introduction to the special issue on multi-channel retailing. *Journal of Retailing*, 91(2), pp. 174-181.
- [3] Otto, J. R. and Chung, Q. B., 2000. A framework for cyber-enhanced retailing: integrating e-commerce retailing with brick-and-mortar retailing. *Electronic Markets*, 10(3), pp. 185-191.
- [4] Saghiri, S., Wilding, R., Mena, C. and Bourlakis, M., 2017. Toward a three-dimensional framework for Omni-channel. *Journal of Business Research*, 77, pp. 53-67.