

A Study on Consumer Behaviour Towards Online and Offline Retail Shopping in Delhi/NCR

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Abstract

This study examines consumer behavior towards online and offline retail shopping in the Delhi/NCR region. With the rapid rise of e-commerce and evolving consumer preferences, the research aims to identify the key factors influencing shopping decisions across both channels. Data was collected from 200 respondents through structured questionnaires, covering demographics, shopping frequency, product preferences, decision-making factors, and satisfaction levels. Findings reveal a strong inclination toward online shopping, particularly for electronics, fashion, and books, driven by convenience and discounts. However, offline retail remains significant for categories like groceries and items requiring physical inspection. While online platforms score high on ease and variety, offline stores perform better in terms of personal trust and immediate gratification. The study concludes that a hybrid, omnichannel retail model is essential to meet the diverse and dynamic needs of consumers in Delhi/NCR.

Keywords: *Consumer behavior, Online shopping, Offline retail, Delhi/NCR, Retail trends, Omnichannel strategy*

Introduction

The retail sector in India has witnessed a paradigm shift with the rapid emergence of e-commerce alongside traditional brick-and-mortar stores. In metropolitan regions like Delhi/NCR, changing lifestyles, increased internet penetration, and the growth of digital payment systems have significantly influenced consumer shopping behavior. While online retail offers convenience, variety, and attractive discounts, offline retail continues to thrive on personalized service, trust, and the tangible shopping experience. Understanding consumer preferences and the factors driving their choices is crucial for retailers aiming to stay competitive in this dynamic environment. This study explores the comparative behavior of consumers toward online and offline shopping, focusing on aspects such as frequency of purchases, preferred product categories, satisfaction levels, and decision-making factors. The objective is to provide insights into current consumer trends and support the development of integrated retail strategies suited to urban markets like Delhi/NCR.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the factors influencing consumer preference for online or offline shopping.
- To compare consumer satisfaction levels between online and offline retail experiences.
- To assess the impact of demographic variables (age, gender, income, education) on shopping behavior.
- To analyze the evolving shopping habits and expectations of consumers in Delhi/NCR.

Literature Review

The literature indicates that consumer behavior in retail is influenced by a variety of factors including socio-economic background, technological adaptability, convenience, and past experiences (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Online retail provides benefits such as convenience, a wide range of products, and competitive pricing (Laudon & Traver, 2020), whereas offline shopping appeals to those who value immediate product access, physical verification, and in-person service (Solomon, 2015).

Research by Tiwari et al. (2020) showed that urban consumers prefer online platforms for electronics and fashion items, while preferring brick-and-mortar stores for groceries and perishable items. Ganguly (2019) emphasized that while digital retail is on the rise, trust and service experience in offline channels continue to be crucial decision-making factors.

Research Methodology

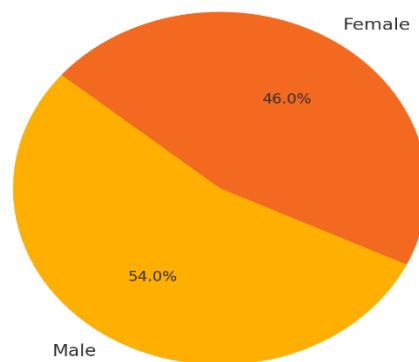
- **Area of Study:** Delhi/NCR
- **Sample Size:** 200 respondents
- **Sampling Technique:** Stratified random sampling
- **Data Collection Method:** Structured questionnaire (administered both online and offline)
- **Data Analysis Tools:** Descriptive statistics, cross-tabulation, chi-square test (SPSS used for analysis)

The survey questionnaire consisted of multiple-choice and Likert-scale items aimed at understanding consumer behavior, preferences, satisfaction levels, and demographic influences.

Data Analysis & Interpretation

1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

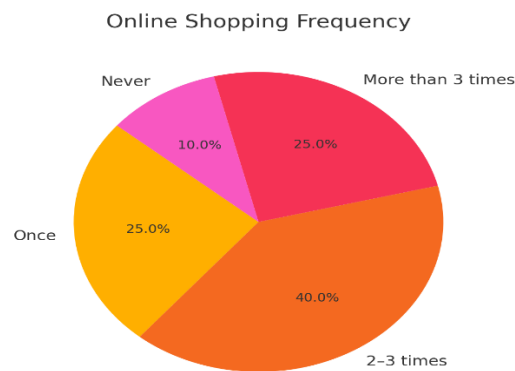
Gender Distribution of Respondents



The sample consists of a balanced gender distribution with a slight male majority. The dominant age group is 18–30 years (40%), followed by 31–45 years (35%), suggesting that most respondents are young and middle-aged adults—typically active consumers in both online and offline retail segments.

Demographic Variable	Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	108	54%
Gender	Female	92	46%
Age Group	18–30	80	40%
Age Group	31–45	70	35%
Age Group	46–60	40	20%
Age Group	60+	10	5%

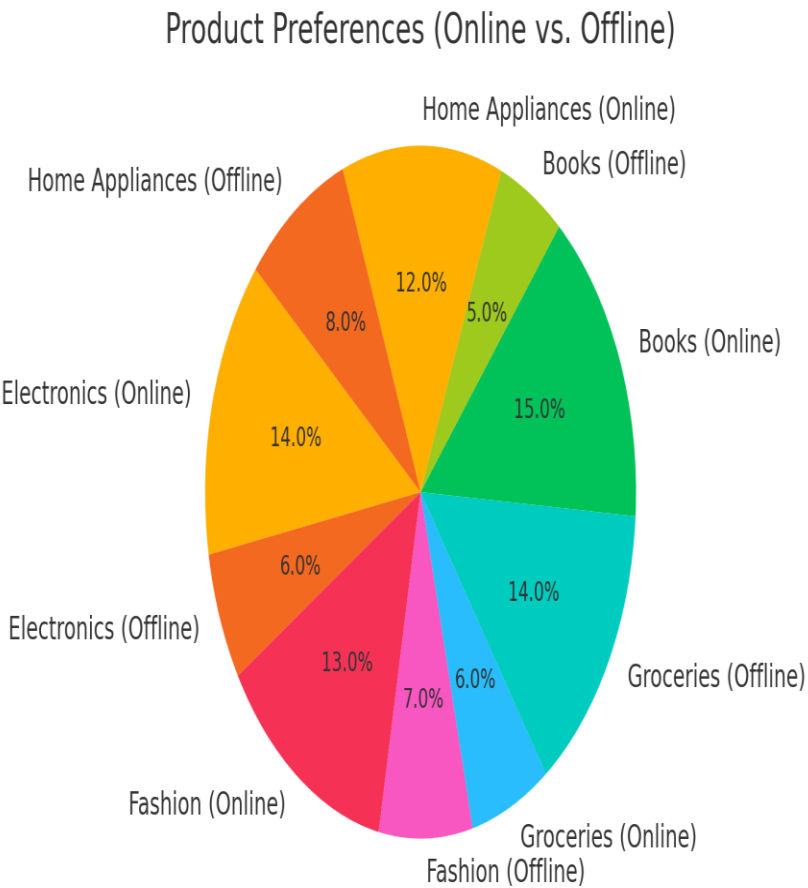
2. Shopping Frequency (Online vs. Offline)



Online shopping is done at least once a month by 90% of the respondents, with 40% shopping 2–3 times a month. This shows a strong trend toward online purchasing. Offline shopping remains relevant, especially weekly or occasionally, showing that in-person retail is still significant for many consumers.

Mode of Shopping	Frequency per Month	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Online	Once	50	25%
Online	2–3 times	80	40%
Online	More than 3 times	50	25%
Online	Never	20	10%
Offline	Weekly	60	30%
Offline	Bi-weekly	50	25%
Offline	Occasionally	70	35%
Offline	Never	20	10%

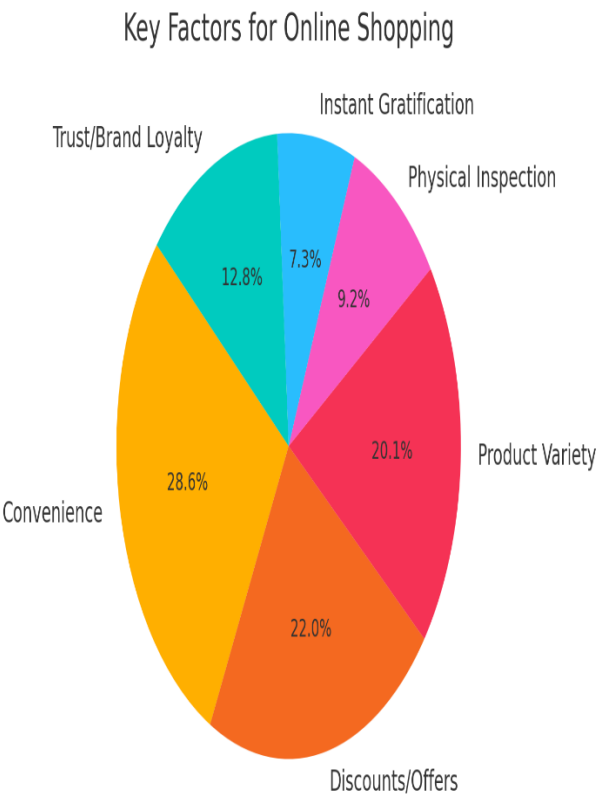
3. Preferences by Product Category



Consumers overwhelmingly prefer online platforms for books, electronics, and apparel due to better prices, variety, and convenience. However, grocery shopping still favors offline stores due to the need for physical inspection and immediate availability.

Product Category	Prefer Online (%)	Prefer Offline (%)
Electronics	70%	30%
Fashion/Apparel	65%	35%
Groceries	30%	70%
Books	75%	25%
Home Appliances	60%	40%

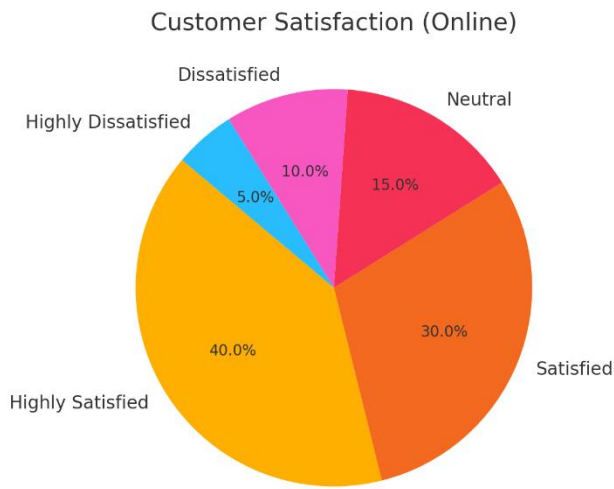
4. Key Factors Influencing Shopping Behavior



Convenience and discounts are strong drivers for online shopping. Offline retail is still preferred for physical inspection, instant product possession, and brand trust—indicating that touch-and-feel factors continue to play a major role in consumer decisions.

Factor	Online (%)	Offline (%)
Convenience	78%	35%
Discounts/Offers	60%	30%
Product Variety	55%	45%
Physical Inspection	25%	72%
Instant Gratification	20%	50%
Trust/Brand Loyalty	35%	45%

5. Customer Satisfaction Levels



Overall satisfaction is relatively similar between online and offline channels, with a slight edge for offline shopping in terms of “highly satisfied” customers. This could be attributed to better customer service and immediacy of the experience in brick-and-mortar stores.

Satisfaction Level	Online (%)	Offline (%)
Highly Satisfied	40%	45%
Satisfied	30%	30%
Neutral	15%	10%
Dissatisfied	10%	10%
Highly Dissatisfied	5%	5%

Findings

The study reveals a clear shift in consumer behavior towards online retail shopping in the Delhi/NCR region, particularly among the younger demographic (18–45 years). A large majority (90%) of respondents engage in online shopping at least once a month, with electronics, fashion, and books being the most preferred categories. Consumers are primarily drawn to online platforms due to convenience, discounts, and product variety. However, offline shopping remains relevant, especially for groceries and products requiring physical inspection and instant possession.

The data also highlights that offline retail is still favored for trust-based purchases and in situations where personal interaction or immediate delivery is important. Despite the convenience of online shopping, a substantial portion of consumers (45%) report being highly satisfied with offline shopping, slightly higher than their online counterparts (40%).

Overall, the findings suggest that while online shopping continues to grow rapidly, offline shopping retains its value for certain product types and consumer preferences. Retailers must adopt a hybrid strategy that combines the strengths of both formats to cater to evolving consumer expectations.

Discussion

The findings highlight that while online retail provides convenience and cost benefits, offline retail continues to dominate in trust-sensitive and sensory product categories. Consumers are increasingly demonstrating hybrid behavior—researching products online and purchasing them offline (ROPO effect), or vice versa. Demographics play a significant role in influencing these behaviors, particularly age and income.

Omnichannel retailing is emerging as a significant trend, where retailers must offer seamless integration between their online and offline presence to meet evolving consumer expectations.

Conclusion

The study on consumer behavior towards online and offline retail shopping in Delhi/NCR reveals a significant shift towards digital platforms, especially among younger consumers. Online shopping has gained popularity due to its convenience, attractive discounts, and wider product range. Consumers increasingly prefer purchasing electronics, fashion items, and books online, indicating growing confidence in digital transactions and delivery systems.

However, offline retail still retains its importance, particularly for products like groceries and items that require physical inspection. Factors such as trust, immediate possession, and personal interaction continue to draw consumers to physical stores. The study also indicates that while customer satisfaction is high for both channels, offline shopping holds a slight edge due to experiential and service-related factors.

The findings highlight the evolving preferences of urban consumers who seek value, efficiency, and personalized experiences. To thrive in this dynamic environment, retailers must adopt an omnichannel strategy that integrates the strengths of both online and offline platforms. Customizing offerings, improving customer service, and leveraging technology will be crucial for meeting the diverse expectations of modern consumers in Delhi/NCR.

Recommendations

- Offline retailers should leverage technology (e.g., digital catalogues, QR codes, in-store apps).
- Online platforms should focus on building trust, reducing delivery times, and improving return policies.
- Retailers should invest in mobile-friendly platforms to cater to the increasing use of smartphones.
- Personalized marketing strategies should be adopted based on demographic profiling.

Limitations of the Study

- The study is limited to respondents in Delhi/NCR, and findings may not be generalizable.
- The sample size of 200 may not capture the full diversity of consumer behavior.
- Self-reported data is subject to response bias.

Future Scope of Research

- A longitudinal study can be conducted to observe changing patterns over time.
- Comparative studies between metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas could provide richer insights.

- In-depth qualitative studies can explore psychological factors influencing consumer trust and loyalty.

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