

A Study of Preferred Mode of Shopping of Consumers in Kolhapur District with Respect to Mobile Phones

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to draw comparison in the consumer behavior and perception with respect to conventional shopping and virtual shopping while shopping for Mobile Phones and Accessories in Kolhapur District. Unlike the earlier days when shopping meant visiting a store – type of which may differ such as local retail store, company showroom, franchise unit, etc. Today with advancement of technology, consumer has got more options for shopping whereby he can shop from anywhere anytime as per his convenience this mode of shopping is known as virtual shopping or online shopping.

The behavior and perception of the consumer towards the traditional or conventional shopping and virtual shopping or online shopping with respect to shopping for mobile phone or its accessories therefore needs to be ascertained and understood for drawing comparison. This research study was thus undertaken in the 12 talukas of Kolhapur district and data was collected from 483 respondents.

This preliminary study along with being exploratory and descriptive is based on facts and figures taken from data gathered and corroborated thru the questionnaire designed for detailed research on the basis of hypothesis formulated.

IndexTerms– Mode of shopping, mobile phones, Kolhapur district, Consumer behaviour

INTRODUCTION

Shopping is such an activity that almost each person indulges into in one form or another. Hence, the concept of shopping is well known and easy to understand however, actually what needs to be understood and analyzed is the consumer behavior and perception that is taken by the consumer while accomplishing the task of shopping. Various studies over the year have revealed many factors that influence the decision making process of consumers. The degree of influence of various factors on consumer varies with the category of product and / or service as well as the mode of shopping.

The nature and characteristic of a person also plays an important role in the buying behavior of a person. Hence, social factors like family, friends, relatives, colleagues, status, etc. along with personal factors such as gender, age, education, occupation, income, etc. are responsible for building up the characteristics of a person that influence the overall decision of a person. Further, the consumer's approach or decision of shopping for one kind of product and/ or one mode of shopping is dynamic and not static as it is relative and depends on other circumstantial factors.

Mobile phones which a decade ago were considered as a luxury have now become a necessity. With the advancement of technology, mobiles no longer are used for making calls or sending text messages, the utility of these mobile phones has increased and today these mobile phones are known as smartphones. These smartphones offer many facilities that it can perform over and above voice calling and text messaging. The features of smartphones and the brand name plays a big role in attracting the attention of the consumers' however, these smart phones have become affordable to each segment of the community due to entry of cheaper versions of smart phones. Further with the penetration of internet in rural areas of the country along with sharp decline in the internet usage rates due to entry of JIO, demand for smart phones is on rise.

This study shall help in understanding the psychology of the consumers while shopping for Mobile phones and its accessories.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To ascertain the consumer behavior and perception towards shopping of mobile phone conventionally and virtually.
- To understand the preferred mode of shopping of consumers as per demographic features

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Primary data collection was made using stratified sampling method. A structured closed ended questionnaire for collection of primary data was framed and primary data was collected from 483 respondents across the district of Kolhapur.

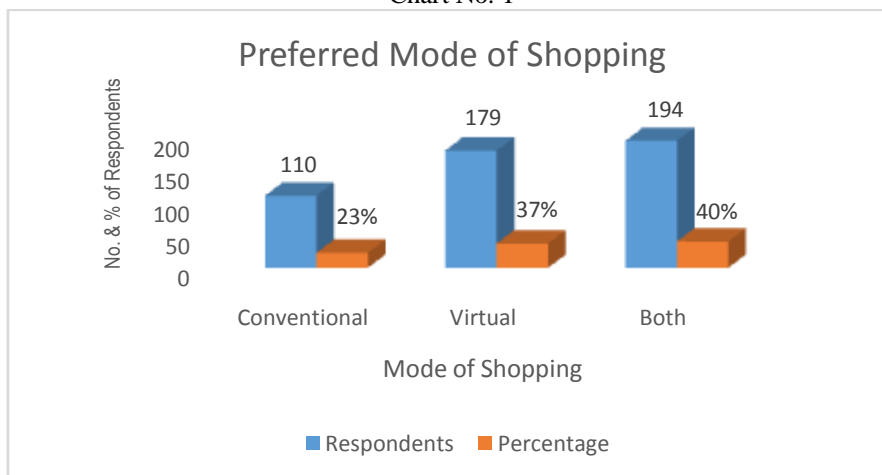
ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Preferred Mode of Shopping:

With availability of new avenues of shopping, the consumers have more choices and options to do their shopping. Further due to penetration of Internet in rural areas of Kolhapur along with substantial drop in the tariff rates of Internet, use of

this medium has become popular as well as affordable. Therefore, consumers in rural areas also can do virtual or online shopping by accessing the Internet. Hence, it would be interesting to understand and ascertain the nature of shopping done by consumers today.

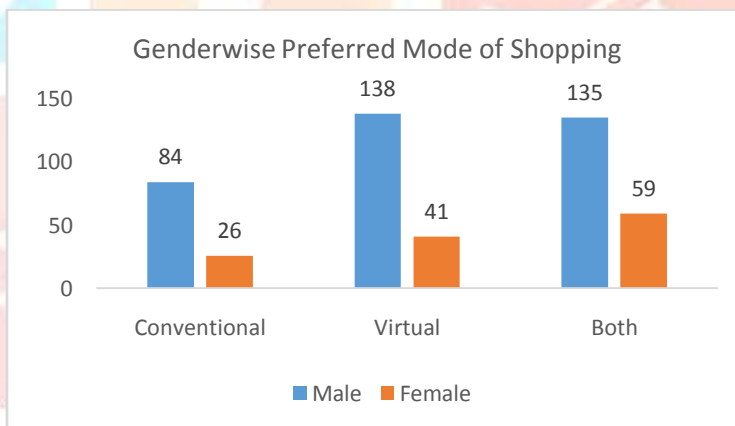
Chart No. 1



The above chart no.1 depicts the present general shopping trend of consumers in the district of Kolhapur with respect to shopping of Mobiles. As can be seen from the above, there is a significant change in the preference of respondents with 179 i.e. 37% respondents virtually shopping mobile phones, while 110 i.e. 23% respondents preferring conventional mode of shopping and 194 i.e. 40% respondents using both mode of shopping as per their convenience.

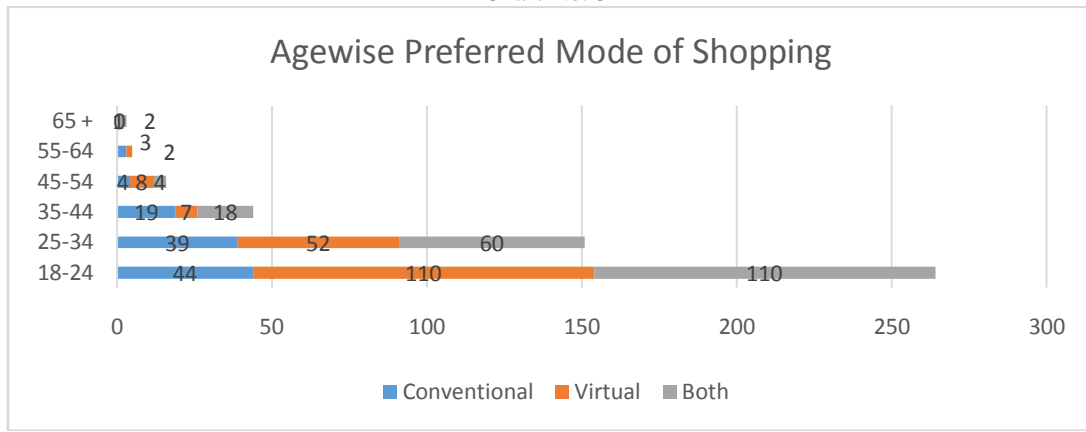
Further, analysis helps in understanding the demographic pattern of the present shopping trend. Accordingly the gender wise and age wise analysis is graphically illustrated with the help of charts.

Chart No. 2



From the above chart no.2, it can be seen that out of 110 respondents who preferred conventional shopping 84 respondents are male and 26 respondents were females; similarly, out of 179 respondents who preferred virtual or online shopping 138 respondents were male and 41 respondents were females. Thus, it is seen that gender wise composition of respondents preferring conventional shopping is 76% male and 24% while in case of virtual shopping this composition is 77% male and 23% female. Therefore, it can be said that gender has no significant role in selecting the mode of shopping as both male and female respondents' behavior and perception towards conventional and virtual shopping is more or less identical.

Chart No. 3

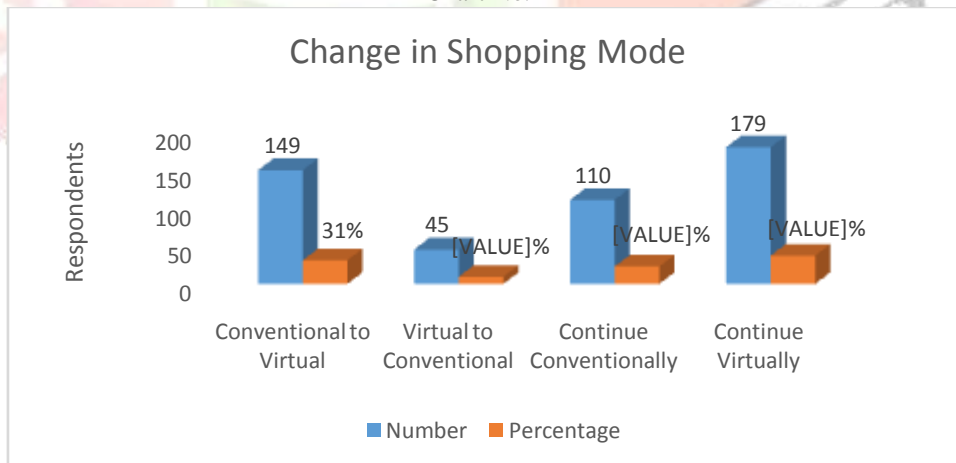


Age wise preference of respondents with regard to mode of shopping differ, which is illustrated in Chart no.3. Age group of 18-24 years constituted of 264 respondents of which 44 (16%) respondents preferred shopping conventionally while 110 (42%) preferred shopping virtually and 110 (42%) preferred both mode of shopping; age group of 25-34 years constituted of 151 respondents of which 39 (26%) respondents preferred shopping conventionally while 52 (34%) preferred shopping virtually and 60 (40%) preferred both mode of shopping; age group of 35-44 years constituted of 44 respondents of which 19 (43%) respondents preferred shopping conventionally while 7 (16%) preferred shopping virtually and 18 (41%) preferred both mode of shopping; age group of 45-54 years constituted of 16 respondents of which 4 (25%) respondents preferred shopping conventionally while 8 (50%) preferred shopping virtually and 4 (25%) preferred both mode of shopping; age group of 55-64 years constituted of 5 respondents of which 3 (60%) respondents preferred shopping conventionally while 2 (40%) preferred shopping virtually and age group of 65 and above constituted of only 1 respondent who preferred shopping conventionally. Thus, it can be said that age of a person has an influence while selecting the mode of shopping.

Change in Mode of Shopping:

Generally, it is seen that there is always a curiosity about any new thing, similarly the novelty of virtual shopping has attracted consumers, while the apprehension of risk has kept some consumers away from it. Further, some consumers who have shopped virtually and are disappointed with the same may once again shift over to the conventional mode of shopping and those satisfied with it will continue to shop virtually. The details of this study in the District of Kolhapur are depicted in the below mentioned chart.

Chart No. 4



From the above chart no. 4 it can be observed that as many as 149 i.e. 31% respondents shifted their mode of shopping to virtual from conventional, while 45 i.e.9% respondents, who were unhappy with virtual shopping have shifted back to conventional mode of shopping. Further, 110 i.e. 23% respondents who were satisfied with virtual shopping continued to shop virtually, while 179 i.e.37% respondents who have some apprehensions about virtual shopping and are reluctant to change their mode of shopping continued to shop conventionally.

CONCLUSION

The study throws light on the consumer behavior and perception of consumers while selecting the mode of shopping for buying mobile phone. Amongst the various parameters apart from gender other demographics such as age, education, occupation, marital status, Income, etc. have a significant role which influence the decision of consumers. Similarly, some perceptions like innovativeness, novelty etc. induce the consumers to try the new mode of shopping; while some perceptions like fear of risk, reliability, quality, etc. create apprehensions in the mind of consumers make them reluctant to try the mode of shopping.

To conclude, it can be said that within a short span of time, virtual shopping no doubt has made its presence felt in the District of Kolhapur, however it still has to go a long way to establish its credentials to draw the sizable number of reluctant respondents and also restore the trust of unsatisfied respondents. From the perspective of conventional stores, it can be said that corrective measures need to be taken immediately to counter the surge of fierce competition thrown by virtual or online shopping so that they can retain their consumers as well win back those consumers who have shifted their shopping mode to virtual shopping.

