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Before and After-Analysis of Consumer Behaviour During Covid-19 Lockdown for Online Shopping: A Case Study of Kullu District Himachal Pradesh

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Abstract: The impact of coronavirus diseases 2019 (COVID-19) on our lives in every field will make 2020 a memorable year in history. The economy will never return to its former state before COVID-19. March 23rd was when our country went into complete lockdown. The lockdown began on March 23rd and almost all services and factories were stopped. As offline shopping became more challenging and dangerous, it will encourage shoppers to take advantage of internet technology by shopping. To understand the impact of this pandemic on the online buying behavior of customers is necessary. It is an applied research that online companies can utilize to understand consumer online purchase behavior. This study utilizes a descriptive research approach to describe the characteristics of consumer's online product purchases before and after the COVID-19 lockdown. The study is based on quantitative research, with a survey questionnaire being used to collect primary data from customers shopping online. A questionnaire with 200 responses can be used to gain a better understanding of consumer behavior. The data collected from the structured questionnaires was analysed using excel and other statistical tools.

Keywords: COVID-19, Pandemic, Consumer, Buying Behaviour, Before and After, Online shopping

INTRODUCTION

Today, the importance of gathering a lifecycle view of the customer has increased as consumers are only able to communicate through social media during lockdown. When searching for information about a service or merchandise on the internet, potential customers recognize the need for it during the online shopping process. While searching, they are exposed to a number of products that meet their needs. The COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 has resulted in substantial changes in people's lifestyles and prompted them to make online purchases for their necessities. In September 2020, the WHO report indicated that there were 32.6 million of cases reported. The impact of Covid-19 on consumer shopping behaviour is significant, and it will influence their future shopping habits. Online shopping has had an even greater impact on consumer purchasing behaviour during COVID-19, while other sectors are either declining or stable in the market.

Review of Literature

Vijay, Sai. T. & Balaji, M. S. (May 2009), revealed that consumers worldwide are moving towards the one-click online shopping format as they increasingly move from crowded stores. While online shopping is convenient, it is not currently the most preferred method of shopping in India. A survey was conducted with 150 internet users, including those who use and don't use online shopping, to discover why some people buy things online while others don't. According to the findings, Indian consumers are influenced by convenience and time savings when shopping online, but security and privacy worries prevent them from doing so.

Ali (2011) conducted a study on Positive Attitudes of Undergraduate Students towards Online shopping. The study is based on internet have become an important part of modern societies along with the spread of internet, the acceptance of online shopping has been growing. It explored that undergraduate students of turkey have more positive attitude towards online shopping. Therefore, male students have more positive attitude than female students. There is a positive correlation between income level and positive attitude towards online shopping as monthly family income increases, participants have a more positive attitude towards online shopping.

Alam (2022) conducted a study on Impact of Covid-19 on Consumer Behaviour in Online and Offline Shopping. The study is based on an online questionnaire helped to understand to which extent the novel disease covid-19 influenced the decision to shop online versus offline and how the participants perception towards shopping online has changed. He concluded that e-commerce companies should take proper steps to make effective marketing strategies to exist in the e-commerce sector. This study proved the shifting influence of online consumer purchasing behaviour factors during the pandemic.

Research Objectives

Main objectives of the study are as follows:

- To understand the demographic profile of customers who opted to switch to online shopping amid Covid-19 in Kullu district Himachal Pradesh.
- To understand the before and after lockdown of Covid-19 scenario of consumer behaviour on online shopping in Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh.
- To understand the expectation of consumers after lockdown of Covid-19.

Research Design

The study is an applied research which can be used by online companies to understand customer online purchase behaviour. For this research descriptive research design is used, wherein the characteristics of customers with regard to purchase of products online before and after (pre and post) covid-19 lockdown is described. The study is based on quantitative research wherein primary data is collected through survey questionnaire from consumers shopping online.

Sampling

The sample unit is the respondents from the Kullu district Himachal Pradesh. The sampling method used is non-probability method through convenience sampling. The sample size is 200 and the respondents targeted for the same are from Kullu district.

Data Collection Methods

Primary Data: The primary data are collected for the first source of knowledge, a group of questions with multiple choice of answer were provided to the respondents for the aim of survey and collected through distributed questionnaire to the respondents through google forms. By using a questionnaire, data has been collected from 200 sample respondents through survey method.

Secondary Data: The secondary data were collected from reports, books, journals, magazines, articles on internet and newspaper, websites.

Tools and Techniques used for data analysis

In this report, the data is collected by using techniques of primary and secondary method. Primary sources include the survey done by questionnaire, secondary sources include research paper, books etc and interpreted by using different statistical tools such as percentages, pie charts, bar charts, column charts etc.

Percentage change Formula

$$\text{Change percentage} = \frac{\text{After} - \text{Before}}{\text{Before}} \times 100$$

Limitation

1. The study is confined to Kullu district.
2. The present study is based on the opinion on only 200 respondents.
3. The data was collected through structured questionnaire and analysed based on the information given by respondents

Data Analysis and Discussions

The table and graph below depict the profile of the sample respondents in terms of socio-demographic characteristic like gender, age, educational qualification and occupation.

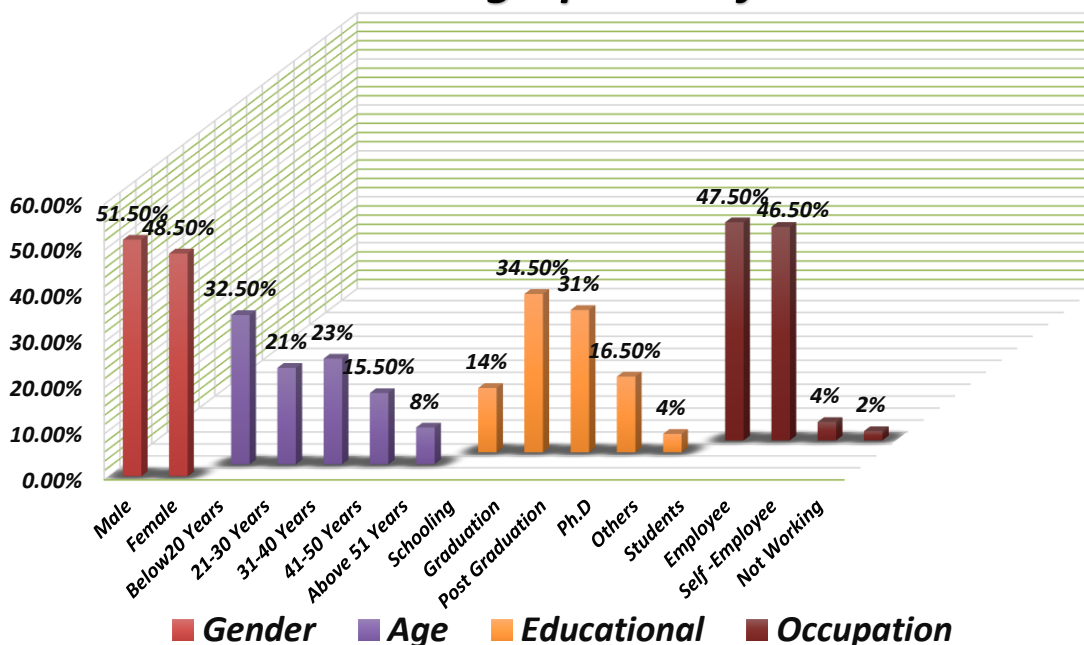
Table-1
Demographic Profile

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Male</i>	103	51.5
<i>Female</i>	97	48.5
Age		
<i>Below 20 Years</i>	65	32.5
<i>21-30 Years</i>	42	21
<i>31-40 Years</i>	46	23
<i>41-50 Years</i>	31	15.5
<i>Above 51 Years</i>	16	8
Educational Qualification		
<i>Schooling</i>	28	14
<i>Graduation</i>	69	34.5
<i>Post Graduation</i>	62	31
<i>Ph.D</i>	33	16.5
<i>Others</i>	8	4
Occupation		
<i>Students</i>	95	47.5
<i>Employee</i>	93	46.5
<i>Self-Employee</i>	8	4
<i>Not Working</i>	4	2
Total	200	100

(Source: Primary Data)

The table-1 and graph represent the demographic profile of the respondents selected for the study. It reveals that out of 200 (100 percent) respondents selected for study, 51.50 percent respondents in the data were male and 48.50 percent were female. There were 32.50 percent of the respondents below 20 years, 21 percent of the respondents were aged 21-30 years, 23 percent were aged 31-40 years, 15.50 percent of the sample were aged 41-50 years and 8 percent of the respondents were aged above 51 years. The educational qualification of the sample reveals that 14 percent of the respondents were schooling, 34.50 percent, 31 percent, 16.50 percent and 4 percent of the respondents were graduation, post-graduation, Ph.D and others. The above table and column chart has categorised the respondents based on their occupation. It showed that 47.50 percent of respondents were students, 46.50 percent of respondents were employee, 4 percent were self-employee and 2 percent of respondents were not working.

Demographic Profile

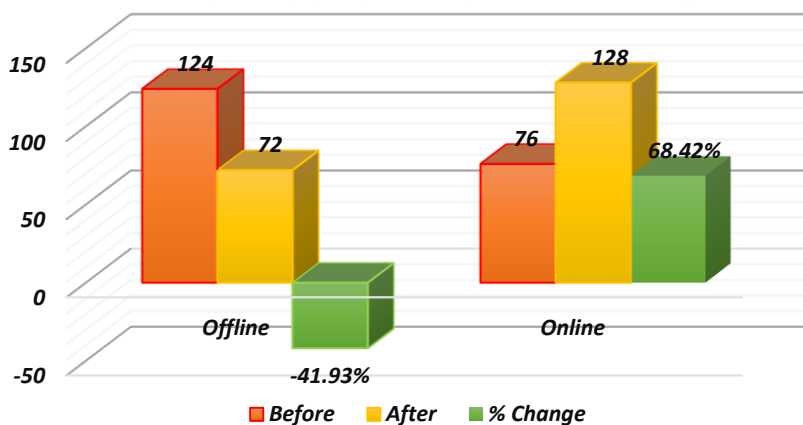


Mode of Shopping
Table-2

Particulars	Before	After	% Change
Offline	124	72	-41.93
Online	76	128	68.42
Total	200	200	

(Source: Primary Data)

Mode of Shopping change in Percentage



From the above table-2 and graphs indicates that there has been a significant 68.42 percent increase in the consumer shifting from offline to online after the lockdown. This can be sustained by that online retailers have offered a variety of discounts and encourage people to purchase/buy online with fast delivery speed and quality products.

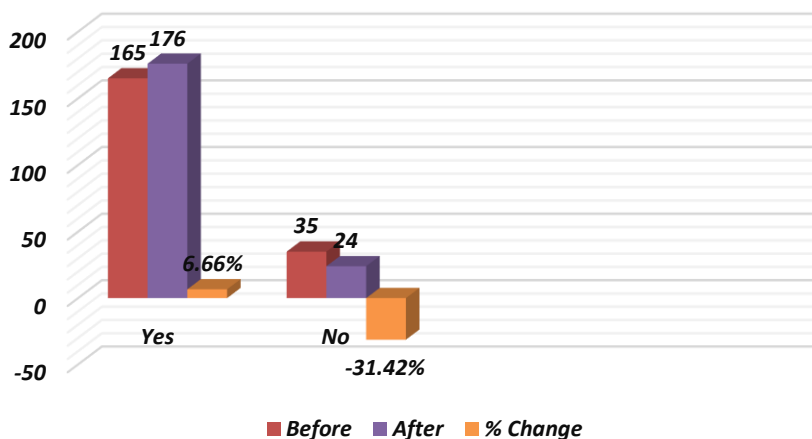
Satisfied with Online Market

Table-3

Particulars	Before	After	% Change
Yes	165	176	6.66
No	35	24	-31.42
Total	200	200	

(Source: Primary Data)

Satisfied with change paercenatge online market



From the above table-3 and graphs indicates that there is a decrease in the unsatisfied rate by -31.42 percent because of the fact discussed above, the online retailers are working hard to retain the surge in the consumer purchase of online products due to lockdown and it seems they are successful in this operation as there is an increase of about 6.66 percent from 176 to 165 out of 200 respondents who are satisfied with the online markets.

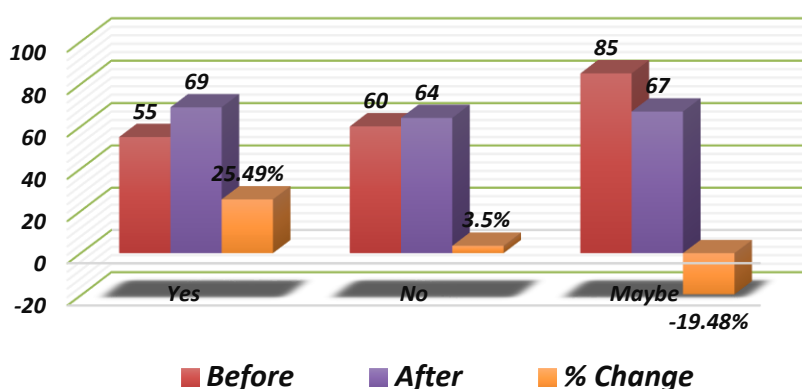
Changes in Buying Habits

Table-4

Particulars	Before	After	% Change
Yes	55	69	25.49%
No	60	64	3.50%
Maybe	85	67	-19.48%
Total	200	200	

(Source: Primary Data)

Percentage Change in Buying Habits



From the above table-4 and graphs indicates that there is not much fluctuations in the buying habits, although the medium changes are very much favor of the online markets as there is 25.49 percent increase in the change in buying habits of the consumers as opposed to a negative 19.48 percent change in the non-change of buying habits.

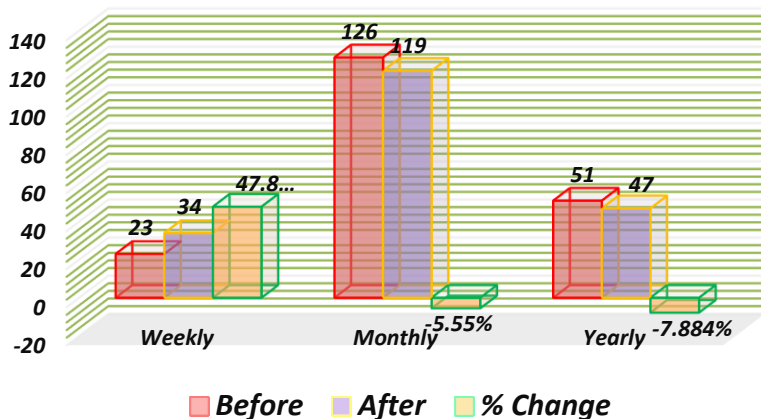
How often do you shop online?

Table-5

Particulars	Before	After	% Change
Weekly	23	34	47.82
Monthly	126	119	-5.55%
Yearly	51	47	-7.84%
Total	200	200	

(Source: Primary Data)

Percentage Change in Shop Online



According to the table-5 and graph above, consumers have made a significant 47.82 percent change in their weekly buying patterns. This can be seen from the decline of around -7.84 and -5.55 percent in the yearly and monthly column, which concludes that previously consumers were not very frequent with their buying behaviour, but now they have shifted to frequent buying from online services.

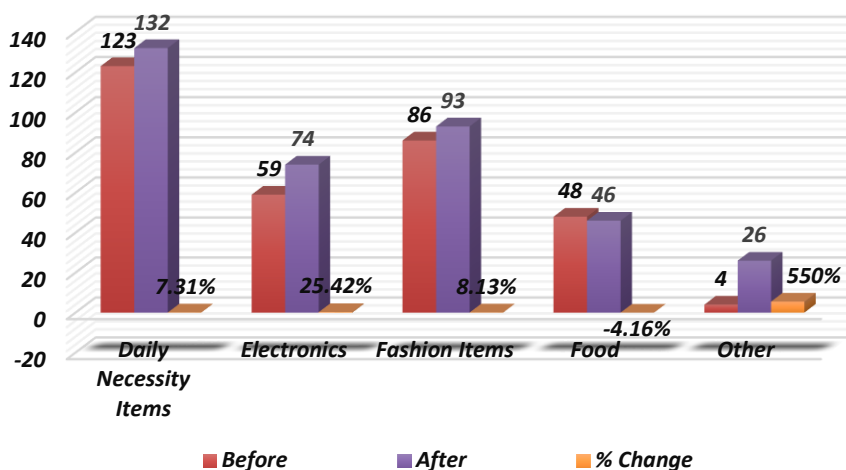
What commodities do you prefer to buy online?

Table-6

Particulars	Before	After	% Change
Daily Necessity Items	123	132	7.31%
Electronics	59	74	25.42%
Fashion Items	86	93	8.13%
Food	48	46	-4.16%
Other	4	26	550%

(Source: Primary Data)

Percentage Change in Commodities prefer to buy online



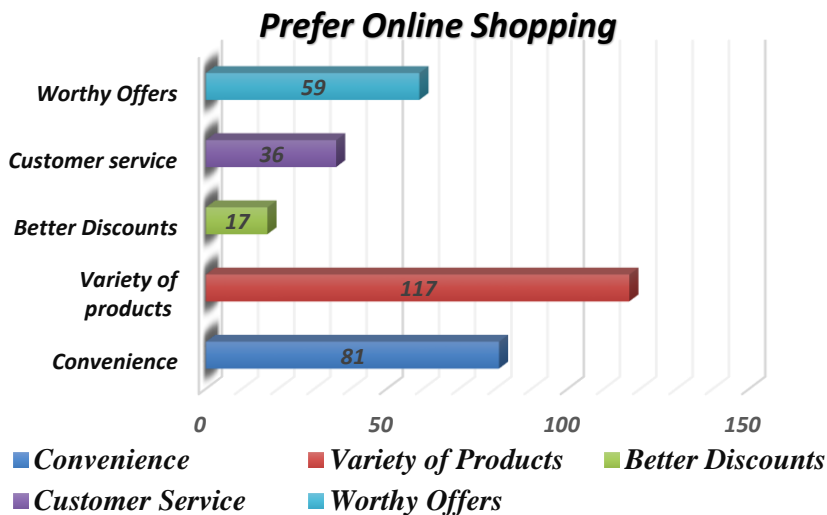
From the above table and graph, we can see that there is clearly more than 5 percent increase in all the commodities purchases online with electronics and other (books, toys, sports, home décor items, grocery etc) been categorized in 24.56 percent and 500 percent respectively. It can be conclude buying pattern has seen a significant change from offline to online shopping and to be able to retain these numbers and grow in the future, the online retailers need to improve and advance more and more to be able to shift all the offline consumer market to online consumer market.

Prefer Online Shopping

Table-7

Particulars	No. of Respondents
Convenience	81
Variety of products	117
Better Discounts	17
Customer service	36
Worthy Offers	59

(Source: Primary Data)



In the above table-7 and graph shows that the most prefer online shopping is variety of products. On the basis of variety of products, the customer buys the product. According to response there are 117 consumers are firstly variety of the product. 81, 59, 36 and 17 respondents of consumer are prefer to convenience, worthy offers, customer service and better discounts.

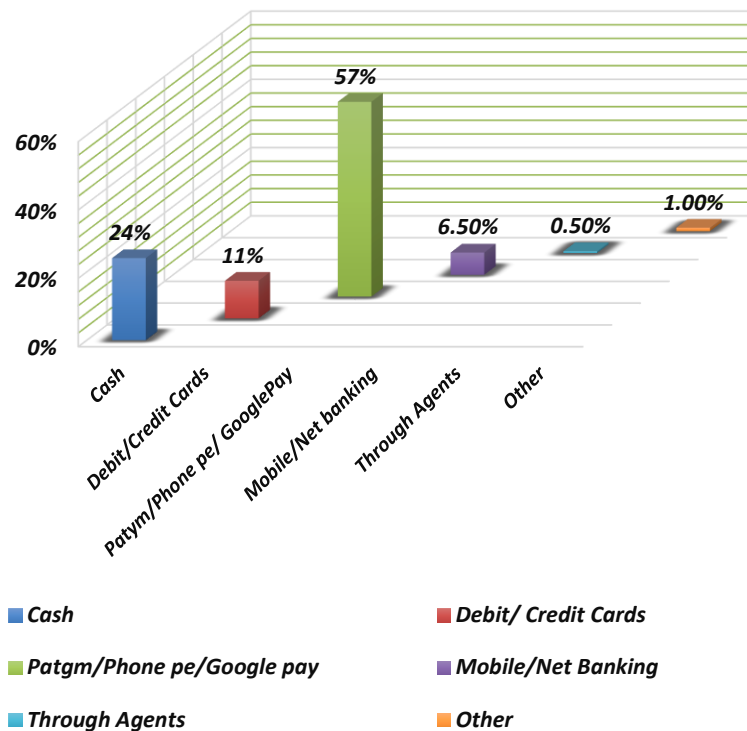
Preferred mode for doing payments after lockdown?

Table-8

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Cash	48	24%
Debit/Credit Cards	22	11%
Patym/Phone pe/ GooglePay	114	57%
Mobile/Net banking	13	6.5%
Through Agents	01	0.5%
Other	02	1.0%
Total	200	100

(Source: Primary Data)

Preferred mode for payments after lockdown



From the above table-8 and graph shown that it can be concluded that people are moving towards digitalisation. 57 percent (114 respondents) patym/phonepe/google pay are more preferred mode for doing payments. 24 percent (48 respondents) preferred cash, 11 percent (22 respondents) preferred debit/credit card, 6.50 percent (13 respondents) preferred mobile/internet banking facilities and 0.5 percent (02 respondents) agents are least preferred mode for doing payments.

Conclusion

This paper has analysed the Before and After-Analysis of Consumer Behaviour During Covid-19 Lockdown for Online Shopping: A case study of Kullu District Himachal Pradesh. The market is expanding and there is a large potential for online stores to tap into untapped areas. Therefore, E retailers have to constantly ascertain their customers' expectations, initiate necessary actions at the earliest to contain problems faced by their customers on online shopping and to offer full-fledge products and services like better quality goods at a smaller price, immediate return and replacement of damaged goods, lower of delivery time, thereby customers satisfaction may be increased and be loyal, which assists to retain existing customers and to attract new ones. Our research confirmed that there has been a rise in consumer behaviour from offline to online due to the lockdown. It was lockdown itself that helped the online markets to offer greater discounts and faster delivery to get a competitive edge towards the whole offline vs online scenario.

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