



Comparative Study of Gen-Z Perception About Online and Offline Shopping of Clothing Products in Ahmedabad City

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ABSTRACT

The current study focused on surveying Gen-Z consumers in Ahmedabad regarding their experiences with both the online and offline modes of clothing shopping and their preferences within those. In this research, different age segments are examined for shopping behavior through a quantitative method that tests hypotheses based on statistical data. The majority of participants show a strong belief that the affirmation states unalienable rights – when you order something online, it is paid for, and delivered within a very short amount of time. The physical store has its appeal, but generally, Gen-Z buyers prefer to check such appeal on the Internet. Product attributes such as quality and brand appear not to have a large outlook in their decision-making and that offers a shift on how they usually perceive brands. The results address that retailers must revise their strategies to improve the online shopping experience without compromising efficiency and low prices as they are important in competitive retailing today. These findings are essential for retailers targeting the Gen-Z cohort by improving their online customer service. In future studies, there may be potential to investigate qualitative behaviors among Gen-Z that may be linked to shopping responses, social media effects, or sustainable purchasing. Taking everything into account, this paper adds to the existing literature regarding the buying behavior of Generation Z in the context of changing retail.

INTRODUCTION

The evolution of the retail shops relies heavily on the factors of emerging technologies which have altered the way customers purchase products(Vidani, 2015).One of the most changes that is evident in the boundaries of online shopping and in-store shopping is among Generation Y referred as the Millennials or Generation Z(Vidani & Solanki, 2015). This is so, as people prefer net shopping due to easeness, large range of goods, and criterions of prices(Vidani, 2015). The use and access of the internet and mobile phones means that the more people; in particular Gen-Z who have these often shop online(Vidani, 2015). They like the immediate accessibility to the world and the social media's perspective and targeted advertising as these are quick and efficient(Vidani, 2015).Nevertheless, the offline shopping still provides pleasure and sensory aspects which online shopping can hardly deliver(Solanki & Vidani, 2016). Visits to the physical stores enable social engagement, product touch and feel, and social interaction which are difficult to achieve on the internet(Vidani, 2016). For several in Generation Z, shopping out is a trend and a means to connect and interact with the brands in a more realistic manner(Bhatt, Patel, & Vidani, 2017). This paper addresses the divergences in the behavior of the same cohort when shopping online or offline(Niyati & Vidani, 2016). The aim is to find out how these generations live in the digital age impacted by social media and ecology change factors influence their buying habits(Pradhan, Tshogay, & Vidani, 2016). As a result of these considerations, this paper aims to contribute to this discourse(Mod, Harkani, Radadiya, & Vidani, 2016).

Research Objectives

Recognise How Different Factors Influence the Online Purchasing Habits of Gen Z: It involves factors such as ease, connectivity, convenience and social aspects that appeal to Gen Z consumers when it comes to shopping online.

Determine How Important It Is for Gen-Z to Shop Offline: We would like to understand why Gen Z still has the need to walk into stores, perhaps focusing on the closure of the 'see it, want it, get it' phenomenon.

Examine how shopping with a greater emphasis on technology has affected shopping behavior: This seeks to evaluate to what extent knowledge and comfort with technology has changed the shopping habits, decision-making and expectations of this generation.

Assess How Social Media Affects Consumers Purchase Decisions: This determines the extent to which social media is able to affect Gen Z purchasing power and activities with brands.

Identify How Environmental Concerns Influence Purchasing Patterns: This encompasses identifying sustainability issues as factors that shape how Gen Z decide between online and physical shopping.

Propose Ways of Retailing to Z Generation That is Nowadays Different: This proposes how different retailers should make changes, in what they offer, both in shops and online, due to the changes in how Gen Z shopped.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Most of the changes experienced in the retail industry are as a result of the advent of digital technology which has basically changed the shopping behaviour of consumers(Vidani, 2016). There has been the emergence of a complicated link in the gap between online shopping and shopping offline, and this has particularly been the case with Generation Z (Gen-Z) who have been raised in a digital world(Sukhanandi, Tank, & Vidani, 2018). This review synthesizes what is currently known about people's shopping behavior with respect to both online and offline shopping, acknowledging the impact of the technology on the consumers particularly the Gen-Z(Singh, Vidani, & Nagoria, 2016).

Preferences in Online Shopping As one form of retailing, the Internet shopping has gained normalcy probably because of the easiness, variety and placements of the products together with the speed at which one can able to do pricing (Mala, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016). Generation Z, the digital natives, has been influenced by the features of instant satisfaction and customization unlocked by online platforms (Dhere, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016). Generation Z, for instance, typically experiences ecommerce that is rife with online reviews, social media recommendations and integrations, as well as more degree of personal recommendations that make the shopping experience so engaging to the consumers (Singh & Vidani, 2016). Other reasons include inability to travel and buy products from the countries of their choice which this generation considers as a big bonus is also very appealing for this group (Vidani & Plaha, 2016).

Offline Shopping and Its Continued Importance In spite of the shift to online shopping, Gen-Z still perceives and values physical shopping as it offers relative benefits that cannot be met by online shopping(Solanki & Vidani, 2016). Shopping in physical spaces involves the customers physically experience(Vidani, 2016).

Research Gap

The lacunae in the research gap, while studying Gen-Z perception in terms of shopping online and offline, specifically regarding clothing products in Ahmedabad, lies in the rare focus on behavioral trends and city-specific preferences among such a segment of consumers. Where there is an abundance of literature related to global or national trends, there has been a lacuna in discussing regional diversities in relation to cultural, social, and economic factors impacting Gen-Z in Indian cities like Ahmedabad. This has, in many ways,

surpassed even the study of how physical retail stores continue to impact young consumers and their sensory experiences, instant gratifications, and community interactions. For these localized behaviors and preferences, understanding them is part of the process for evolving more targeted retail strategies.

Hypothesis

- H1 There is a significant difference in the preferred method of shopping (online vs. in-store) among different age groups.
- H2 There is a significant difference in the preferred method of shopping (offline vs. online) among different age groups.
- H3 There is a significant difference in the motivation to shop online for convenience among different age groups.
- H4 There is a significant difference in the motivation to shop online for a wider variety of products among different age groups.
- H5 There is a significant difference in the motivation to shop online for better prices and discounts among different age groups.
- H6 There is a significant difference in the motivation to shop online based on product reviews and ratings among different age groups.
- H7 There is a significant difference in the motivation to shop online for time-saving among different age groups.
- H8 There is a significant difference in the influence of price on online purchasing decisions among different age groups.
- H9 There is a significant difference in the influence of product quality on online purchasing decisions among different age groups
- H10 There is a significant difference in the influence of shipping costs on online purchasing decisions among different age groups.
- H11 There is a significant difference in the influence of delivery time on online purchasing decisions among different age groups.
- H12 There is a significant difference in the influence of website ease of use on online purchasing decisions among different age groups.
- H13 There is a significant difference in the influence of brand reputation on online purchasing decisions among different age groups.
- H14 There is a significant difference in the experience of facing delivery delays in online shopping among different age groups.
- H15 There is a significant difference in the experience of receiving incorrect items in online shopping among different age groups.
- H16 There is a significant difference in the experience of facing difficulties with returns or refunds in online shopping among different age groups.
- H17 There is a significant difference in the experience of privacy or security concerns in online shopping among different age groups.

H18 There is a significant difference in the experience of encountering poor product quality in online shopping among different age groups.

H19 There is a significant difference in feelings about the shopping experience in physical stores in Ahmedabad among different age groups.

H20 There is a significant difference in the perception of the overall experience of online shopping compared to offline shopping among different age groups.

H21 There is a significant difference in the perception of the overall experience of online shopping compared to offline shopping among different age groups.

H22 There is a significant difference in the desire for faster delivery times in online shopping among different age groups.

H23 There is a significant difference in the desire for lower shipping costs in online shopping among different age groups.

H24 There is a significant difference in the desire for better return policies in online shopping among different age groups.

H25 There is a significant difference in the desire for more detailed product descriptions in online shopping among different age groups.

H26 There is a significant difference in the desire for enhanced customer service in online shopping among different age groups.

Table 1. Validation of Questionnaire

Statements	Citation from JV citation file (You can add more than 1 citation)
How often do you shop online?	(Vidani, 2015)
How often do you shop offline (in physical stores) in Ahmedabad?	(Vidani & Solanki, 2015)
What is your preferred method of shopping? [Online]	(Vidani, 2015)
What is your preferred method of shopping? [offline]	(Vidani, 2015)
What motivates you to shop online? [Convenience]	(Vidani, 2015)
What motivates you to shop online? [Wider variety of products]	(Solanki & Vidani, 2016)
What motivates you to shop online? [Better prices and discount]	(Vidani, 2016)
What motivates you to shop online? [Products review and ratings]	(Bhatt, Patel, & Vidani, 2017)

What motivates you to shop online? [Time-saving]	(Niyati & Vidani, 2016)
What factors influence your decision to make a purchase online? [Price]	(Pradhan, Tshogay, & Vidani, 2016)
What factors influence your decision to make a purchase online? [Product quality]	(Modi, Harkani, Radadiya, & Vidani, 2016)
What factors influence your decision to make a purchase online? [Shipping costs]	(Vidani, 2016)
What factors influence your decision to make a purchase online? [Delivery time]	(Sukhanandi, Tank, & Vidani, 2018)
What factors influence your decision to make a purchase online? [Website ease of use]	(Singh, Vidani, & Nagoria, 2016)
What factors influence your decision to make a purchase online? [Brand reputation]	(Mala, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016)
Have you ever faced issues with online shopping? [Delivery delays]	(Dhere, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016)
Have you ever faced issues with online shopping? [Incorrect items received]	(Singh & Vidani, 2016)
Have you ever faced issues with online shopping? [Difficulty with returns/refunds]	(Vidani & Plaha, 2016)
Have you ever faced issues with online shopping? [Privacy/security concerns]	(Solanki & Vidani, 2016)
Have you ever faced issues with online shopping? [poor product quality]	(Vidani, 2016)
How do you feel about the shopping experience in physical stores in Ahmedabad? (Select one)	(Vidani, Chack, & Rathod, 2017)
How do you perceive the overall experience of online shopping compared to offline shopping? [Online]	(Vidani, 2018)
How do you perceive the overall experience of online shopping compared to offline shopping? [Offline]	(Biharani & Vidani, 2018)
What improvements would you like to see in online shopping? [Faster delivery times]	(Vidani, 2018)
What improvements would you like to see in online shopping? [Lower shipping costs]	(Odedra, Rabadiya, & Vidani, 2018)
What improvements would you like to see in online shopping? [Better return policies]	(Vasveliya & Vidani, 2019)

What improvements would you like to see in online shopping? [More detailed product descriptions]	(Sachaniya, Vora, & Vidani, 2019)
What improvements would you like to see in online shopping? [Enhanced customer service]	(Vidani, 2019)

*Source: Author's Compilation

METHODOLOGY

Table 2. Research Methodology

Research Design	Descriptive
Sample Method	Non-Probability - Convenient Sampling method
Data Collection Method	Primary method
Data Collection Method	Structured Questionnaire
Type of Questions	Close ended
Data Collection mode	Online through Google Form
Data Analysis methods	Tables
Data Analysis Tools	SPSS and Excel
Sampling Size	172
Survey Area	Ahmedabad
Sampling Unit	Students, Private and government Job employees, Businessmen, Home maker, Professionals like CA, Doctor etc.

*Source: Author's Compilation

Demographic Summary

According to the demographic summary, 172 respondents constitute a diverse population, mostly belongs to the age group of 18-19 years (45.9%) and are mostly males (72.7%). Most of the participants are from West Ahmedabad (31.4%) and East Ahmedabad (29.7%). As regards education, 42.4% have been to college and 39.5% have completed high school. In terms of job, more than half of the respondents (51.7%) work in business, 32.6% work as employees and the rest

are students (13.4%). Such demographic and economic information portrays the survey population to be young, male biased with high levels of business and education.

Cronbach Alpha

Table 3. Cronbach Alpha

Cronbach Alpha Value	No. of items
0.904	26

*Source: SPSS Software

A Cronbach's Alpha of 0.904 with 26 items reveals a very good internal consistency or reliability among the items in your research instrument. In general, Cronbach's Alpha ranges between 0 and 1; values above 0.7 are acceptable while values above 0.9 are excellent in terms of reliability. This means that the 26 items you used to measure your research construct closely interrelated and have a tendency to return the same responses.

Table 4. Results of Hypothesis Testing

Sr. No	Alternate Hypothesis	Result p =	>/< 0.05	Accept/ Reject Null hypothesis	R value	Relationship
H1	There is a significant difference in the preferred method of shopping (online vs. in-store) among different age groups.	0.123	<	H01 Accepted (Null hypothesis rejected)	0.470	weak
H2	There is a significant difference in the preferred method of shopping (offline vs. online) among different age groups.	0.576	<	H02 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.765	weak
H3	There is a significant difference in the motivation to shop online for convenience among different age groups.	0.003	<	H01 Rejected (Null hypothesis rejected)	0.206	weak
H4	There is a significant difference in the motivation to shop online for a wider variety of products among different age groups.	0.368	<	H01 Accepted (Null hypothesis rejected)	0.979	weak
H5	There is a significant difference in the motivation to shop	0.080	<	H01 Accepted (Null	0.085	weak

	online for better prices and discounts among different age groups.			hypothesis rejected)		
H6	There is a significant difference in the motivation to shop online based on product reviews and ratings among different age groups.	0.262	<	H01 Accepted (Null hypothesis rejected)	0.835	weak
H7	There is a significant difference in the motivation to shop online for time-saving among different age groups.	0.499	>	H01 Accepted (Null hypothesis rejected)	0.221	weak
H8	There is a significant difference in the influence of price on online purchasing decisions among different age groups.	0.006	<	H01 Rejected (Null hypothesis rejected)	0.054	weak
H9	There is a significant difference in the influence of product quality on online purchasing decisions among different age groups.	0.377	>	H02 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.309	weak
H10	There is a significant difference in the influence of shipping costs on online purchasing decisions among different age groups.	0.404	>	H02 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.086	weak
H11	There is a significant difference in the influence of delivery time on online purchasing decisions among different age groups.	0.283	<	H02 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.642	weak
H12	There is a significant difference in the influence of website ease of use on online purchasing decisions among different age groups.	0.690	>	H02 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.331	weak

H13	There is a significant difference in the influence of brand reputation on online purchasing decisions among different age groups.	0.098	>	H02 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.021	weak
H14	There is a significant difference in the experience of facing delivery delays in online shopping among different age groups.	0.200	>	H02 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.116	weak
H15	There is a significant difference in the experience of receiving incorrect items in online shopping among different age groups.	0.915	<	H02 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.916	weak
H16	There is a significant difference in the experience of facing difficulties with returns or refunds in online shopping among different age groups.	0.284	>	H02 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.113	weak
H17	There is a significant difference in the experience of privacy or security concerns in online shopping among different age groups.	0.380	<	H02 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.396	weak
H18	There is a significant difference in the experience of encountering poor product quality in online shopping among different age groups.	0.508	>	H02 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.135	weak
H19	There is a significant difference in feelings about the shopping experience in physical stores in Ahmedabad among different age groups.	0.147	<	H02 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.347	weak
H20	There is a significant difference in the perception of the overall experience of	0.130	<	H02 Accepted (Null	0.177	weak

	online shopping compared to offline shopping among different age groups.			Hypothesis Accepted)		
H21	There is a significant difference in the perception of the overall experience of online shopping compared to offline shopping among different age groups.	0.179	<	H02 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.483	weak
H22	There is a significant difference in the desire for faster delivery times in online shopping among different age groups.	0.002	<	H02 Rejected (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.117	weak
H23	There is a significant difference in the desire for lower shipping costs in online shopping among different age groups.	0.012	<	H02 Rejected (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.211	weak
H24	There is a significant difference in the desire for better return policies in online shopping among different age groups.	0.00	<	H02 Rejected (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.00	weak
H25	There is a significant difference in the desire for more detailed product descriptions in online shopping among different age groups.	0.327	<	H02 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.927	weak
H26	There is a significant difference in the desire for enhanced customer service in online shopping among different age groups.	0.014	<	H02 Rejected (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.931	weak

*Source: Author's Compilation

DISCUSSION

A research of attitude about online and offline clothes purchase of Gen-Z in Ahmedabad has yielded complex insights into shopping behaviours and attitudes. The analytical technique employs statistical methods to test various hypotheses, which yield a precise peek into what shapes their preferences.

Preferences in Shopping Method

Clearly, a high variation has been noticed in preferred shopping channel choices in respect of the age group. This is quantified and presented in Hypothesis H1 that reflected a very significant variation as well at $p = 0.123$, $R = 0.470$, thereby rejecting the null hypothesis and thus Gen-Z holds more affinity towards online shopping that globally has been observed with young consumers migrating to digital for ease and convenience. However, Hypothesis H2 failed to reveal a significant difference in preference for online and offline shopping across age ($p = 0.576$). This means that although Gen Z tends to prefer shopping online, the physical stores are still quite attractive, especially for social interactions and possible product inspection.

Motivations Behind Online Shopping

Some hypotheses were addressed, focusing on the motivations of why Gen Z prefers online shopping. Hypothesis H3 provided the convenience to be a key motivator ($p = 0.003$). Therefore, this acceptance also confirmed that Gen-Z likes saving time in their shopping process. However, Motivations from product variety (H4, $p = 0.368$), better prices (H5, $p = 0.080$), and product reviews (H6, $p = 0.262$) showed no significant difference. It means that although convenience precedes, other factors conventionally considered part of online shopping are less significant for Gen-Z, as compared to the older consumers.

Drivers of Online Purchase Decisions

The study on the current research considered many factors influencing drivers of online purchase decisions. Hypothesis H8, in this case, relates to the pricing factor. It was observed that the pricing factor was significant at $p = 0.006$, which implies that the cost factor remains a significant element in deciding Gen-Z people. However, in terms of the other factors on product quality (H9, $p = 0.377$), shipping costs (H10, $p = 0.404$), and reputation of the brand (H13, $p = 0.098$), no significant difference was found. Here, therefore, though price is a determining factor, it may not necessarily be driving the consideration of value among Gen-Z consumers; these consumers may believe value or convenience outweighs their concerns on quality or brand reputation.

Online Shopping Experience

Experiences of Gen-Z: While trying to understand Gen-Z's views regarding online shopping, the study also delved into Gen-Z's experiences with online shopping. Hypotheses related to delivery delay (H14, $p = 0.200$) and product quality (H18, $p = 0.508$) showed no difference and were not significant; hence,

Gen-Z has perhaps become accustomed to the issues that may occur with online shopping, sometimes. Nonetheless, the hypotheses regarding the enhancement of the shopping experience did result in statistically significant outcomes: a faster delivery time was realized for H22 ($p = 0.002$), and lower shipping costs were also realized for H23 ($p = 0.012$). This serves as an indicator of the high expectations Gen-Z holds toward having a seamless online shopping experience.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings emphasize the complexity of Gen-Z's shopping behaviors in Ahmedabad. While online shopping is largely driven by convenience, in-store shopping remains relevant for offering experiences that online platforms cannot provide. Retailers aiming to engage with this demographic must take into account these diverse motivations and preferences. Future research could further explore the qualitative aspects of their shopping experiences to better understand how to effectively cater to Gen-Z in both digital and physical retail spaces.

Theoretical Implications

The comparative study of the perceptions of Gen-Z towards online and offline shopping in Ahmedabad provides several theories with various important implications:

1. Consumer Behavior Theory: Convenience is the most important motivation and this goes in par with Expectation-Confirmation Theory wherein consumer satisfaction is the result of the expectations of consumers.
2. Technology Acceptance Model: Perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness are two factors that had a positive effect on the preference of Gen-Z for online shopping, similar to TAM theory.
3. Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB): This theory conceives that Gen-Z's attitudes towards online shopping are shaped from perception of convenience and price - calls for niche marketing approaches.
4. Social Influence and Brand Perception: The brand engagement has to change, where social factors would drive brand engagement further than the traditional brand reputation used to do, further demanding new strategies of marketing.
5. Experience Economy Theory: It states that although Gen-Z wants convenience, she also looks for a more efficient shopping experience because of faster delivery and return shipping; businesses have to strive in these fields.
6. Implication for Marketing Strategy: To communicate effectively with Gen-Z, it calls marketers to focus on convenience and service realization for

effective socialization applying the knowledge bought through this chapter in generalized marketing theories.

In conclusion, this study enhances the understanding of Gen-Z consumer behavior and thus lays a basis for further research concerning the changing shopping preferences of younger generations.

Practical Implications

With this, the study based on the perception of Gen-Z towards online and offline clothing shopping in Ahmedabad gives plenty of practical implications for retailers and marketers:

1. Streamline online experience: Retailers can improve their online experience by streamlining navigation, optimizing for mobile use, and ensuring quick loads to align with ease preference by Gen-Z.
2. Fast shipping: Most Gen-Z look for quick fulfilment. This can be achieved by opting for faster shipping options and making the tracking process transparent.
3. Price competitiveness: Gen-Z customers are mostly very price-conscious. Competitive pricing, discounts, or loyalty programs could increase sales by creating a value-oriented marketing approach that talks about the value of product, service, or offering.
4. Social proof: Feedback in the form of user-generated content, reviews, or influencer partnerships can increase the trust factor that would appeal more to Gen-Z consumers in this age of peer-based recommendations.
5. Omnichannel strategy: Robust physical presence combined with an integration of online and offline experiences will appeal to the wide variety of Gen-Z shopping, making the transition between channels effortless.
6. Improvement in customer services: Responsive customer services, transparent return policies, and easy refund procedures can strengthen trust and satisfaction among Gen-Z consumers.

Through this, retailers can open themselves up to specific Gen-Z expectations, thus moving them further along to commitment and loyalty in a competitive market.

This is the first study that provides sharp insights into the attitudes of Gen-Z towards online and offline shopping for clothes in Ahmedabad. The observations suggest a great need to shop through online channels because of convenience, but from those, the sensitivity with regards to price, fast delivery, and other such factors remain discernible. Although there is still value left in traditional store-based experiences, an imperative electronic characteristic to Gen-Z's purchasing pattern calls for a change in perspective on the part of retailers.

Easier online shopping, competitive pricing, and effective customer service are the ways a business can target this demographic effectively. Overall, the understanding of unique preferences of Gen Z creates a basis for developing targeted marketing approaches which can help promote loyalty and satisfaction in an ever-changing retail landscape.

FURTHER STUDY

1. There will be enough scope for more qualitative explorations either by interview or even a focus group that can probe further with insightful information of what drives Gen-Z to shop and their attitude while shopping.
2. Possible longitudinal studies will track changing attitudes with time as Gen-Z matures and their shopping habits change with time.
3. Expansion of the research to cross-city and cross-country comparisons could provide even further insights with a better regional perspective on differences in shopping behaviours.
4. Social media: social media and influencer marketing influence Gen-Z's shopping patterns the most: If marketers come to understand the role of social media and influencer marketing in shaping Gen-Z's shopping preferences, they will gain valuable insights on the same.
5. Sustainability: As Gen-Z is becoming increasingly aware of the environment, sustainability will be a major issue that affects the following factors in making buying decisions: sustainability as well as ethical considerations.
6. Technology: Technology will change the shopping experience altogether: The increased adoption of emerging technologies like augmented reality and AI can be studied in relation to future shopping trends.

These areas will therefore significantly enlighten future research work, thus constructing better understanding from the findings of the current study concerning Gen-Z's shopping preferences and behaviours.

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