Consumer Satisfaction In Online And Offline Shopping: A Systematic Review Of Trends, Determinants, And Comparative Insights

Anmol Kabra

Research center- school of studies in commerce , vikram university Ujjain

Dr. Smita Derashree

Assistant Professor

Govt. Kalidas Girls College, Ujjain

Abstract

Consumer satisfaction has emerged as a critical determinant of success in the rapidly evolving retail landscape, where online and offline shopping modes coexist and increasingly overlap. The growing adoption of digital technologies, coupled with the continued relevance of physical retail formats, has reshaped consumer expectations, purchasing behavior, and evaluation criteria. This study presents a systematic review of existing literature on consumer satisfaction in online and offline shopping with the objective of identifying key trends, dominant determinants, and comparative insights across both channels. The review synthesizes findings from prior empirical and conceptual studies to examine how factors such as price and perceived value, product quality and variety, convenience, service quality, trust, security, and after-sales service influence consumer satisfaction in different shopping contexts. The analysis reveals that while online shopping is primarily driven by convenience, accessibility, and informational efficiency, offline shopping continues to offer superior experiential value, trust, and immediate gratification. Furthermore, the findings indicate a growing shift toward hybrid and omnichannel shopping behavior, where consumers strategically combine online and offline experiences to optimize satisfaction. By consolidating fragmented research, this review contributes to a holistic understanding of consumer satisfaction dynamics and provides valuable implications for retailers, marketers, and researchers seeking to enhance consumer-centric strategies in an increasingly competitive and integrated retail environment.

Keywords: Consumer Satisfaction, Online Shopping, Offline Shopping, Retail Trends, Comparative Analysis

Introduction

The rapid transformation of the retail landscape over the past two decades has significantly altered the way consumers search for information, evaluate alternatives, and make purchasing decisions. The emergence and expansion of online shopping platforms, supported by advancements in digital technology, internet penetration, and mobile commerce, have created new opportunities and challenges for both consumers and retailers. At the same time, offline shopping through traditional brick-and-mortar stores continues to remain relevant due to its tangible, experiential, and trust-based advantages. In this evolving environment, consumer satisfaction has emerged as a critical construct for understanding shopping behavior, loyalty, and long-term business sustainability. Satisfaction reflects the extent to which consumers' expectations are met or exceeded during the shopping process and is influenced by multiple factors such as product quality, price, convenience, service quality, and overall shopping experience. As consumers increasingly alternate between online and offline channels, comparing satisfaction levels across these modes has become essential for retailers aiming to design effective omnichannel strategies and for researchers seeking to explain changing consumption patterns.

Consumer satisfaction in online and offline shopping is shaped by distinct yet interrelated determinants. Online shopping offers advantages such as convenience, time efficiency, wider product variety, price comparison, and access to user reviews, which often enhance perceived value and satisfaction. However, concerns related to product authenticity, delivery delays, payment security, and lack of physical inspection may negatively affect the online shopping experience. In contrast, offline shopping provides direct product examination, immediate possession, personalized assistance, and a sensory experience that fosters trust and emotional engagement, but it may be constrained by higher prices, limited assortment, and time and location barriers. Understanding these contrasting attributes is crucial for identifying the key drivers of satisfaction in each context. Comparative insights into online and offline shopping satisfaction not only highlight the strengths and limitations of both channels but also reveal how demographic variables, lifestyle changes, and technological familiarity influence consumer preferences. By examining trends and determinants of satisfaction across shopping modes, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of consumer decision-making and offers valuable implications for retailers, marketers, and policymakers aiming to enhance consumer experiences in an increasingly competitive and hybrid retail environment.

Background of the Study

The retail sector has been undergoing a fundamental transformation driven by the growth of digital technologies, changing consumer preferences, and expanding internet accessibility. Globally, e-commerce has experienced substantial expansion, with online retail sales expected to reach approximately $6.86 trillion in 2025, an increase from $6.3 trillion in 2024, reflecting continued year-on-year growth in digital transactions. By 2024, online channels accounted for roughly 20.1 percent of all retail sales worldwide, marking the first time that online retail crossed the 20 percent threshold of total global retail sales and underlining the accelerating consumer shift toward digital shopping modes. Online shopping penetration has grown significantly over the past decade and is projected to continue rising as digital ecosystems mature and consumers become more comfortable with digital payment systems and logistics networks. In contrast, traditional offline retail remains the dominant distribution channel for many categories, contributing the majority of total sales volume. For instance, despite e-commerce gains, brick-and-mortar retail continues to play a major role in consumer purchase behaviour, especially for goods where physical inspection and personal interaction are pivotal in purchase decisions. These dual trends highlight an increasingly hybridised retail environment in which understanding consumer satisfaction across both online and offline channels is critical for retailers seeking to optimize competitive strategies and customer engagement.

In the Indian context, the digital retail revolution has been particularly pronounced. The number of online shoppers in India surged to nearly 260 million in 2024, and projections suggest further growth to 300 million by 2030 as internet penetration deepens into Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities and digital payment infrastructure expands. E-commerce currently represents about 8 percent of the Indian retail market, with robust compound annual growth rates (CAGR) projected through the latter part of the decade as consumer adoption of digital channels continues to rise. Indian shoppers are increasingly engaging with online platforms not only for convenience and comparative pricing but also for access to broad product assortments and seasonal deals, especially during festive and promotional periods. Despite this, offline retail persists, particularly for categories such as groceries, personal care, and high-touch purchases where in-store experiences and immediate possession remain valued. Consumer satisfaction in these divergent contexts varies according to diverse determinants including convenience, service quality, trust, product availability, and experiential factors. Consequently, a systematic review of these satisfaction drivers is essential to elucidate how consumers evaluate and prioritize online versus offline shopping experiences in a rapidly evolving retail landscape.

Concept of Consumer Satisfaction

Consumer satisfaction is a central concept in marketing and consumer behavior research, referring to the overall evaluation a consumer makes after purchasing and using a product or service. It represents the degree to which perceived performance meets, exceeds, or falls short of the consumer's prior expectations. When expectations are met or surpassed, satisfaction occurs; when performance is perceived as inadequate, dissatisfaction arises. Consumer satisfaction is not limited to the product alone but encompasses the entire consumption experience, including information search, purchasing process, delivery, usage, and post-purchase support. It is influenced by both cognitive factors, such as price fairness, quality, and functional value, and affective factors, such as emotions, enjoyment, trust, and perceived care from the seller. In contemporary retail environments, satisfaction also reflects convenience, responsiveness, personalization, and ease of interaction across different channels. Importantly, consumer satisfaction is dynamic in nature, as expectations evolve over time with increased market competition, technological advancement, and prior experiences. High levels of satisfaction are closely linked to positive behavioral outcomes such as repeat purchases, brand loyalty, positive word-of-mouth, and reduced price sensitivity, while dissatisfaction may lead to complaints and switching behavior. As a result, understanding the concept of consumer satisfaction is vital for organizations seeking long-term competitiveness, as it serves as both an indicator of performance and a strategic tool for improving customer relationships and sustaining market success.

Literature Review

The comparative study of online and offline shopping has attracted sustained academic attention over the past decade, reflecting rapid changes in retail formats and consumer decision-making processes. Early studies, such as those by Gupta (2015) and Gupta and Sethi (2016), laid the groundwork by examining consumer preferences in specific Indian regions, notably Odisha. These studies highlighted that offline shopping was traditionally preferred due to physical inspection, immediate product availability, and interpersonal interaction, while online shopping was gaining momentum because of convenience, wider choice, and competitive pricing. Sarkar and Das (2017) further reinforced this duality by demonstrating that consumers do not completely replace offline shopping with online alternatives; rather, they selectively choose channels based on product type, perceived risk, and situational factors. Their findings suggested that consumer satisfaction is multidimensional and context-specific, shaped by functional as well as psychological considerations. Collectively, early literature emphasizes that online and offline shopping coexist rather than compete directly, setting the foundation for later comparative and behavioral studies.

Subsequent research expanded the scope by focusing on behavioral patterns, satisfaction levels, and attitudinal differences across shopping modes. Kumar (2016) examined consumer behavior in e-commerce, particularly for electronic gadgets, and found that while online shopping scored higher on price comparison and information availability, offline shopping remained superior in terms of trust and post-purchase confidence. Sharma, Sharma, and Kaur (2020) echoed these findings, observing that consumer attitudes toward online shopping were positively influenced by convenience and time-saving attributes, whereas offline shopping benefited from experiential value and social interaction. Dumais, Tumbuan, and Tumiwa (2017), in their study on fashion products, emphasized that sensory engagement and trialability significantly enhanced satisfaction in offline stores, while online shopping appealed to younger consumers who prioritized trend variety and ease of access. These studies collectively suggest that satisfaction determinants differ markedly between channels and are often moderated by product category, age, and prior experience.

More recent literature has placed greater emphasis on consumer satisfaction and its consequences, such as loyalty, repeat purchase intention, and complaint behavior. Hult et al. (2019) made a significant contribution by empirically examining whether antecedents and outcomes of satisfaction differ across online and offline purchases. Their study demonstrated that while service quality and value perceptions drive satisfaction in both channels, trust and fulfillment reliability play a more critical role in online contexts, whereas interpersonal service quality and store environment are more influential offline. Choi and Bum (2020) added another dimension by comparing impulse buying behavior and post-purchase satisfaction, finding that online environments encourage impulsive purchases through promotions and ease of checkout, but offline shopping often results in higher immediate satisfaction due to tangible consumption experiences. Dziewanowska (2015) also highlighted differences in experiential dimensions, arguing that offline shopping provides richer emotional and sensory experiences, while online shopping emphasizes efficiency and informational control.

Studies conducted during and after the COVID-19 pandemic further deepened understanding of shifting consumer behavior. Espinoza et al. (2021) analyzed online and offline shopping behavior during the pandemic and observed a sharp increase in online shopping adoption driven by necessity, safety concerns, and mobility restrictions. However, the study also noted that satisfaction with online shopping was contingent on logistics efficiency, delivery reliability, and digital interface quality. Lokhande (2022) and Kavitha and Metillda (2022) examined post-pandemic consumer satisfaction and found that although online shopping usage increased substantially, consumers continued to value offline shopping for categories such as apparel, where fit, fabric, and immediate exchange options are critical. Takhellambam et al. (2022), focusing on undergraduate female students, reported a hybrid preference pattern, where respondents used online shopping for convenience and price benefits but relied on offline shopping for assurance and experiential satisfaction. These findings underscore that consumer satisfaction is dynamic and responsive to external shocks and contextual changes.

Overall, the literature reveals a consistent consensus that consumer satisfaction in online and offline shopping is shaped by distinct yet overlapping determinants. While online shopping excels in convenience, accessibility, and informational efficiency, offline shopping remains strong in experiential value, trust, and emotional engagement. Studies such as Muntaqheem and Raiker (2019), Kumari (2022), and Jyoti, Manisha, and Deepakshi (2023) emphasize that demographic variables, technological familiarity, and lifestyle changes significantly influence channel preference and satisfaction levels. Moreover, research from different geographical contexts, including Portugal (Faria et al., 2013) and Indonesia (Dumais et al., 2017), suggests that while cultural and infrastructural differences exist, the fundamental drivers of satisfaction remain broadly similar. Despite extensive research, gaps remain in synthesizing trends across time and contexts, particularly in understanding how evolving consumer expectations shape comparative satisfaction. This justifies the need for a systematic review to integrate

existing findings, identify consistent patterns, and highlight areas requiring further empirical investigation.

Evolution of Online and Offline Shopping

The evolution of shopping reflects broader economic, technological, and social transformations that have reshaped consumer lifestyles and purchasing behavior over time. Offline shopping, rooted in traditional marketplaces, local shops, and later organized retail formats such as department stores and shopping malls, dominated consumer transactions for centuries. These physical retail environments emphasized personal interaction, sensory evaluation of products, immediate ownership, and relationship-based selling. Over time, offline retail evolved from small independent stores to large retail chains and supermarkets, supported by improvements in supply chains, merchandising techniques, and customer service practices. Shopping malls and organized retail formats further enhanced the experiential aspect of offline shopping by combining entertainment, leisure, and social interaction with consumption, making physical shopping a comprehensive experience rather than merely a transactional activity.

The emergence of online shopping marked a significant shift in retail evolution, driven primarily by the rapid expansion of the internet, digital payment systems, and logistics infrastructure. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, e-commerce began as a supplementary channel offering limited product categories and basic transaction facilities. Over time, advancements in website design, mobile applications, data analytics, and artificial intelligence transformed online shopping into a highly sophisticated and consumer-centric platform. Features such as personalized recommendations, customer reviews, dynamic pricing, and seamless payment options enhanced convenience and efficiency, encouraging widespread adoption. The growth of smartphones and mobile internet access further accelerated online shopping by enabling consumers to shop anytime and anywhere. More recently, social commerce, quick-commerce, and omnichannel retail strategies have blurred the boundaries between online and offline shopping, integrating digital tools with physical stores.

Today, online and offline shopping coexist in a hybrid retail ecosystem, each complementing the other rather than functioning as mutually exclusive modes. Consumers increasingly adopt a blended approach, using online platforms for information search, price comparison, and convenience, while relying on offline stores for experiential engagement and trust. This evolution underscores a shift from channel dominance to channel integration, where consumer choice and satisfaction are shaped by flexibility, personalization, and seamless shopping experiences across multiple platforms.

Determinants of Consumer Satisfaction

Price and Perceived Value

Price is a fundamental determinant of consumer satisfaction as it directly influences perceptions of fairness and value for money. Consumers tend to evaluate satisfaction not merely on the absolute price paid but on the balance between cost and the benefits received. In online shopping, price transparency, discounts, and comparison options enhance perceived value, while in offline shopping, negotiated pricing and bundled offers contribute to satisfaction. When consumers perceive that the benefits of a purchase outweigh the monetary and non-monetary costs involved, satisfaction levels increase significantly.

Product Quality and Variety

Product quality remains a core driver of satisfaction across both shopping modes. Offline shopping allows consumers to physically inspect products, assess durability, and evaluate features before purchase, leading to higher confidence in quality. Online shopping, on the other hand, compensates through extensive product variety, detailed descriptions, images, and customer reviews. Access to a

wide assortment of brands and models enhances satisfaction by providing greater choice and customization opportunities, although inconsistency between displayed and delivered quality can negatively affect consumer perceptions.

Convenience and Accessibility

Convenience plays a crucial role in shaping consumer satisfaction, particularly in the context of modern lifestyles. Online shopping offers round-the-clock accessibility, time savings, and ease of ordering from any location, making it highly attractive to working consumers. Offline shopping, while limited by store hours and location, provides immediate product availability and instant gratification. Satisfaction depends on how well each mode aligns with consumers' time constraints, mobility, and shopping preferences.

Service Quality and Customer Support

Service quality significantly influences satisfaction by shaping the overall shopping experience. In offline retail, personalized assistance, staff responsiveness, and in-store ambience contribute to positive perceptions. Online platforms rely on efficient customer support systems, chat services, and prompt issue resolution. Effective service interactions enhance trust and reduce frustration, leading to higher satisfaction levels across both channels.

Trust, Security, Delivery, and After-Sales Service

Trust and security are particularly critical in online shopping, where concerns about payment safety, data privacy, and product authenticity affect satisfaction. Offline shopping generally benefits from higher perceived trust due to physical presence. Additionally, delivery efficiency, flexible return policies, and reliable after-sales service strongly influence satisfaction in both modes. Smooth delivery processes and hassle-free returns enhance consumer confidence and contribute to long-term satisfaction and loyalty.

Comparative Insights: Online vs. Offline Shopping

In recent years, the market share and consumer adoption patterns of online and offline shopping have shown significant contrasts that reflect evolving retail dynamics. Globally, online retail's share of total retail sales surpassed 20 percent in 2024, demonstrating a steady rise as digital channels become integral to consumer behaviour. In 2025, global online retail sales are projected to reach approximately $6.86 trillion, growing at an annual rate faster than traditional retail and reflecting sustained investment in e-commerce infrastructure. Meanwhile, offline retail remains dominant, with an estimated around 80–85 percent of total retail sales still occurring in physical stores, underscoring the continued importance of brick-and-mortar outlets in overall consumer expenditure. In the United States, for example, e-commerce accounted for roughly 16–17 percent of total retail sales in late 2024 and into 2025, while a majority of consumers still preferred physical stores for certain purchases, particularly groceries and other high-touch categories. These figures indicate that although online shopping is growing rapidly, offline shopping continues to command a substantial portion of consumer spending and remains indispensable in the retail ecosystem.

Consumer preferences and satisfaction levels also differ notably across shopping channels due to inherent strengths and limitations. Online shopping attracts consumers through convenience, broader product variety, ease of price comparison, and access to customer reviews, leading many segments—especially younger, tech-savvy shoppers—to favour digital platforms for fashion, electronics, and non-perishable goods. Studies have found a significant proportion of consumers prefer online shopping for its time-saving benefits and home delivery options. Conversely, offline shopping continues to be preferred by segments of consumers seeking personal service, physical inspection of products, and immediate possession, with surveys showing that roughly one-third of consumers value in-store

experiences for elements that digital channels cannot replicate. Factors such as trust, sensory engagement, and experiential satisfaction remain key drivers for physical store patronage. Demographic variations also influence these preferences; for instance, middle-aged and older consumers often display stronger loyalty to offline retail for categories like fresh produce and personal care items, while younger consumers lean more toward online channels. These comparative insights highlight not only the ongoing relevance of both modes but also the importance of integrated omnichannel strategies for satisfying diverse consumer needs in a hybrid retail landscape

Research Problem

The rapid expansion of digital technologies and the parallel persistence of traditional brick-and-mortar retail have created a complex and dynamic shopping environment in which consumers increasingly alternate between online and offline channels. While numerous studies have examined consumer satisfaction in either online or offline shopping contexts, the findings remain fragmented, context-specific, and sometimes contradictory due to variations in geographic settings, product categories, consumer demographics, and research methodologies. This fragmentation has made it difficult to develop a comprehensive understanding of how consumer satisfaction is shaped across different shopping modes and how its key determinants evolve over time. Moreover, the accelerated adoption of online shopping driven by technological advancements, changing lifestyles, and external disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly altered consumer expectations, yet existing literature has not been sufficiently synthesized to capture these emerging trends in a holistic manner. Another critical issue lies in the limited comparative integration of satisfaction drivers, where factors such as price, convenience, trust, service quality, and experiential value are often studied in isolation rather than through a unified framework that allows meaningful comparison between online and offline contexts. As a result, retailers and policymakers face challenges in designing effective customer-centric and omnichannel strategies based on robust, consolidated evidence. Therefore, the core research problem addressed in this study is the lack of a systematic and integrated review that synthesizes existing research to identify dominant trends, key determinants, and comparative insights into consumer satisfaction across online and offline shopping, thereby bridging theoretical gaps and providing direction for future empirical and managerial research.

Conclusion

This systematic review highlights that consumer satisfaction in online and offline shopping is a multifaceted and evolving phenomenon shaped by technological progress, changing consumer lifestyles, and the coexistence of multiple retail formats. The review reveals that neither online nor offline shopping operates in isolation; instead, both channels offer distinct advantages that influence consumer satisfaction in different ways. Online shopping excels in terms of convenience, price transparency, accessibility, and product variety, making it particularly attractive to time-constrained and digitally adept consumers. In contrast, offline shopping continues to provide superior experiential value through physical product inspection, immediate possession, personal interaction, and enhanced trust, which remain critical for certain product categories and consumer segments. The findings further indicate that key determinants of satisfaction—such as perceived value, service quality, trust, and after-sales support—operate differently across channels, reinforcing the need for context-specific evaluation. Importantly, recent trends show a growing preference for hybrid shopping behavior, where consumers combine online and offline touchpoints to maximize value and reduce perceived risk. This underscores the strategic importance of omnichannel integration for retailers aiming to enhance satisfaction and long-term loyalty. The review identifies clear patterns as well as persistent research gaps, particularly in the integration of comparative insights across time, regions, and product categories. By synthesizing existing literature, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of consumer satisfaction dynamics and provides a consolidated foundation for future research and managerial decision-making in an increasingly competitive and hybrid retail environment.

References

1. Gupta, P. (2015). Comparative study of online and offline shopping: A case study of Rourkela in Odisha (Doctoral dissertation).

2. Sarkar, R., & Das, S. (2017). Online shopping vs offline shopping: A comparative study. International Journal of Scientific Research in Science and Technology, 3(1), 424-431.

3. Sharma, A., Sharma, A., & Kaur, H. (2020). Comparative Analysis Between Online and Offline Shopping Approach and Behavior of Consumers. Journal of Computational and Theoretical Nanoscience, 17(11), 4965-4970.

4. Gupta, P., & Sethi, N. (2016). Factors Affecting Customers' Choice of Shopping-A Comparative Study of Online and Offline Shopping in Odisha, India. Journal of Marketing Vistas, 6(1), 63.

5. Lokhande, M. J. (2022). Online and Offline Shopping: A Comparative Study. International Journal of All Research Education and Scientific Methods (IJARESM), 10(12), 775-786.

6. KAVITHA, S., & METILLDA, A. Y. (2022). A Comparative Study On Customers' Satisfaction Towards Online And Physical Shopping With Reference To Readymade Garments. Journal of Namibian Studies: History Politics Culture, 32, 427-436.

7. Kumar, M. (2016). CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AND SATISFACTION IN E-COMMERCE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BASED ON ONLINE SHOPPING OF SOME ELECTRONIC GADGETS. Clear International Journal of Research in Commerce & Management, 7(7).

8. Takhellambam, A., Kala, S., Lal, S. P., Devi, M., & Dandasena, S. (2022). Comparative study of online and offline shopping behaviour among undergraduate girl students. Asian Journal of Agricultural Extension, Economics & Sociology, 40(11), 484-489.

9. Dumais, L. P., Tumbuan, W. J., & Tumiwa, J. R. (2017). A Comparative Analysis of Consumer Preferences Between Online and Offline Store (Case Study on Fashion Product). Jurnal EMBA: Jurnal Riset Ekonomi, Manajemen, Bisnis dan Akuntansi, 5(3).

10. Hult, G. T. M., Sharma, P. N., Morgeson III, F. V., & Zhang, Y. (2019). Antecedents and consequences of customer satisfaction: do they differ across online and offline purchases?. Journal of retailing, 95(1), 10-23.

11. Kumari, A. (2022). COMPARATIVE STUDY ON CHANGING BEGAVIOR OF CONSUMERS FROM OFFLINE SHOPPING TO ONLINE SHOPPING (Doctoral dissertation).

12. Jyoti, M., Manisha, M., & Deepakshi, M. (2023). Comparative Study of Online VS Offline Shopping. International Journal of Research and Review Techniques, 2(1), 39-42.

13. Muntaqheem, M., & Raiker, S. D. (2019). A Study On Consumer Behaviour towards Online and Offline Shopping. IRE Journals, 3(4), 56-62.

14. Espinoza, M. C., Ganatra, V., Prasanth, K., Sinha, R., Montañez, C. E. O., Sunil, K. M., & Kaakandikar, R. (2021). Consumer behavior analysis on online and offline shopping during pandemic situation. International Journal of Accounting & Finance in Asia Pasific (IJAFAP), 4(3), 75-87.

15. Dziewanowska, K. (2015). Comparison of Dimensions of Online and Offline Shopping Experiences. In Annual Paris Business Research Conference. Paris.

16. Choi, C., & Bum, C. H. (2020). A Comparative Study of Differences in Consumers' Impulse Buying Behaviour, Purchase Satisfaction, and Complaint Behaviour Based on Types of Product Purchased. Sport Mont, 18(3).

17. Jain S (2022). "Social Media Marketing for Small Businesses: Strategy and Planning". International Journal of Research in Economics and Social Sciences(IJRESS),Vol 12 No 6,2022

18. Faria, S., Ferreira, P., Carvalho, V., & Assunção, J. (2013). Satisfaction, commitment and loyalty in online and offline retail in Portugal. European Journal of Business and Social Sciences, 2(7), 49-66.

19. Setiawan, R., Rani, K., Cavaliere, L. P. L., Hiep, N. T., Halder, S., Raisal, I., ... & Rajest, S. S. (2020). References for Shopping Online Versus in Stores What Do Customers Prefer and How Do Offline Retailers Cope with It? (Doctoral dissertation, Petra Christian University).