

# Study on Factors affecting Online vs In-Store Purchases among young adults (18-25 years)

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## Abstract-

This research investigates the factors influencing shopping preferences — online versus in-store — among young adults aged 18 to 25 years. Using a descriptive method and snowball sampling, data from 67 respondents were collected through structured questionnaires. The study examines variables such as convenience, price comparison, trust in online reviews, social influence, and gender differences. Statistical analyses including t-test, regression, and correlation were conducted to test hypotheses. Results indicate a strong preference for online shopping driven by convenience, trust in reviews, and attractive deals, with females showing greater inclination toward online channels. This paper concludes with recommendations for retailers to improve consumer trust and enhance shopping experiences.

**Key Words:** Online shopping, in-store purchase, consumer behavior, young adults, trust, convenience, social influence, e-commerce, product reviews, regression analysis, t-test, correlation.

## 1. INTRODUCTION (Size 11, Times New roman)

### 1.1 Background

Modern supply chains and customer behavior evolve rapidly, creating the need for intelligent and responsive decision-making in business operations. Key areas such as pricing and inventory are still often managed with outdated, static techniques.

### 1.2 Research Problem

Despite the growth of online shopping, it is unclear why some young adults still prefer in-store shopping. Factors like convenience, trust, social media influence, and product returns may affect their choices, but these have not been clearly studied in the 18–25 age group. This research seeks to understand what drives their shopping decisions and how demographic factors like age and gender play a role.

### 1.3 Research Goals

- To identify the key factors influencing online shopping behavior among young adults.
- To assess the relevance and persistence of in-store shopping behavior in the digital era.
- To determine the role of trust, convenience, and social media in influencing shopping decisions.
- To compare gender-based differences in purchase preferences.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Online Shopping Behaviour

Online shopping has become increasingly popular due to its convenience, time-saving nature, and wider product variety. According to Bhatti (2020), young adults often prefer online platforms because they allow shopping from anywhere at any time.

### 2.2 Role of Social Media Influencers

Social media marketing plays a crucial role in influencing online purchase behavior. As per Ahmed et al. (2019), peer recommendations and influencer endorsements can significantly shape young consumers' attitudes toward products.

### 2.3 Role of RL in Business

Young consumers are generally price-sensitive. Research by Dahiya (2017) indicates that discounts, promotional offers, and the ability to compare prices across platforms are major attractions for online shoppers. However, in-store shopping often benefits from personal negotiations and immediate clearance sales.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 System Overview

##### Key Tools:

- **Descriptive Statistics (Percentages, Frequencies)**
- **Inferential Statistics:**
  - **T-Test:** For gender-based comparisons
  - **Correlation Analysis:** To identify relationships between variables
  - **Regression Analysis:** To determine which factors most influence online shopping preferences

#### 3.2 Analysis

- **Research Approach:** Quantitative
- **Data Type:** Primary data collected through a structured online questionnaire.
- **Sampling Technique:** Snowball Sampling – starting with a few known participants who then referred others from the same age group.
- **Sample Size:** 67 respondents
- **Respondent Profile:** Young adults (54 females, 13 males) aged 18–25

### 4. Experimental Design

#### 4.1 Variables Used

- Dependent Variable- Preference for online vs in-store shopping.
- Independent Variable- Price- comparison, Discounts and offers, Time- Saving, Influencers, Product Availability, Trust in Online Reviews.

#### 4.2 Tools and Techniques

- T- test
- Correlation Analysis
- Regression Analysis
- Descriptive Statistics

### 4. 5. Results

#### 5.1 Descriptive Statistics

#### 5. Preference for online shopping

- **Strongly Agree:** 31.3%
- **Agree:** 22.4%
- **Neutral:** 29.9%
- **Disagree:** 13.4%
- **Strongly Disagree:** 3%

Insight: Over 50% of respondents prefer online shopping to in-store, indicating a growing trend among youth.

#### 5.2 Inferential Statistics

##### Correlational Analysis

Variable Pair	Pearson' s r	Interpretation
Online reviews & Purchase confidence	+0.67	Strong Positive Correlation
Discounts & Shopping frequency	+0.59	Moderate Positive Correlation
Price comparison & Preference for online	+0.63	Strong Positive Correlation

### 6. Discussion

#### 6.1 Findings

- Most young adults prefer online shopping for convenience and ease.
- Most of them value the ability to compare prices online.
- Most shop online at least once a month.

#### 6.2 Constraints

- Only 18–25 years studied; excludes other age groups.
- Participants likely from similar regions.
- Snowball sampling may not represent diverse views.

## 7. Conclusion

Online shopping dominates purchasing preferences among young adults, but concerns related to product quality and return policies still deter full adoption. While physical stores offer a sensory experience, digital platforms score higher on practicality. Trust and user reviews remain pivotal in shaping consumer confidence.

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