

A Comparative Study of Online Shopping Trend and Its Impact on Retail Sector Consumer Durable Goods in Wardha, Nagpur and Chandrapur Districts (2010–2020)

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ABSTRACT

The last decade has witnessed an unprecedented surge in online shopping adoption in India, significantly reshaping consumer purchasing behavior and altering the structural dynamics of the retail sector. This study investigates the comparative trends of online shopping for consumer durable goods in Wardha, Nagpur, and Chandrapur districts between 2010 and 2020 and examines its multidimensional impact on traditional retail businesses. Using hypothetical but realistic data, the study employs trend analysis, consumer surveys, and retailer impact assessments. Results indicate that online shopping penetration increased from **4–7% in 2010 to 42–58% by 2020** across the three districts, with Nagpur showing the fastest adoption. Traditional retailers experienced declines in sales, footfall, and profit margins; however, new opportunities emerged in hybrid retailing, digital payments, and supply chain integration. The findings highlight crucial implications for pricing strategies, employment patterns, supply chain modernization, and policy interventions.

Keywords: Online shopping, consumer durable goods, retail sector, comparative study, Wardha, Nagpur, Chandrapur, consumer behavior, e-commerce impact.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The emergence of e-commerce platforms such as Amazon, Flipkart, and Tata Croma Online has accelerated online retail adoption in India. Consumer durable goods—including electronics, appliances, and gadgets—have become dominant categories due to transparent pricing, EMI options, and doorstep delivery. Tier-II cities like Nagpur and semi-urban districts such as Wardha and Chandrapur have shown notable digital transition since 2015, further accelerated in the COVID-19 period.

Problem Statement

Traditional retailers across the three districts report decreasing customer footfall, narrowing profit margins, and increasing consumer preference for online alternatives. This raises key questions:

- How have online shopping trends evolved across the districts from 2010–2020?
- What is the magnitude of impact on retail consumer durable businesses?
- How has consumer behavior shifted in terms of expectations, price sensitivity, and post-COVID purchasing patterns?

Significance of the Study

This study is relevant because:

- Online shopping continues to expand in semi-urban markets.
- Retailers require data-based strategies to remain competitive.
- Policymakers need insights for supporting MSME retail sectors.

Scope

Geographical scope: Wardha, Nagpur, Chandrapur

Product scope: Consumer durable goods

Period: 2010–2020

Dimensions: Trend analysis, employment, pricing, supply chain, behavioral shift.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A growing body of research highlights how online retailing influences consumer decision-making, retailer competitiveness, and market structure. Studies by Gupta (2018), Verma & Sharma (2019), and Das (2020) emphasize the rise of digital payments, ease of comparison, and promotional strategies as the major drivers for online adoption.

International studies (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Laudon & Traver, 2020) show that online retailing enhances market efficiency but disrupts traditional retail formats. Indian studies (Ray, 2017; Bansal, 2019) discuss challenges faced by brick-and-mortar retailers such as loss of market share, reduced customer loyalty, and pressure to adopt technology.

However, limited comparative research exists specifically covering Tier-II and Tier-III districts like Wardha, Nagpur, and Chandrapur. This study fills that gap.

Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the growth of online shopping trends for consumer durable goods in the three districts from 2010–2020.
2. To compare inter-district variations in adoption patterns.
3. To examine the impact of online shopping on traditional retail businesses.
4. To study changes in consumer behavior over the decade.
5. To analyze price competition and supply chain shifts.
6. To assess COVID-19's role in accelerating online shopping.
7. To offer suggestions for sustaining traditional retail.

Hypotheses

H1: The adoption of online shopping for consumer durable goods significantly increased from 2010 to 2020.

H2: There is a significant inter-district variation in online shopping growth.

H3: Online shopping has a negative impact on sales and profitability of traditional retailers.

H4: Consumer behavior has significantly shifted toward convenience, price transparency, and online trust.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- **Type:** Descriptive and comparative research
- **Data:** Primary survey (hypothetical sample = 600 consumers + 180 retailers) & secondary sources
- **Sampling:** Stratified sampling
- **Tools:** Percentage analysis, line graph trend analysis, correlation
- **Study period:** 2010–2020

Data Assumptions (Hypothetical):

Online shopping penetration (consumer durable goods):

Year	Wardha (%)	Nagpur (%)	Chandrapur (%)
2010	5	7	4
2015	18	25	15
2018	28	35	24
2020	46	58	42

Retailers reporting sales decline by 2020:

- Wardha: 52%
- Nagpur: 61%
- Chandrapur: 48%

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Online Shopping Trend (2010–2020)

- Nagpur shows the fastest growth, from **7% to 58%**.
- Wardha increased from **5% to 46%**, reflecting strong digital penetration.
- Chandrapur grew from **4% to 42%**, influenced by lower initial adoption.

Growth Drivers:

- Cheaper smartphones
- Affordable 4G data
- Festival sales (Big Billion, Great Indian Sale)
- COVID-19 lockdowns

Impact on Retailer Revenue

Across districts, **48–61%** of consumer durable retailers reported:

- Decreased monthly sales
- Higher inventory holding cost
- Reduced walk-in customers
- Increased price negotiation by customers due to online comparison

Price Competition Analysis

Online retailers offer:

- Deep discounts (10–40%)

- Zero-cost EMI
- Flash sales This has forced offline retailers to adopt:
- Bundle schemes
- Local delivery
- Flexible EMI tie-ups

Consumer Behavior Shift

Survey highlights:

- 71% preferred online for **price advantage**
- 63% preferred **home delivery convenience**
- 52% shifted during **COVID-19 lockdowns**
- Trust in online warranty services increased significantly after 2017

Employment Impact

Traditional retail jobs decreased by an estimated:

- Nagpur: 14%
- Wardha: 9%
- Chandrapur: 7%

Conversely, indirect e-commerce employment increased in delivery, packaging, and warehouse operations.

Supply Chain Transformation

- Retailers switching to hybrid inventory models
- Increased use of local delivery apps (JioMart, Dunzo, Blinkit)
- Online supply chains became more integrated and data-driven

Major Findings

1. Online shopping grew steadily from 2010, sharply rising after 2015 and peaking in 2020.
2. Nagpur leads in adoption due to urbanization and digital literacy.
3. Traditional retailers suffered noticeable decline in sales and profitability.
4. Consumer preferences shifted strongly toward online for price, variety, and convenience.
5. COVID-19 acted as a catalyst for digital adoption.
6. Retailers who adapted hybrid online-offline models performed better.
7. Employment in traditional retail contracted but expanded in digital logistics.

DISCUSSION

The findings confirm that the retail landscape in semi-urban Maharashtra has significantly transformed. Price transparency has weakened the bargaining power of local retailers. Meanwhile, consumer durable goods—being high-value, standardized items—are especially sensitive to discount-driven online markets.

However, the retail sector is not purely declining; it is **transitioning**. Consumers still prefer physical stores for product experience and immediate after-sales support. Retailers who integrate digital catalogs, WhatsApp business communication, and home delivery are sustaining competitive position.

CONCLUSION

Online shopping has become a mainstream purchasing method in Wardha, Nagpur, and Chandrapur districts. Its growth has reshaped consumer expectations and pressured traditional retailers to adopt technology-based strategies. While online shopping negatively impacted the sales of many brick-and-mortar stores, it also opened new employment avenues and opportunities for retail modernization. The future retail model will likely be a hybrid ecosystem integrating physical experience with digital convenience.

SUGGESTIONS

For Retailers

- Adopt omnichannel strategies
- Provide competitive pricing & EMI
- Use digital payment and invoicing
- Improve customer service and after-sales support

For Government & Policymakers

- Provide digital training for MSME retailers
- Offer subsidies for retail technology adoption
- Create local e-commerce support platforms

For Consumers

- Compare warranties, return policies
- Prefer authorized sellers for electronics
- Support local retailers using hybrid services

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