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ONLINE SHOPPING AND HIGH STREET

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research attempts to identify a connection between the advantages and disadvantages associated with online shopping and establish the reasons why people prefer to buy some items such as music on line rather than high street as well as identifying ways in which online shopping has affected the growth of the music shops on the high street. The data was collected from 8 participants inform of interviews lasting between 10 to 25 minutes from students with in the university. The results indicated that the advantages and dis advantages associated with online shopping had an impact of the choice of preference when it comes to shopping online and that it indeed contributed to the growth of music shops. The findings indicate that the rapid growth of online shopping is influencing the music industry and that online retailers should focus on dealing with these dis advantages and ensure sustainable growth of the industry.

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INTRODUCTION

The evolution of shopping has seen customers moving from buying from a local public market to buying from a global cyber-mall. However, there is still an apparent existence of both shopping environments today. The differences in their complexity and extent of the shopper- employee interaction is tailored to meet the shoppers' expectations Bitner (1992 cited in Ng, 2003).

While Zentner (2006) stated that on regular basis, people who download music online have a higher probability of buying music. Rob and Waldfogel (2006) argue that the downloaded music measured between a third and a half less than the actual music purchased from shops. And hence the thought that when one album of music is down loaded it does not equal to the actual displacement of a purchased album. This shows that not all the music that is down loaded would necessarily have to be bought. In addition, they suggest that some of the extra music that downloaders enjoy may tantamount to dead weight, yet it benefits the society and transactional.

Huang and Oppewal (2006) argue that many people would like to use the internet time and again to buy things and this is because of many factors which influence the shopper's decision to buy online or high street, such as the delivery charge. It was noted that that those charges however, are not the major determinant but also the travel time a shopper has to spend going to the high street. Although there are some shoppers who were more concerned about the delivery charge compared to the travel time, it would be better if online sellers focused their advertising on the advantage of saving travel time for the shoppers.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the research is;

To evaluate the advantages and disadvantages associated with online shopping.

The objectives of the research are;

- 1.To establish the reasons why people prefer to buy music and other products online rather than high street shops.
- 2.To identify ways in which online shopping has affected the growth of the music shops on the high street.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

We have come up with the following questions below to enable us to achieve the aim and objectives of our research.

- 1.How has online shopping impacted the purchase of music and other products from high street?
- 2.Why would people in the UK prefer to buy music and other products online rather than high street?
3. How has online shopping affected the growth of the music shops on the high street?

BACK GROUND AND RESEARCH AREA

Online shopping has changed the way in which music and other products are being sold and bought in today's world. For example, the comfort with which a music lover can buy their favourite music online may have been a major factor in the growth on music shops on the high street. There have been many other reasons why the purchase of music and other products from high street is changing, but the focus of this research is on how online shopping has contributed to the changes in the purchase of music and other products on the high street. With more people being able to buy music using a phone, tablet or a PC, could this be the reason why they prefer to buy music online? The research would seek to dwell on the main reason why this choice of preference is becoming more pre-eminent among the consumers. While advertising and the style of music is getting better by the day, could it be possible that that availability of online shopping has made it possible for some people to breakthrough much quicker than expected and this could be one of the ways in which online shopping is contributing to the growth of the industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The way music is being consumed has changed because of the internet which has paved way for a research opportunity in this area especially when it comes to sharing files. You need to have a certain amount of knowledge and skills on the use of computers to be able to do online shopping. You need to have resource and ability to efficiently use a computer and the internet to be able to purchase music or any other item online. And therefore, the argument that one's possession of the skills mentioned above should positively influence their behaviour in purchasing music or any other product online. The anticipated usefulness of the websites, from which people buy and download music together with the trust and enjoyment experienced while going through the buying and downloading process is an important aspect to consider. Online music retailers focus on the characteristics leading to a quick and easy way to buy and download music online especially among the young generations (Bounagui and Nel, 2009). Online shopping has provided an advantage of choice of preference when it comes to buy things online. Price and quality of the goods bought online along with network security, aftersales services and many other factors are key issues when a buyer is considering buying online. The use of direct sales online eliminates the middle links and that's saving in costs, which makes the prices of goods on line cheaper. Consumers being able to buy anything online at any time compared to high street retailers who have a limit on their opening and closing hours, makes the creates an advantage of convenience when shopping online, plus their unlimited amount of information available for buyers online to go through without leaving their homes. Other advantages such as sharing product reviews about a product are available in online shopping which is not the case with high street shopping. However, there are disadvantages as well with online shopping such as quality problems, the products not functioning as expected, colour differences and styles e. t. c. coupled together with poor after sales services in case the product you bought has a problem. And sometimes the network people use to buy these products are not as secure as expected (Tang and Lv, 2011).

METHODOLOGY

This research conducted was a qualitative research. Face to face interviews were carried out among 8 students in the Croydon college campus. 5 interview questions were used during the one to one interviews that were carried out with the focus on the advantages and the disadvantages that shoppers felt were associated with online shopping. Croydon college campus was selected for this research because most students there are within the age range that can do both online and high street shopping. The participants volunteered to offer 5-10 minutes of their time to answer the questions. Data was collected through these face to face interviews. A total of 7 interviews were successfully completed and one was disqualified on the basis that the participant did not seem to understand the subject, and the data from only the 6 participants was analysed.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

As (Tang and Lv, 2011) argue that Online shopping has provided an advantage of choice of preference when it comes to buy things online. Price and quality of the goods bought online along with network security, aftersales services and many other factors are key issues when buyer is considering buying online.

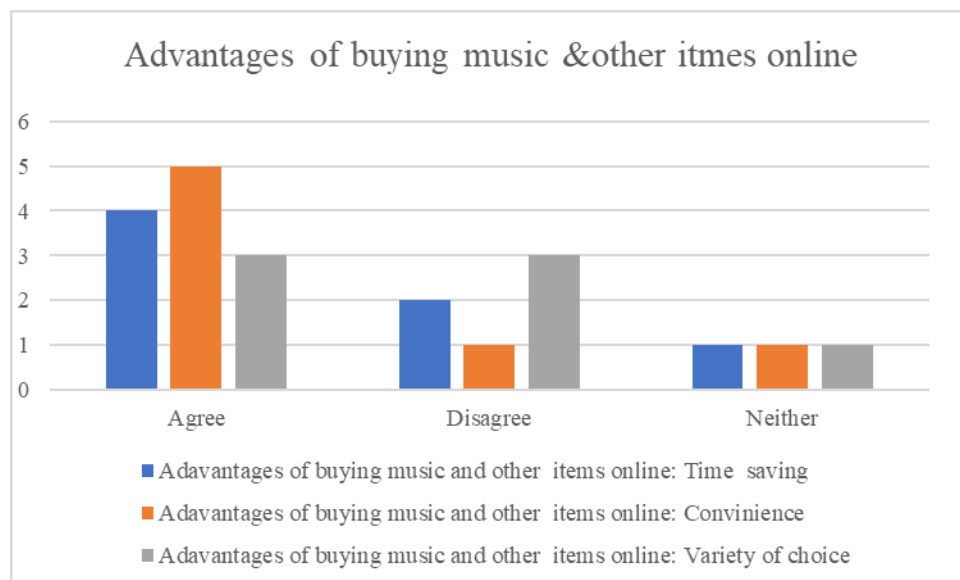


Figure 1. Advantages of buying music and other items online.

As shown in Figure 1, 5 participants the findings show that agreed to the convenience, 4 agreed to time saving and 3 agreed to a variety of choice when doing online shopping. 2 participants disagreed agreed with time saving, 1 with convenience and 3 with the variety of choice while 3 could neither agree nor disagree with either of the three disadvantages.

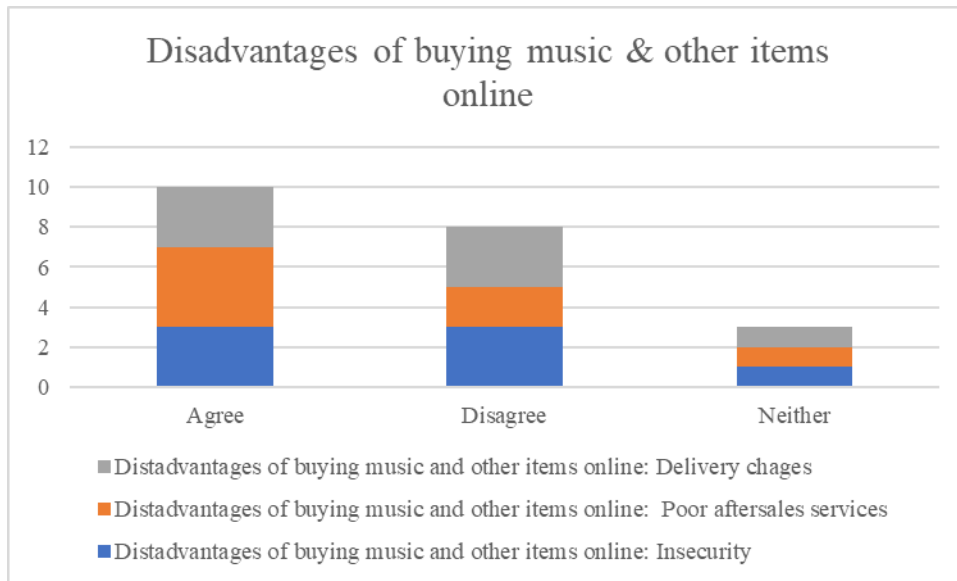


Figure 2. Disadvantages of buying music and other items online.

As shown in figure 2 above, 2 participants agreed while 2 disagreed on fact that online shopping has a disadvantage of security while 1 participant neither agree nor disagreed. 4 participants agreed to the poor aftersales services while 2 disagreed to the same when it came to online shopping and 1 neither agreed nor disagreed. 3 participants agreed that delivery charges were a dis advantage while 3 disagreed to the same and 1 could neither agree nor disagree.

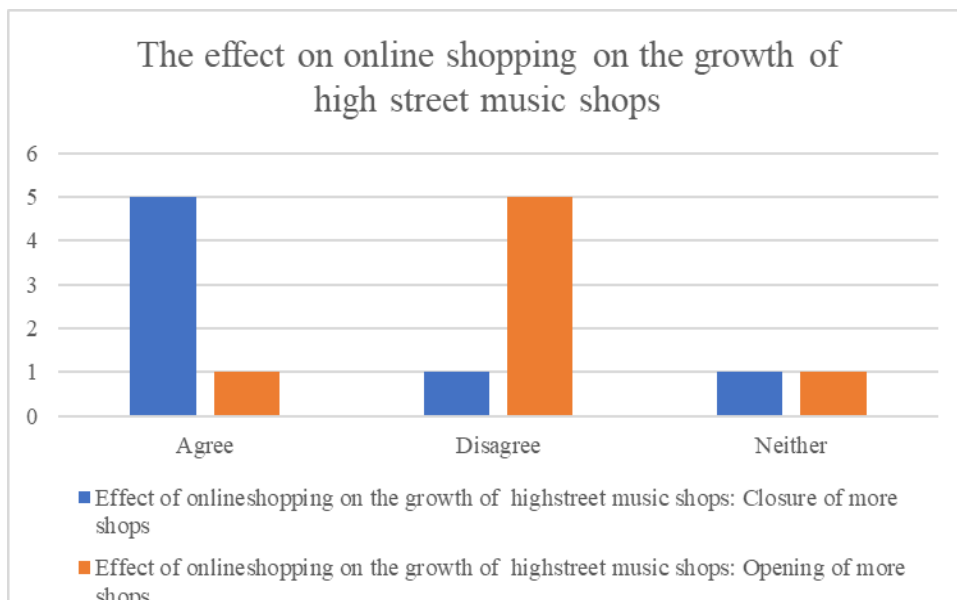


Figure 3. The effect of onlineshopping on the growth of highstreet music shops

The findings in figure 3 above indicated that 5 of the participants agreed to the view that online shopping was leading to the closure of music shops on the high street while 2 disagreed while 1 participant neither agreed or disagreed. When asked about whether online

shopping was leading to the opening of more shops on the high street, 5 participants disagreed while only one agreed and again only 1 neither agreed or disagreed.

CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

Advantages such as convenience, time saving, and a variety of choice shoppers often get when they buy online were found to be a major area that requires more research into and the main disadvantages of insecurity, poor after-sales service and delivery charges were found to be discouraging the practice of online shopping. However, argument about online shopping affecting the growth of music shops on the high street was strongly agreed with only on the negative side, indicating that it is possible that online shopping has negatively affected the growth of online music shops. The major limitation of this research was that only a limited number of people were willing to offer enough time for the interview and this would therefore limit the sample space and the direction of the interview.

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APENDICIES

Table 1.

Advantages of buying music and other items online			
	Time saving	Convenience	Variety of choice
Agree	4	5	3
Disagree	2	1	3
Neither	1	1	1

Table 2.

Disadvantages of buying music and other items online			
	Insecurity	Poor aftersales services	Delivery charges
Agree	3	4	3
Disagree	3	2	3
Neither	1	1	1

Table 3.

Effect of online shopping on the growth of high street music shops		
	Closure of more shops	Opening of more shops
Agree	5	1
Disagree	1	5
Neither	1	1

ONLINE SHOPPING AND HIGH STREET INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The aim of this research is to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages associated with online shopping. So, the answers to the following questions have been categories into three sections; *Agree*, *Disagree* or *Neither*. Please pick out which one of the three is most suitable for your opinion.

Questions category		Factors associated with online shopping and high street.	Agree	Disagree	Neither
Advantages of buying music and other items online.	1	Online shopping is time saving.			
	2	Online shopping gives shopper convenience.			
	3	Online shopping offers shoppers a variety of choice.			
Disadvantages of buying music and other items online.	4	Online shopping is insecure.			
	5	Online shopping has poor aftersales services.			
	6	Online shopping has a disadvantage of delivery charges.			
Effect of online shopping on the growth of high street music shops.	7	Online shopping has led to the closure of more shops on the high street.			
	8	Online shopping has led to the opening of more shops on the high street.			

