Influence of multiple e commerce platforms on shopping experience, innovation, and economic growth of Ireland; A comparative study with Indian ecommerce sector

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Abstract

The rampant growth of Information Technology and betterment of communication systems has brought with them the introduction of e-commerce platform as a boon. With its advantages and convenience, slowly and eventually, e-commerce has seeped into the daily lives of common people, resulting in amelioration of their lifestyle and a revolution in the retail business. Online shopping has soon become the part and parcel of common people, they now prefer to sit back home and shop online where they are spoilt with options for almost all categories of products including homeware items, electronic goods, cosmetic and beauty products, garments, groceries etc. This striking shift in the shopping platform has not only benefitted the buyers but has largely impacted the businesses of the sellers, they could acquire a large global customer base. Small family-owned local businesses now not only sell their products at every corner of the nation but can also get global customers. "Local becomes global" has become the tag line of the era, where global availability of local goods has helped in the preservation and spread of culture, history, and heritage world-wide. People have now become aware of various goods that are indigenous to a particular region and can enjoy their advantages from across the globe. However, a single online e-commerce platform struggles to satisfy the ever-increasing hunger of the buyers for more options at minimum price and sellers for a wider customer base. This project articulates the importance of having multiple e-commerce platforms in Ireland with regards to shoppers' experience, encouragement and growth of innovative business ideas and growth of country's economy, which is currently having one significant e-commerce aggregator only. This research presents the notion and implication of having multiple e-commerce platforms on these above-mentioned aspects. The analysis of countries which are growing in terms of e-commerce has been done. The influencing factors for online shoppers in those countries and their implication of the sellers has been highlighted in form of literature review in this research. This qualitative research has considered the opinion of a focussed group in order in form of survey questionnaires and then analysed those data through tools like IBM SPSS and Microsoft Power BI only to have a denouement for discussing the research questions. Also, how multiple e-commerce aggregators are benefiting the sellers, buyers and is impacting the economy of a country has been discussed with respect to Indian e-commerce market. Based on the theoretical and the analytical insights, throughout this paper the author has tried to reach to an evident closure in terms of the research topic.

Keywords: E-commerce, shoppers' experience, country's economic growth, innovation, multiple e-commerce aggregators, small family-owned local businesses

Declaration

Submission of Thesis and Dissertation

National College of Ireland

Research Students Declaration Form

(Thesis/Author Declaration Form)

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Introduction

Introduction to the topic

In the new age society, purchasing goods online has become the most popular medium of shopping. This process of buying and selling goods over the internet is referred to as E-commerce (Turban, et al., 2000). In the modern world E-commerce has been turned into an entire ecosystem enabling direct distribution of goods and services for both sellers and the buyers (Taher, 2021). In the modern times access of smartphones and internet has been very easy in most parts of the world. This has empowered the shoppers across the globe to shop anywhere and anytime making more and more people accustomed to shopping online making E-commerce more and more popular and a one stop solution.

Ireland has population of 5.1 million people as of 2018 (Forbes, 2018). Among them 91% of the population use smartphones (Deloitte, 2019). With the E-commerce market estimated to be around 7 billion Euros and a growth rate of 8.6% Ireland is one of the growing E-commerce industries. Moreover, spending of the Irish online shoppers ranks the third highest among the European Union countries with the Irish shoppers eager for both homegrown and oversees merchants. Furthermore, to support the growth it has been observed that the most preferred payment method among the Irish shoppers are Cards which is around 64% as of 2019 followed by digital wallet which is around 21% (Morgan, 2020). However, in spite of having such a high projected growth rate and a CAGR of 7.8% as of 2023 there is only one major e-commerce aggregator, that sells products of almost all categories in Ireland. Therefore, this research studies how having multiple such e-commerce aggregators can impact the Irish shopper's shopping experience, benefit the local sellers as well as help boost the country's economy.

Background of the Study

Online shopping has been one of the most used mediums of shopping across the globe. With the increase in smartphone usage across all the age groups of the society and widespread of internet has significantly increase the reach of E-commerce. The Covid 19 pandemic has made people realise the significance of online shopping. Huge spike in the e-commerce industry was observed during and after this period. Moreover, the small and medium businesses across all sectors have also started to increase their presence. They have realised that e-commerce could be a way to gain wide range of customers, without much of investments in setting up physical stores, dealing with the problem and expenses of shelf space.

Research aim

In this research paper the researcher aims to analyse the impact of having multiple e-commerce aggregators on the online shopper's shopping experience, impact on the local small-scale businesses and how it could be a motivating factor for new and upcoming entrepreneurs to start their businesses online and how having multiple e-commerce platforms and increase in small scale businesses could boost the economy of the country. The research questions for this research are:

- How multiple e-commerce platforms would impact the shopping experience of customers in Ireland?
- How multiple e-commerce platforms could encourage innovation, benefit the small local businesses, and attract more small-scale entrepreneurs in Ireland?
- How impactful will multiple e-commerce companies be on the economic growth of Ireland?

Research Instruments

For the purpose of the analysis of this research primary data was collected by the researcher through google form questionnaire. Also, to get a better understanding of the subject other reliable secondary data sources.

Research Objective

The objective of the research is to analyse the primary data collected from variety of people with respect to the research aim and trying to come to a conclusion about it. Also, in order to provide real market trends, the researcher has also, reviewed several secondary sources of the data. Along with that the e-commerce trends of the countries having highest CAGR as of 2023 are also considered and a comparison with the Indian E-commerce sector have also been projected based on the research questions.

Structure of the Research

The research is divided into few parts. The first part is the Introduction that consists of a small introduction, background of the study, research aim, instrument, and the research objective to give the readers a brief idea about the research paper. The second part is the literature review where various sources in relation to the research are reviewed and critically analysed to get into more details related to the past study that has been done in relation to the topic. The third part is the Methodology where the data collection methods, methodology used and its importance along with the explanation to the appropriate methodology chosen by the author. The fourth part is the analysis that elaborates the analysis from the primary data collected by the author along with the key findings from those analysis. The fifth part which is the Discussion, involves detailed discussion based on the analysis and key findings that has been elaborated in the previous part. And the last part is the conclusion where the author has summarized the dissertation paper and provided the conclusion.

Summary

The paper considers that the Irish e-commerce sector is a growing market, having potential to grow even further over the years to come. Therefore, an analysis of how more e-commerce aggregators could be more impactful to the shoppers, the small-scale sellers and economy of the country has been presented in this paper.

Literature Review:

Introduction:

With the advancement of global digitalization, the marketing sector has also seen a shift with the advent of the E-commerce. Now, instead of going to different physical stores for the different necessary items, customers can purchase goods of all categories with just a few clicks from their home, and the product gets delivered. Over the years the e-commerce sector has seen a huge number of customers who are shifting toward this online model of buying and selling. This growth of e-commerce has seen the e-commerce companies offering almost all types of products over the internet starting from domestic construction equipment, household products, electronic goods, Car equipment, grocery items to even domestic plants.

The rise of e-commerce has not only proved beneficial for buyers but also for sellers. With the e-commerce model big sellers along with even the small local sellers now get the opportunity to sell their products to customers at every corner of every nation now. This has resulted them to acquire a huge customer base, which in turn made them see a huge rise in their revenue. With the rise of different e-commerce platforms, it has also been evident around the world that many new small businesses have come into the market, resulting in giving rise to new entrepreneurs.

With the rise of new entrepreneurs and development of a new sector, the governments of different countries around the world have seen a growth in their economy. New jobs are being created, the lifestyle of people have changed and rapid rise in businesses have been noticed. Moreover, with the rise of new payment systems, different business models and new policies of the e-commerce companies gave rise to a new age shopping mode to the customers.

E-commerce trends and details of different countries:

The strong rise of e-commerce has attracted many buyers to purchase online. However, one such important criteria for satisfying the buyers online purchase experience is having multiple e-commerce platforms that sell different variety of products. In this fast-paced market people are attracted to those platforms where they can find all of their required stuffs at one place, in other words having a one stop solution. Therefore, it is one of the key factors for a country developing in this sector to have multiple e-commerce platforms that would cater the needs of the customers by providing them easy solutions. Unfortunately, in Ireland there is only one such major platform that can provide such solution to the customer and that is Amazon. Therefore, the customer without much option has to go to Amazon platform for their online shopping. This has resulted in a monopoly for the company without giving the buyers much of a choice and that in turn is depriving the buyers of several perks like quick deliver, reduced shipping charges, discounts etc. Therefore, in this section the researcher will compare with some other countries that have multiple such e-commerce platforms and analyse the growth of this sector in those countries keeping the main focus on India.

Retail e-commerce sales CAGR from 2022 to 2025, by country

E-commerce retail sales CAGR 2022-2025, by country

Compound annual growth rate

Country	CAGR
Brazil	20.73%
Argentina	20.69%
Turkey	20.24%
Russia	18.73%
India	18.49%
South Africa	17.11%
Mexico	16.8%
Italy	16.57%
Japan	14.7%
United States	14.55%
Spain	14.18%
Canada	14.06%
Australia	13.28%
Indonesia	12.95%
United Kingdom	12.63%
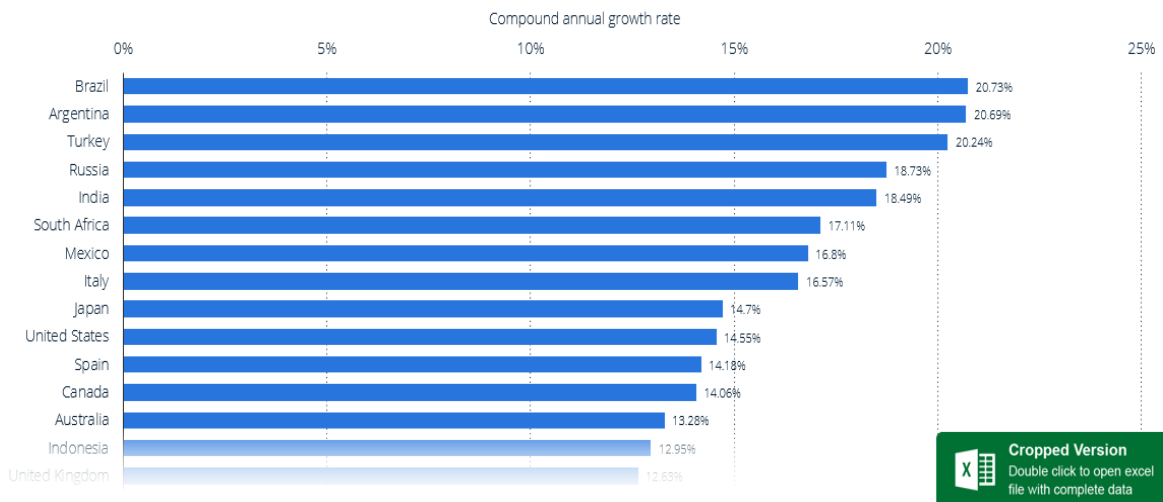
Figure 1: Source: (Statista, n.d.)

The above data shows the Compound Annual Growth Rate of e-commerce sales in different countries. Here the top 2 being Brazil and Argentina. India stands in the 5th place in this chart.

E-commerce in Brazil:

On analysing this data, it has come to light that both Brazil and Argentina have multiple e-commerce platforms where people can purchase range of products from fashion, electronics, home appliance etc. For example, Brazil has Mercado Livre which sales wide variety of products starting from technology, household appliances, sports and fitness goods to beauty and personal care. This e-commerce platform has 260.93 million monthly visitors. Below is screen shot of all the categories this e-commerce platform offers.
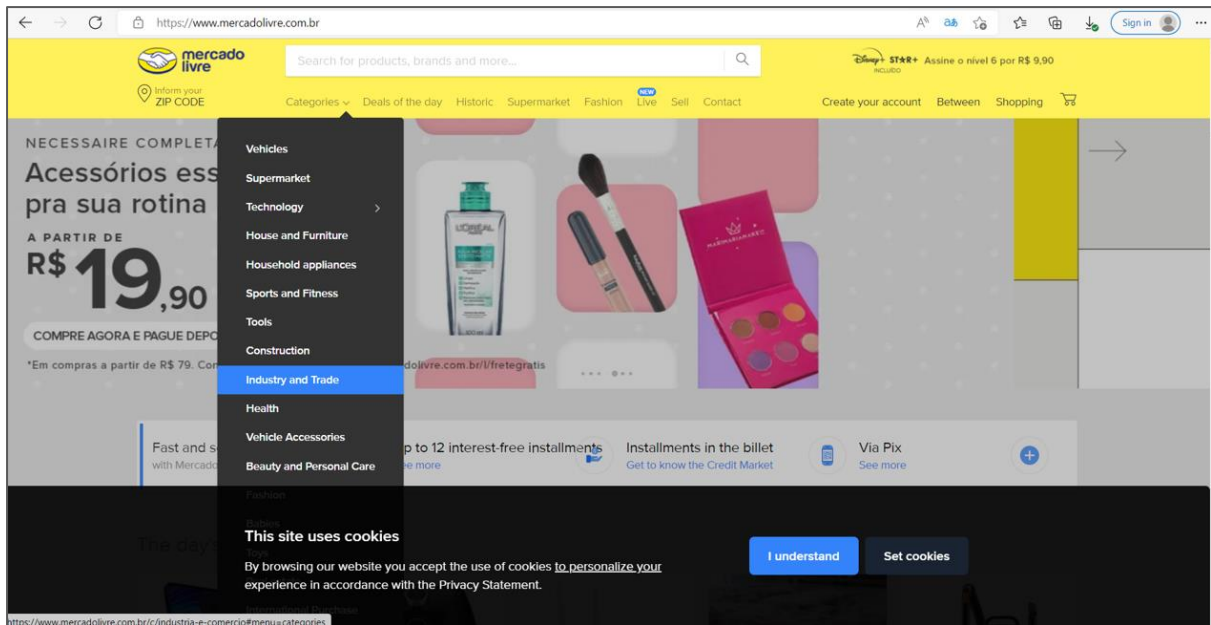
Figure 2: Source Free Market Brazil - Free same-day shipping (mercadolivre.com.br)

Along with this Brazil also has Americanas which has 134.58 million estimated monthly visitors. This platform also provides wide variety of products like automotive goods, phones, and phone plans, toys, TVs, computers, tablets, audio and home theatre equipment, fashion, games, furniture, and more. The below screenshot is evidence of all the categories of products that are available on this platform:
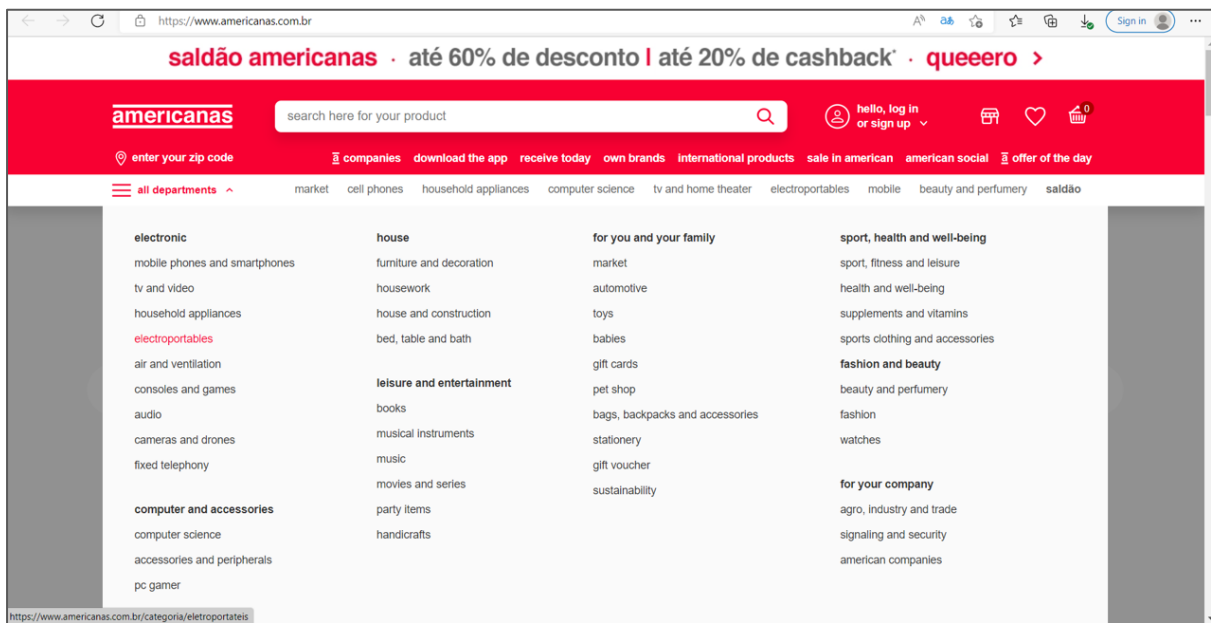
Figure 3: Source: American - everything, all the time, anywhere :) (americanas.com.br)

Along with these there are multiple such e-commerce platforms like OLX, Magazine Liza, Amazon Brazil, Submarino etc where the customers can get wide variety of products in a single platform (guide, n.d.)

Like Brazil Argentina also has a rich e-commerce retail industry. Below is a screen shot of the top e-commerce platforms in Argentina based on the monthly visits from September 2020- March 2021.

Distribution of leading e-commerce sites in Argentina between September 2020 and March 2021, by share of monthly visits

Site	Share
Mercado Libre (mercadolibre.com.ar)	81.98%
Personal (personal.com.ar)	4.43%
Amazon (amazon.com)	3.06%
Frávega (fravega.com)	2.33%
Garbarino (garbarino.com)	1.6%
Easy (easy.com.ar)	1.54%
Carrefour (carrefour.com.ar)	1.43%
Dafiti (dafiti.com.ar)	1.26%
Coto Digital (cotodigital3.com.ar)	1.25%
Musimundo (musimundo.com)	1.1%

Share of monthly visits

Figure 4: Source: • Argentina e-commerce sites ranked by visit share 2021 | Statista

The platforms like Carrefour, Mercado Libre, Fravega, Amazon provides the shoppers with wide range of products all available in a single platform. This has a huge impact on the shopper's experience where they can get product of almost all categories from a single platform giving them a pleasant shopping experience as well as saving chunk of time while searching for their desired product. Below I have given some screen shots of different some of the different platforms and the product categories that they offer.

Figure 5 : Source https://carryfour.com.ar
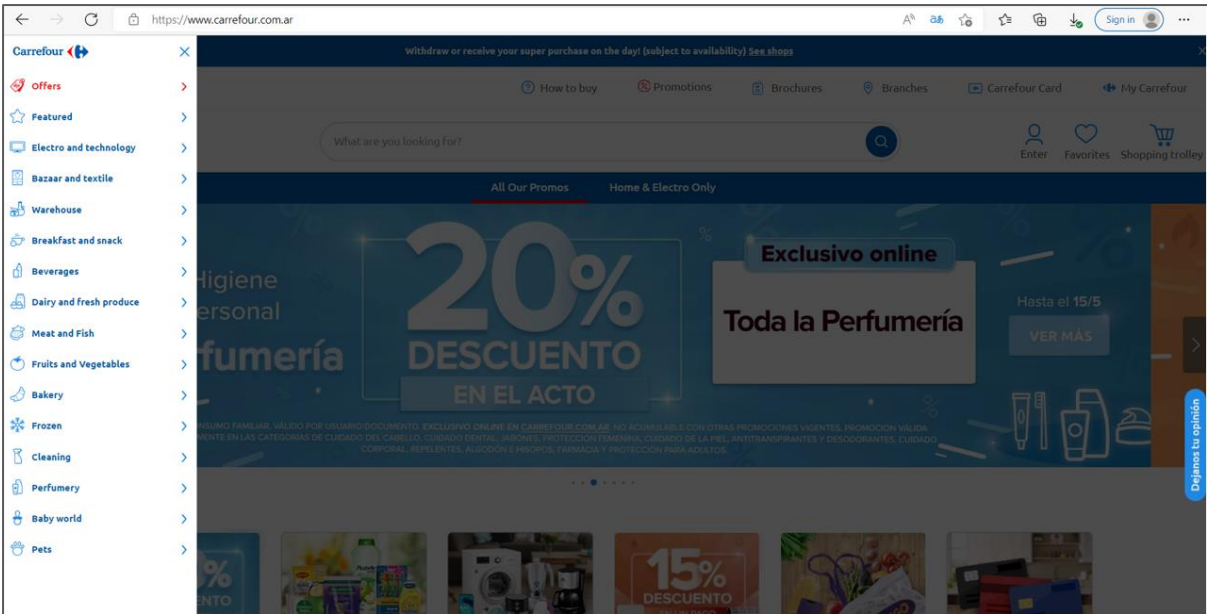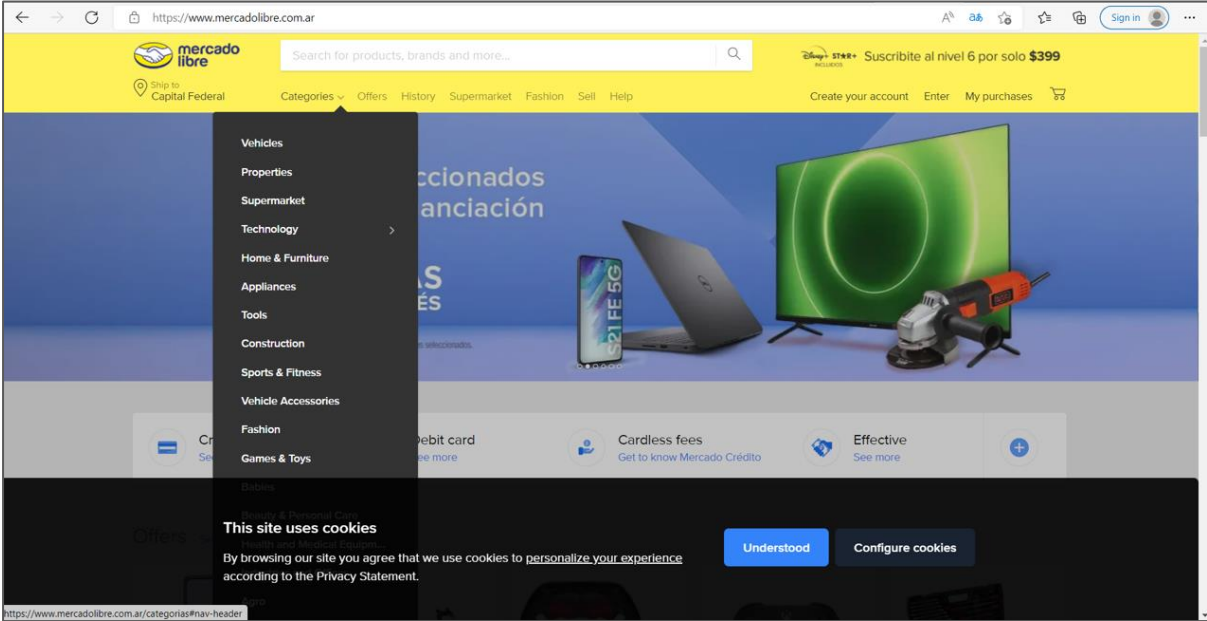
Figure 6 : Source: www.mercadolibre.com.ar
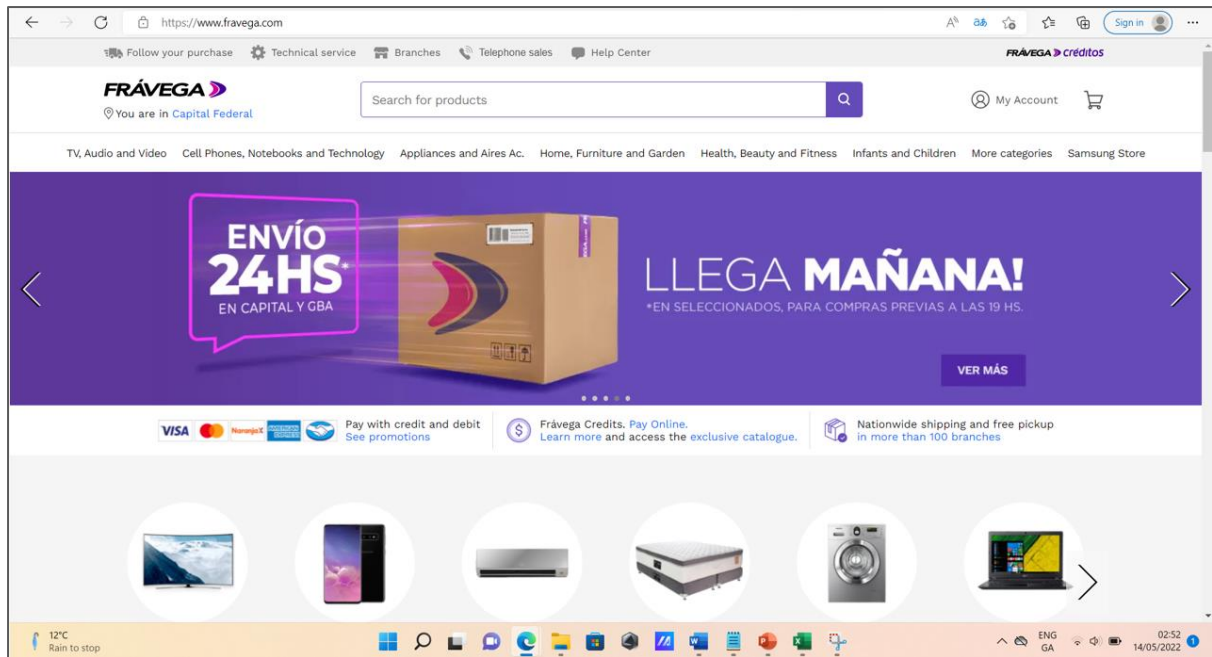
Figure 7 : Source www.fravega.com

E-commerce in Turkey:

Like Argentina and Brazil Turkey also has multiple e-commerce platforms. Top 2 e-commerce platforms like trendyol.com and hepsiburada.com provide products of all varieties to the customers. These local e-commerce platforms that initially started their journey from Turkey have slowly started becoming global in the recent past. Trendyol.com is backed by Alibaba (guide, n.d.)whereas in 2021 Hepsiburada became the 1st Turkish company to be listed on NASDAQ (Yalçın, 2022).

These examples of Argentina, Brazil, Turkey's e-commerce platforms show us the potential of growth for e-commerce companies. This also explains that by offering wide range of products in a platform a company can attract numerous users by enriching their shopping experience. Also, having multiple competitors helps the customers to get various benefits with their purchase. For example, Mercado Libre provides free delivery services to their customers and these customers are not only based in Brazil but also, Argentina, Mexico etc. Below are the benefits that Mercado Libre provides to their shoppers to enrich their shopping experience.
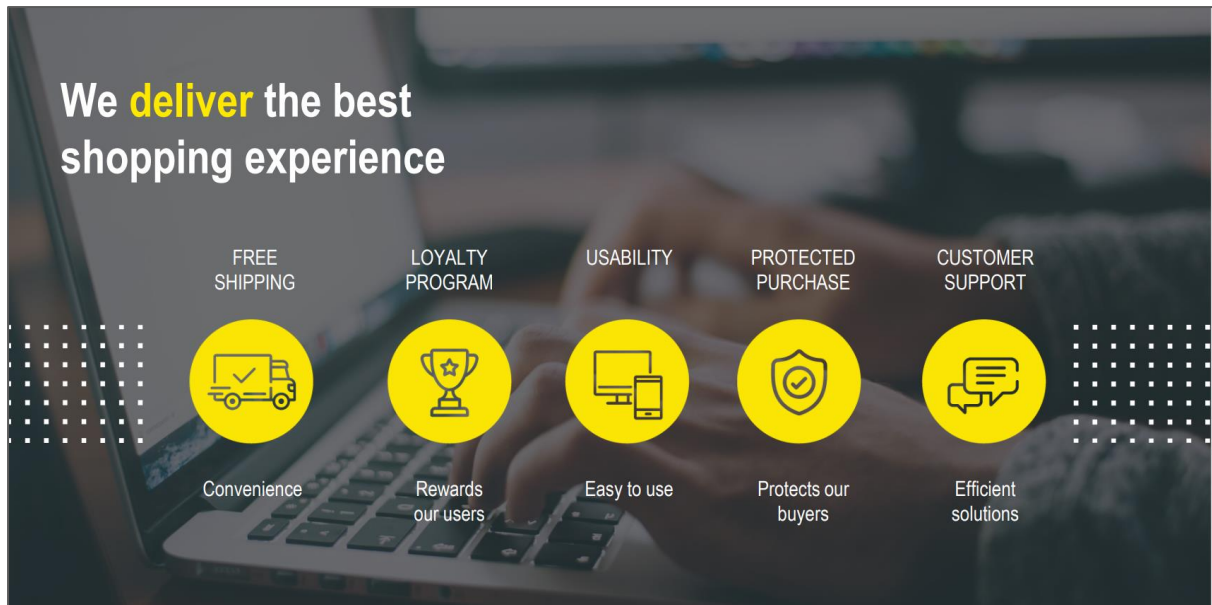
Figure 8 Source: (Libre, 2019)

On a macroeconomic level, the economic usefulness of e-commerce may be seen as a kind of technical innovation since it helps enterprises and organizations improve their productive viability, hence increasing the overall supply level of the whole community. Energy and economic progress are inextricably linked, with studies focusing on the role of electricity in promoting economic development. Rather than using various measuring methodologies to investigate regional differences in e-commerce growth, this study employs multidimensional factors to create an e-commerce democracy index, a proper evaluation platform for productivity expansion, and a province-wide index system (Wynn, 2020). The economy will gain as e-commerce expansion accelerates. E-commerce and development have enhanced resource allocation efficiency. Making it easier for people to communicate information More pricing transparency will boost customers' willingness to buy. According to (Wynn, 2020) traditional retail and e-commerce may be combined in a manner that increases corporate integration and decreases expenses. The Kos hypothesis suggests that the e-commerce sector might reduce transaction costs in five ways. Identifying transaction goals, lowering price search charges, lowering research, and negotiating costs, and lowering costs associated with preserving market order are all examples of cost-cutting measures. Reduced transaction costs may boost economic development, increasing efficiency. Online shopping, as opposed to traditional retail, promotes personal growth.

E-commerce has long strived to be at the centre of its customers' conversations, watching the increasing social sphere of current and potential customers. E-marketers have dynamically altered their architecture and strategy to build and maintain connections with individuals on social media, understanding that purchasing decisions are mostly a social activity reliant on interpersonal contact. "Social commerce," abbreviated SC, has evolved as a reaction to rising customer desire for collaborative places and quick and secure decision making. Many e-commerce businesses, including Amazon, eBay, and others, have modified their websites to add social connectedness features to capitalize on social media's rising effect on customer participation, involvement, and perceived value (Aldrich, 2017).

E-commerce growth in India's eastern, middle, and western regions has a substantial influence on the country's economic development. Several researchers from developed and developing countries performed comparative studies. The impact of e-commerce on economic development extends beyond borders. E-commerce has a greater impact on less developed economies than on more developed ones. The "E-commerce into Rural Complete Demonstration" project's policy implications, job effects, industry aggregation effects, and human capital upgrading effects all benefit the county economically. The policy impact of demonstration projects on county economic development varies substantially by area. The central and western regions have a bigger impact on county economic development than the eastern coastline districts. E-commerce fosters social entrepreneurship while also strengthening local economies since it makes it simpler for small communities to offer their products to consumers all across the nation and even the globe. According to (Wynn, 2020) complete review, there are regional variances in the state of e-commerce development in China. The benchmark is the extent to which the sharing revolution has evolved. Indian's regional economic development may be split into three groups, each with significant variances.

Shopper's Experience:

Information technology is enabling consumers to penetrate the globalized economy where they can compare products and prices across areas and become aware of product substitutes that exist in the market. If consumers are not pleased with the products or prices being offered, they can easily switch to the traditional form of trade. Consumers can now access the national, regional, or even the global market for a particular product if it is unavailable in the local market (Jain, et al., 2021) .

In Ireland many of the brands offer product delivery service. Yet due to lack of having multiple aggregators there is a monopoly of a single firm in this part of the e-commerce model. Hence customers are forced to pay whatever the company charges without having many options to choose from. This highlights the importance of having competition in the market. With the introduction of e commerce companies which will offer not only branded goods of all categories, but also local goods made in Ireland, will give the consumers more options to choose from and compare prices while purchasing their goods. This will not just endow the shopping experience of the customers in Ireland but also make them aware of many local brands across different categories along with reducing the shipping charges and even quicker delivery.

In terms of shoppers experience it is of utmost importance that the customers get their products shipped on time and in reduced rate. The charts below show the importance how free shipping and quick delivery plays a decisive role for online customers.

Lack of free shipping keeps many shoppers from purchasing

How frequently has a lack of free shipping kept you from buying from an online retailer?

Never	Once in a while	About half of the time	Most of the time	All the time
9%	23%	23%	28%	17%
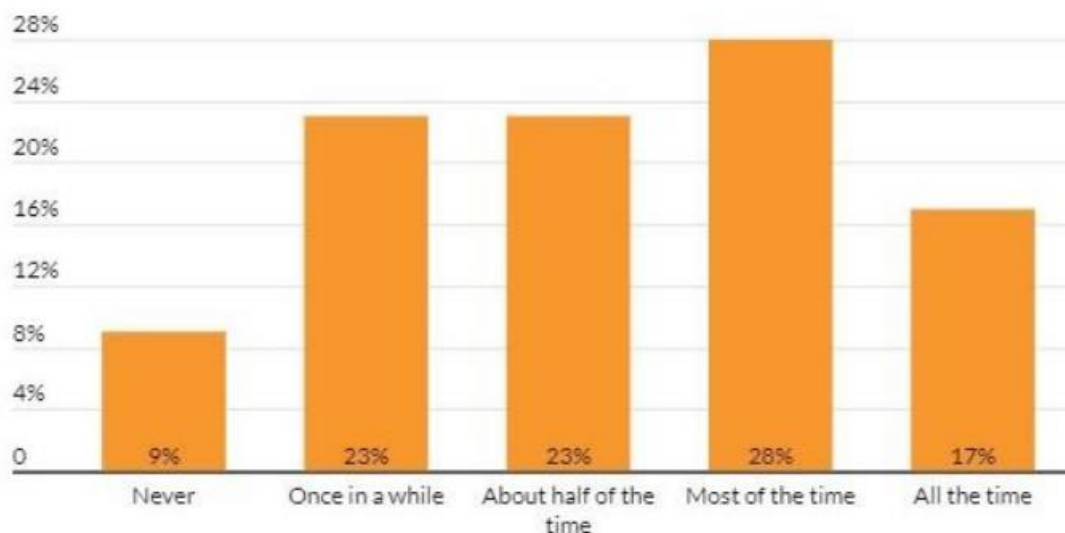
Figure 9 : Source (Euromonitor, n.d.)

Many consumers didn't complete a purchase because it wouldn't arrive on time

Which of the following have you experienced when ordering online in the past 6 months?

Didn't order because of delivery time	Ordered items for same-day delivery online	Paid for expedited shipping	Ordered items for same-day store delivery	Didn't order due to unclear delivery date
44%	30%	28%	21%	20%
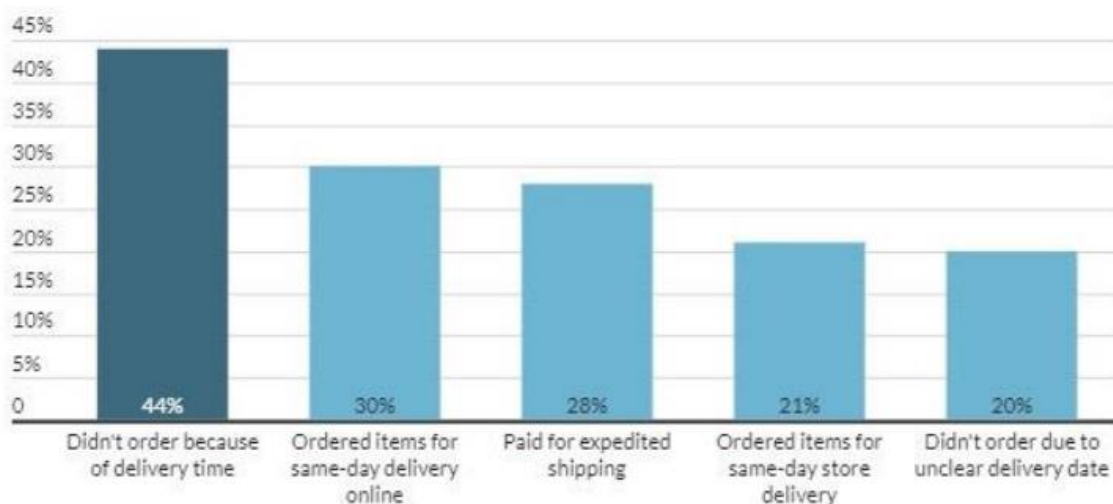
Figure 10 : Source (Euromonitor, n.d.)

Moreover, the consumer spending in Ireland have been increasing since 2018. The average age of Irish population is 36.8 years. As per the report (Morgan, 2019)

the increase in the consumer spending in Ireland has been primarily driven by the young people who have helped increasing the online sales.
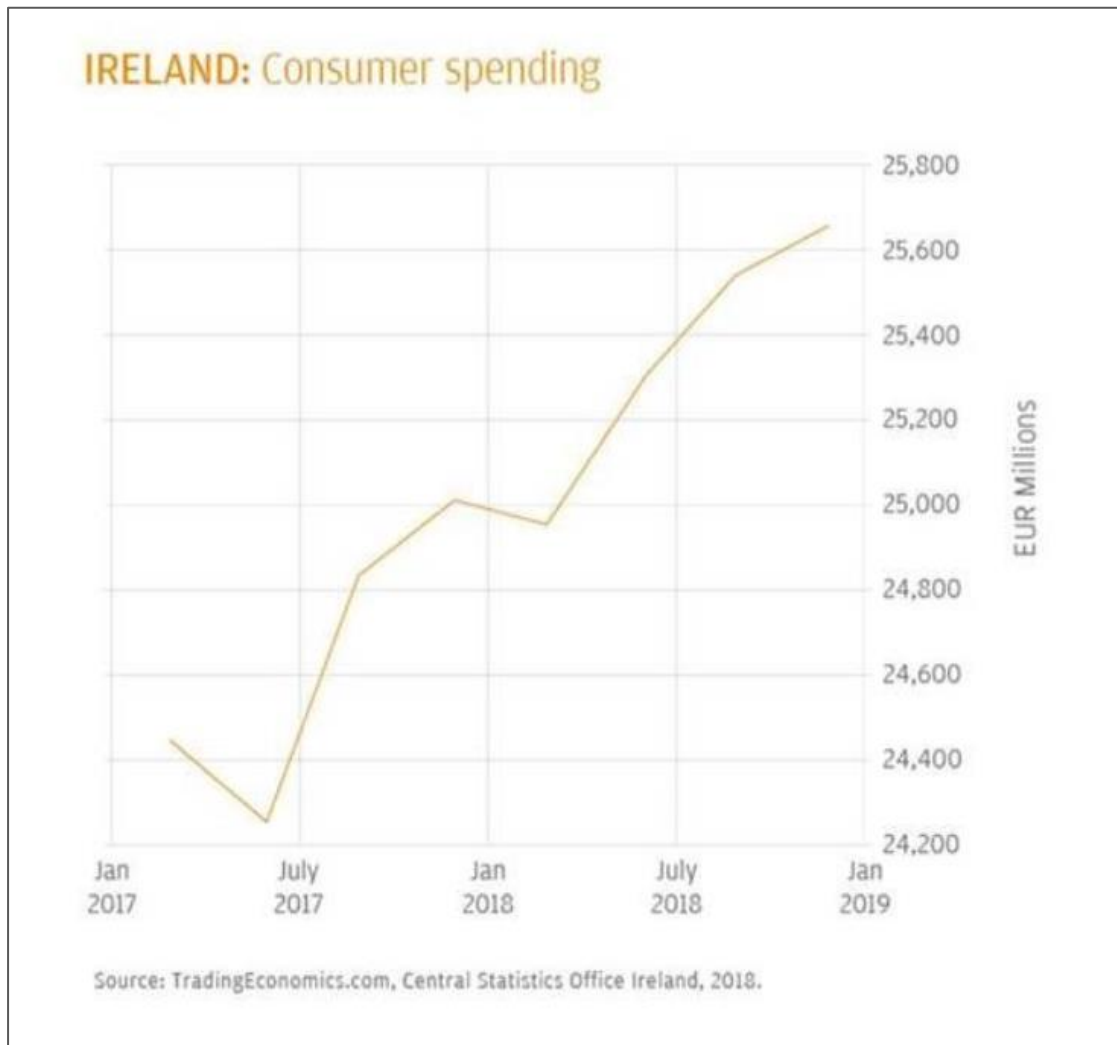
Figure 11 : Source (Morgan, 2019)

Though the consumer spending is driven by the young population between age 25- 34 years who purchases at least once a week online yet, it is to be considered that the money spent online by the Irish Citizens is significantly higher than other European countries; 26.66% more than the European average.

Among these around 23% of the online purchases are recorded from abroad with UK being the first among them followed by China and US. However, Magee, the domestic e-commerce clothing site is a notable name in Ireland that has recorder 80% of sales export as of 2018 (Morgan, 2019)

Despite of these the average delivery time in Ireland is between 3-5 days and is long in today's market. Therefore around 77% of the Irish shoppers are willing to pay extra for the same day or one day delivery. This is a significant dent in their online shopping experience (Morgan, 2019)

E-commerce and Innovations

E-commerce and Innovations workout sideways is important part. As per the opinion of (David Tsurel, 2020) innovating and inventing the different old traditional digitalized techniques into new forms with the basic transformation that will result in the overall growth of the commercial site. Employing employees helps employees and workers in acquiring the money, which in turn satisfies the employees. The satisfaction of employees increases the satisfaction of customers in meeting their demands. Satisfaction of customers helps in buying company goods, which in turn increases the economy of the organization. Small enterprises are emerging at a greater rate through online applications like sugar cosmetics, Nykaa, and medium enterprises like shop clues and Jiomart, and many other enterprises These small and medium enterprises can enhance their business by promoting sales of their manufactured products and items. Moreover, as per the opinion of (Ristyanti & Ristyanti, 2019) while everything is going in loops, the shopping sites should deliberately work into the matter of which the differentiate nature falls in the eyes of the consumers.

How E-commerce affects a country's economic growth

Comparison With India:

The emergence of digitization has a profound impact on the socio-economic standard of the society. It helps establish a production capacity and standard of living that are necessary for the country's economic growth. The technological advancements that have occurred in the field of digitization have also contributed to the country's employment generation (Pohjola, 2001), (Castells, 2000)

A study conducted on digitization revealed that it has a positive impact on the country's growth and employment. It also noted that the increasing number of people working in the field has led to a rise in the human capital. The rapid emergence and growth of e-commerce has also led to an attractive customer base (Katz, et al., 2014)

Digitization has brought about various social transformations in the lives of common Indians. The government's Digital India initiative seeks to transform the country's society by making it more connected. However, its impact on the country's economy is yet to be studied (FICCI & Nathan, 2013)
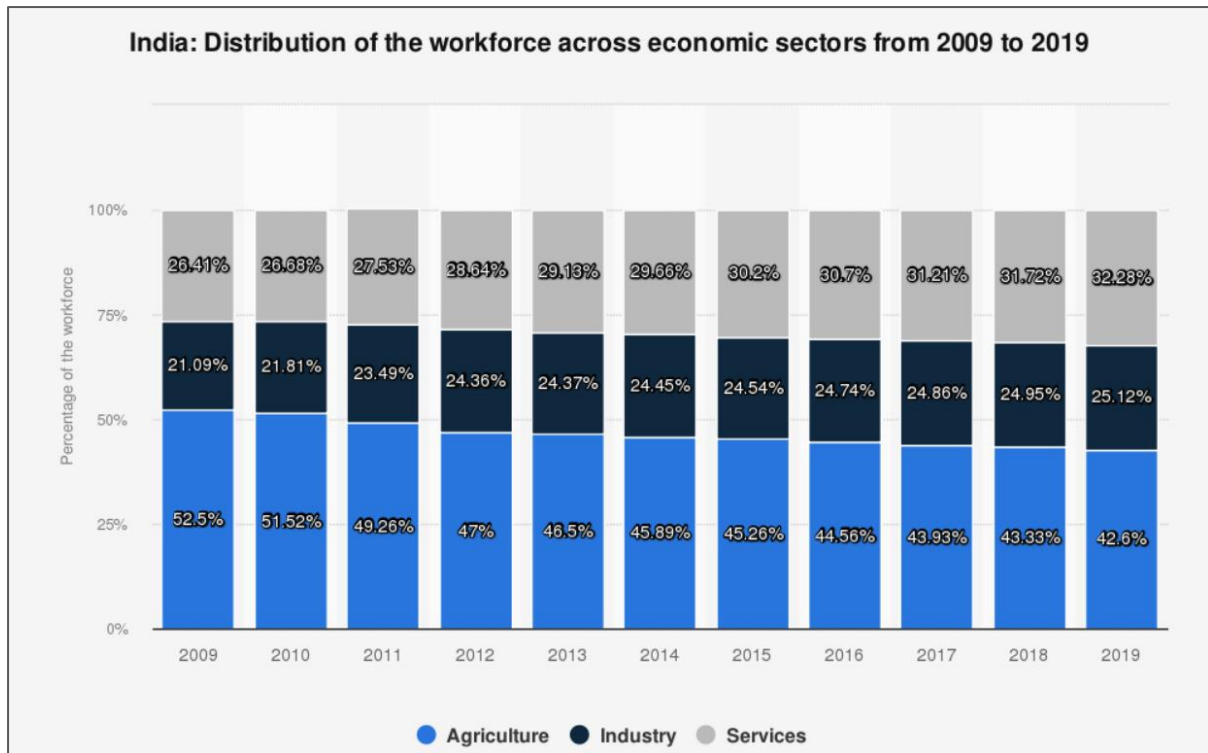
Figure 12 : Source (Bank, 2022)

The above data is an example of how the digitization and e-commerce is slowly transforming working class sector of India. India being renowned for agriculture had the highest share of the workforce in the agricultural sector. People having lands and experience, generally used to stay in the agricultural sector and even push their next generation to be in that area. However as per this data it is evident that the workforce in the services sector is gradually increasing reducing the workforce in the agricultural sector since 2009. Two years prior to this the first B2C e-commerce platform Flipkart started in India. Multiple new sectors of jobs like Delivery, IT, Administration, warehouse, distribution etc was being created ever since. This was followed by the introduction of Amazon in India in 2013. Success of these two E-commerce platforms led the growth to multiple such companies like Myntra, Snapdeal etc.

Since then, the number of E-commerce platforms in India has been ever increasing. Below is a list of different E-commerce platforms in India based on their sales as of 2017.
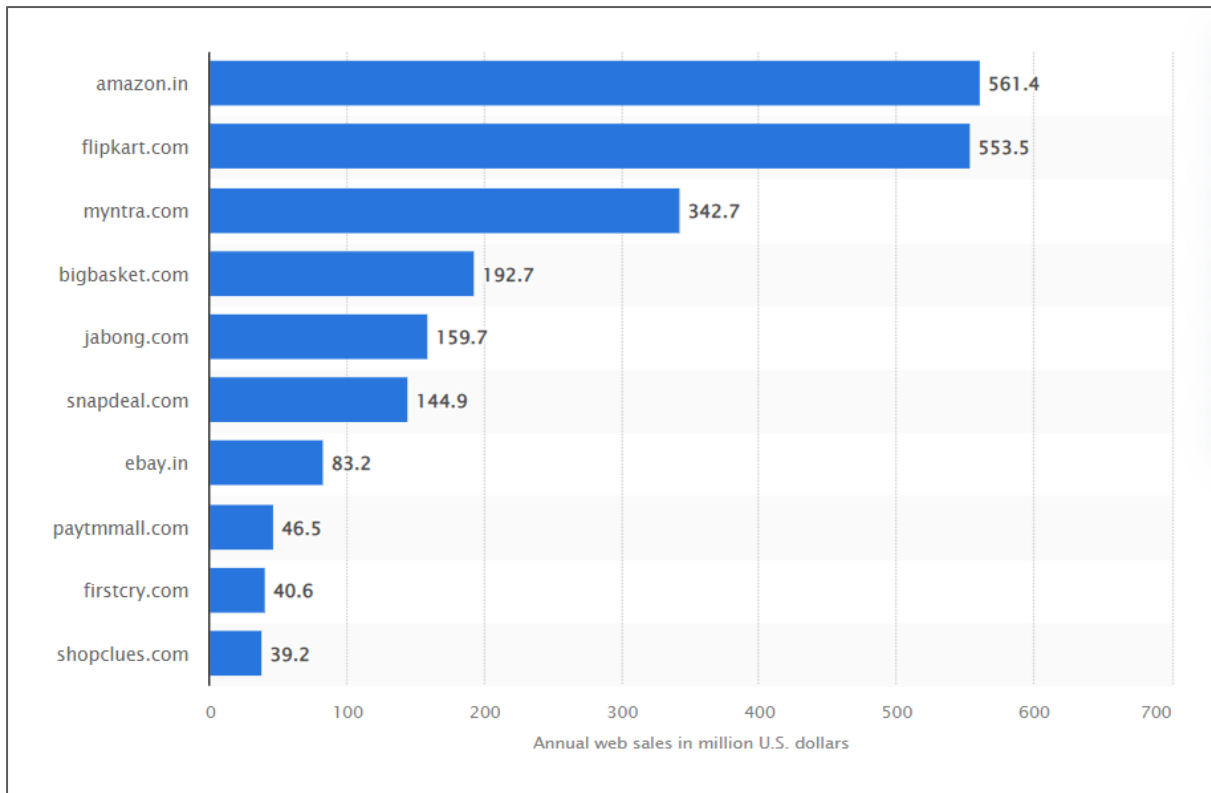
Figure 13 : Source (Statista, 2018)

All the above-mentioned companies have been strong contributors to the Indian E-commerce ecosystem. Along with benefitting the customers in different facets they have significantly contributed to economy of the country as well. Below is the data showing the share of E-commerce in the Indian GDP in 2016,2017 with a projection of 2018.

Employment Generation in E-commerce:

Both the developed and developing countries are witnessing the perks of digitization.
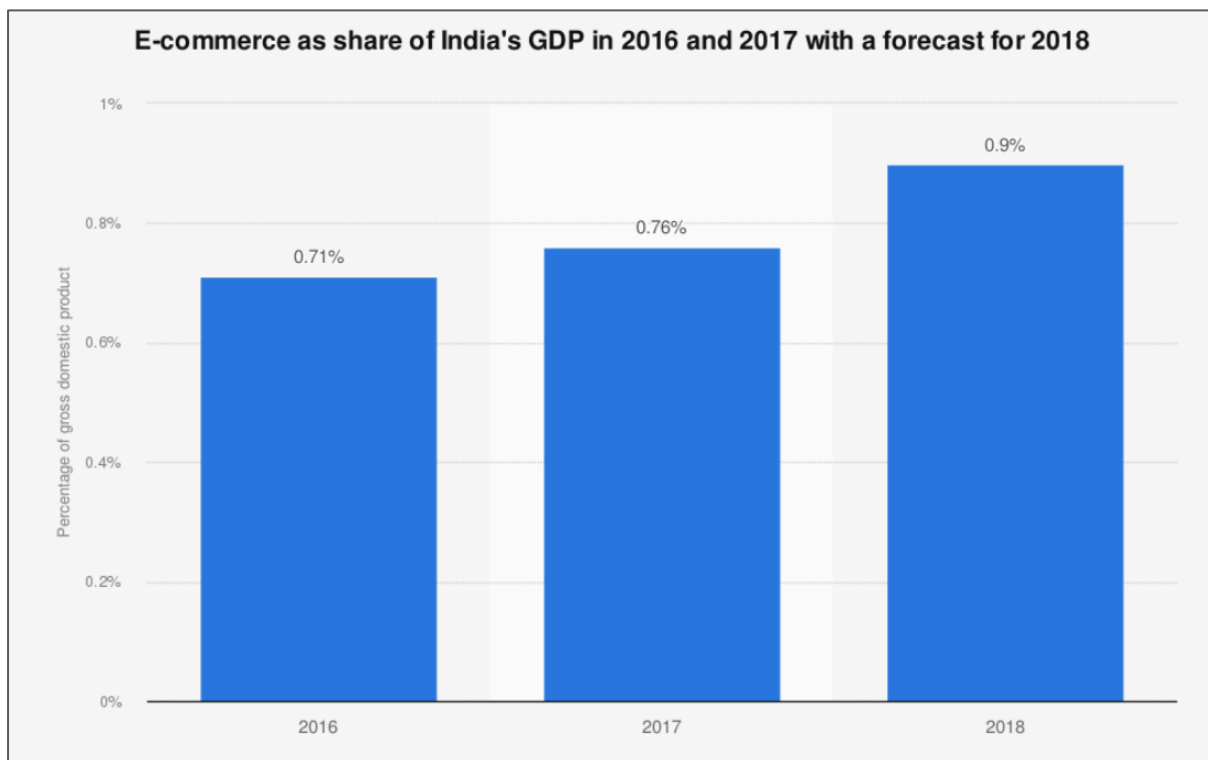
Figure 14 : Source (SAP & Foundation, 2019)

The above data gives an idea about the percentage of contribution E-commerce has on India's GDP. As per the data it is evident that contribution of e-commerce in the India's GDP has been ever increasing since 2016. This has been possible with the number of new jobs, usage of transportation and logistics and billions of dollars of investments by different e-commerce tech giants into building finest supply chain, logistics, listings, marketing, and delivery solutions.

How multiple E-commerce platforms encourages new businesses to grow:

The rise of e-commerce has significantly reduced the gap between small and large businesses. Through the electronic marketplaces, small and medium-sized enterprises can now compete against the established players. These marketplaces also provide a unique opportunity for merchants to expand their reach and improve their profitability. The disadvantages which the smaller businesses face in terms spending by the bigger players can somewhat be encountered by joining the e-commerce marketplace. This gives the smaller players advantage by offering them advanced technological infrastructure, website traffic which allows them to sell their products to wide range of customers removing their location barrier. The idea of not setting up individual physical space or website gives an added boost to the small sellers in the e-commerce marketplace. With this emerging hybrid marketplace electronic commerce acts as bridge between a huge number of buyers and sellers in a country (Jain, et al., 2021) . Electronic marketplace acts as a intermediary between the sellers and the buyers to exchange goods, products and services. Along with this the third-party

retailers also gets the opportunity to concur with electronic marketplace by listing their products and selling them on online marketplace. This mode of business has empowered the sellers along with the buyers by providing them various choices (S & M, 2000) . Also, with low start-up cost, opportunity to market products globally operational efficiency and better inventory management makes this transformation easier for small businesses (McCue, 2018) With intelligent analytics, better tracking and advanced reporting tools the sellers get better insights of the market trends, sales performance as well as future predictions.

Benefits and Support:

Electronic marketplace provides sellers a medium to sell their goods and services without setting up their own online setup giving them the opportunity to initiate business with relatively low setup cost. Electronic marketplaces are usually software based, therefore unlike the brick-and-mortar model and with reasonable annual membership deals it requires relatively low investment with higher probability of profitability once the business in developed (Kaplan & Sawhney, 2000). As compared to large firms the small-scale businesses are more flexible to adapt to the electronic environment (Walczuch, et al., 2000). Thus, it has been evident in many countries that after the development of different e-commerce platforms significant rise in the new small-scale businesses has been noticed. Adaption of existing small-scale businesses to the online model has been ever increasing. Also, many new small-scale businesses have started only on online model where they sell their products only on different e-commerce platforms. Moreover, it has also been noticed that the different e-commerce giants have setup their own brands in different product categories giving the customer wide range of choices to buy from.

How multiple e-commerce platform would encourage new businesses to grow and boost their innovation?

The widespread adoption of information and communication technologies (ICT) in recent decades, notably the widespread usage of the Internet, has enhanced the use of e-commerce as a distribution channel. In several industries, this resulted in significant structural shifts. These transformations are already causing fundamental restructuring in the way certain businesses operate.

The benefits of e-commerce are diverse. From the customer's standpoint it provides them with vast categories of product from enlarged set of vendors in arguably better prices. Also, the customers get the option of price comparison of their desired product allowing them to purchase any product anytime removing the time barrier of a physical store. On the other hand, E-commerce has widely benefited the sellers as well. The sellers can promote their product easily online which makes them easier to reach out to customers without spending too much of additional cost. Moreover, due to the different e-commerce aggregators the sellers have benefited in terms of their distribution of products as well (Bakos, 2001).

In the modern day the sellers enjoy several benefits by going online. Few of such benefits are mentioned below:

Reduced Search Cost:
The development of several internet technologies has significantly helped sellers to get customers. The buyers can search for products as well as appropriate sellers through several search engines like Google, Yahoo, DuckDuckGo etc. The buyers can check the reputation of the sellers through these search engines. Therefore, the sellers with wide variety of products with good reputation can easily generate new leads and acquire new customers without having to spend much. Also, the big e-commerce aggregators across different countries helps sellers to list their products and based on several factors the listing of the products pf sellers from top to bottom of the page is decided. This removes the burden of marketing and lead generation from the sellers.

Online Competition:
With online competition the sellers can offer differentiated products to their customers. Also, they can keep a track of the prices offered by other sellers for products of similar category. This helps them to assess their competition and provides a possibility to manipulate the prices of their products with respect to their competitors.

Product Differentiation:
The idea of "friction free" market is not ideal for the sellers. Yet it needs to be considered that some goods are truly homogeneous in nature. The online retailers can therefore use technology to increase the product differentiation which could increase the profit of the sellers. Since the product offerings are not constrained by the availability of shelf space, hence the sellers can increase the product offerings, provide more information about the product which would help the customers to choose their desired product accurately (Bakos, 1997).

Methodology:
Research methodology is the process that clarifies the way the researchers drive throughout their research. It includes the logical, systematic approach the researcher opts to resolve the research problem. A research methodology details the various paths the researcher takes in order to assure a reliable, authentic result to achieve the goals and aims of the research objective. Along with inclusion of the types of data that would be collected and used, the research methodology shows the legitimacy of the research along with providing scientific and logical findings. In a nutshell it is the in-depth plan that helps the researcher to stay on track while making the process smooth, manageable, and effective in its own way. Though research is a vast process with unclear path of moving from one point to other however, having a clear plan is always beneficial for the researcher (Opoku, et al., 2016)Advantages of a proper research methodology includes:

Helps researcher to clarify their approaches and methods during the research.

Helps researcher to keep a documentation of the aims and objectives of the research along with plan of gathering, analysing the data.

Helps to identify the correct approach for the research.

Encourages the researchers to follow a fixed approach for the research

In this chapter the researcher will explain the methodology and different techniques that has been used in this study. The research philosophy, the research design and methodology, the research strategy, and the research instrument utilized in this study will be illustrated. This section will also advocate the approach of the study and provide a detailed explanation on the research instruments that have been done. Also, explanation about the survey design, sample selection, data analysis will all be included.

Research Philosophy:

The research philosophy can be described as process of beliefs and assumptions regarding the development of knowledge. In every research number of types of assumptions are made. These are the assumptions that shape the research question and the interpretation of the findings (Burrell & Morgan, 2005). A well thought out set of assumption can underpin the methodological choice, research strategy, data collection techniques and the approach of analysis. Primarily there are three types of assumption for research which are Ontological, Epistemological, Axiological. Ontological assumption refers to the assumption of the nature of reality. Axiology involves the role of values and ethics, and Epistemology focuses on the assumption of knowledge. That is which can be treated as valid, acceptable knowledge and the way it can be communicated to others (Burrell & Morgan, 2005).
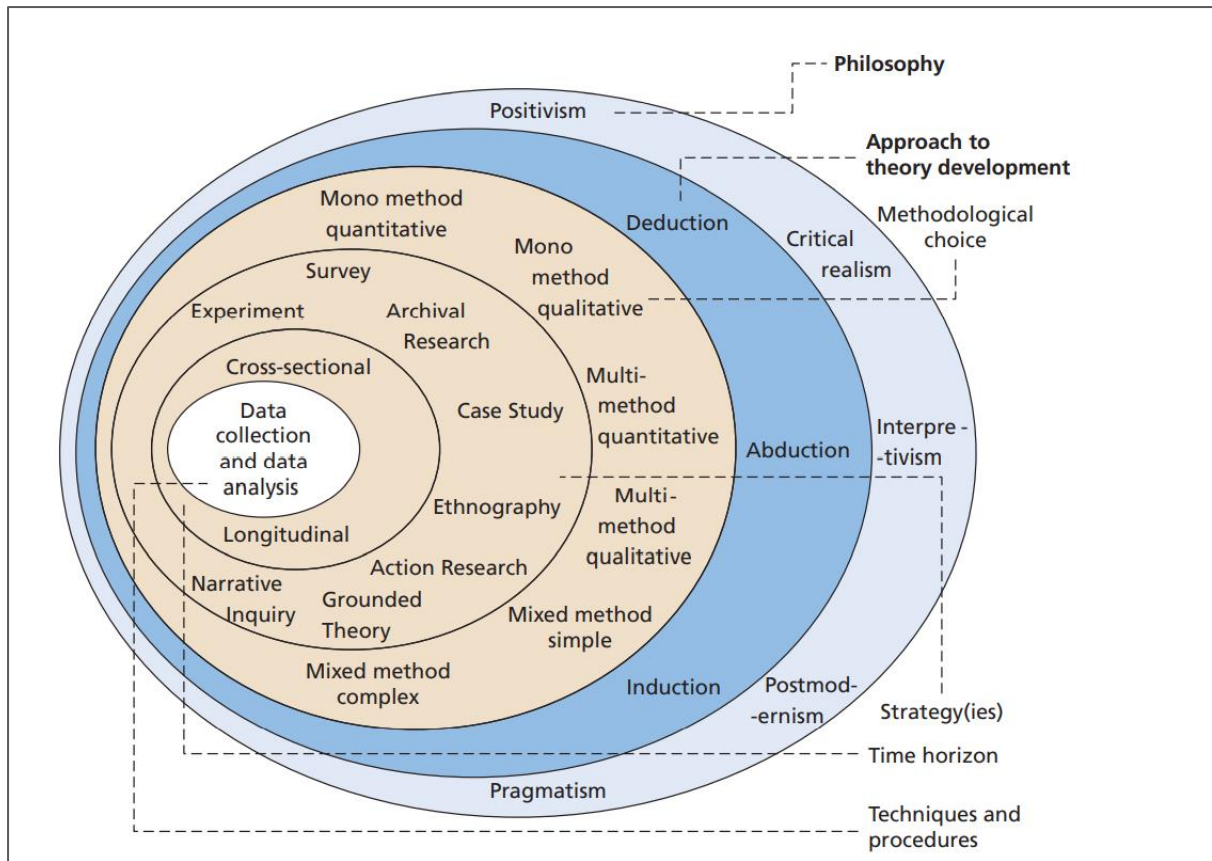
Figure 15 : Source: (Saunders, et al., 2019)

Above is the image of research onion. A research onion consists of six layers starting with the research theories to methodologies. It illustrates techniques and timelines, conflicting and complementary hypothesis (Bell, et al., 2019). The research onion was used as a guidance in this study through the strategies and directions this research would implement going forward through the layers of the research onions.

Realism: This is an academic perspective that identifies existence independent of perception and theoretical hypotheses (Bell, et al., 2019). The critical realists are in favour of epistemological relativism which considers knowledge to be a product of its history and social realities are constructed. Therefore, it can be derived that the idea of critical realism is not reducible to quantitative methodologies and statistics (Reed, 2005). However, this research is following a qualitative approach where a small set of people are included for collection of primary data and past data from researches and journals are taken into consideration in order to analyse the existing trends and market insights.

Interpretivism: Interpretivism is complementary to constructivism. It considers social reality to be a subjective creation based on interpretation and interaction (Zikmund, et al., 2019). The goal of interpretivism research is to establish new understanding and interpretation of social environments and situations (Saunders, et al., 2019).

Pragmatism: This approach is best suited when the most significant predictor of epistemology is the research issue. This approach believes in acts, situations, and outcomes rather than any pre-defined situations (Cohen, et al., 2000)

Positivism: This is the most scientific approach focusing on effects and consequences of causes in the research questions. In this approach knowledge is gained through seeing and measuring objective reality (Phillips & Burbules, 2000). This is a conventional research paradigm which is used for quantitative research methods including surveys and questionnaire (Saunders, et al., 2019). For the purpose of the research this approach has been used in order to analyse the percentage and count of people and their opinions on different questions which were being asked in the questionnaire.

Methodology followed for Data Analysis

The primary goal of research methodology is to analyse the logical reason involving the approach to the research along with helping the researcher by providing a detailed plan of the research to follow going forward. There are several steps involved in an analytical project like Data cleaning, preparation, Modelling etc. The standardised approach for analytical problem solving is Crisp-DM (Cross Industry Standard Process for Data Mining). It helps a project like that to be more manageable, faster, and less costly along with being more reliable (Wirth & Hipp, n.d.). The CRISP-DM methodology being a robust and proven methodology helps to provide a structured approach in terms of planning and organizing a data mining project. In real world scenario most of the approaches can be performed in various orders, therefore it often becomes very important to backtrack to the previous order or re-iterate an order. There are 6 various kinds of phases in CRISP-DM like, Business understanding, Data understanding, Data preparation, modelling, evaluation, and deployment. There are multiple advantages of CRISP-DM like:

- This process helps in focusing on the aims which helps the researcher to stick to the goal.
- Being an iterative process, this helps in analysing the progress and whether it is headed to the pre-defined right objective.
- Reduces the risk in the progress all the processes being in a documented form it helps to identify any issues in the early stages of the project.

In this research data gathering, cleaning and analysis has been an integral part to achieve the goal of the research. Several objectives of the research involve detailed and complex data cleaning and analysis. Therefore, by getting inspired by the advantages of the CRISP-DM method, a methodology of a similar type has been formulated that is iterative, process oriented, and systematic. The diagrammatic representation of the methodology is shown below:
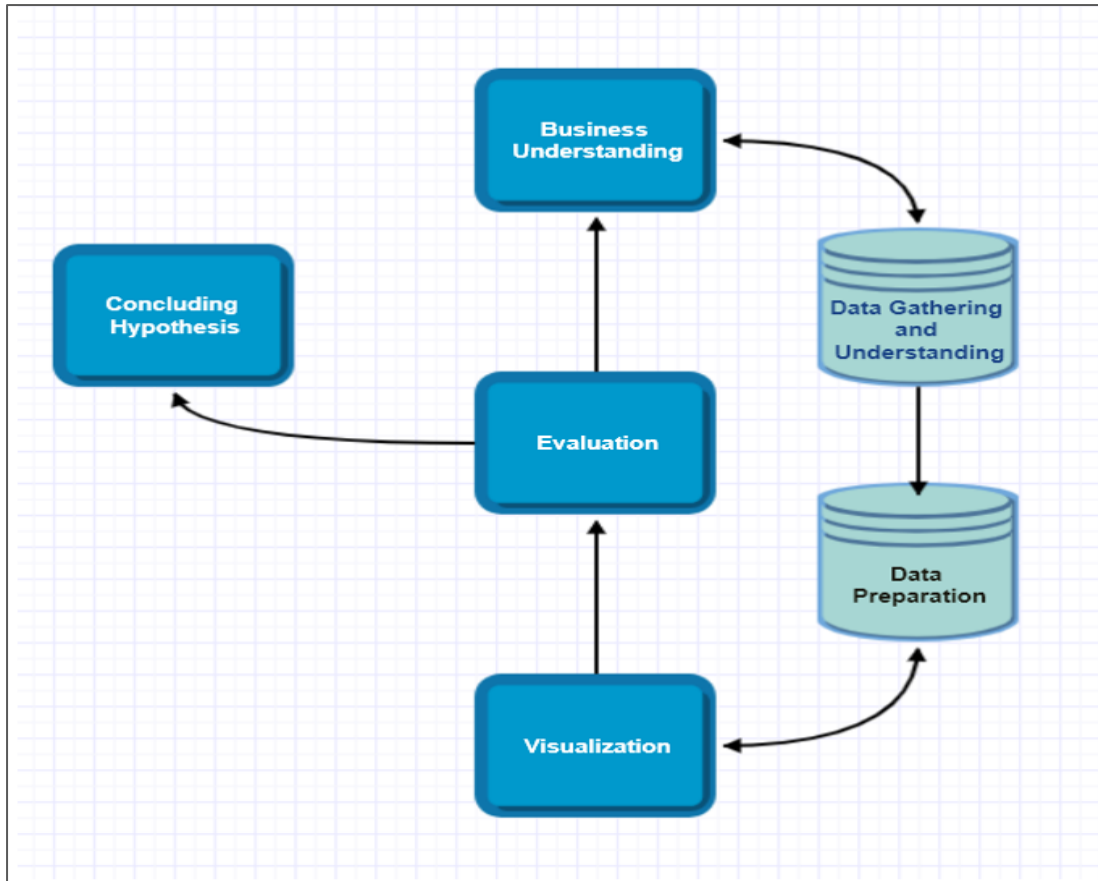
Figure 16 : Flow Diagram of Methodology, Source (Author; Inspired by CRISP-DM)

Business Understanding:

This first stage of the CRISP-DM methodology involves gaining understanding of the business and the impact of the project from a business point of view (Wirth & Hipp, n.d.). In this stage it is determined what exactly the researcher is trying to accomplish. Here the researcher accesses the situation in detail by further deep diving to fact-finding, building out a much-detailed explanation of the issues outlined in the business goals task. The final step of this stage is determination of the goals of the research work that finally results in proper development of a suitable and optimized step by step project plan until the objective of the research work is met and the desired results are obtained.

In this research the researcher primarily focuses on the impact multiple e-commerce platforms can have in the shopper's experience in Ireland. Since this research involves a comparative study with Indian e-commerce sector therefore the researcher has primarily focused on India. It has been often noticed that due to stiff competition in the Indian e-commerce market the e-commerce platforms offer several discounts along with different types of benefits in terms of delivery like quicker deliver, free delivery to attract customers to their website. Therefore, one aspect of this research involves how important are those to the online shoppers and would that improve the number of online shoppers in Ireland. Another aspect of the research involves that the small entrepreneurs who owns small shops or people having small family businesses

that is running for last few decades, how impactful would multiple e-commerce platforms be on their business and would this be able to motivate the number of new up and coming entrepreneurs to start their businesses and sell their products online. Lastly with multiple e-commerce platforms comes multiple operational, marketing and sales and many other different roles. Therefore, this would create several jobs in the country and how it would boost the overall economy of the country. So, all the data (primary and secondary) that have been used in this research and the analysis that has been done are from this perspective.

Data Gathering and Understanding:

The information collected by the researcher for the purpose of research is called primary data. The main examples of primary data are interview and questionnaires (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009).

Research Instrument:

Initially to collect primary data the researcher has used survey questionnaire form. A survey can be said as "a structure data collection technique where each participant are asked same questions" (C.Dawson, 2010). A survey has the capabilities to offer quantitative depiction of a population's trends, correlations between variables in a population by analysing a smaller section of that population (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The main objective of doing a survey is that they provide information on a wide range of people with minimum effort and minimum cost. As of 2019 only 13.2% research surrounding collaborative consumption have used surveys (Laurenti, et al., 2019).

In the current times of Covid where social distancing has become a norm the path of collecting data in form of questionnaire has proved to be a very useful mean. This has helped the researcher to collect sample for larger group of people without any need to travel. All the questions that were asked to the participants were in form of questionnaire template provided by online survey supplier – Google forms. Then the questionnaire was circulated online through various social media platforms and to other friends and families of the researcher. To make sure that the greatest number of people from wide range can participate in the survey the number of questions has been kept short and written in simple English language. All the questions that were being asked in the survey questionnaire are novel and has not been taken from any sources. The survey was being conducted for the purpose of understanding opinion of people of different nationality, their viewpoint on multiple aspect of e-commerce. Both, people working in e-commerce sector and not working in e-commerce sector has participated in the survey. To make the survey more generic people of different age group starting from 19 to 65 has been considered.

The survey questionnaire was developed to get the understanding of people's likings and had a scale of Most likely to Unlikely. Some of the survey questions which were included to understand people's frequency of e-commerce usage had a scale of Most often to Rarely. Also, there were survey questions where participants were given the option to select multiple options for the same question in form of checkbox.

Considering the ethical aspect in mind, no personal data including email address of the participants were collected in the survey.

Data Preparation:

This phase is often referred to as "data wrangling" or "data munging". In this phase the data is prepared from the raw data to construct the final dataset. Here the primary tasks include selection of data, data cleaning and transformation. All the redundant data, missing values and data with special characters are cleansed and filtered out to create a final dataset.

Sampling:

The study was to evaluate the usage and preference of different aspect of e-commerce platforms of the users. Therefore, wide range of people from age range greater than 18 was taken into account. On the higher side there were no age limit for the participants for participating in the survey. Also, participants include professionals working in the e-commerce sector as well as regular buyers who are not involved in e-commerce professionally have been considered. Participants who were available easily and were willing to participate has been considered for this survey. Since the questionnaire was circulated mostly through social media therefore, majority of the people who participated in the survey would be friends, acquaintance, co-worker, and relatives. Lastly the sample size of the survey was of 130 people. According to (Saunders, et al., 2019) larger the sample size less likely to make a mistake while generalizing the target population.

Apart from that to answer parts of the research questions the researcher has also used secondary data for the analysis and discussion. The secondary data sources where primarily the data of different countries related to e-commerce and its economic impact. All the sources of the secondary data have been clearly mentioned and cited.

Data Representation and Analysis:

The primary data which was collected through a survey questionnaire was circulated in form of Google forms. The response of all the participants were stored in the Google form itself. Once the target number of participants were reached the researcher fetched all the data in an excel format and saved it locally. There were some questions where the participants were given the freedom to choose multiple options. Since all the selected options came into a single cell in the excel file it was not possible to analyse using that same response file. Therefore, the researcher prepared the data in an appropriate manner by creating different columns for each of the options using excel formulas. All the missing values in the dataset were also handled during this process of data cleaning and preparation The timestamp of the responses was also removed in the cleaning process since it was not of any further use for the researcher. The cleaned data was then analysed and visualized using IBM SPSS and Microsoft Power BI.

Visualization is an important aspect for a research project. In this section the data that was collected, cleaned, and prepared and is visually represented based on several analysis points. Bar chart being an intuitive and easy to understand graphical representation, is a common method for visualization. Among the bar charts the most commonly used bar chart is equal width bar chart. The most important aspect of the equal width bar chart is that they use the screen size efficiently (Keim, et al., 2002). Apart from this bar chart are easier to compare when there are multiple categories and it the patterns and trends are easy to recognize when they are interpreted in a bar chart. Another popular visual representation is the Pie chart. The pie chart is most suitable when different variables in a single category are being interpreted. It is said that the pie chart is more than 200 years old and first portrayed the population and revenues of European states. William Playfair used Pie chart first in 1801 (Spence, 2005)
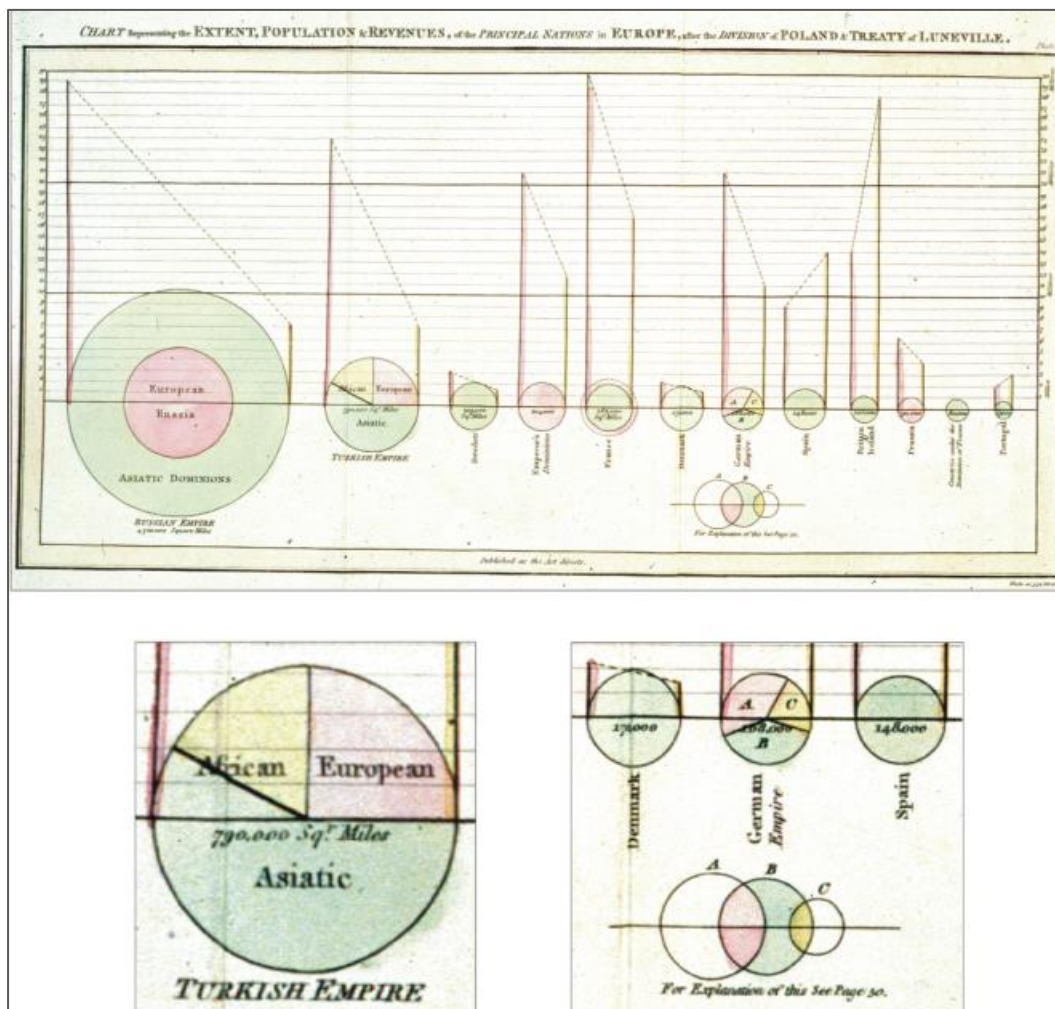

Figure 17 : Source (Spence, 2005)

In this research bar chart and Pie chart are primarily used for the visualization purpose. The visualization tools like IBM SPSS are mostly used for the visual

representations along with some usage of Microsoft Power BI which can also be found in this research.

Evaluation:

This is the next step in the methodology is Evaluation. Evaluation in research refers to the verification of the findings and how aligned the findings are with respect to the research objective. It involves assessing the findings based on the data gathered. In this research after the visualizing data based on different parameters the researcher evaluates the key findings that can be interpreted from those visualization. The findings from the visualization are documented based on the research aims and objectives and how well it supports the research goals.

Validity:

To provide the consistency of a test or a scale Alpha was developed by Lee Cronbach in 1951. Internal consistency means analysing the point to which the items in the scale measure the concepts to be similar and their inter relations within the test. It is very important to determine the internal consistency of the data that is used in the research. In the Cronbach's alpha it is measure between 0 to 1. The value of alpha increase if the if the items in the test are correlated to each other and vice-versa.

To begin with the analysis and Visualization of the collected data, it was important to check the validity of the data, which was calculated using Cronbach's alpha in IBM SPSS. The questions of similar factors and aligned scale are taken into account for this test. Below is the result of the test.

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.550	.620	3

Figure 18 : Reliability Statistics

As per this test $\alpha > 0.7$ is considered to be recommended however, $\alpha > 0.5$ is considered to be acceptable. The result of Cronbach's alpha is affected by the lesser number of questions in the questionnaire, interrelatedness of the questions, number of respondents or having more than one latent variable. Since the based on the test the result in not unacceptable i.e., not $\alpha < 0.5$ therefore the research analysis has been continued with the questionnaire results.

Analysis And Findings:
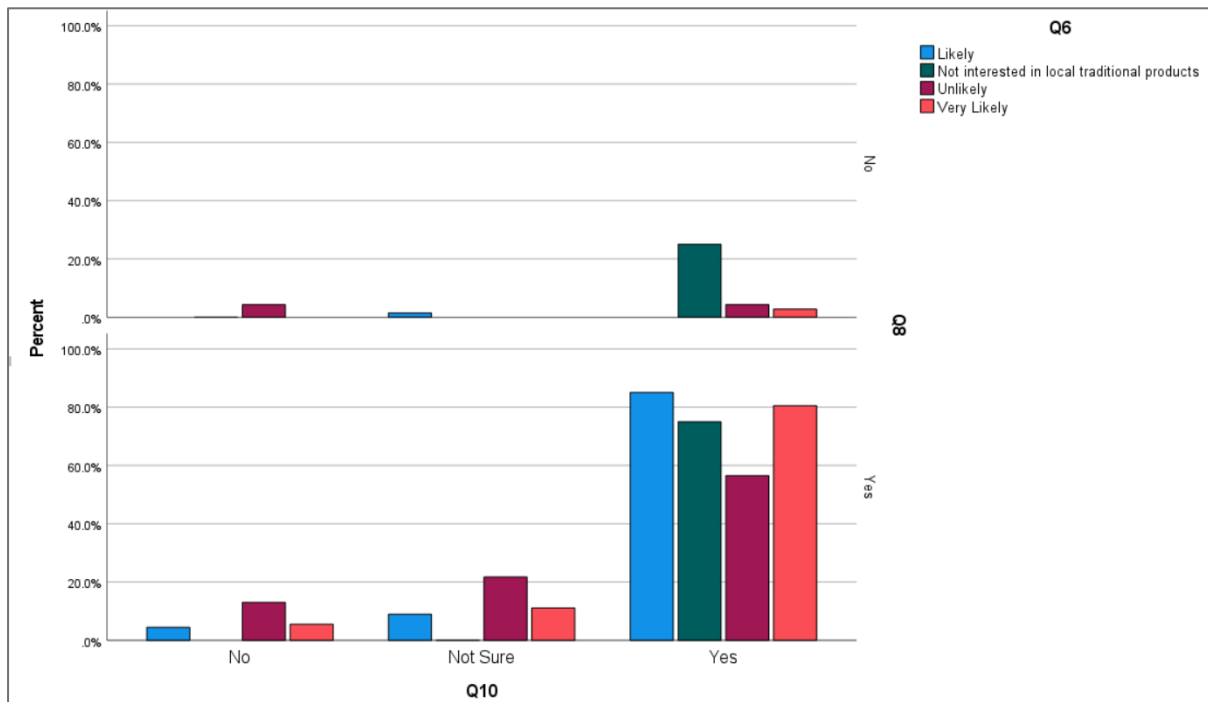
Vizualization 1:

Figure 19: Bar Graph showing relation among Q8, Q10 and Q6 of Questionnaire

Percentage of people answering question 8 (Whether they think there should be multiple e-commerce in a country) and their opinion on traditional goods and what they think about benefit of sellers due to multiple e-commerce platforms.

The above bar graph illustrates peoples' opinion on how likely they are to buy local traditional items through e-commerce platforms and their opinion on whether having multiple e-commerce platforms would benefit the sellers who sell their products online. Firstly, the entire population has been divided into two categories, the first category believes a country should have multiple e-commerce platforms selling products of different categories and the second group believes there should not have multiple e-commerce platforms selling products of different categories. After the categorization, the opinions on the above-mentioned factors are done through bar graphs. The X axis of the bar chart categorises the people based on their opinion on whether multiple e-commerce platforms would benefit the sellers who sell their products online and the Y-Axis of the bar chart shows participants opinion on whether they think there should be multiple e-commerce platforms in a country.

130 different responses have been collected through a questionnaire survey and the questions involved in the above illustration has been listed below:

6. If available, how likely are you to buy local traditional items through e-commerce platforms?

8. Do you think that a country should have multiple e-commerce platforms selling products of different categories?

10.Do you think that having multiple e-commerce platforms would benefit the sellers who sell their products online?

Key findings:

Category 1: People who believes a country should have multiple e-commerce platforms selling products of different categories.

It can be observed in this category that majority of people believes that having multiple e-commerce platforms would benefit the sellers who sell their products online, and in this group, majority prefers to buy local traditional items through e-commerce platforms whereas very few people prefer not to buy local traditional goods online apart from few who are not interested in local traditional items at all. This can be observed from the blue, orange, maroon and green bar bar representing "Likely" and "very Likely", "Unlikely" and "Not interested in local traditional groups" respectively. There are few people who are not sure whether having multiple e-commerce platforms would benefit the sellers who sell their products online and very few who believes that sellers won't get benefitted. For both of these groups it can be observed that majority of them are unlikely to buy local traditional goods online.

Category 2: People who believes a country should not have multiple e-commerce platforms selling products of different categories.

In this category also majority believes having multiple e-commerce platforms would benefit the sellers who sell their products online and out of them highest number of people are not interested in local traditional items and the second highest number are unlikely to purchase local traditional goods online. People who do not think that having multiple e-commerce platforms would benefit the sellers who sell their products online are also unlikely to buy the local traditional goods online.

It can be safely concluded from the above observations that majority of people prefer to have multiple e-commerce platforms selling products of different categories. Having multiple platforms induces competition among them which would primarily result in reduction of price of products along with availability of more variety of products of different categories, better product delivery system incurring minimum or no delivery charges and constant improvisation on betterment of e-commerce web sites for better customer experience. This would enhance the overall shoppers' experience as they would be spoilt with multiple options at reasonable prices with better e-commerce site interface and site speed and minimum or no delivery charges. This competitive environment would be the fundamental driver of innovation, as existing and rising businesses would be driven to introduce and adopt better production methods for optimum utilization of resources to produce improvised products and services. It can be

concluded from the observations that mostly people are eager to buy local and traditional products, which are slowly getting lost due to lack of proper selling platform and poor or almost no growth. Introduction of multiple e-commerce platforms would a significant saviour Local and family-owned businesses would get a wider platform to sell their products with minimum commission charges. This would not only help various small and local businesses to grow but would also encourage multiple start-ups to arise and grow, thus resulting in massive economic growth of the country as a whole. Local products and sellers would get global, and this international exposure would help in spreading and preserving the culture, heritage and history of a country. The ever-increasing demand and supply and the yearning to reach equilibrium would attract more sellers and customers in the e-commerce world resulting in overall economic growth.

This would attract more customers resulting in growth of sellers instigating economic growth

Visualization 2:

Analysis based on local traditional goods purchasing:
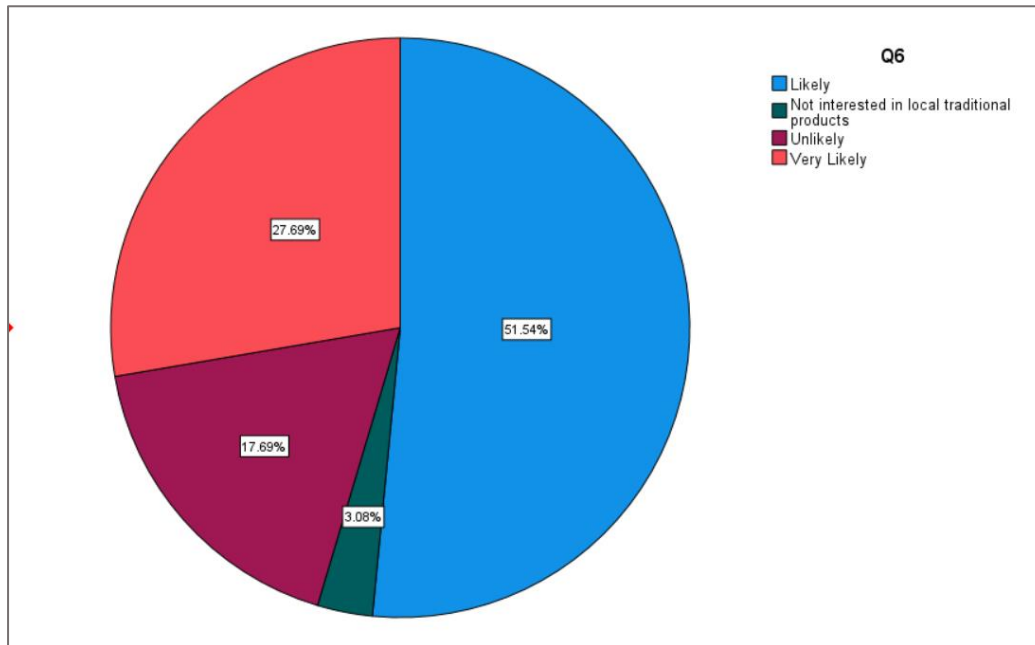

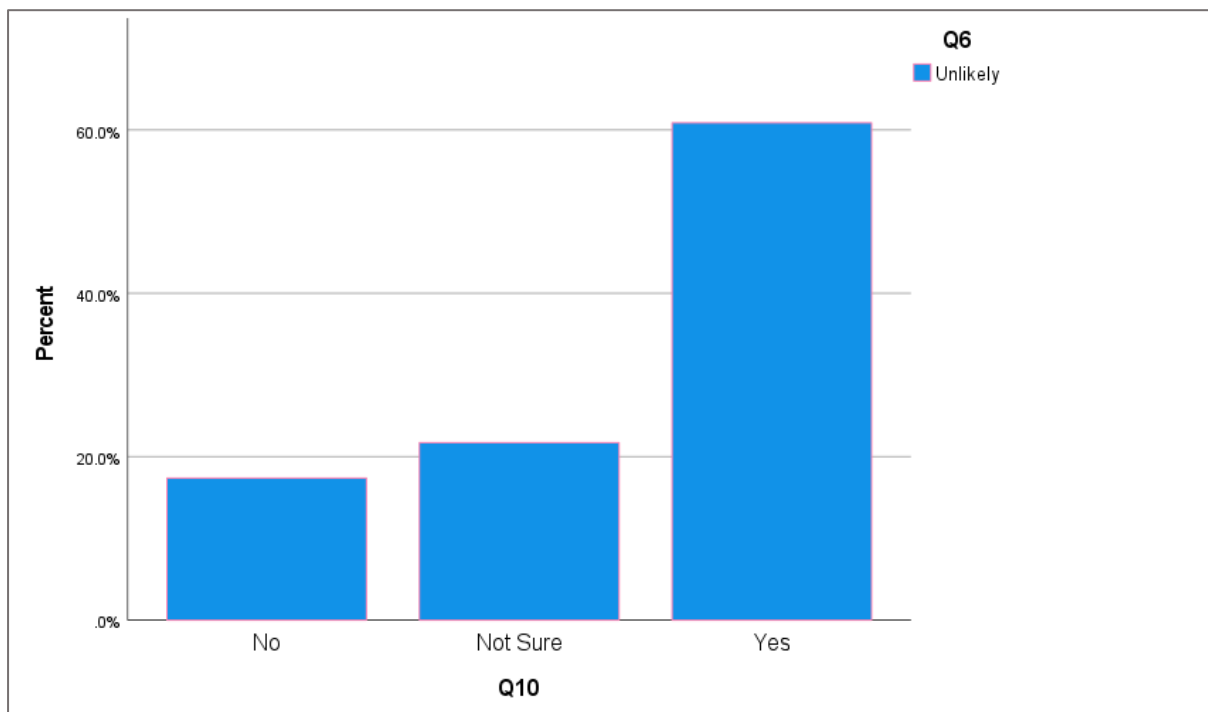*Figure 20: Pie chart showing Interest on local traditional goods.*

Figure 21 : Bar graph with Q6 and Q10 of Questionnaire

The above graphical representation is done based on the respondent's choice of purchasing local traditional goods and their opinion on whether having multiple e-commerce platforms are beneficial for the sellers, representing question 6 and question 10 respectively.

The Pie chart shown above is the representation of people of their likely hood of purchasing local traditional goods online. The blue area in the pie chart represents the percentage of people who are likely to purchase local traditional goods online. The orange area in the pie chart shows the percentage of people who are very likely to purchase local traditional goods. The maroon area shows the percentage of people who are unlikely to purchase, and the green area represents the small percentage of people who does not have any interest in local traditional goods.

The researcher then considered only those people who are unlikely to purchase local traditional goods online, filtering out all the other options. Then the opinion of these set of respondents were taken on whether they believe that multiple e-commerce platform would benefit the sellers selling their goods online which is question 10 of the questionnaires mentioned above.

Key Findings:

From the Pie chart more than 51% of people are Likely to purchase local traditional goods online whereas more than 27% of people are very likely to purchase local traditional goods online. On the other hand, 17.69% of people are unlikely to purchase local traditional goods online and 3% oof people are not interested in local traditional goods. In the next step, by taking those 17.69% of people in to account for further analysis in the bar chart, where it has been seen that 60% of the people agree that having multiple e-commerce platforms would benefit the sellers who sell their products online whereas around 22% are not sure and around 18% of people do not think that having multiple e-commerce platforms are beneficial for online sellers.

Therefore, from the above analysis it can be concluded that majority of the online shoppers intend to purchase local traditional goods online. Hence, the local traditional goods are very much relevant to the buyers buying their goods online. On doing further analysis on those set of people who are unlikely to purchase local traditional goods online, it is observed that most of them thinks that sellers who sell their products online would be benefited by having multiple e-commerce platforms. This could be because sellers would get option to sell their products to several platforms, increasing their customer reachability and scaling up their businesses, the sellers would gain bargaining power which as per Porter's 5 forces would be a significant boost in their business, reducing the commission they have to pay to these online platforms, choosing the products they want to sell. Local traditional goods are usually made and sold by small family-owned businesses, small scale sellers and other various undertakings. Therefore, it might be inferred that these respondents might want to purchase from these small sellers directly so that they receive maximum price for their products without deductions of major commissions and other cost cuts by the e-commerce platform.

Without the option to seller through multiple e-commerce platforms the sellers might find high commissions charged by the platform. Without any alternate option they might have to pay high commission to sell online which would be damaging to their business or they might scrap the idea of selling their products online. Therefore, multiple e-commerce platforms would significantly boost the bargaining power of these small local businesses selling local traditional goods and would boost new business opportunities for aspiring entrepreneurs. This would also help in innovation of products as due to competition these business owners would look for product differentiation which in turn would enrich the traditional goods market. Moreover, with a strong traditional marketplace the local tradition of the country would also get enormous boost and would have the possibility of spreading among the young generation rather than getting obsolete.
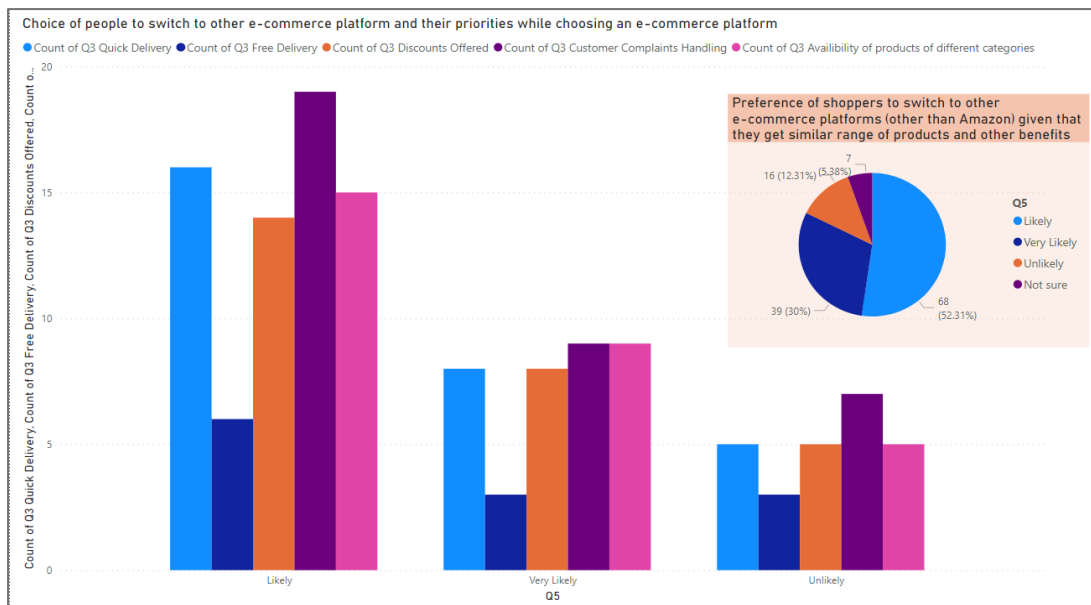
Visualization 3

Figure 22 : Bar graph with Q3 and Q5 and Pie Chart with Q5 of Questionnaire

The above graphical representation takes two questions into consideration.

Q3: What are the major factors you consider while choosing an online e-commerce platform for your purchase?

Q5: How likely are you to purchase from other e-commerce platforms (other than Amazon) given that you get similar range of products and other benefits?

From now on Question number 3 would be referred to as Q3 and Question number 5 would be referred to as Q5.

On asking people of their preference to switch to another e-commerce platform, the researcher have got the response in four categories namely Like, Very Likely, Unlikely and Not Sure. The Pie chart represents the choice of people (in Percentage) of how open they are to switch to another e-commerce platforms. The Light blue section of

the pie chart shows percentage of people who are Likely to switch to other e-commerce platforms. The Dark Blue section represents those who are Very Likely to switch to other e-commerce platforms. The Orange section shows those are Unlikely to switch to other e-commerce platforms and the Purple area shows the percentage of people who are Not Sure of switching to other e-commerce platforms.

The researcher has then filtered out the small percentage of people who are not sure whether they would want to switch to another e-commerce platforms. After filtering them the researcher have now taken Q3 into account. The Q3 shows the percentage of people and their preference of different factors they consider while choosing an online e-commerce. The bar chart representation therefore categorizes the people based on their preference to switch to another e-commerce platform which is the X axis of the chart, and the Y-axis shows different factors which they consider while choosing an online e-commerce platform. The light blue bar shows the count of people who consider Quick delivery as a factor. The dark blue bar shows the count of people who considers Free Delivery as a factor. The Orange bar represents the count of people who considers Discounts offered as a factor. The purple bar shows the count of people who considers Customer complaints handling as a factor and the pink bar shows the count of people who considers Availability of wide range of products as a factor. All the people who have responded were given the choice to choose multiple options for these questions.

Key Findings:

In the pie chart it is seen that 52.31% of people are likely to switch to other e-commerce platform and 30% of people are very likely to switch to other e-commerce platforms. Whereas only 12.31% and 5.38% are unlikely and Not sure respectively of switching to other e-commerce platforms. Based on this analysis it can be said that more than 80% of people are willing to switch to other e-commerce platforms provided their requirements are fulfilled.

In the bar chart that depicts the people's willingness to switch and the major factors they consider while choosing an online e-commerce platform, it can be seen that those who are unlikely to switch have chosen customer complaints handling as a major reason for choosing their online e-commerce platforms. Quick delivery, Discounts offered and Availability of products of different categories comes joint 2nd in their priority list while choosing an online e-commerce platform.

People who are likely to switch have chosen Customer Complaints handling as the major factor while choosing the online e-commerce platforms whereas Quick deliver and availability of products are 2nd and 3rd priorities respectively.

On the other hand, those who are very likely to switch to other e-commerce platforms have also chosen Customer complaint handling as their primary factor while choosing an online e-commerce platform. Quick delivery and availability of wide range of product comes 2nd and 3rd respectively in their priority list.

From the above analysis it can be concluded that people are very much concerned about the after-sell services of the e-commerce platforms and rates this very highly as a factor while choosing an online e-commerce platform. Also, free delivery has been a less of a priority for the shoppers of different categories and they rather prefer Quick delivery of their goods for which they are willing to pay for. Along with that, getting wide range of products to choose from while shopping from any e-commerce platforms is a significantly important factor for the shoppers to choose an online e-commerce platform.

Therefore, it can be inferred that majority of people would be happy to have multiple e-commerce platforms as it can be observed that if given an option they would prefer to switch and use multiple platforms to compare their online purchasing criteria. Availability of multiple e-commerce platforms would develop competitive values in Customer complaint handling, Availability of wide range of products and quick delivery of the purchased goods. While the individual e-commerce platforms would compete to provide best of their services to attract and retain customers, in turn it would boost the shopper's experience significantly.
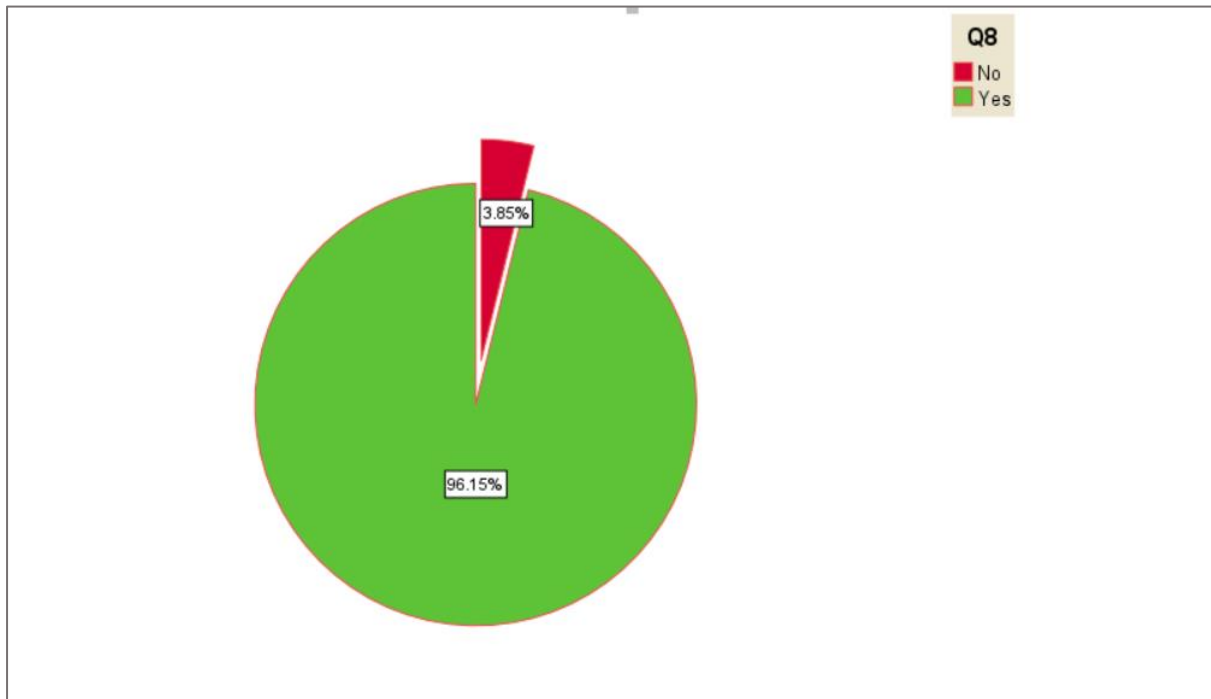
Visualization 4:

Figure 23 Pie chart showing opinion on having multiple e-commerce platforms in a country
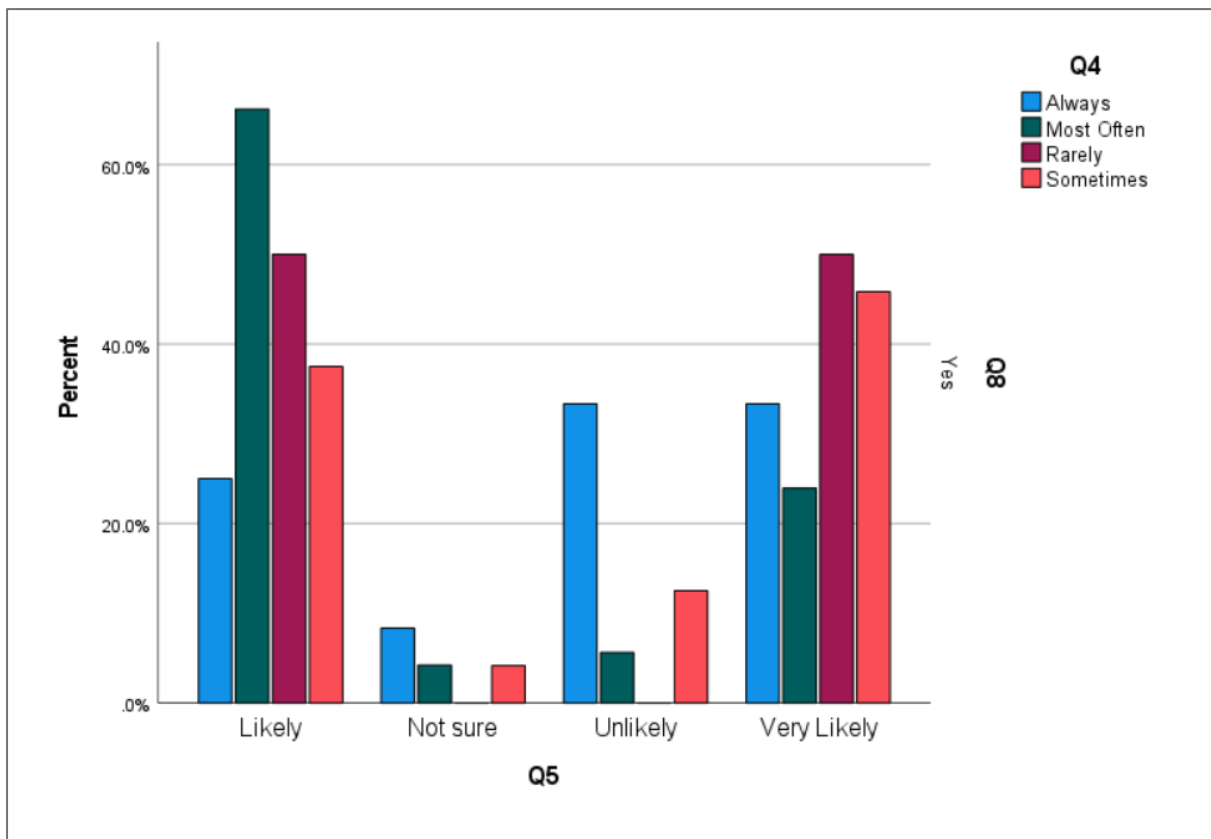

Figure 24: Bar Graph with Q5, Q4 and Q8 of Questionnaire

The above graphical representations are made by taking three questions into consideration.

Q4. How frequently do you use amazon for your online purchase?

Q5. How likely are you to purchase from other e-commerce platforms (other than Amazon) given that you get similar range of products and other benefits?

Q8. Do you think that a country should have multiple e-commerce platforms selling products of different categories?

The above questions would be referred as Q4, Q5 and Q8 respectively from now on.

In form of question Q8 the survey respondents were asked of their opinion on having multiple e-commerce platforms for online shopping in a country. The green area in the Pie chart shows the percentage of people who thinks that there should be multiple e-commerce platforms in a country and the red area in the pie chart shows the percentage of people who think that there shouldn't be multiple e-commerce platforms in a country.

The people who are not in favour of having multiple e-commerce platforms have been filtered out for this analysis. After filtering them the researcher has taken Q4 and Q5 into account. The Q4 gives the idea about how frequently the respondents use Amazon for their online purchase. On the other hand, the Q5 shows how open they are to switch to other e-commerce platforms. The bar chart categorises people based on their preference to switch to other e-commerce platforms which is the X axis of the chart. The bars of the chart represent how often the respondents use Amazon for their online purchases. The Y-axis represents the people who thinks that there should be multiple e-commerce platforms in a country. The blue bar in the bar chart represents those who Always uses Amazon for their online purchase. The Green bar in the bar chart represents those who uses Amazon Most often for their purchase. The Red bar represents those who uses Amazon Rarely for their purchase and the Orange bar represents those who Sometime uses Amazon for their purchase. All the figures that are shown in the bar chart are in percentage.

Key Findings

The pie chart represents the opinion of people (in percentage) of whether there should be multiple e-commerce platforms in a country. To this more than 96.15% of people thinks there should be multiple e-commerce platforms in a country and 3.85% of people says there should not be multiple e-commerce platforms in a country.

The bar chart that has been then prepared with those 96.15% of people in favour of having multiple e-commerce platforms depicts the usage of Amazon for their online shopping based on the category to which they are willing to switch to other e-commerce platforms. The bar chart shows that more than 60% of people who use Amazon Most often are likely to switch to other online e-commerce platforms. Around 50% of people who rarely use Amazon are likely to switch to other e-commerce

platforms and more than 20% of people who always use Amazon are likely to switch to other e-commerce platforms. Also, 50% and 45% of those who Most often and Sometime uses Amazon respectively for their online purchase are Very Likely to switch to other e-commerce platforms whereas, more than 30% people who Always uses Amazon are very likely to switch to other e-commerce platforms. On the other hand, more than 30% of people who Always uses Amazon are unlikely to switch to other E-commerce platforms along with 10% of people who Most often uses Amazon. Few people from all these categories are not sure about switching to other e-commerce platforms.

From the above findings it can be concluded that majority of the respondents wants multiple e-commerce platforms in a country. More than 50% of people who Always uses Amazon are willing to switch to other e-commerce platforms if that gives better offerings to them. Around 85% of people who currently uses Amazon for their online purchase are willing to switch to other e-commerce platforms. Also, majority of those people who uses Amazon Rarely and sometime are open to switch to other e-commerce platforms.

Therefore, it can be inferred from the above analysis that majority of people want competition in the e-commerce industry in a country. Those who wants competition are buyers of all categories starting with frequent buyers to those who purchase rarely. However, majority of buyers from all these categories are open to switch to other e-commerce platforms to gain more benefits from their online purchase. People believes that the competition in the e-commerce market would improve their online shopping experience at different levels for which they would like to try out other e-commerce platforms that would suffice their needs even better.
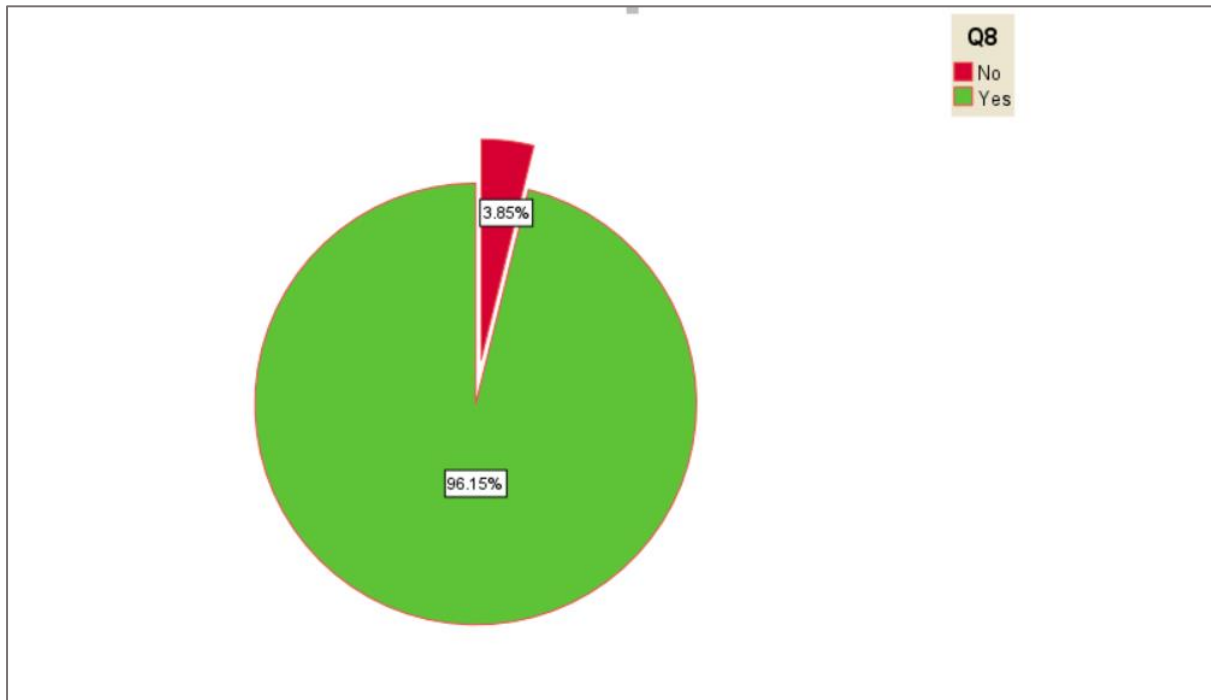
Visualization 5:

Figure 25 : Pie chart showing opinion on having multiple e-commerce platforms in a country
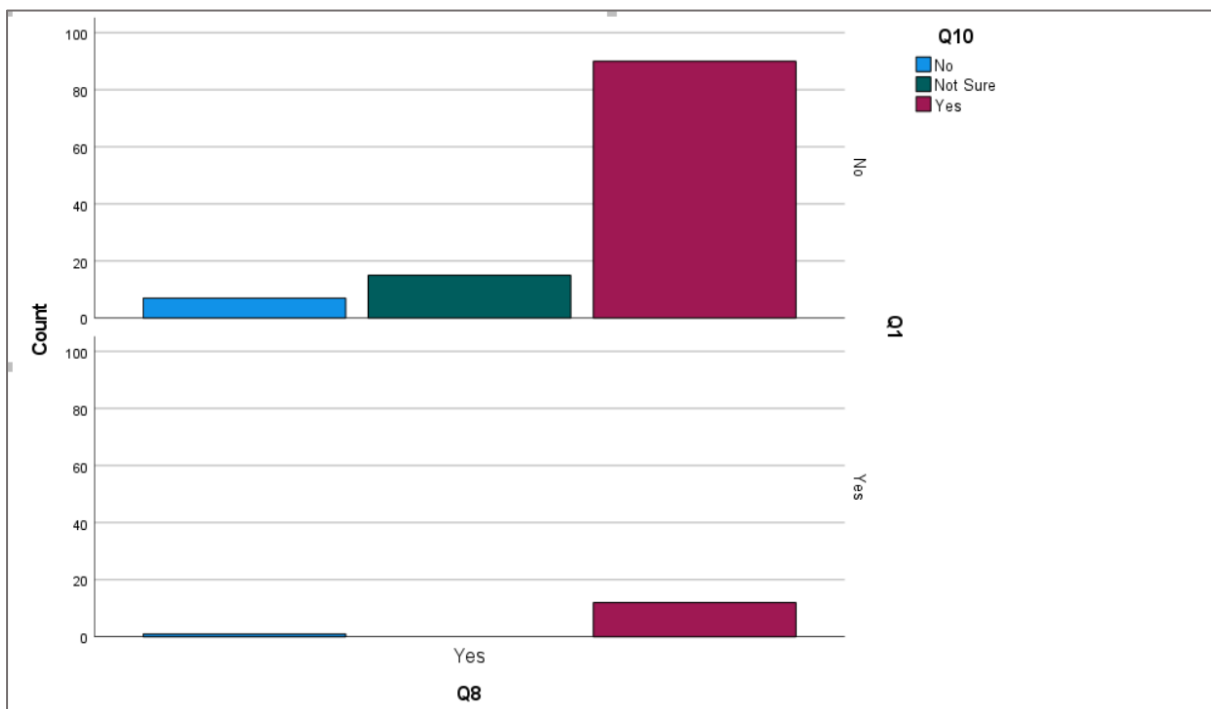

Figure 26 : Bar Graph with Q10, Q1 and Q8 of Questionnaire

Q1. Do you work in e-commerce industry?

Q8. Do you think that a country should have multiple e-commerce platforms selling products of different categories?

Q10. Do you think that having multiple e-commerce platforms would benefit the sellers who sell their products online?

Chart showing number of people who want multiple e-commerce platform in the country, think about sellers benefit of having multiple e-commerce and also whether they work on e-commerce industry or not.

The pie chart shows that majority of respondents believes that a country should have multiple e-commerce platforms selling products of different categories. Those who do not think that there should be multiple e-commerce platforms have been filtered out from the further analysis. Then the bar chart has been categories based on whether the respondents work in e-commerce sector.

Findings:

It is found that around 90% of the respondents who do not work in e-commerce sector believes that having multiple e-commerce platforms in a country would benefit the sellers, around 18% are not sure about it and only 10% thinks that it would not benefit the sellers.

On the other hand, around 15% people who do works in the e-commerce industry thinks that having multiple e-commerce platform who benefit the sellers and only around 2% of them do not thinks that multiple e-commerce platforms would benefit the sellers.

Visualization 6
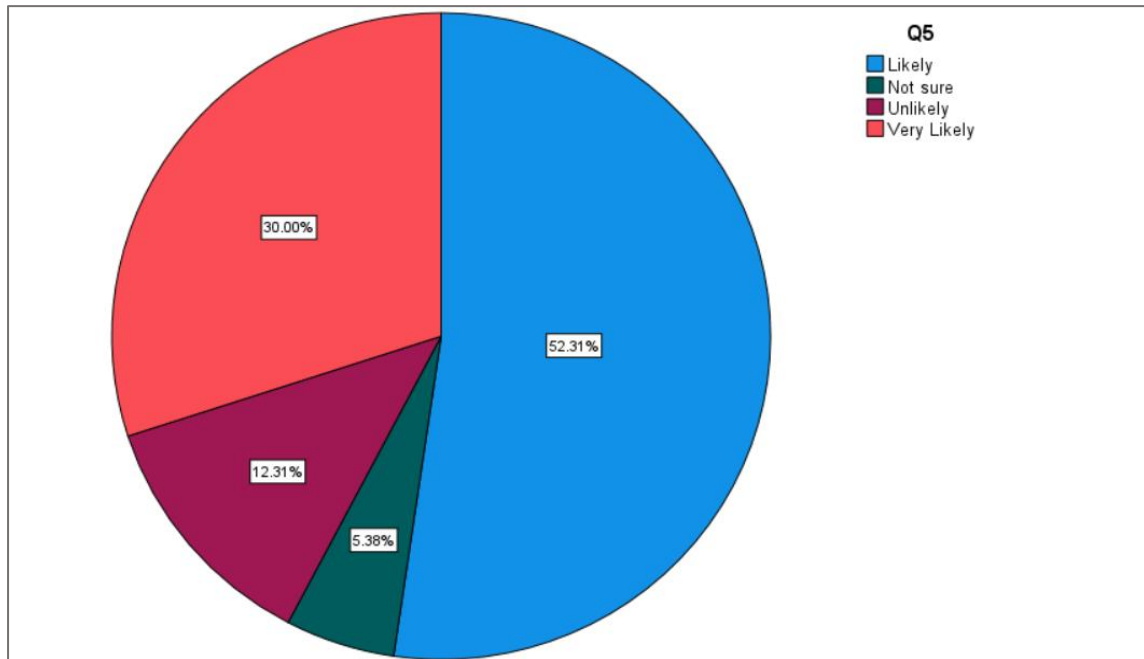
Analysis Based on Age group:

Figure 27 : Pie chart showing respondents likeliness to buy traditional goods online
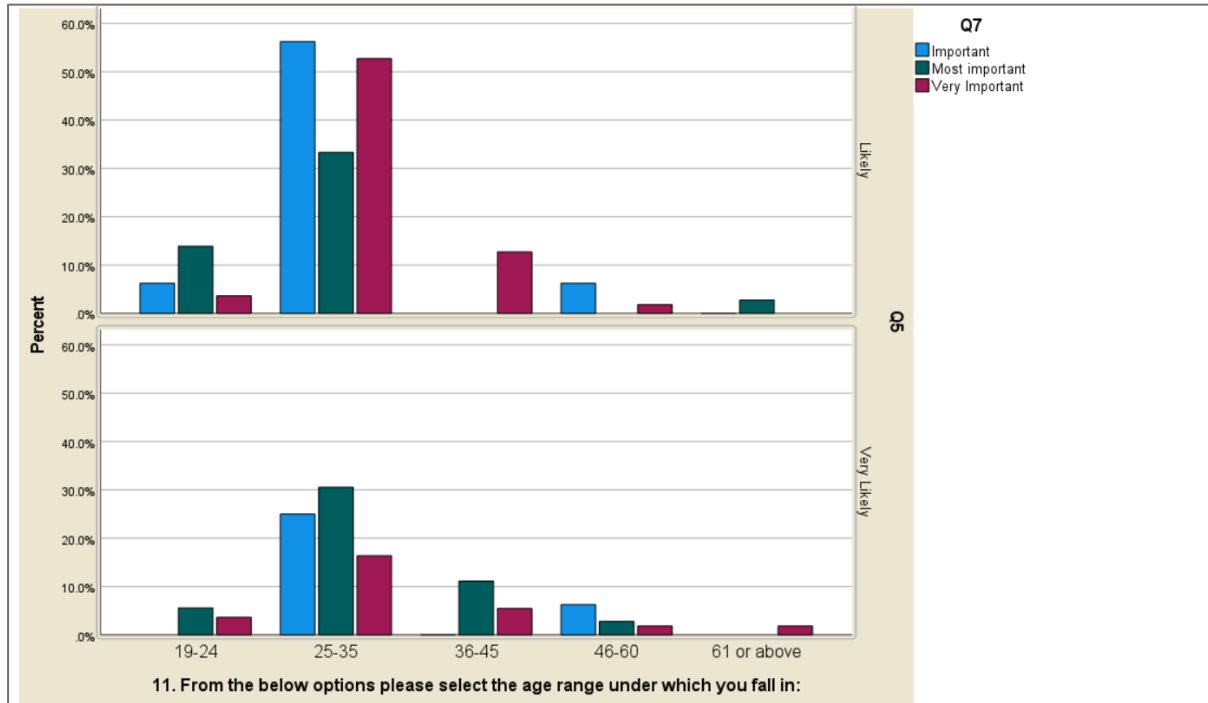

Figure 28 : Bar Graph with Q7, Q5 and Q11 of Questionnaire

The graphical representations above have taken 3 questions into account.

Q5: How likely are you to purchase from other e-commerce platforms (other than Amazon) given that you get similar range of products and other benefits?

Q7: How important is free delivery and quick delivery for you while choosing an online e-commerce platform?

Q11: From the below options please select the age range under which you fall in?

From now onwards these questions would be referred as Q5, Q7 and Q11 respectively.

The above pie chart represents people's opinion on how open they would be to switch to other e-commerce platforms. To which more than 52% of people have responded to be likely which is represented in blue. 30% of people are "very likely" to switch to other e-commerce platform which is represented in Orange. 5.38% of people are not sure of switching which has been represented in Green, whereas 12.31% of people are unlikely to switch which is represented in Maroon. Now only those respondents who have responded "Very Likely" and "Likely" are taken into action filtering out those who have opted other options.

Based on this filtering the researcher has prepared the bar graph which shows the age group of people in the X-axis, the Y-axis categorises people based on their willingness to switch to other e-commerce platforms i.e "Very Likely" and "Likely" and the bars represents those people who considers free and quick delivery to be "important", "Most important" and "Very important". The Blue bar in the bar chart represents those to whom free and quick delivery are important. The green bar represents those for whom free and quick delivery is Most important and the Maroon bar represents those who consider free and quick delivery to be Very Important.

Key Findings:

As per the Pie chart, it is visible that most of the people are likely to switch to other e-commerce platforms. The analysing the data with other factors like age categories and level of importance of free and quick delivery are described below categorically:

Age Range: 19-24

Free and Quick Delivery: Most Important

12% of people in this age category are likely to switch to other e-commerce platforms. Also, more 5% people of the same categories are Very Likely to switch to other platforms.

Free and Quick Delivery: Important

Around 5% of people in this category are likely to switch to other e-commerce platforms.

Free and Quick Delivery: Very Important

In this category around 3% of people are likely and very likely to switch to other e-commerce platforms each.

Age Group: 25-35

Free and Quick Delivery: Most Important

In this category around 32% of people are Likely to switch to other e-commerce platforms and 30% of people are Very Likely to switch to other e-commerce platforms.

Free and Quick Delivery: Important

Around 58% of respondents in this category are Likely to switch to other e-commerce platforms and around 25% of the respondents are Very Likely to switch to other e-commerce platforms.

Free and Quick Delivery: Very Important

In this category around 52% of people are Likely to switch to other e-commerce platforms and around 18% of people are Very likely to switch to other e-commerce platforms.

Age Group: 36-45

Around 10% of people in this category to whom Free and Quick Delivery are Most Important are Very Likely to switch to other e-commerce platforms whereas around 5% of people to whom Free and Quick Delivery are Important are Likely to switch. Also, around 12% and 5% of people who falls under this age range and to whom Free and Quick delivery are Very Important are Likely and Unlikely to switch to other e-commerce platforms respectively.

Therefore, it can be concluded that most of the respondents who are very likely to switch to other e-commerce platforms across all age range considers Free and Quick Delivery to be the most important factor while choosing an online e-commerce platform. Those who are likely to switch, considers Free and quick delivery to be Important factors across all age range. Therefore, Free and Quick delivery can be considered to be a very important factor and it is also a significant tool for new e-commerce platforms to attract new customers under their belt. Also, in terms of shopping experience these delivery criteria's being of so much importance to the online shoppers can be improved by having competition in the retail e-commerce sector in Ireland.

Visualization 7:

Based on importance of Free and Quick Delivery while choosing online e-commerce platforms and how multiple e-commerce platforms could boost the shopper's online shopping experience.
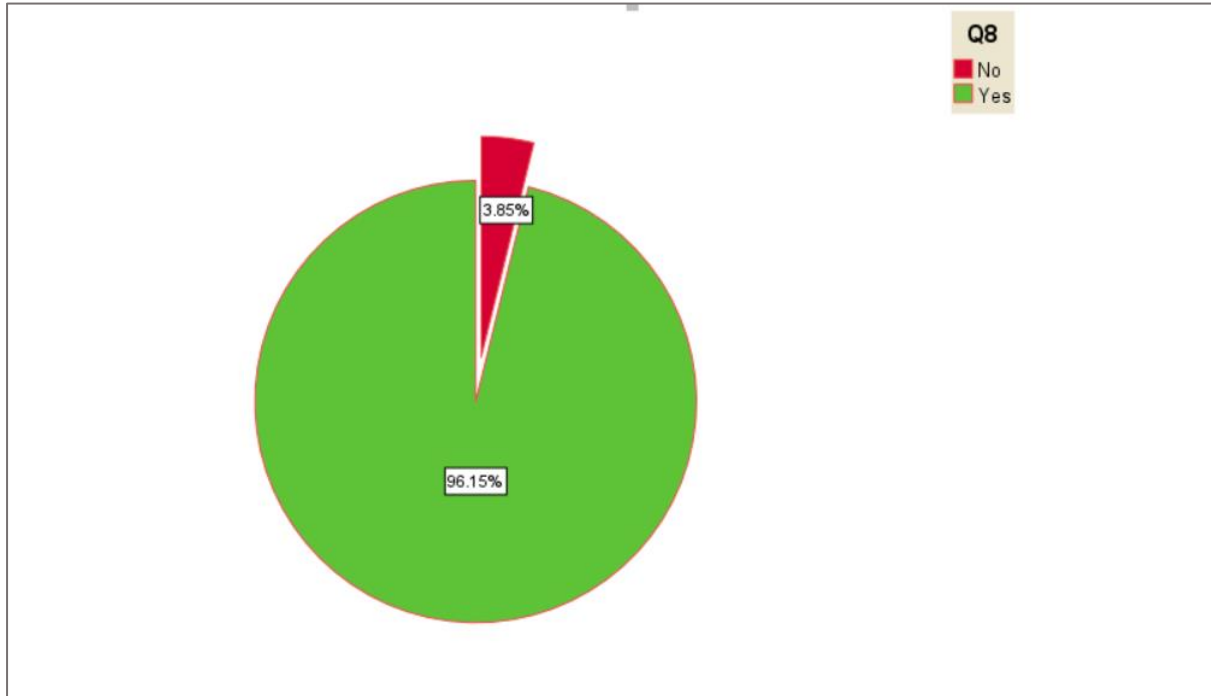

Figure 29 : Pie chart showing importance of having multiple e-commerce platform in a country
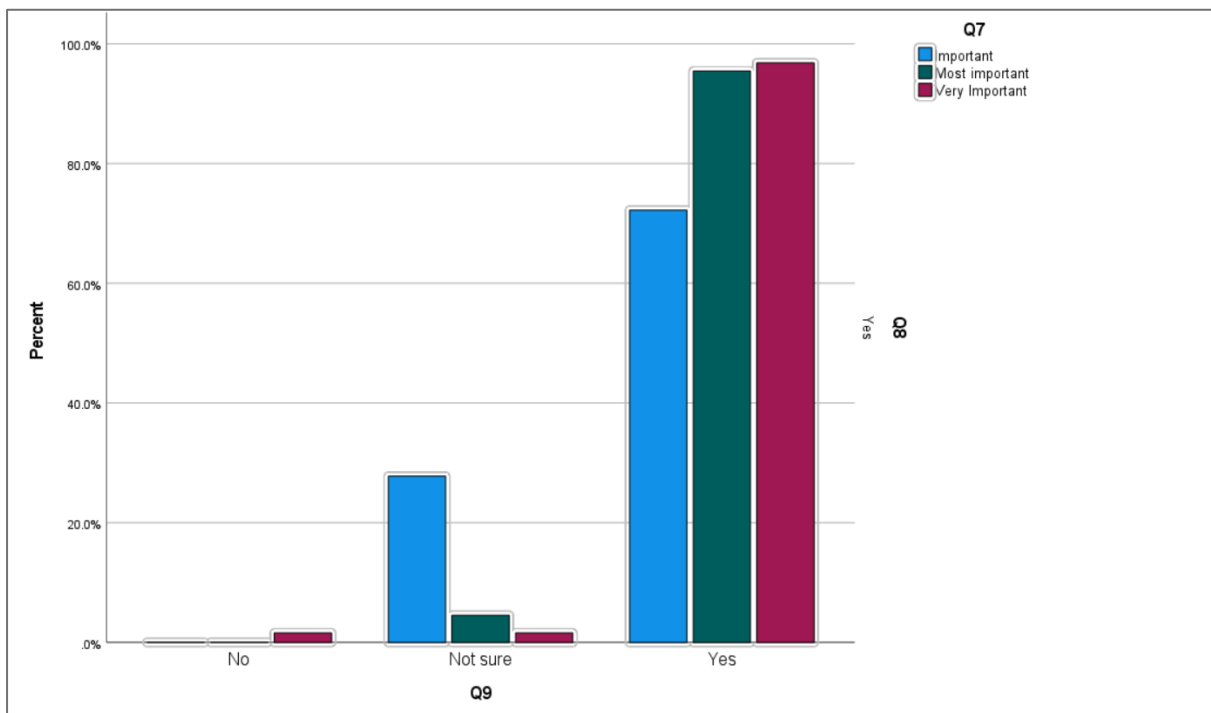

Figure 30 : Bar graph involving Q7, Q8 and Q9

The above graphical representation is shown based on 3 questions.

Q7. How important is free delivery and quick delivery for you while choosing an online e-commerce platform?

Q8. Do you think that a country should have multiple e-commerce platforms selling products of different categories?

Q9. Do you think that more competition in the e-commerce industry would improve your online shopping experience with different added benefits like discounts, reduced shipping charges more choices of products etc?

From now onwards these questions would be referred to as Q7, Q8, Q9 respectively. Initially people's opinion on whether they think that multiple e-commerce platform should be there in a country which is shown the Pie chart above. Then those who have voted as No to that question has been filtered out and only those who thinks there should be multiple e-commerce platforms are taken into further consideration. Therefore, the bar chart has considered those people who believes a country should have multiple e-commerce platforms. Thereafter the respondents are categorised based on their opinion on how having multiple e-commerce platform could improve their shopping experience. The bars in the chart represents people's opinion on the importance of free and quick delivery while choosing an online e-commerce platform based on the category mentioned.

Key Findings.

More than 96% of people thinks there should be multiple e-commerce platforms in a country. Among them those who thinks that having multiple e-commerce platforms will boost their online shopping experience 96% considers Free and Quick Delivery to be very important, 95% consider it to be Most important and around 75 % considers it to be Important.

On the other hand, among those who are not sure whether multiple e-commerce platforms in a country would improve their shopping experience, around 28% of them considers Free and Quick Delivery to be Important and 5% considers it to be Most Important.

Discussion

The primary objective of this chapter is to debate the key findings of the research. Therefore, it is very important to take into consideration the key findings that were achieved from the visualizations mentioned above.

The primary goal of this research was to elaborate the Irish e-commerce retail marketplace and scope of improvements within that area. As a result of this initially the e-commerce trends and sector of different countries have been highlighted to gather an understanding of the current world scenario of this industry. The top 3 countries in the Retail e-commerce sales CAGR projected report from 2022-2025 are Argentina, Brazil and Turkey. As a result, the retail e-commerce sector of those 3 countries Brazil, Argentina and Turkey were discussed and analysed. It has been seen

that those countries have more than one e-commerce aggregators selling products of wide category. This empowers the shoppers to compare prices, get an idea of the value of the product in the market in order to select the right place to buy the product from. As per the research this freedom of choosing is lacking in the Irish e-commerce market due to lack of options to the customers. Moreover, having multiple e-commerce aggregators in those countries has forced the companies to take necessary measures in terms of price, discounts, delivery in order to attract and retain customers. This, from the customer point of view has been a significant advantage to them.

The primary source of data that was collected through a survey conducted of 130 people across different nations and of different nationalities were another important aspect for analysing and discussing from the customer's standpoint. The questionnaire included questions related to prices, discounts, parameters of shoppers for choosing online shopping, willingness to purchase local traditional goods and also to get an idea of the respondent's profile questions related to their age and involvement of employment in E-commerce sector was also included in the questionnaire. The response of the questionnaire has been visualized above along with the key takeaways from each of those insights. The analysis and argument based on those visualizations have been mentioned in this section dividing them in to three parts based on the research questions.

Shoppers Experience

The first research question of this research was how having multiple e-commerce platforms in a country would improve the online shopper's shopping experience. From the analysis above it has been observed that most people do online shopping because of getting their products home delivered and availability of products of all range in a single platform. Also, availability of products across all categories, discounts offered, and quick delivery are 3 of the most important parameters for people on choosing an online platform. In Ireland there is only one such e-commerce platform; Amazon that provides products of all categories to their customers. In such a monopoly market however, if we consider shopper's loyalty for Amazon it is seen that majority of the respondents are willing to switch to other e-commerce platforms if they get at least similar range of products. Based on this if multiple e-commerce platforms providing wide range of product categories exists in this country, shoppers would get options while purchasing. Moreover, we have often seen if there's a monopoly in a sector the benefits are always enjoyed by the selling company rather than the customers. As result, having multiple e-commerce aggregators would provide competitions to the retail e-commerce sector to which the companies, in an attempt to attract and retain customers would provide offers of different sorts like reduction of delivery time, more discounts, cheaper product delivery etc which at the end would benefit the customers as well as provide a healthy competition in this sector.

This trend can be justified from the analysis of Indian market. The Indian market having multiple retail e-commerce websites charges very little shipping charges for the products. Also, there are free deliveries for a purchase of certain amount. Along with that on subscription of certain plans customers can get 1 day delivery of all the

products at least in the tier1 cities. As per the survey result more people are inclined towards quick delivery rather than free deliver. This gives the idea that the customers are even ready to pay some amount for getting their products quicker. Also, in Figure 8 it can be seen the customer benefits offered by Mercado Libre which operates in competitive e-commerce markets like Brazil and Argentina. On the other hand, discounts and price reductions are another factor that the shoppers consider. In India the two major e-commerce giants Flipkart and Amazon both provide major discounts on fixed dates. This has resulted on one company starting to offer big discount for a day. This has resulted the other company to act to which they responded by offering discounts as well on a separate day. This is the result of competition for attracting and retaining their customers and the benefit of which is ultimately enjoyed by the online shoppers.

Encouragement to new and local entrepreneurs

Ireland is a country with a rich business culture. There is a big percentage of Irish family businesses across all domains that are spread around Ireland. These businesses have clear set of values, promote diverse perspectives, and are focussed on successions. These small and medium sized family businesses spread the cultural values of the country by selling different kinds of local and traditional goods. Also, there are certain families that are engaged into these businesses for generations now. According to the survey conducted for this research majority of the people are interested in purchasing local traditional goods. Having multiple e-commerce platforms would boost the sale of these family businesses making them reach a wide set of customers all around the nation. Moreover, having the scope of selling these their products starting with small handmade products to other wide range f product categories would boost the morale of new up and coming entrepreneurs. This would increase the number of small businesses as well as give the new entrepreneurs a platform to be innovative across a wide range of product line.

This change has been noticed in countries like India where the sellers who earlier had to sell their products to medium and small sized retailers have now got the opportunity to scale their business by selling their products to different e-commerce giants across the country. Moreover, new, and innovative businesses have started to flourish like production of customized trendy shirts, hand designed mobile covers, traditional accessories for women etc. This gave rise to various small businesses and have empowered people to start their own business.

Economic Growth

This is the final aspect of this research. Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) are the widely spread across the Irish economy. They are the pillars of the Irish business sector providing 46% of the gross value added to the Irish economy. Also, 99.7% of the active enterprises are SMEs in Ireland engaging 68% of employment (Office, 2012). With the advent of multiple e-commerce aggregators boost in different sector of business-like supply chain, logistics etc could be seen with rise in employment in these sectors along with delivery would be quite eminent. Also, scaling of existing businesses would also give a boost to the economy along with emergence of new small businesses. Soon this

could significantly increase, becoming a trend and contributing largely to the Irish economy. Moreover, this could also be a steppingstone for a country in becoming self-reliant.

Conclusion

E-commerce marketplaces has been ever growing across the globe. By analysing the current trend, it is observed that the accessibility of the internet has been only going to positive direction. Along with this, people are spending more and more time online. This would only spread the popularity of the online shopping more among the shoppers. Along with that during the Covid 19 pandemic online shopping has significantly increased. Many new shoppers have purchased goods of various categories online for the first time during the Covid period. Because of this, many new shoppers have learned the process of purchasing goods. Similar trend has been noticed in the seller's side as well. Sellers who previously sold their product offline have been forced to move online to sustain due to the pandemic. This has made them accustomed to the hacks of selling online. Therefore, the number of online sellers has also seen a rapid increase in the market. Apart from this the employment level generated by the e-commerce platforms across different fields directly and indirectly has surged.

The growth of Irish E-commerce industry has been in steady since the last 5 years. As per (Morgan, 2020) every 4 people out of 10 are yet to purchase online, hence the scope of growth is still immense. With this probability of growth more and more people would be attracted to online shopping if they get better shopping experience just by sitting at their home. Also, with the growth in the buyers it cannot be denied that the growth from the sellers' perspectives are equally important. With increased number of sellers and their ability to sell various range of products competitively will not only attract more sellers to sell online but also allow existing sellers to improvise their product and be innovative. However, as compared to other growing countries in E-commerce sector the Irish shoppers and sellers have a very limited option to choose from in the online platform. This could result in reduced motivation for sellers on experimenting with new innovative products as well as discourage new customers to shift to this form of shopping.

The research shows the competitiveness among the other growing E-commerce countries. Countries like Brazil, Argentina, Turkey has multiple e-commerce platforms. Therefore, in order to stay competitive and to attract and retain customers the companies there offer several benefits to their customers in terms of discounts, delivery and product options. Same scenarios can be observed in India as well where the giant players like Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra offers various range of products, unique products as well as the price wars between the companies benefits the customers. This often seduces the customers to purchase stuffs even when it is not necessary for them. Based on the primary data collected, the shoppers here are also eager for faster delivery, discounts as well as variety of products and price comparison, however, due to lack of competition among the E-commerce companies the shoppers are deprived of those benefits. Moreover, the urge for local traditional goods is not less, however, the sellers selling those products are having very less option to showcase and sell their products. Also, even if some of them sell their products online yet, due to very less options of E-commerce aggregators they do not have any bargaining power that results them in giving high commissions to these companies. Therefore, with the surge

in e-commerce customers more E-commerce platform would only benefit the shoppers as well as the sellers and create a sustaining and beneficial E-commerce ecosystem for all the parties involved.

Recommendation

Ireland is a growing market for E-commerce industry. Majority of the shoppers are accustomed to the E-commerce ecosystem including internet usage, online product order, delivery of products, online transactions etc. For the matter-of-fact card payment is the most used payment method among the shoppers in Ireland. The spending details as shown in the research is also among one of the highest in EU. Based on these facts the researcher has put together few recommendations below:

- Based on the current scenario there are space for new entry for E-commerce aggregators in Ireland. The current e-commerce ecosystem being so rich means that the new entrants won't have to educate customers on the E-commerce aspects such as internet usage, payment methods, delivery etc as usually happens in developing nations like India.
- The shoppers are more than happy to switch to other e-commerce platforms if their needs are fulfilled. Also, from the seller's perspective any new e-commerce player coming into the market are less likely to face scarcity of sellers as there are very less options to them.
- The corporate taxes of Ireland could also be a motivating factor for a new e-commerce player to enter the Irish market

The above recommendation could be beneficial to the Irish E-commerce retail sector to both the buyers and sellers and based on the research it would be a significant boost to a growing market with very high potential.

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