INSTITUTO
UNIVERSITÁRIO
DE LISBOA

Online vs Offline: Who Will Win the Battle for your Retail Euro?

Ana Filipa dos Santos Correia

Master in Management

Supervisor:
Full Professor Rui Manuel Vinhas da Silva,
ISCTE Business School, Department of Marketing, Strategy and Operations

November, 2021

Online vs Offline: Who Will Win the Battle for your Retail Euro?

Ana Filipa dos Santos Correia

Master in Management

Supervisor:
Full Professor Rui Manuel Vinhas da Silva,
ISCTE Business School, Department of Marketing, Strategy and Operations

November, 2021

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my family.

Acknowledges

To my ancestors, who have always supported my studies and have always believed in me. I would never be standing here without your support.

To my parents, thank you for always believing in me and to listen to my worries.

To my dear friend, Beatriz Gonçalves, for all the help through this difficult process.

To Professor Rui Vinhas da Silva, thank you for your help and guidance, without your assistance I would never finish my dissertation.

Finally, thanks all my friends and colleagues who supported me in this walking.

Resumo

A era da digitalização revolucionou a vida dos consumidores, favorecendo as compras online no debate contínuo entre compras online e compras em lojas físicas. No que se refere ao seu enquadramento na indústria da moda, é relevante considerar que os consumidores tendem a encontrar informações tanto online quanto offline. Esta pesquisa tenta lançar algumas ideias sobre as diferenças entre as diferentes formas de compra. Para obter as evidências necessárias, foi realizada uma pesquisa e várias entrevistas, que evidenciaram que as mulheres tendem a comprar roupas online mais do que os homens. O maior motivo para as pessoas continuarem a comprar em loja física é a possibilidade de experimentar os itens antes de comprar. Por outro lado, a comodidade de fazer as compras no conforto da sua casa é um elemento atrativo para a escolha do canal online.

Palavras-chave: Preferência dos Consumidores, Retalho de moda, Multi-Canal, Omni-Canal, Online vs Offline, Showrooming, Webrooming.

Classificação JEL: D11- Consumer Economics: Theory; L81 –Retail and Wholesale Trade; e-Commerce

Abstract

The age of digitalization has revolutionized consumers' lives by favoring online shopping in the ongoing online versus in-store shopping debate. As to how it pertains to the fashion industry, it is relevant to consider that consumers tend to find information both online and offline. This research attempts to shed some light on the differences between the different forms of shopping. In order to obtain the necessary evidence, a survey and several interviews were conducted showing that women tend to buy clothes online more than men do. The most significant reason people continue to buy in-store is the ability to try the items prior to purchasing. On the other hand, the convenience of making the purchases from the comfort of their home is an attractive element to choosing the online channel.

Keywords: Consumer Preference, Fashion industry, Multichannel retailing, Omnichannel, Online vs Offline, Showrooming, Webrooming.

JEL Classification: D11- Consumer Economics: Theory; L81 –Retail and Wholesale Trade; e-Commerce

Index

Index of Tables

Index of Figures

1 Introduction

The rapid integration of digitalization came to change the way of the consumers' behavior. Traditional retailing is no longer the sole way consumers have to purchase their goods. It is still important for customers to feel and touch the product, but they are now, more than ever, making the purchase with the aid of an online channel. The different phases of the consumer decision making will no longer be exclusively online or offline, they can be intertwined.

Multichannel and online shopping are becoming increasingly fundamental in today's ever changing retail environment. Retailers are combining their offline stores with online stores in order to keep up with these new realities (e.g., Carini et al., 2011; Dawes & Nenycz-Thiel, 2014; Neslin et al., 2006; Neslin & Shankar, 2009; Zhang et al., 2010).

Furthermore, the Covid-19 pandemic that the global population are facing, also came to change the consumers perspective towards shopping, causing them to consider online retailing whilst there were no other viable options. According to Correios de Portugal, S.A. (CTT, 2020), the B2C e-commerce market grew 20% in 2019 in Portugal. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and the change in consumer habits, it is expected for e-commerce to grow 40% to 60% in the year 2020.

According to Rabinovich & Bailey (2004), the retailers that use an exclusively online business tend to have a higher performance and success, where Amazon is a clear example of this case.

Consumers may take this tendency into consideration when carrying out future purchases. Retailers not only have a new responsibility but also an opportunity to reinvent themselves. Online shopping has gained popularity among consumers, especially because offline shopping is generally a more time-consuming activity. However, regarding clothing in general, it is still a product that requires a presence of a physical store, given its more unique characteristic whereby consumers want to try them on (Balasubramanian et al., 2005).

Nevertheless, there are also authors who defend that clothing is one of the most acquired products online (Goldsmith and Goldsmith, 2002; Hansen and Jensen, 2009; Nielsen, 2010). Apart from that, the fashion industry in Portugal does not have sufficient analytical data, especially when compared to other countries such as the United States, United Kingdom and China (Cardoso et al., 2010). Therefore, this research aims to study the difference between the online and offline, specifically in retailing (i.e., fashion) in Portugal.

Besides this introduction, the paper is divided into four more chapters: literature review, methodology, discussion/results and conclusions.

The literature review contemplates the theoretical approach of the study and is segmented into several different parts.

The next section is a short demonstration of the evolution of the Internet in the last few years.

The second part highlights the concept of e-commerce as well as the evolution of this market in Portugal, the effect on the economy and its evolution over the last few years, taking into consideration the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020.

The third part is related with consumers and a discussion on the concepts of shoppers vs browsers, and the utilitarian vs hedonic value, thus explaining the consumers behaviors to their shopping experience.

The fourth section is very pertinent for the scope of this project, since it explains the big difference between the online versus in-store shopping, taking into consideration the factor affecting the consumers preference.

The fifth part of the literature review addresses the Fashion Industry, highlighting its consumers behaviors and preferences and how digitization changed this industry as well.

Then, the last part presents a table summarizing the main issues that were found during the research.

In the third chapter of this project, titled Methodology, it is explained how the research was led as well as the methodological features. The topics covered were the problem and objectives, the hypotheses, the population, the sampling method, the sample, the instruments used to collect the data and its processing.

The fourth chapter is presented and discusses the results obtained from the study. Firstly, the several aspects tested through the survey are analyzed and intercalated due to the information gathered during the interviews. Furthermore, in the discussion, the results obtained are compared to existing literature.

Finally, the last chapter presents the conclusions of the project, the main limitations and suggestions for future research.

2 Literature Review

2.1 The evolution of the Internet

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) (2020), estimates that at the end of 2019, 4 billion people, a little more than 51 per cent of the worldwide population, were using the Internet (the growth of the online users over the years can be seen in Figure 1).

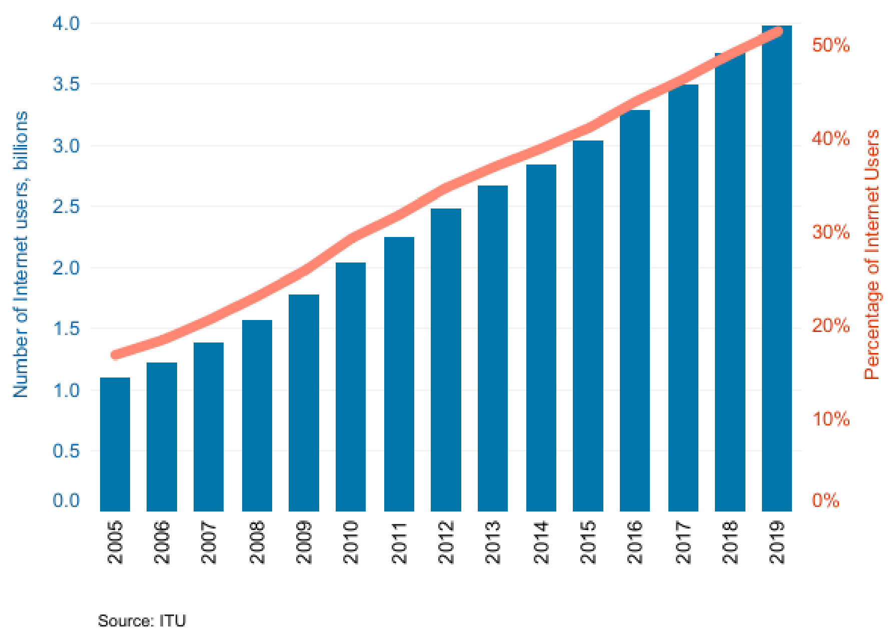

Figure 2.1: Evolution of internet users globally, between 2015-2019 (Source: ITU 2019)

According to ITU (2020), where the connection with Internet is available and affordable, younger generations are enthusiastic adopters, regardless from where they are. Even though merely 51% of the global population is using the Internet, this number increases to almost 70% when speaking about people aged between 15 to 24 years old.

For the case of Portugal, *Instituto Nacional de Estatística* (INE) (2020) states that 84,5% of households have internet connection at home. The percentage of internet users grew 3% compared with the same period of 2019. People between 16 and 74 years used the Internet mainly to communicate and to access information.

2.2 E-commerce

E-commerce can be classified as a business model that can be applied in every major market segment: business-to-consumer (B2C), consumer-to-consumer (C2C), business-to-business (B2B), or consumer-to-business (C2B). Apart from what market it is operating, E-commerce always uses an electronic network, typically the internet (Frankenfield, 2017). Some firms use exclusive the E-commerce to promote their business and rarely move their business into physical stores; on the other hand, some firms use the E-commerce to improve their physical market position and associate it with an online presence (Burt & Sparks, 2003; Rao, Goldsby, & Iyengar, 2009).

According to Rabinovich & Bailey (2004), the retailers that use an exclusive online business tend to have a higher performance and success, where Amazon is a clear example of this case. Though, some authors defend that when firms have both physical and online operations, they can enjoy the advantage of having in place logistic systems and considerable experience that permits them to develop better interactions between the online and offline business (Maltz, Rabinovich, & Sinha, 2004; Porter, 2001).

2.2.1 The evolution of e-commerce in Portugal

According to *Correios de Portugal, S.A.* (CTT, 2020), the B2C E-commerce grew 20% in 2019 in Portugal, as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and the change in consumer habits, so it is expected for the eE-commerce to grow 40% to 60% in the year of 2020.

The E-commerce offered a growth rate of 23,32% in Portugal, from 2016 to 2017, corresponding to the second highest rate in all of Europe (INE, 2017; Lone, 2018).

The Portuguese population have been joining online shopping. By the year of 2019, 51% of the national population with internet access made at least one online purchase during 2019, 4% more than in 2018 (CTT, 2020).

By the end of 2020, the number of online purchases is likely to be 19.5 products (CTT, 2020).

The profile of the Portuguese e-buyer is characterized by the predominance of the female gender, rounding 51,5%, centered on the active ages between 25 and 54 years (77.3%), followed by the younger generation with 21%. The majority lives in Lisbon and Porto (CTT, 2020).

What made the Portuguese costumers join online shopping was convenience, price and mobility. The ease of purchase was one of the highlights with 64%, being able to buy any time 59%, followed by the price and promotions, both with 58% (CTT, 2020).

The category of "clothing and footwear" is the category where the most purchases are made (56%). Followed by "electronics and computers" (43%), "hygiene and cosmetics" (42%), "books and movies" (33%), "mobile phones" (23%), "household utensils" (21%), "sports material" (29%), "animal products and accessories" (13%) (CTT, 2020).

The customers are now more likely to not abandon the purchase at the checkout, a behavior that has been decreasing in recent years. What most influences the customer to leave the purchase is the price being higher than expected because of the delivery cost, it's the reason of 62% of the abandonment. This is followed by other factors as "unclear information about the product" with 42% and "little confidence in the seller" with 20% (CTT, 2020).

Another vital aspect is that e-buyers prefer free delivery, the least lead time and more convenience in terms of new delivery location options (85%). Home delivery continues to be the favorite type of delivery for e-buyers (CTT, 2020).

During the COVID-19 crisis, half of e-sellers doubled their sales, which estimates a global average growth between 60% and 80% (CTT, 2020).

2.3 Consumers

2.3.1 Shoppers vs Browsers

According to Soopramanien & Robertson (2007), the Internet has a high number of users, and the tendency is for the number to grow. Internet may be the mean to buy something, it may only be a communication medium. Given that using the internet doesn't mean buying from it. There are Shoppers and Browsers, they both use the Internet, but in different ways.

Internet Shoppers is the term used to define users that buy something from the Internet, while Internet Browsers are users that search and do their analyzes with the help of Internet but don't buy products or services from Internet (Forsythe & Shi, 2003).

2.3.2 Utilitarian vs Hedonic Values

Consumers tend to show two different behaviors to their shopping experience, the Hedonic and Utilitarian values (Bahin et al., 1994). The latter illustrates the experimental factor of shopping, while Hedonic shoppers are focused on the emotional aspects of the experience of shopping (Arnold and Reynolds, 2003; Cude and Morganosky, 2000; Foscht et al., 2005; Rick et al., 2014).

In the Utilitarian shopping, shoppers analyze every single aspect of the product or service before making the final decision, what makes them completely rational. On the other side, products that are bought for luxury purposes, just for the consumer to feel the pleasure of the available good, are called Hedonic goods. In this case, consumers give more importance to the appearance of the good or service than the actual substance, being a result from emotions and aesthetic (Sarkar and Sabyasachi Das, 2017).

According to Sabyasachi Das and Sarkar (2017), during their decision-making processes, consumers consider both Utilitarian and Hedonic aspects of products and services. They choose products or services based on both their usefulness and their presentability in the society. This takes out of idea that consumers only make decisions considering their emotional needs or their rational attitudes.

2.4 Online vs Offline

Retailing has been changing with digitalization, not only channels of transaction but also the nature and types of exchanges, agents, offerings and retail settings (Hagberg et al., 2016). These technological changes also have an impact in the consumer shopping experience (see Reynolds and Sundstrom, 2014), in value creation (e.g., Pantano and Viassone, 2015; Saarijarvi et al., 2014) and value capture (e.g., Hanninen et al., 2018; Hure et al., 2017).

Nowadays, consumers can collect more information about their needs and preferences because now they have various digital touchpoints on their reach that support their purchase process (Blom et al., 2017; Yurova et al., 2017).

Consumers can choose to use Webrooming, where they analyze goods online first and then buy them offline (Flavián et al., 2016) or the exact opposite, where they go to physical stores to analyze the products and then they do the purchase online (Neslin et al., 2014). Both are current practices in Omnichannel consumer behavior. With the combination of online and offline to make their purchases, shoppers are constituting the most useful segment for retailers (Fernández et al.,2018). Using both channels has a positive influence in consumers experiences of service quality and attitudes regarding retailers (Pantano and Viassone, 2015), therefore it has a positive purchasing behavior and consumer experiences (Blom et al.,2017; Sit et al.,2018).

Consumers tend to choose to use online channels to make their research concerning first phases of the consumer decision even though they prefer to buy it at a physical store. This is called "Webrooming" (Puccinelli et al., 2009). On the other side, in some particular type of product like electronic devices such as, audio/video, PCs/printers, tablets/smartphones, consumers tend to analyze these products in physical stores and then buy it online, this effect is called "Showrooming" (Melis et al., 2015).

Omnichannel have become almost a rule and not an exception, consumers have become more demanding and they expect more from the brand experience (e.g. Brynjolfsson, Hu, and Rahman, 2013; Nunes and Cespedes, 2003; Piotrowicz and Cuthbertson, 2014; Verhoef, Kannan and Inman, 2015).

Consumers that opt to go to a physical store to buy a product, may find the product itself out of stock (Gallino & Moreno, 2014). When they face this type of problem, consumers tend to substitute the product they wanted for another in the same category (Kok and Fisher, 2007; Musalem et al., 2012).

Online commerce is accelerating, mobile devices are also getting a more important role nowadays, but offline stores are still the most chosen way of shopping. Consumers are getting more demanding, they use different channels and touch points, almost like it is a rule, they are now having shopping journeys between the channels, both online and offline, what is called Omnichannel journeys (Melero et al., 2016).

It may be difficult and complex for retailers to develop the Omnichannel experience, so it is important to know how to measure the consumer value to evaluate the relevance of their synchronization efforts (Huré et al., 2017).

When consumers decide to do their purchases online, they face some factors that they don't find in offline shopping that influence their decision in what way they will choose to make their shopping (Suthamathi & Jeeva, 2020).

2.4.1 Factors Affecting Online Shopping

Suthamathi & Jeeva (2020) describe some factors that can affect consumers' decision when purchasing online. Those factors are:

Convenience: When consumers opt to do online shopping, they are doing a more suitable choice, because they can do the purchase from home, without getting into a car and go from mall to mall. While at home, they can buy from different stores at the same time. After the consumer has the decision made, the payment procedure is harmonious and they get their order at their place. And that is what makes this method more convenient. Also defended by Chiang & Dholakia (2003), convenience it is the fact that consumers can perform the purchase at any time of the day and anywhere. Convenience is also reflected in the ease with which prices are compared in a digital environment.

Pricing strategy: Since online retailers do not have to pay for store rental fees and other type of bills related to a physical store, they can offer a more competitive price than an offline retailer. Buyers tend to choose products with standard prices and good quality over expensive ones.

Online trust: Not every consumer trusts the online trade, some are afraid of it. The difference is in the consumer perception of trust in a particular site and its product and services.

Delivery time: When consumers make an online purchase, they have to wait a few days until they have the product. The opposite happens in offline shopping, where they get the product at the exact time of purchase. People prefer to have the product quicker, so this may be the biggest issue of online shopping since the duration is one of the major problems affecting product demand.

Variety: The combination of online and offline gives the consumer all the variety of products that a brand has. Sometimes the products that consumers see online do not match what retailers have in stores. Online stock has a much extended variety of products. Also, as mention by Brynjolfsson, Yu and Smith (2003), the increase in the number of product varieties on the Internet is due to, according to better organization, recommendation, and supplying a more significant number of products available for sale.

Risk: Consumer face a risk when buying a product online if they have never seen or touch the product physically so they may buy something that is not exactly the size or the color they think. Besides that, the product may come damaged. In fact, there are consumers who don't they buy a product without touching it first, because they believe that this act provides more security and reduces the uncertainty of your choice (Vieira, 2012). Also defended by Katawetawaraks and Wang (2013) the need for touch and product experimentation it is an important aspect for consumers.

2.4.2 Factors Affecting Offline Shopping

Also, according to Suthamathi & Jeeva (2020) there are some factors that can affect consumers' decision when purchasing offline. Those factors are a less number of choices and time consuming.

Less number of choices: As mentioned before, the variety is limited in the offline shopping when compared to online shopping. Some of the stock can actually be old and some of that products can suffer a price reduction or even be on sale.

Time consuming: The process of shopping takes time. Not only in stores while trying outfits or going from store to store to compare the products but also in distance from home or workplace to the mall or a street store. The time consuming in this situation it is higher than in the online shopping.

2.5 Fashion

In the Oxford Dictionaries, the word "fashion" implies a popular style of clothes, behavior, decoration or hair, at a specific time or place; the state of being popular. But it can also be noun as the business of making and selling clothes or cosmetics in new and different ways.

As defended by Sproles (1974), fashion is a way that consumers try to create their status, they use it so they can belong into a specific social group or exactly the other way around, to distinguish themselves from the crowd.

Others defend that fashion is an aggregation of individual behaviors that combined turns into a universal rule (Simmel, 1997). In this sense, fashion is seen as a set of alterations happening in human life (Ma et al., 2012).

The term "fashion" is frequently connected to clothing because there is a high correlation amongst those two (Rhie, 1985; Fairhurst et al., 1989).

In this context, and according to (Ma et al., 2012; Rocha et al., 2005), in this research the term "fashion" will be generally used to refer to apparel and accessories.

According to Baudrillard (2008), consumption is no longer the simple act of pursuing a product, is now a method for consumers to feel integrated in the society. There are two major forces of fashion consumption, the social motivation and the individual one. The first one is related to the need for exhibitionism, socialization, compliance, and symbolic status that society implies. The individual consumption motivation happens when consumers want to persuade a product to satisfy their own needs (Zhu, 2006).

2.5.1 Slow versus Fast Fashion

Fast fashion is an overwhelming paradigm that has been more considered than the slow fashion regarding scientific research, but it is still missing the consumer-driven perspective (Barnes and Lea-Greenwood, 2006; Bhardwaj and Fairhurst, 2010).

It is important to analyze the differences in these two concepts, to understand what makes consumers to choose between them and also what it changes in supplier's perspective as well as in consumers' perspective.

2.5.2 Suppliers' viewpoint

Fast fashion is known as a change in the retailer supply chain in order to minimize lead times, making it more flexible and fast generally conceived as a change in the retailers supply chain (Perry and Sohal, 2000; Tyler et al., 2006; Hayes and Jones, 2006; Levy and Weitz, 2008). This adaptation of the supply chain is crucial for many retailers, as consumers are becoming more and more demanding, eager to see new things on a regular basis and at affordable prices, so they can shop more frequently (Bruce and Daly, 2006; Hoffman, 2007). Similarly, to the just-in-time philosophy, most part of these retailers can only accomplish these transformations by vertically integrating their supply chain (Birtwistle, et al., 2003). In this context, while Zara is considered one of the fast fashion giants and H&M the pioneer of these business model (Morgan and Birtwistle, 2009), Topshop and Forever 21 are also on Levy and Weitz (2008) fast fashion stores' list example.

The slow fashion concept was born within the slow food movement (Clark, 2008), which started in Italy, as a reaction against the increasing number of fast-food chains and the implementation of a fast food lifestyle (Fletcher, 2010; Johansson, 2010). Given the fact that it is a recent concept, consensus on its definition has not yet been found. Some authors consider that slow fashion contrasts with fast fashion because, unlike the latter, slow fashion was primarily conceived to offer quality, rather than endless collections of clothing in response to fast changing trends (Watson and Yan, 2013). Another perspective defines slow fashion as a philosophy of creating pieces which embody different stories and to which consumers should create a deep connection, creating therefore clothing with meaning (Johansson, 2010).

2.5.3 Consumers' viewpoint

According to Watson and Yan (2013), consumers that have a higher need to shop fashion items with regularity with low prices are the fast fashion consumers, they look for clothes that are trendy and requires a low investment. This movement is not only popular among youth consumers, but also among all generations, since this new environment enables them to replace their clothes with more trendy ones and for more reasonable prices (Bhardwaj and Fairhurst, 2010). In this way, consumers are less likely to make mistakes and have the shopping risks because fast fashion provides them the opportunity to buy products with a very low amount of money (Gabrielli et al., 2013).

Therefore, consumers who seek for fast fashion products don't feel guilty about their purchases because they do not expend large quantity of money. The reverse happens to the fans of slow fashion, as they avoid the remorse of buying new clothes because they are purchasing long-lasting quality products, making them believe they are doing an ideal purchase (Watson and Yan, 2013).

Fast fashion may be considered as "disposable fashion" regarding the fact that consumers are encouraged to dismiss their clothes and buy new ones regularly (Christopher et al., 2004). On the other hand, the fans of slow fashion seek for high quality products, however it takes them a higher investment, it also gives the possibility to have long lasting fashion products (Wood, 2009).

Fast fashion can bring ethical and environmental issues, but it doesn´t seem to be a worry in fast fashion consumers in their intention to purchase more affordable clothing (Kim et al, 2013). According to Watson and Yan's (2013) research, the consumers that showed to be more alarmed by these issues are only slow fashion consumers.

2.5.4 Age in Fashion

Younger consumers are the most likely segment of the population to be enthusiastic for fashion items and to care the most about trends (Martin and Bush, 2000; Kleep and StormMathisen, 2005). But it's relevant to notice that older consumers have been ignored in the marketplace, and particularly in the fashion market (Belleau et al., 1994; Kozar, 2012; Nam et al., 2007; Rabolt & Solomon, 2004).

According to INE (2017), Portugal will have 3.17 elderly people for each youth, considering this behavior, it is important for the marketplace to adapt to the future reality, (Doka, 1992). Furthermore, it is relevant to understand the mature consumer (Kozar and

Damhorst, 2008, Moye and Giddings, 2002) and how different he is from the younger one.

Older people are more likely to be more predisposed to spend additional money in the fashion market than younger consumers (Bernhardt and Kinnear, 1976; Fox et al., 1984; Gillet and Schneider, 1978; Lumpkin et al., 1985) because they tend to chase more quality and brand names than younger consumers (Burt and Gabbott, 1995; Moschis, 2003), and they are less probable to use the internet to purchase or search for product information.

In terms of age of level of use of computers and the internet, the majority (97%) is between 16 and 24 years of age, while in e-commerce it is the individuals aged between 25 and 34 years, who else place orders over the internet, representing 26% of all who buy online (INE, 2012).

2.5.5 Gender in Fashion

Men and women are motivated by the same influences, but the intensity of how they are affected it is different and that is shown in their shopping behavior, as defended by Miller (1998). The female population spends a lot more time when doing shopping activities than the male population.

Women are also more likely to be in charge for food and apparel purchases. Women are more concerned about the way they look and clothing, therefore men are less likely to be concerned about clothing and fashion (Kaiser, 1990).

Besides that, the male population try to avoid shopping, but when they do it they are quick-shoppers. In the contrary, the female population have pleasure in touching the product and helps them to gather information, demonstrating higher levels in the need for touch of the product (Falk and Campbell,1997; Hansen and Jensen, 2009).

In the clothing industry women tend to have more need for touch on garments than men, as they shop more spontaneous, often unnecessarily, but for pleasure and fun. Females buy more clothes than males, since spends more time looking for information about a piece of clothing, having more mental energy to research the different options, collect information from different sources, to take more accurate purchasing (Falk and Campbell, 1997 and Cho and Workman, 2011).

2.5.6 How digitalization is changing the marketplace and consumers' habits: Fashion overview

As companies understood the digitalization and what advantages it can bring, the e-commerce became a reality and more and more companies decided to have an online presence. Most of these companies combined their physical stores with an online store, so they could improve their business (Prasarnphanich and Gillenson, 2003). With this new reality, consumers have been increasingly making their choices online (Punj, 2011), especially fashion consumers who appreciate the accessibility of the online presence on pre-purchase and evaluation of alternatives point (Siddiqui, 2003).

Already in 2007, almost 60% of American shoppers used the internet as a mean to search and analyze goods and 50% of them had made an online purchase, at least once (Punj, 2011). In a study developed in 2010, of 27.000 internet users around the world, 84% of the users confirmed they already had bought something from the internet (Nielsen, 2010).

While Grewal et al. (2004) defends that buying cloths may have characteristics and evaluation methods really complexed, consumers may prefer to purchase this type of items in offline stores. Goldsmith and Goldsmith (2002), Hansen and Jensen (2009) and Nielsen (2010) have shown evidence that fashion products are one of the most purchased products in online stores.

2.6 Literature Resume

Table 2.1 – Literature Review Summary

Author	Title	Journal (Year)	Main Issues
Suthamathi & Jeeva	Online Shopping Vs Offline Shopping Customer Preference In Salem District	International Journal Of Scientific & Technology Research (2020)	Less number of choices – The offline has fewer options of products than the online.
Gallino & Moreno	Integration of Online and Offline Channels in Retail: The Impact of Sharing Reliable Inventory	Management Science 60 (6) (2014)	

	Availability Information		
Suthamathi & Jeeva Siddiqui	Online Shopping Vs Offline Shopping Customer Preference In Salem District Retailer and consumer perceptions of online fashion retailers: web site design issues.	International Journal Of Scientific & Technology Research (2020) Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management (2003)	Time Consuming – The offline implies a lot more time during the process of choosing than the online.
Suthamathi & Jeeva	Online Shopping Vs Offline Shopping Customer Preference In Salem District	International Journal Of Scientific & Technology Research (2020)	Risk – The product may be different than expected or may come damaged in the online shopping; Delivery time – It is not an immediate purchase.
Vieira Katawetawaraks, C., & Wang, C. L	An evaluation of the need for touch scale and its relationship with need for cognition, need for input, and consumer response Online shopper behavior: Influences of online shopping decision	Journal of international consumer marketing (2012) Asian journal of business research (2013)	The need for touching- Consumers tend to prefer to touch/see the product before they buy it.

3 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Context and Objectives

The major objective of this research is to understand the evolution of the online shopping. How the online can also influence the offline retailing and the weight it has in retailing. Aiming at measuring the preference of shopping among Portuguese individuals, the following objectives were defined:

Table 3.1 – Methodology objectives

Key Research Question:	Understand consumers' position in the online versus offline shopping in retail debate	
Main Issues	Research Question	Research Objetive
	RQ1: How does gender and age influence the online shopping in retailing sector?	RO1: Understand the consumers profile that prefers online shopping.
	RQ2: What are the main factors that influence people to choose the offline channel rather than the online in the retailing sector?	RO2: Understand what is keeping consumers to choose online shopping.
	RQ3:What is making people consider the online channel to make their online shopping in the retailing sector	RO3: Understand what is attracting consumers to make their retail shop via online.

The literature review presented in the previous chapter, enabled the identification of some dimensions that can clarify the individuals' preference and what have been changing with

digitalization and the impact that Covid-19 had and has in consumers life. Furthermore, a few studies from the last year, such as those from CTT (2020), were extremely important as well to realize these changes. Since the scope of this research is to understand the evolution of the online shopping and the influence that the online can have in the retailing sector the Portuguese population.

Through all the information gathered from several authors and previous studies, the following dimensions were proposed as possible relevant factors to obtain an understanding of consumers preferences in this rivalry between online and offline shopping, The aim is to understand what the consumers' preferences are. The objective is to understand what are keeping the consumer to do online purchases. What are the characteristics, is to make sure that the factors mention by the authors in the literature review such as, more number of choices and less time consuming, has perks of the online and the risk and delivery time are what make people more reticent when buying online.

To respond to the research objectives the following hypothesis were created:

H1: The influence of sociodemographic variables (age and gender) is significant in the online purchase of textiles/clothing. (RQ1)

H2: The impossibility of touching and seeing the products before buying is the main barrier to online purchases and, consequently, the biggest obstacle to e-commerce in the textile/clothing sector. (RQ2)

H3: Tactile experience is important when consuming textile/clothing products. (RQ2)

H4: The greater variety of products it's an important factor for consumers to prefer the online shopping. (RQ3)

H5: The Delivery time in online the shopping it's a barrier for consumers to choose this channel. (RQ3)

3.2 Population and sample

This study aims at finding out the general shopping preference, either online or offline the Portuguese society, therefore, it targets every Portuguese individual with an age between 18 and 69 years old. Since the method chosen to collect the data is an online survey, it is considered that all the respondents have access to the internet, otherwise, it would be unlikely their participation.

The initial idea is to obtain a perfect sample of the entire population, thus obtaining the same responses for each age segment considered. However, especially due to a limitation in gathering a higher number of responses across all these segments, it ended up being divided in the following way: 64,3% aged between 18-24, 27,6% between 25-39, 6% between 40-54 and 2,2% between 55-69.

The sample is composed by 319 cases (n=319). However, the convenience sampling method used may not guarantee the representation of population.

3.3 Instrument used to collect data

In order to collect data for this research, a questionnaire was made (please see Annex A1) The survey has nineteen questions, divided into three dimensions. The first to characterize the population, the second to understand if either consumer do their purchase online or not. The third was driven for the online consumers to have a better understand their online consumption, while the fourth sector was for the ones that haven't bought a product online in the last six months and why not.

After the questionnaire, an analysis was carried out so that it was possible to use the results in order to conduct interviews with important actors in retail. These interviews were conducted by a telephone call to managers of various stores.

3.4 Process of collection and data processing

The questionnaire was elaborated via online through Google Forms and was available to respondents for 3 days in September 2021. In order to obtain the most possible number of responses, a few social networks such as WhatsApp, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram were used. These tools have played a crucial role in advertising the survey, thus reaching a wide range of individuals.

As it was explained above, there were limitations in gathering the required responses to build a sample that represented the whole Portuguese society, nevertheless, the number of responses (n=325) has enabled an acceptable sample of 319 valid answers to perform the data processing.

Later, when initiating the data processing, it is important to, at first, make a sample characterization. This phase is going to be extremely relevant since it enables to understand who the participants are, thus observing at several aspects such as their age and gender. Further, the next step involves an analysis of the data collected for each one of the defined objectives, right before pointing out the clear trends found in their responses. The trends identified are going to be used as a basis to draw the conclusions for the research.

In order to statistically analyse the responses obtained via questionnaire, the software *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS) was used. This software is one of the primary instruments that are usually used for data analysis, since it allows its user to analyse the data obtained and check the existing relations between the variables chosen.

Additionally, to complement the responses gathered via survey and to better understand the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on online and in-store purchases, five interviews were conduct by telephone to retail professionals from different stores, in order to obtain their testimony regarding the reality in stores.

4 Data Analysis

4.1 Sample Characterization

The questionnaire has allowed to collect 319 valid responses to form the sample. To proceed to with the sample characterization, the following aspects were selected: Gender, Age and Education Level (please see Table 4.1).

The major stake of respondents belongs to the female gender with 56.1%, while male respondents represent 43.9% of the sample size. For this research, were only considered respondents with ages between 18 and 69 years old. The majority of the sample size, 64.3%, is constituted of people with 18-24 years old. The second age class with more weight in the sample is made of people with 40-54 years old, representing 27.6%. Followed by people with 50-54 years old with 6% of the cases and people between 55-69 with 2.2%. In terms of Education level, it is relevant to note that more than 50% have a higher degree (bachelor's degree or above).

Table 4.1 – Sample characterization

Characteristics	Respondents	%
Gender		
Female	179	56.10
Male	140	43.90
Age		
18-24	205	64.30
25-39	88	27.60
40-54	19	6.00
55-69	7	2.20
Education Level		
6th grade	1	0.30
9th grade	2	0.60
12th grade	64	20.10
Bachelor's degree	140	43.90
Master's degree or above	112	35.10

Note: n=319

4.2 Online Shopping

Table 4.2 divides the sample in people who have bought in the online channel in the last 6 months and people who have not, by age class and gender. The results indicate a clear trend of online shoppers, with only 14.11% of the respondents answering that they didn't buy any product online.

Both men and women are buying online, even though women tend to buy more online, showing a percentage of 91.10%, while men, even with a strong percentage too with 79.29%, buy less than women.

On the other side, there is no big difference in ages when it comes to buying online. The age group between 25 and 39 years shows a percentage of 97.78% for females that responded that they have bought online, and men with 79.10%, followed by the age group of 18 and 24 with 90.35% for women and 80.22 for men. Between the ages of 40 and 54 years, 85.71% of women and 60.00 of men have bought online products in the last six months and between 55 and 69 years, 66.70% of women and 100.00% of men in this age group have bought a product online.

Table 4.2 – Distribution of People who have bought a product online in the last 6 months

		Yes	%	No	%	Total	%Total
Female	**Age**						
	18-24	103	90.35	11	9.65	114	63.70
	25-39	44	97.78	1	2.22	45	25.10
	40-54	12	85.71	2	14.29	14	7.80
	55-69	4	66.70	2	33.33	6	3.40
	Subtotal	**163**	**91.10**	**16**	**8.90**	**179**	**100.00**
Male	**Age**						
	18-24	73	80.22	18	19.78	91	65.00
	25-39	34	79.10	9	20.90	43	30.70
	40-54	3	60.00	2	40.00	5	3.60
	55-69	1	100.00	0	0.00	1	0.70
	Subtotal	**111**	**79.29**	**29**	**20.71**	**140**	**100.00**
	Total	**274**	**85.89**	**45**	**14.11**	**319**	

Table 4.3 illustrates how many people have bought a fashion product using the online channel, even though most people who have bought a product using an online channel, also used the online channel to buy a fashion product, i.e., clothes.

It is clear to see that men are less likely to buy this type of product online, with only 41.42% of them having bought a fashion product through this channel (against 58.57% of men who haven't bought a fashion item online), while women that have bought clothing items online represent 74.30% (against 25.70% of women that have not bought any fashion item online).

It is interesting to note that in the age group between 18 and 24 years old, when it comes to females, it is the group with the highest percentage of "yes" when buying fashion products online, with 77.20%, against 22.80% with a "no" as an answer. Contrasting, 64.54% of men respondents have never bought a fashion product online, with 38.46% of men in this age group have indeed bought a fashion product online.

In the female group there is a slight decrease in online purchases in ages between 25 and 39 years old, to 75.56%, while in the male group there is a completely opposite trend, rising from 38.46% to 48.84% for men who buy this type of product online.

The only age group for the female gender that has a different trend from the rest is in the ages between 55 and 69 years old, where there is a greater inclination not to have purchased this type of product online with 66.67% of the responses, against 33.33%.

For men, there is always a clear tendency not to buy this type of product online, this being slightly less tenuous in the age group between 25 and 39 years old (48.84% of men have bought a fashion item in the online channel).

Table 4.3 – Distribution of People who have bought a fashion product online in the last 6 months

		Yes	%	No	%	Total	% Total
Female	**Age**						
	18-24	88	77.20	26	22.80	114	63.69
	25-39	34	75.56	11	24.44	45	25.14
	40-54	9	64.29	5	35.71	14	7.82
	55-69	2	33.33	4	66.67	6	3.35
	Subtotal	**133**	**74.30**	**46**	**25.70**	**179**	**100.00**
Male	**Age**						
	18-24	35	38.46	56	61.54	91	65.00
	25-39	21	48.84	22	51.16	43	30.71
	40-54	2	40.00	3	60.00	5	3.57
	55-69	0	0.00	1	100.00	1	0.72
	Subtotal	**58**	**41.42**	**82**	**58.57**	**140**	**100.00**
	Total	**191**	**59.87**	**128**	**40.13**	**319**	

4.2.1 Reasons that lead people to buy online

Keeping in mind both men and women who have bought a clothing item online, there are many reasons that can lead them to opt for the online channel to make their clothing purchases (in the survey, the respondents had up to 5 options to choose from).

Looking at Table 4.4, one can deduct what are reasons that consumers consider the most when opting for the online channel. Consumers care about convenience that buying from home brings them (Mean=0.64), followed by the speed and simplicity of the purchasing process (Mean=0.63). The greater variety of products that the online channel brings is also highly considered (Mean=0.45), and the fact that consumers can avoid lines when sopping online is a positive aspect of this channel (Mean=0.42).

Table 4.4 – What are the reasons for people to buy online

	Minimum Stat.	Maximum Stat.	Mean Stat.	Std. Error	Std. Deviation
Speed and simplicity in the purchasing process	0	1	0.63	0.035	0.485
Greater variety of produtcs	0	1	0.45	0.036	0.498
Convenience (buy from home)	0	1	0.64	0.035	0.482
Avoid social gatherings	0	1	0.18	0.028	0.384
Reduced price	0	1	0.25	0.031	0.432
Free shipping	0	1	0.27	0.032	0.444
Less time consuming	0	1	0.30	0.033	0.459
Transportation cost savings	0	1	0.07	0.018	0.253
The ability of doing the purchase without judgment	0	1	0.04	0.015	0.201
Avoid lines in store	0	1	0.42	0.036	0.495
Easiness of returns/exchanges	0	1	0.06	0.017	0.234
Other	0	1	0.02	0.010	0.144

n=191

4.2.2 Disadvantages of online shopping

Again, keeping in mind both men and women who have bought a clothing item online, there are many disadvantages that can keep consumers away from choosing the online channel (in the survey, the respondents had up to 5 options to choose from).

In the following table (Table 4.5), the main disadvantages of the online channel can be taken. The fact consumers like to try the product before buying it constitutes the main disadvantage of the online channel compared to the offline one (Mean=0.79). Consumers also consider that the impossibility of not being able to touch the product before buying it is a greater disadvantage (Mean=0.57), followed by the risk of the product being different from expected (Mean=0.55). Moreover, consumers consider the difficulty in exchanging or returning the product to be one of the main disadvantages of the online channel (Mean=0.48).

Table 4.5 – Main disadvantages of the online channel

	Minimum Stat.	Maximum Stat.	Mean Stat.	Std. Error	Std. Deviation
Like to touch the product before buying it	0	1	0.57	0.036	0.497
Like to try the product before buying it	0	1	0.79	0.003	0.412
Don't feel like buying online	0	1	0.03	0.012	0.160
I like to keep the product as soon as the payment is made	0	1	0.14	0.025	0.344
Others' opinions	0	1	0.03	0.013	0.175
Difficulty in exchanging or returning the product	0	1	0.48	0.036	0.501
Don't rely on the online payment system	0	1	0.17	0.027	0.379
Customer service - help from the employees	0	1	0.01	0.022	0.307
Lengthy process	0	1	0.06	0.017	0.234
Risk of the product being different from the expected	0	1	0.55	0.036	0.499

n=191

4.2.3 Why people choose not to buy online

Now, considering both men and women who have not bought a clothing item online, there is a need to understand why they prefer the offline channel rather the online one, that is, what are the disadvantages of the online channel that holds consumers to choose such channel (in the survey, the respondents had up to 5 options to choose from).

As it is evident from Table 4.6, consumers like to try the product before buying it (Mean=0.54), followed by the preference to touch the product before buying it (Mean=0.44). Some respondents pointed the fact they didn't have a need to buy a clothing item (Mean=0.42). Another relevant disadvantage is the risk of the product being different from expected (Mean=0.34).

Table 4.6 – What are the reasons for people to not buy a product online

	Minimum Stat.	Maximum Stat.	Mean Stat.	Std. Error	Std. Deviation
No need to buy a product from that sector	0	1	0.42	0.044	0.496
Like to touch the product before buying it	0	1	0.44	0.044	0.498
Like to try the product before buying it	0	1	0.54	0.044	0.500
Don't feel like buying online	0	1	0.14	0.031	0.349
I like to keep the product as soon as the payment is made	0	1	0.07	0.023	0.257
Others' opinions	0	1	0.06	0.021	0.243
Difficulty in exchanging or returning the product	0	1	0.23	0.037	0.420
Don't rely on the online payment system	0	1	0.05	0.019	0.212
Customer service - help from the employees	0	1	0.02	0.011	0.125
Lack of customer service	0	1	0.05	0.019	0.212
Lengthy process	0	1	0.09	0.025	0.281
Risk of the product being different from the expected	0	1	0.34	0.042	0.474
Other	0	1	0.03	0.015	0.175

n=128

A point worth taken is the fact that some of the most relevant disadvantages are common between the ones that bought clothing items online and those who did not.

The Eta squared is a measure of strength of association between variables. It is considered a standardized estimate of an effect size, which means that it is comparable across outcome variables measured using different units (Cohen, J. (1988). For reference, an Eta squared of 0 would mean no differences (and no influence), while 1 would indicate a full dependency between an independent and dependent variable[1].

To understand if the sociodemographic variables of Age and Gender have a direct influence on whether consumers decide to shop online and buy clothes online, the next table was created (please see Table 4.7 and Table 4.8). All the values have either a negligible or small size effect, except for the independent variable Gender, when buying a fashion product online, with an Eta² equal to 0.111, considered of medium size effect. This result means that Gender has influence when people make their purchase of clothes when buying online. As it has already been stated in Table 4.3 above, women are more propitious to buy clothes online than men.

[1] Considering the effect scale by Cohen (1988), the size of the effect is 0.00 < 0.01 – Negligible; 0.01 < 0.06 – Small; 0.06 < 0.14 – Medium; 0.14 < 1.00 – Large.

Table 4.7 – The influence of sociodemographic variables in the online shopping

Product Online	
Gender	$Eta^2 = 0.028$
Age	$Eta^2 = 0.008$

Table 4.8 – The influence of sociodemographic variables in the online shopping of fashion products

Fashion Product Online	
Gender	$Eta^2 = 0.111$
Age	$Eta^2 = 0.010$

4.3 Covid-19 Impact

It is also important to understand if the respondents think that the recent Covid-19 pandemic influenced their life as a consumer. In Table 4.9, it is possible to analyze that none of the people inquired thinks that the Covid-19 pandemic has no influence, neither a low influence in the acceleration of the integration of the purchasing process in the online channel. The mean shows a value of 4.69, which indicates that the respondents believe that the Covid-19 pandemic has a strong impact in their choices as consumers between the online and offline channel.

Table 4.9 – Impact of covid-19 pandemic in the online purchases

	Minimum Stat.	Maximum Stat.	Mean Stat.	Std. Error	Std. Deviation
Covid-19 influence in the integration of online purchases	3	5	4.69	0.037	0.507

4.4 Interviews

Regarding the interviews that were made based on the results of this questionnaire, a sample of five interviews were conducted via telephone with professionals from different retail stores. The five respondents are Portuguese, three are women and two are men, aged between 22 and 34 years old.

Most have been working in retailing for 4 to 10 years in different stores, such as Stradivarius, Lefties, Salsa, Mango, Zara, Massimo Dutti and Pull & Bear. While others only worked at Zara Home and Sacoor Brothers.

All respondents were introduced to the topic to which this project refers. The questions were answered taking into account their professional opinion, apart from one question which was based on the respondents' personal opinion as a consumer. The questions asked can be seen in Annex A2.

The retailers that were interviewed guarantee that the evolution of online allowed them to improve their in-store sales. The main reason for this to happen is the fact that online is so integrated, that in stores when there is a lack of stock, either by product variety or by the size of the product sought, it is thus possible to make an online purchase with the customer, with the guarantee that they will not lose the sale and that the customer will have the item he wants.

Retail managers say that although online sales have increased a lot, online sales are unlikely to surpass offline and these were the main reasons given:

- The customer needs to touch, see and try the product, which is in accordance with what was stated based on the answers of the questionnaire;

- The customer looks for the employee to obtain a more professional opinion;

- The customer likes to have the product at the time of payment, which is why many of them are still reticent when the employee himself proposes to buy online.

The retailers defend that the Covid-19 pandemic and the fact that people were obligated to do their purchases from home during the quarantine has helped people trust the payment process, as well in the risk of buying a product that they have never seen, touch or try.

This has helped the professionals to encourage people buying the product online with their system in store, which made them never lose a sale, even when they do not have the product in their stock.

The interviews helped to have a better understanding of the issue of online and offline by people who have worked for years in the field and are able to have a perfect sense of the evolution of both online and offline channels.

5 Discussion and Findings

The goal of this research was to understand the consumers preference in the online versus offline purchases battle in retailing. The digitalization and Covid-19 pandemic has changed the way consumers behave. As mentioned before, the B2C e-commerce market is expected to grow 40%-60% in 2020, as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic and the change in consumer habits (CTT, 2020).

In terms of the first research question, the consumer's gender is quite relevant when considering the online purchases of clothes, women show more propensity to buy clothes online than men do. While their age has no big impact on the decision. For hypothesis 1 “The influence of sociodemographic variables (age and gender) are significant in the online purchase of textiles/clothing”. The analysis shows that the socio-demographic variable of gender has particular influence on clothing, while age has shown none.

The next research question refers to “what are the main factors that influence people to choose the offline channel rather than the online, in the retailing sector?” and for the hypothesis 2, 3, and 5 “the impossibility of touching and seeing the products before buying is the main barrier to online purchases and, consequently, the biggest obstacle to e-commerce in the textile/clothing sector”, “The tactile experience is important when consuming textile/clothing products” and “The delivery time in online shopping is a barrier for consumers to choose this channel.”.

It was proved in the questionnaire and interviews that people feel the need to touch the garment before purchasing. As much as people who purchase in-store admitted that this was one of the most relevant factors for not buying online, online shoppers consider it to be one of the most significant disadvantages when buying clothes online, even though “trying the product before making the purchase”, is more relevant than “touching the product”.

On the other hand, the delivery time of the product was not selected as a considerable disadvantage or reason for consumers to choose the in-store approach instead of the online channel.

For the final research question, “what is causing people to consider the online channel to make their shopping in the retailing sector” and for the hypothesis 4 and 5 “The greater variety of products is an important factor for consumers who prefer online shopping”

The fact that individuals have a larger variety of products available online than they do in-store, is an important contributing factor for online purchasers. A significant benefit to companies merging both their online and in-store capabilities is that the employee can use their wider and greater supply stored off-site while still being present in-store. As a result, the firm won't lose the sale of that item of clothing in particular even if it's not available at the moment in store as it can be shipped to the store or directly to the shopper. Many consumers commented on the benefit of having more variety available while retail professionals supported this highly advantageous capability of merging online and in-store shopping.

The main results do not show a big difference from the state of art, with the one exception the aspect related with Delivery Time. According to Suthamathi & Jeeva (2020), consumers wish to have the product as soon as possible after the purchase is made therefore this is potentially the main issue that impacts product demand within online shopping. During the pandemic, governmental measures prohibited individuals from shopping in-store thus requiring them to make online purchases and have to compromise between accommodating the delivery time or not having the item whatsoever.

The principal disadvantage individuals presented was that it is not possible to try the product prior to making the purchase. It was not mentioned during the literature review. Can this factor be the major disadvantage concerning online shopping?

6 Conclusion

The final part of this paper includes a summary of the research, particularly in terms of the main conclusions obtained from the study carried out.

The purpose of this research was to understand the consumers' position in the online versus in-store retail shopping debate.

The main conclusions did not stray from the expected hypothesis. Over the past six months, amongst the surveyed individuals, more than 80%, bought a product through the internet. However, in relation to clothing/textiles, the percentage of people who had bought a product from this category does not exceed more than 50%. To be precise, only 59.87% had bought a product from the online sector.

It was interesting to realize that the most important factor keeping people from buying online is the predicament that consumers can not try the product before they buy it. The authors in the literature review did not mention this argument.

The age of the consumer does not influence their decision when choosing which method to make their purchase.

The main factors that lead people to choose in-store shopping instead of the online when carrying out their purchases is the simple fact that in physical stores, people can try the product before they buy it. The possibility to touch, feel and see the product in-person before any cash transaction ensues and the fact that the product won't differ from any expectations, which may occur when purchasing online.

On the other hand, individuals pointed out that whilst buying online, one of the advantages of online shopping involves the speed and simplicity of the purchase while having the comfort of their own home. The greater variety of the products and the fact that they can avoid lines and walking around stores as additional positive aspects.

Covid-19 pandemic changed the way consumers behave and it only have been changing for the last two years. In response to this evolving behavior, brands are also changing to keep up with the new era.

Thus, it would be interesting to perform the same research in the future, perhaps in five years, in order to understand the real effects in consumers lives.

Additionally, for future studies on this topic, it would be extremely pertinent to obtain a wider range of responses, thus enabling to shape a sample that could illustrate the Portuguese population in a more precise way.

Regarding the data analysis, through more advanced procedures it would be possible to go even further in the analyses, thus enabling the researcher to gain more exact deductions for this scope.

7 Limitations of the Study

The main limitations in pursuing this dissertation were related to the difficulty of obtaining certain statistical data linked to e-commerce of textile/clothing products on the Portuguese market.

The development of a questionnaire to collect data is quite an uncertain procedure, since it depends on the willingness of individuals to take some time of their lives to respond. The truth is that most individuals are not willing to do that. With this limitation comes the problem of gathering the required number of responses, which hardly corresponds to the desired number.

Entering more specifically in the questionnaire, a different limitation arises, this time regarding the age classes of individuals. The purpose of the survey was to represent the Portuguese population in the most effective manner, however, perhaps because of the method selected to collect data, most respondents belonged to the youngest class. This occurrence does not allow to build a sample that would perfectly illustrate the Portuguese society.

Besides that, when performing the interviews, it was problematic to contact with people with senior positions in the stores, mainly due to the lack of their time to carry out the interviews, making this process taking longer than expected.

Finally, it is quite relevant to highlight the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in this dissertation, since it represented an obstacle on the ongoing procedures, thus leading to an extra effort in certain situations.

8 References

Arnold, M.J., & Reynolds, K.E. (2003). Hedonic shopping motivations. *Journal of Retailing*, 79(2), 77-95.

Balasubramanian, S., Raghunalhan, R., Mahajan, V. (2005). Consumers In a Multi Channel Environment: Product Utility, Process Utility and Channel Choice. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 19 (2), 12–30.

Barnes, L. & Lea-Greenwood, G. (2006). Fast fashioning the supply chain: shaping the research agenda. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and management*, 10 (3), 259-271.

Baudrillard, J. (2008). *A sociedade de consumo* (2nd Editions, 70).

Belleau, B.D., Broussard, L., Summers, T.A. and Didier, J. (1994). Attitudes of women over 50 toward apparel and media. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 78(1), 1075-1084.

Bernhardt, K. L. & Kinnear,T, C. (1976). Profiling the Senior Citizen Market. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 3(1), 449-452.

Bhardwaj, V. and Fairhurst, A. (2010). Fast fashion: response to changes in the fashion industry. *The International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research*, 20 (1), 165-173.

Blom, A., Lange, F. & Hess, R. (2017). Omnichannel-based promotions' effects on purchase behavior and brand image. *Journal Retailing Consumer Services*, 39 (6), 286-295.

Bruce, M. & Daly, L. (2006). Buyer behavior for fast fashion. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 17 (3), 329-344.

Brynjolfsson, E., Hu, Y.J. & Rahman, M.S. (2013). Competing in the Age of Omnichannel Retailing. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 54 (4).

Brynjolfsson, E., Yu, H., & Smith, M. D. (2003). Consumer Surplus in the Digital Economy: Estimating the Value of Increased Product Variety at Online Booksellers. *Management Science*, *49*(11), 1580-1596.

Burt, S. and Gabbot, M. (1995). The elderly consumer and non-food purchase behavior, *European Journal of Marketing*, 29(2), 43-57.

Burt, S., & Sparks, L. (2003). E-commerce and the retail process: A review. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 10(5), 275–286.

Cardoso, P.R.,Costa, H.S. & Novais, L.A. (2010). Fashion consumer profiles in the Portuguese market: involvement, innovativeness, self-expression and impulsiveness as segmentation criteria. *International Journal of Consumer Stud*ies, 34(1), 638–647.

Carini, A., Vikram, S., Patti, F. E., & Doug, R. (2011). *eCommerce Continues To Grow In Overall Importance To The Retail Landscape In Europe* .http://www.forrester.com/European+Online+Retail+Forecast+2010+To+2015/fulltext/-/E-RES58597

Chiang, K. P., & Dholakia, R. R. (2003). Factors driving consumer intention to shop online: an empirical investigation. *Journal of Consumer psychology*, *13*(1), 177-183.

Christopher, M., Lowson, R. & Peck, H. (2004). Creating agile supply chains in the fashion industry. *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management*, 32 (8), 367-376.

Cho, Siwon e Workman, Jane. (2011). Gender, fashion innovativeness and opinion leadership, and need for touch. *Journal Fashion Marketing and Management.*15, 363-82.

Clark, H. (2008). Slow + fashion – an oxymoron – or a promise for the future…?. *Fashion Theory*, 12 (4), 427-446.

Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical Power Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences* (2^{nd} edition). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

CTT – Correios de Portugal, S.A., (2020, November). *CTT e-Commerce Report 2020.* https://www.ctt.pt/contentAsset/raw-data/e7271d5f-adb5-4cfc-ac00-1120717f8839/ficheiro/export/Alberto%20Pimenta_%20ecommerceday2020_vf.pdf

Cude, B.J., & Morganosky, M.A. (2000). Consumer response to online grocery shopping. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 28(1), 17-26.

Dawes, J., & Nenycz-Thiel, M. (2014). Comparing Retailer Purchase Patterns and Brand Metrics for In-Store and Online Grocery Purchasing. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 30(3-4), 364-382.

Doka, K.J. (1992). When grey is golden: business in an aging America. *The Futurist*, 26(4).

Fairhurst, A.E., Good, L.K. & Gentry, J.M. (1989). Fashion involvement: an instrument validation procedure. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 7 (3), 10-14.

Falk, P. & Campbell, C. (1997). *The Shopping Experience,* Sage, London. (1st editiom)

Fernández, N.V., Pérez, M.J.S. & Vázquez-Casielles, R. (2018). Webroomers versus showroomers: are they the same? J*ournal of Business Research*, 92 (1), 300-320.

Flavián, C., Gurrea, R. & Orús., C. (2016). Choice confidence in the webrooming purchase process: the impact of online positive reviews and the motivation to touch. *Journal of Consumer Behavior,* 15(5), 459-476.

Fletcher, K. (2010). Slow fashion: an invitation for systems change. The Journal of Design, Creative Process & the Fashion Industry 2 (2), 259-266.

Forsythe, S. M., & Shi, B. (2003). Consumer patronage and risk perceptions in Internet shopping. *Journal of Business research*, *56*(11), 867-875.

Foscht, T., Morschett, D., & Swoboda, B. (2005). Perception of store attributes and overall attitude towards grocery retailers: the role of shopping motives, *The International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research*, 15(4), 423-447.

Fox, M. A., Roscoe, Jr. & Feigenbaum, A. (1984). A longitudinal analysis of consumer behavior in the elderly population. *Advances in Consumer Research* ,11 (1), 563-568.

Frankenfield, J. (2017, March). *Electronic Commerce (e-commerce).* https://www.investopedia.com/terms/e/ecommerce.asp

Gabrielli, V., Bahi, I. & Codeluppi, V. (2013). Consumption practices of fast fashion products: a consumer-based approach. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 17 (2), 206-224.

Gallino, S., & Moreno, A. (2014). I*ntegration of Online and Offline Channels in Retail: The Impact of Sharing Reliable Inventory Availability Information.* University of Pennsylvania.

Gillett, P. L. & Schneider, R. L. (1978). Community-wide discount programs for older persons: A review and evaluation. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 12(1), 309- 322.

Goldsmith, R.E., and Goldsmith, E.B. (2002). Buying apparel over the internet. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 11(2), 89-102.

Grewal, D., Iyer, G. R. & Levy, M. (2004). Internet retailing: enablers, limiters and market consequences. *Journal of Business Research*, 57 (7), 703-713.

Hagberg, J., Soundstrom, M. & Egels-Zanden, N., 2016. The digitalization of retailing: an exploratory framework. *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management*, 44 (7), 694-712.

Hannien, M., Smedlund, A. & Miltronen, L. (2018). Digitalization in retailing: muti-sided platforms as drivers of industry transformation. *Baltic Journal of Management*, 13 (2), 152-168.

Hansen, T. & Jensen, J.M. (2009). Shopping orientation and online clothing purchases: the role of gender and purchase situation. *European Journal of Marketing*, 43 (9/10), 1154-1170.

Hayes, S.G. & Jones, N. (2006). Fast fashion: a financial snapshot. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 10(3), 282-300.
Hoffman, W. (2007). Logistics get trendy. *Traffic World*, 271 (5), 5-15.
Huré, E., Picot-Coupey, K. & Ackermann, L. (2017). Understanding omni-channel shopping value: a mixed-method study. *Journal Retailing Consumer Services*, 39 (1), 314-330.
INE (2012, January). *Sociedade da Informação e do Conhecimento - Inquérito à Utilização de Tecnologias da Informação e da Comunicação nas Famílias.* https://www.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=INE&xpgid=ine_pesquisa&frm_accao=PESQUISAR&frm_show_page_num=1&frm_modo_pesquisa=PESQUISA_SIMPLES&frm_texto=Inqu%C3%A9rito+%C3%A0+utiliza%C3%A7%C3%A3o+de+tecnologias+de+informa%C3%A7%C3%A3o+e+comunica%C3%A7%C3%A3o+pelas+fam%C3%ADlias&frm_modo_texto=MODO_TEXTO_ALL&frm_data_ini=&frm_data_fim=&frm_tema=QUALQUER_TEMA&frm_area=o_ine_area_Destaques&xlang=pt
INE (2017, March). *Projeções de População Residente 2015-2080*. https://www.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=INE&xpgid=ine_destaques&DESTAQUESdest_boui=277695619&DESTAQUESmodo=2&xlang=pt
INE (2020, November). *Sociedade da Informação e do Conhecimento - Inquérito à Utilização de Tecnologias da Informação e da Comunicação nas Famílias*. https://www.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=INE&xpgid=ine_pesquisa&frm_accao=PESQUISAR&frm_show_page_num=1&frm_modo_pesquisa=PESQUISA_SIMPLES&frm_texto=Inqu%C3%A9rito+%C3%A0+utiliza%C3%A7%C3%A3o+de+tecnologias+de+informa%C3%A7%C3%A3o+e+comunica%C3%A7%C3%A3o+pelas+fam%C3%ADlias&frm_modo_texto=MODO_TEXTO_ALL&frm_data_ini=&frm_data_fim=&frm_tema=QUALQUER_TEMA&frm_area=o_ine_area_Destaques&xlang=pt
International Telecommunication Union (2019). Individuals using the Internet. https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/stat/default.aspx
Johansson, E. (2010). *Slow Fashion—An Answer for a Sustainable Fashion Industry?*
The Swedish School of Textiles, University of Bora˚ s, Bora˚ s. https://hb.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1312116/FULLTEXT01
Kaiser, S.B. (1990). *The social psychology of clothing* (2nd Edition). Fairchild Books & Visuals.
Katawetawaraks, C., & Wang, C. L. (2013). Online shopper behavior: Influences of online shopping decision. Asian journal of business research, 1(2).
Ke, G., Wong, R., & Wong, S. (2018). Exploring online and offline shopping motivational values in Malaysia. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 30(2), 352-379.
Kim, H., Choo, H. J. & Yoon, N. (2013). The motivational drivers of fast fashion avoidance. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 17(2), 243-260
Klepp, Ingun Grimstad & Ardis Storm-Mathisen. (2005). Reading Fashion as Age: Teenage Girls and Grown Women Accounts of Clothing as Body and Social Status. *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body and Culture*, 9 (3), 323-342.
Kok, A. G. & Fisher, M. (2007). Demand estimation and assortment optimization under substitution: Methodology and application. *Operations Research*, 55 (6).
Kozar, J.M. (2012). Effects of Model Age on Adult Female Consumers' Purchase Intentions and Attitudes for an Age-Specific Product, Clothing. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 4 (2).
Kozar, J.M. & Damhorst, M.L. (2008). Older women's responses to current fashion models. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 12 (2), 338-350.
Levy, M. & Weitz, B.A. (2008). *Retailing Management*. (7th Edition), McGraw-Hill

Irwin, Boston, MA.
Lone, S. (2018). *A Word from Ecommerce Europe*. European Ecommerce Report 2018, 119.
Lumpkin, J.R. (1985). Shopping orientations segmentations of the elderly consumer. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Sciences,* 13 (1), 271-89.
Ma, F., Shi, H., Chen, L. & Luo, Y. (2012). A Theory on Fashion Consumption. *Journal of Management and Strategy,* 3 (4).
Maltz, A., Rabinovich, E., & Sinha, R. (2004). *Logistics: the key to e-retail success. Supply Chain Management Review*, April, 56–63.
Martin, C.A. & Bush, A.J. (2000). Do role models influence teenagers' purchase intentions and behaviour?. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 17(1), 441-453.
Melis, K., Campo, K., Breugelmans, E. & Lamey, L. (2015). The impact of the multichannel retail mix on online store choice: does online experience matter? *Journal of Retailing*, 91(2) 272–288.
Miller, Daniel. (1998). A Theory of Shopping. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
Morgan R. L. & Birtwistle, G. (2009). An investigation of young fashion consumers disposal habits. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 33(1), 190-198.
Morelo, I., Sese, F.J. & Verhoef, P.C. (2016). *Recasting the customer experience in today's omni-channel environment*. Universia Business Review, 50(1), 18-37.
Moschis, G.P. (2003). Marketing to older adults: an updated overview of present knowledge and practice. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 20(1), 516-525.
Moye, L. N. & Giddigns, V.L. (2002). An examination of the retail approach-avoidance behavior of older apparel consumers. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 6 (3), 259-276.
Musalem, A., Olivares, M., Bradlow, E.T., Terwiesch, C. & D. Corsten. (2012).
Structural estimation of the effect of out-of-stocks. *Management Science*, 52(1) 113.
Nam, J., Hamlin, R., Gam, H.J., Kang, J.H., Kim, J., Kumphai, P., Starr, C., & Richards, L. (2007). The fashion-conscious behaviours of mature female consumers. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 31(1), 102-108.
Neslin, S. A., Grewal, D., Leghorn, R., Shankar, V., Teerling, M. L., Thomas, J. S., &
Verhoef, P. C. (2006). Challenges and Opportunities in Multichannel Customer Management. *Journal of Service Research*, 9(2), 95-112.
Neslin, S. A., & Shankar, V. (2009). Key Issues in Multichannel Customer Management: Current Knowledge and Future Directions. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 23(1), 70-81.
Neslin, K., Jerath, A., Bodapati, E.T.,Bradlow, J.,Deighton, S., Gensler, L., Lee, E.,Mon taguti, R., Telang, R., Venkatesan, P.C. & Verhoef, Z. (2014). The interrelationships between brand and channel choice. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 25 (3), 319-330.
Nielsen (2010). *Global Trends in Online Shopping. A* Nielsen Global Consumer Report. http://fi.nielsen.com/site/documents/Q12010GOSOnlineShoppingTrendsFINALCLIENTREPORT-June2010.pdf (Accessed in November 7, 2020).
Nunes, P.F., & Cespedes, F.V. (2003). *The Customer Has Escaped*. Harvard Business Review, 81 (11).
Oxford Dictionnaires. http://www.oxforddictionaries.com
Pantano, E. & Viassone, M. (2015). Engaging consumers on new integrated multichannel retail settings: challenges for retailers. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 25 (1), 106-114.
Perry, M. & Sohal, A.S. (2000). Quick response practices and technologies in developing supply chains. *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management*, 30 (7), 627-639.
Piotrowicz, W., & Cuthbertson, R. (2014). Introduction to the Special Issue. Information

Technology in Retail: Toward Omnichannel Retailing. *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*, 18 (4).
Porter, M. (2001, March). *Strategy and the Internet*. https://hbr.org/2001/03/strategy-and-the-internet
Christopher Puccinelli, N. M., Goodstein, R. C., Grewal, D., Price, R., Raghubir, P. & Stewart, D. (2009). Customer experience management in retailing: understanding the buying process. *Journal of Retailing*, 85 (1) 15–30.
Punj, G. (2011). Effect of consumer beliefs on online purchase behaviour: the influence of demographic characteristics and consumption values. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 25, 134-144.
Rabinovich, E., & Bailey, J. P. (2004). Physical distribution service quality in Internet retailing: Service pricing, transaction attributes, and firm attributes. *Journal of Operations Management*, 21(6), 651–672.
Rabolt, N. J. & Solomon, M. R. (2004). *Consumer Behavior: In Fashion, Prentice Hall. 13th Edition.*
Rao, S., Goldsby, T. J., & Iyengar, D. (2009). The marketing and logistics efficacy of online sales channels. *International Journal of Physical Distribution and Logistics Management*, 39(2), 106–130.
Reynolds, J. & Sundstrom M. (2014, November 6). Digitalization, retail transformation and change: what will European consumers want from their future shopping experience?. *International Proceedings of the 4th Nordic Retail and Wholesale Conference Stockholm*.
Rhie, Y.S. (1985). Fashion involvement and clothes buying behaviour. Chungman *Journal of Sciences*, 12 (2), 251-257.
Rick, S., Pereira, B. & Burson, K.A. (2014). The benefits of retail therapy: making purchase decisions reduces residual sadness. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 24(3), 373-380.
Rocha, M.A.V., Hammond, L., Hawkins, D. 2005. Age, gender and national factors in fashion consumption. J*ournal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 9(4), 380-390.
Saarijarvi, H., Miltronen, L. & Yrjola, M. (2014). From selling to supporting – leveraging mobile services in the context of food retailing. *Journal Consumer Services*, 21 (1), 26-36.
Sarkar, R., & Das, S. (2017). Online shopping vs offline shopping: a comparative study. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Science and Technology*, 3(1).
Siddiqui, N., O'Malley, A., McColl, J. C. & Birtwistle, G. 2003. Retailer and consumer perceptions of online fashion retailers: web site design issues. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 7 (4), 345-355.
Simmel, G. (1997). *The Philosophy of Fashion*. In Frisby, David and Featherstone, Mike (Eds.) Simmel on Culture 187–206.
Sit, A. & Hoang, A. (2018). Showrooming and retail opportunities: a qualitative investigation via a consumer-experience lens. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 40 (1), 163-174.
Soopramanien, D. G., & Robertson, A. (2007). Adoption and usage of online shopping: An empirical analysis of the characteristics of "buyers""browsers" and "non-internet shoppers". *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *14*(1), 73-82.
Sproles, G. B. (1974). Fashion theory: a conceptual framework. *Advances in Consumer research*, 1, 463-472.
Suthamathi, D. & Jeeva, S. (2020). Online Shopping Vs Offline Shopping Customer Preference In Salem District. *International Journal Of Scientific & Technology Research*, 9 (2).
Tyler, D., Heeley, J. & Bhamra, T. (2006). Supply chain influences on new product

development in fashion clothing. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management,* 10 (3), 316-328.
Verhoef, P.C., Kannan, P.K., & Inman, J.J. (2015). From Multi-channel Retailing to Omni-Channel Retailing: Introduction to the Special Issue on Multi-Channel Retailing. *Journal of Retailing,* 91 (2).
Vieira, Valter. 2012 . An evaluation of the need for touch scale and its relationship with need for cognition, need for input, and consumer response. *Journal of international consumer marketing.* 24, 75-78
Watson, M. Z., Yan, R. (2013). An exploratory study of the decision processes of fast versus slow fashion consumers. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 17 (2), 141-159.
Wood, Z. (2009) *Slow Fashion: As Times Get Hard and Green Consciousness Grows, Lasting Styles Made with Organic and Fair Trade Materials are Gaining in Popularity.* The Observer (UK). http://eartheasy.com/blog/2009/01/slow-fashion
Yurova., Rippé, B., Weisfeld-Spolter, S., Sussan, F. & Arndt., A. (2017). Not all adaptive selling to omni-channel consumers is influential: the moderating effect of product type. *Journal Retailing Consumer Services*, 34 (1), 271-277.
Zhang, J., Farris, P. W., Irvin, J. W., Kushwaha, T., Steenburgh, T. J., & Weitz, B. A. (2010). Crafting Integrated Multichannel Retailing Strategies. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 24(2), 168-180.
Zhu, X. (2006). An Empirical Research on Luxury Consumption Motives of Chinese Consumers. *Journal of Business Economics*, 7, 42-48

Annexes

Index of Annexes

Annex A1: Questionnaire

Hello!

My name is Filipa Correia and I am currently finishing my Master's degree in Management at ISCTE Business School. This survey aims at helping me complete my dissertation, thus representing a huge importance for my final project. The main goal is to understand what is the consumer preference regarding online shopping versus offline shopping.

All the answers are for academic purposes and will remain confidential so please answer them as truthfully as possible.

This survey will take approximately 4 min.

Thank you very much for your participation!

A. Sample Characterization

A1. What is your nationality?	
Portuguese	1
Other:	2

A2. What is your gender?	
Female	1
Male	2
Other:	3

A3. How old are you?	
<18	1
18-24	2
25-39	3
40-54	4
55-69	5
>=70	6

A4. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?	
Did not attend school	1
4^{th} grade or below	2
6^{th} grade	3
9^{th} grade	4
12^{th} grade	5
Bachelor’s degree	6
Master’s degree or above	7

A5. What's your current occupation?	
Student	1
Student-worker	2
Employee	3
Self-employed – Business owner	4
Domestic	5
Unemployed	6
Retired	7

B. Do consumers buy online?

B1. In the last six months, did you buy products in the online shopping?	
Yes	1
No	2

B2. In the last six months, did you buy clothes in the online channel?	
Yes	1
No	2

C. Online Consumers?

C1. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, was it recurrent for you to shop online?	
Yes	1
No	2

C2. On a scale from 1 to 5 (1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 "strongly agree"), do you feel that the Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the integration of purchases through the online channel?	
Strongly disagree	1
Disagree	2
Not disagree, nor agree	3
Agree	4
Strongly agree	5

C3. In the last six months, how many times have you bought a clothing item through the online channel?	
1 to 2 times	1
3 to 6 times	2
7 to 9 times	3
More than 10 times	4

C4. On average, what amount do you spend per purchase, when buying clothing items online?	
<25€	1
25€ to 50€	2
51€ to 75€	3
76€ to 100€	4
100€	5

C5. What was the reason for choosing the online channel to make your last purchase of a clothing item? (Select up to 5 options)	
Speed and simplicity in the purchasing process	1
Greater variety of products	2
Convenience (Buy from home)	3
Avoid social gatherings	4
Reduced price	5
Free shipping	6
Less time consuming - Less time spent during the choosing process compared to the offline shopping	7
Transportation cost savings	8
The ability of doing the purchase without judgment	9
Avoid lines in store	10
Easiness of returns/exchanges	11
Other:	12

C6. What do you consider the disadvantages of the online shopping? (Select up to 5 options)	
I like to touch the product before buying it	1
I like to try the product before buying it	2
I don't feel like buying online	3
I like to keep the product as soon as the payment is made	4
Others' opinions	5
Difficulty in exchanging or returning the product	6
Don't rely on the online payment system	7
Customer Service - help from the employees	8
Lengthy process	9
Risk of the product being different from the expected	10
Other:	11

C7. What were the instruments you used to make these purchases? (Can answer more than one option)	
Computer	1
Mobile phone	2
Tablet	3
Other:	4

C8. What was the brand/online store where you bought your last clothing item?	
Zara	1
Massimo Dutti	2
Pull & Bear	3
Salsa	4
Mango	5
Zara Home	6
H&M	7
Berska	8
Stradivarius	9
Oysho	10
MO	11
Other:	12

C9. How likely are you to buy again clothing items in the near future? (1 being - Very unlikely and 5 - Very likely)	
Very unlikely	1
Unlikely	2
Not unlikely, nor likely	3
Likely	4
Very likely	5

D. Non-Online Consumers?

D1. If in the last six months you did not buy clothes in the online channel, why?	
No need to buy a product from that sector	1
I like to touch the product before buying it	2
I like to try the product before buying it	3
I don't feel like buying online	4
I like to keep the product as soon as the payment is made	5
Others’ opinions	6
Difficulty in exchanging or returning the product	7
Don't rely on the online payment system	8
Customer Service - help from the employees	9
Lack of customer service	10
Lengthy process	11
Risk of the product being different from the expected	12
Other:	13

D2. How likely are you to buy a clothing item online in the near future? (1 being - Very unlikely and 5 - Very Likely)	
Very unlikely	1
Unlikely	2
Not unlikely, nor likely	3
Likely	4
Very likely	5

D3. On a scale from 1 to 5 (with 1 being very unlikely and 5 very likely) do you feel that in the long run your purchases will be made exclusively online?	
Very unlikely	1
Unlikely	2
Not unlikely, nor likely	3
Likely	4
Very likely	5

Annex A2: Interviews

1 – What is your nationality?

2 – What is your gender?

3 – How old are you?

4 – What is the highest level of education that you have completed??

5 – How long have you been working in retail?

6 – In which store(s) have you pursued your professional career?

During the last months, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, consumers were forced to shop from home.

The following questions are asked considering your retail professional opinion in mind.

7 – Do you think the Covid-19 Pandemic sped up the process of integrating purchases through the online channel?

8 – Do you feel that buying through the online channel improves or worsens offline shopping? Why?

9 – In general, do you think that consumers still prefer to buy in physical stores or that they are increasingly opting for online?

10 – Can you get a sense of the increase in online sales in recent years?

A questionnaire was conducted in order to understand the opinion of consumers regarding this "fight" between online and offline.

11 – Part of consumers say they think it's quite likely that the future of shopping will be exclusively online while the most part don’t agree. How do you feel about it?

12 – Do you think that online shopping has surpassed, or will it ever surpass physical store purchases? Please justify your opinion.

13 – What are the main characteristics of physical store purchases that you think are the main reasons for customers to prefer this channel to make their purchases?

14 – On the other hand, what do you think are the reasons for consumers to opt for the online channel?

15 – As a consumer, between both channels (online vs offline), what is your preference when making a purchase and why?

Annex A3: Additional Data Analysis

Table A3.1 – Main disadvantages of the online channel

	Respondents	%	% of cases
Like to touch the product before buying it	108	19.50	56.50
Like to try the product before buying it	150	27.00	78.50
Don't feel like buying online	5	0.90	2.60
I like to keep the product as soon as the payment is made	26	4.70	13.60
Others' opinions	6	1.10	3.10
Difficulty in exchanging or returning the product	91	16.40	47.60
Don't rely on the online payment system	33	5.90	17.30
Customer service - help from the employees	20	3.60	10.50
Lengthy process	11	2.00	5.80
Risk of the product being different from the expected	105	18.90	55.00
Total	**555**	**100.00**	**100.00**

Table A3.2 – What are the reasons for people to buy online

	Respondents	%	% of cases
Speed and simplicity in the purchasing process	120	19.00	63.20
Greater variety of produtcs	85	13.40	44.70
Convenience (buy from home)	122	19.30	64.20
Avoid social gatherings	34	5.40	17.90
Reduced price	47	7.40	24.70
Free shipping	51	8.10	26.80
Less time consuming	57	9.00	30.00
Transportation cost savings	13	2.10	6.80
The ability of doing the purchase without judgment	8	1.30	4.20
Avoid lines in store	80	12.70	42.10
Easiness of returns/exchanges	11	1.70	5.80
Other	4	0.60	2.10
Total	632	100.00	332.60

Table A3.3 – What are the reasons for people to not buy a product online

	Respondents	%	% of cases
No need to buy a product from that sector	54	17.10	42.20
Like to touch the product before buying it	56	17.80	43.80
Like to try the product before buying it	69	21.90	53.90
Don't feel like buying online	18	5.70	14.10
I like to keep the product as soon as the payment is made	9	2.90	7.00
Others' opinions	8	2.50	6.30
Difficulty in exchanging or returning the product	29	9.20	22.70
Don't rely on the online payment system	6	1.90	4.70
Customer service - help from the employees	2	0.60	1.60
Lack of customer service	6	1.90	4.70
Lengthy process	11	3.50	8.60
Risk of the product being different from the expected	43	13.70	33.60
Other	4	1.30	3.10
Total	**315**	**100.00**	**246.1**