

Consumer Resistance towards Local Store Shopping

“To what extent do apathetic shoppers prefer online shopping opportunities over the offline shopping process?”

A case of Zalando.de

Author: Julia Pötter
University of Twente
P.O. Box 217, 7500AE Enschede
The Netherlands

The presented examination focuses on the shopping behaviour of customers where by special attention is paid to “apathetic shoppers”. Apathetic shoppers are known to be less motivated to go for shopping and only get involved with the process of shopping because they have to do it. Firstly, it is examined, which factors positively influence their resistant behaviour towards shopping. Furthermore, the research aims at figuring out whether apathetic shoppers are more likely to buy at online stores than using the traditional way of shopping in local stores. The focus group of the study is the German target consumer market of age 16 till 60 years.

Nowadays, the online buying opportunities of shops have become an important sales funnel for companies. The advantages which come along with online shops are more and more welcomed by consumers and therefore companies increase their sales revenues by selling their products online. This paper seeks to examine the reasons for the apathetic shoppers’ resistance towards local store shopping and in addition, it evaluates on their attitude towards online shopping opportunities. By using the example of Zalando.de, a well-known German online retailer for clothes, the downsides and advantaged of online shops will be examined. Since Zalando.de is an online retailer for all kinds of clothes, this examination also evaluate to which extent apathetic shoppers favour other online retailers which concentrate on single categories of clothing.

Supervisors:

Prof.dr.ir. Jörg Henseler (University of Twente, Enschede, The Netherlands)
Tobias Scholz, PHD Candidate at University of Twente (Mainz, Germany)

Keywords

Apathetic shoppers, consumer resistance, shopping behaviour, online shopping, local store shopping, Zalando.de

Table of Content

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Problemstatement	3
3.	Motivation and relevance	3
4.	Research goal	3
5.	Theoretical background	3
6.	Preliminary causal model	4
7.	Method section	4
8.	Results and findings	5
8.1	Motives and reasons for the apathetic behaviour towards shopping at local clothing stores	5
8.2	Attitude towards the online buying opportunities of clothing	5
8.3	Online shopping as an adequate substitute for the traditional store shopping?	6
	-advantages and disadvantages of online and offline shopping	6
8.4	How local stores can improve the shopping experience of customers	7
8.5	How online clothing shops can improve their stores to attract more customers / zalando.de	7
9.	Discussion	7
10.	Conclusion	8
11.	Limitations	9
12.	Further research suggestions	9
13.	References	9
14.	Appendix	10
14.1	Interview questions	10

1. INTRODUCTION

In several previous investigations, different types of shopping groups have been examined and defined according to their shopping habits and attitudes. The results of these studies present a wide variety of shopper groups which show differences in the degree of their shopping motivation, their price-sensitivity and their overall wishes and needs.

One group, the so called apathetic shopper, is known to not favour the shopping process and to just visit stores because there is a specific need or reason to do so.

The apathetic shopper can be characterized as not motivated and not interested in the shopping process. The apathetic shopper often has no time for shopping, like business people or other full-time employees or simply does not want to spend its time on shopping. Time saving is one of the main arguments for shopping resistance in the existing literature (Blattberg, 1976).

So far, recent literature figured out that apathetic shoppers avoid the local store shopping whenever they can and show an overall negative attitude towards going out for shopping. The question whether apathetic shopper do more favour the online shopping possibilities over the traditional way of shopping, has not been recently examined.

2. PROBLEMSTATEMENT

The existing problem is that some customers are unmotivated or show little interest in the shopping process of clothes and even try to avoid it whenever they can. This so called apathetic shopper has to be attracted and motivated to become more familiar with the buying possibilities that are around. Therefore it is important to know which factors have led to this apathetic behaviour and how this apathy can be decreased by the clothing stores. To be able to react on the consumers' apathy, local store managers need to know the reasons and motives for the apathetic behaviour.

3. MOTIVATION AND RELEVANCE

The motivation of the examination is to better understand the shopping behaviour of apathetic shoppers and to evaluate the reasons for their resistance towards shopping. On the one hand, the findings of the evaluation can help to improve the online/offline presence of companies according to the wishes and needs of apathetic shoppers. On the other hand can the results help to better understand the apathetic shoppers' lack of motivation, determine what tools are needed to satisfy the apathetic shoppers and to design a shopping experience, that is more attractive to them. According to Korgaonkar and Silverblatt (2003) in recent literature there is still a lack of information why customers prefer shopping on the internet or not. Additionally it has to be figured out whether consumers are more likely to buy specific items on the internet. In this examination therefore it will be focused on the online shopping attitude of consumers towards buying clothing on the internet. "As the use and popularity of the Internet continues to increase, the question of why consumers prefer to shop on the Internet for certain products and not for others is still not very well understood" (Korgaonkar, Silverblatt, 2003). The investigation of Pastore (2001) presents that more than 400 million people make use of the internet shopping opportunities a day. Nevertheless a great segment of consumers still show a resistant behavior towards online shopping. According to Pastore (2001) the main reason for this resistance is the complexity of the use of the web. Concerning the findings of Pastore, this investigation will try to figure out more reasons for consumer

resistance towards online shopping. The findings can be helpful for online retailer to improve their web stores and web presence according to the wishes and needs of the resistant consumers.

According to Wolin, Korgaonkar & Lund (2002), the internet shopping opportunities have a big future potential to grow and to increase their amount of usage by consumers. Due to this fact, this investigation will try to figure out how online retailers can use their potential and maximize their attractiveness towards online buyers.

4. RESEARCH GOAL

The research goal of this paper is to find out which reasons apathetic shoppers have to avoid the buying process of clothing. It is further evaluated whether this type of shopper is more likely to buy their clothes online than at offline stores (local stores).

According to the results, it can be concluded how the shopping experience could be improved to be more comfortable and satisfying for apathetic shoppers and to what extent shopping apathy influences their online/offline buying behaviour as compared to 'non-apathetic shoppers'.

This paper seeks to examine who these apathetic shoppers are and tries to figure out what causes their shopping-resistant behaviour.

Further, it is evaluated what unique behaviours apathetic shoppers display and why this behaviour is interesting to know for retailers.

The findings can be used by online retailers as well as by local stores to improve their customer services. By means of a survey special needs and wishes will be collected and can be used to improve the shopping process and experiences on both sides; on the seller and the buyer side.

5. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

A study by Sit, Merrilees and Birch (2003) examines the different segments of visitors in shopping centres. According to the authors, are the most apathetic shoppers males, married, aged 45 or older and have a high income per year (Sit, Merrilees and Birch, 2003). Additionally the study figured out the characteristics of apathetic shoppers and their habits and attitudes. The segment of uninterested shoppers are mostly represented by people who visit a shopping centre just out of necessity, without intrinsic interest in the activity of shopping as they perceive shopping as "a burden or chore" (Sit, Merrilees and Birch, 2003). This type of shopper is known to rarely meet people, to browse less and to rarely go out for dining as well as they do not seek entertainment when they are visiting a shopping centre. Apathetic shoppers seem to be resistant to any advertisement or marketing strategy, since they dislike or even hate the shopping process to such an high extent that they often do not care or cannot be affected by offers and advertisement. "Hence, any promotional effort targeted on this apathetic segment might not be worth the investment." (Sit, Merrilees and Birch, 2003).

Lumpkin (1985) and Tatzel (1982) come up with similar findings according to the age and gender of apathetic shoppers. Tatzel additionally states that apathetic shoppers want to minimize the overall effort on the shopping process and often have a negative view and attitude towards shops and their policies.

To draw a comparison whether apathetic shoppers are more likely to buy at online stores than in local stores, McKinney

examined the wishes and needs of this target group. In her investigation, McKinney examines to which extent apathetic shoppers do accept and use the online shopping opportunities and, which tools or features are missing to satisfy and increase their shopping experience. In the overall results the apathetic shopper segment strongly disagrees with shopping factors that were related to internet and offline shopping. This segment was the only shopper segment that indicated that catalogue shopping would increase its shopping satisfaction. Therefore McKinney gives some suggestions for retailers to be able to attract the apathetic shopper type. "Thus, retailers interested in appealing to consumers in the Apathetic segment would perhaps have to incorporate a catalogue into their internet-based retail operation. However, to get this shopper to buy on the internet would require the use of several convenience-oriented, time-saving variables." (McKinney, 2004)

According to Darden, Reynold (1971) and Stone (1954), an apathetic shopper is combining indifferences with the wish of convenience. This type of shopping groups is known to always use the same shopping strategies. Apathetic shoppers are brand and store loyal, which also means that they never try or buy something new (Guiltinan and Monroe, 1980). Buying always the same brands and visiting the same stores has several advantages. These shoppers already know the product and its quality and therefore, they take no risks. In addition, they save time while shopping and do not have to spend more time for shopping than necessary (Blattberg, 1976).

Gutman and Miller (1982) defined four types of shoppers: The neutrals, the uninvolveds, the negatives and the rejecters. These types show some similarities compared to the apathetic shoppers of Stone (1954). These shopping types of Gutman and Miller (1982) are characterized to be moderate and neutral on all fashion orientation factors. According to Tatzel (1982), the apathetic type of customers often uses the help of salespeople and establishes a kind of relationship with them to be able to easily and quickly select their clothing.

6. PRELIMINARY CAUSAL MODEL

For the given examination, the following is hypothesized:

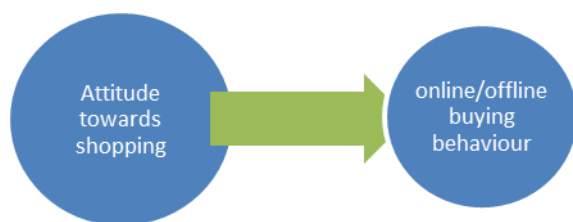
H1: The haptic experiences in local clothing stores do negatively affect the online buying decision making process of apathetic customers.

H2: Apathetic shoppers are more likely to buy their products in online shops than at local stores.

H3: Apathetic shoppers are more likely to buy at shops which concentrate on selling items of a specific category than at stores selling a large variety of clothing.

H4: The apathetic shopper age (≥ 45) is less likely to buy online.

On the basis of the hypotheses a preliminary model was developed.



Explanation of the model: As stated in the second hypothesis, (H2: Apathetic shoppers are more likely to buy their products in online shops compared to local stores.) is the preliminary model based on the expectation that the individual attitude towards the local store shopping of the apathetic shopper does influence the online shopping behaviour as well as the offline shopping behaviour.

The attitude towards shopping can be categorized according to the degree of disliking. It is expected that some respondents have a more negative attitude towards shopping than others have. Negative attitude can be divided in different degrees. Some apathetic shoppers, for example, just may feel uncomfortable while shopping, while others do absolutely hate the shopping process. According to these different attitudes it can be examined whether apathetic shoppers with a strong shopping apathy (ultimately reluctant attitude) have a more positive attitude towards the online shopping opportunities than shoppers who have a less strong apathetic attitude (reluctant attitude). The attitude towards online and offline buying by consumers can for example be measured by the regularity of buying online/offline (local stores).

The expected relation between these two variables is that a strong negative attitude towards shopping (independent variable) positively influences the buying behaviour towards online shopping (dependent variable).

According to the hypotheses it is assumed that the implementation of motivational and marketing tools by companies, and the consideration of the reasons for the resistant behaviour, will lead to a more active buying behaviour of apathetic shoppers.

7. METHOD SECTION

The implemented research focuses on the German clothing consumer market. The needed data for the evaluation has been collected by conducting interviews which consist of 16 open questions.

The sample size of the study includes 40 German apathetic shoppers in the age between 16 and 60 years. All of the interviewed people dislike the traditional clothing shopping process in local stores or shopping malls. Additionally the sample size was carefully selected according to the equal amount of female/male respondents and their age. To be able to make comparisons between younger and older respondents concerning their attitude and behaviour towards local store and online shopping, the following age categories were implemented:

Category 1:

Age: 16-25 (4 female respondents, 6 male respondents)

Category 2:

Age: 26-35 (6 female respondents, 4 male respondents)

Category 3:

Age: 36-44 (5 female respondents, 5 male respondents)

Category 4:

Age: 45-60 (4 female respondents, 6 male respondents)

The age categories above were chosen according to overall assumptions.

Category 1: People in the age of 16-25 predominately are pupils or students with a lower budget. This age category is expected to be familiar with the use of the internet and online shops. Additionally this category is expected to be more interested in actual fashion trends than older people are.

Category 2: People in the age of 26-35 are expected to be employed and to have a regular income. Additionally this category is expected to be familiar with the internet and the online buying opportunities.

Category 3: People in the age of 36-44 are estimated to be employed and to have a regular income. This category may be less familiar with the internet and online buying processes than younger people.

Category 4: People in the age of 45 and older are expected to be employed and have a regular income. This age category may be the least familiar with the internet as compared to the three other age categories and could therefore use the online shopping opportunities less than younger people.

All of the above assumptions were used as typecasts which are expected to exist but solely function to later evaluate on the interviews.

In total the sample size consisted of 21 male respondents and 19 female respondents.

All respondents were interviewed by a personal face-to-face interview, a phone call interview or via a skype interview. The given answers, suggestions and ideas of the respondents were collected separately for each interviewee on a survey paper.

The interviews lasted each between 15 and 30 minutes, according to the individual amount of ideas and suggestions of the respondents. For two reasons, the communication language of the interviews was German; (1) Since the examination focuses on the German consumer market, all respondents of course were German. (2) Moreover some of the respondents were not able to speak English, therefore the elaborated interview questions were carefully translated into German.

8. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

8.1 Motives and Reasons for the Apathetic Behaviour towards Shopping at Local Clothing Stores

In the beginning of the interviews, the participants were asked for their personal reasons for not shopping or for being unlikely to shop at local stores.

Most of the respondents claimed that shopping in the city is a very stressful process which is more or less a necessary evil. According to the second question of the interview, (Q2: Do you see shopping as a necessary evil?), the male, 32 years old respondents stated the following, which representative for 70 percent of all other respondents: "In most cases it is a necessity to do and I do not like it very much. I do not take any satisfaction out of the shopping process", (Interviewee: P., P., male, 32 years. For more than 72 Percent of the male respondents, time wasting was the main aspect when talking about shopping at local stores. According to Questions 3 of the Interview, (Q3: Do you try spending as little time as possible with shopping clothes?) a male, 23 years old respondent stated: "Yes, I most of the time try to spend as little time as possible to shop clothing. Before shopping, I have a clear image in mind, how the clothes is supposed to look like. Once I am in the store,

I just have look for the desired item or a similar one. After founding the product, I always leave the shopping centre as soon as possible" (Interviewee: N., R., male, 23years). The long waiting times in front of fitting rooms and cash desks were two of the main given reasons for the resistance towards shopping at local stores. Besides the aspect of time wasting, the often crowded stores and the loudness inside the shops annoy the apathetic shoppers and turn their shopping process into an unpleasant event which they want to avoid and escape from as soon as possible. Additionally 68 percent of all male and female respondents stated that untidy store tables/shelves and dirty floors do negatively influence their shopping behaviour and attitude towards shopping in the city. Another often stated reason by male respondents was the missing of a clear overview and concept in clothing stores. 78 percent of all male participants explained that it always needs a lot of time and effort to find the clothing piece they are actually looking for. Female respondents do agree with this statement; 66 percent of all females do miss a clear structure inside the stores. People which live outside the city or have no own car; especially teens in the age under twenty claimed that it takes time and money to get to the city. Teens or people without an own car have to pay for a bus ticket, people which go to the city by car often have to pay a high parking fee. The aspect of money is also found in the comparison of clothing prices. 55 percent argued that local shops sell their products at high prices as for example compared to online shops, which sometimes have sale events and offer prices. A further reason for avoiding the local store shopping is the existence of annoying shop assistants, as mentioned by 45 percent of all respondents. These 45 percent stated that the staffs in shops are often over-motivated and profit oriented, just having the aim to sell something, regardless to the individual's needs and wishes. The final often responded reason for disliking shopping is the missing variety in local clothing stores. Concerning the choice colour, sizes and styles of the clothes, 80 percent of all female and male respondents complained about too little availability and opportunity of choices. Additionally the availability of special clothing like organic clothes or fair-trade products are claimed to be unavailable in local stores and shopping malls. The worst scenario for 52 percent of all respondents is to go out for shopping and return without buying anything. This wasting of time and effort is for most of the interviewed shoppers the worst case which can happen and therefore an important factor in the decision making process whether to go out for shopping or not.

8.2 Attitude towards the Online Buying Opportunities of Clothing

According to the respondents' answers concerning their attitude towards online shopping, the apathetic shoppers can be divided into two types of online shoppers.

The attitude of apathetic shoppers towards the clothing shopping process at online stores differs according to their individual degree of apathy towards the local store shopping. The degree of apathy for buying at local stores can be measured by the individual's frequency of going out for buying clothes within a month as well as the personal attitude towards the shopping process. Some respondents just dislike the buying process in the city; others really hate it and see shopping as a necessary evil.

By evaluating on the answers to the following three questions of the interview, the degree of apathy towards local store shopping can be measured:

Question 1: How often do you go for clothing shopping a month? (Shopping centres, city)

Question 2: Do you see shopping as a necessary evil? Explain your answer.

Question 3: Do you try spending as little time as possible with shopping clothing? Explain your answer.

By evaluating on the answers to the following two questions of the interview, the degree of apathy towards online shopping can be measured:

Question 5: How often do you buy clothing on the internet?

Question 11: Is the online clothing buying process more comfortable for you, than the local store shopping? Please explain your answer.

According to these findings the apathetic shopper can be divided into the following two types:

Apathetic shopper 1:

This apathetic shopper type has a more or less negative attitude towards the local clothing buying process. The local shopping is not a favoured activity according to the respondents, but the apathy towards shopping is less strong compared to other respondents. This shopper type goes out for shopping clothes 1-2 times within a month, but uses the online shopping opportunities just once a month or less than once a month. The apathetic shoppers do not completely refuse the online shopping process but merely use it for specific needs and in special situation. There does differences exist according to the individual motives for using the online shopping opportunities. Most of the respondents browse at online stores because the right size of the clothing or the desired colour is not available in the local stores anymore

Basic clothing like t-shirts or trousers is stated to be bought traditionally in local stores. Dresses for festive occasions or shoes for a specific event are more likely to be bought online.

Apathetic shopper 2:

This type of apathetic shopper has a strong shopping apathy. In means of the amount of going out for shopping within a month, this apathetic shopper type tries to avoid the shopping process whenever it can. On an average, this type goes out for local store shopping once a month or even less than once a month. The apathetic shopper 2 therefore is more likely to use the only buying opportunities of shops. Apathetic shopper which stated to buy in local stores less than once a month, visit and buy at online shops 1-2 times within a month. Due to the fact that this type of shoppers does dislike any kind of shopping process, also the online shopping process is not one of the favourite activities of the respondents. Shopping clothing stays shopping clothing, doesn't matter if the process is done online or offline. Nevertheless this type of apathetic shopper appreciate the more comfortable way of buying clothing online and the less time and effort wasting and therefore is more likely to buy at online stores.

The gathered data shows a tendency that the apathetic shoppers type 2 do more often browse at online stores than going out for shopping at local stores and shopping malls. The less apathetic shopper type 1 buys, compared to the apathetic shopper 2, less often at online stores and go for local store shopping more frequently.

8.3 Online Shopping as an Adequate Substitute for the Traditional Store Shopping?

-Advantages and Disadvantages of online and offline shopping

More than 50 percent of the respondents think that the online shopping opportunity is a good addition to the traditional way of shopping. However, this opinion is limited for special situations, for example if the size or colour is not available in the local shops anymore. Most respondents define the online shopping opportunity more as a likeable addition to the traditional shopping than as an adequate substitute. Only about 18 percent of all respondents really see the online shopping opportunity as an adequate substitute for buying clothing and frequently use it as a replacement for shopping in local stores.

79 percent of all respondents enjoy the comfortable way of ordering clothes online. The huge product range and clear overview of the web pages are the two main reasons for the respondents to use the online buying opportunity.

However all respondents claim that the online buying process also does have downsides. The two main critical arguments are long delivery times and that people often buy more clothing than they would buy in local stores. Due to the fact that it is not possible to try the clothing before buying them, people order different sizes or colours. According to the eighth question of the interview, (Q8: Do you think the online buying opportunity is an adequate substitute for the traditional local store shopping?), a female, 21years old respondent claims: "I do not think that online buying is an adequate substitute. The online buying process does have some advantages, but also disadvantages. I think for example that it is very annoying to buy clothes online just to notice a few days later that the delivered goods do that fit. I have to return the clothes, which is an extra effort and work I have to do. Additionally the non-environmental friendly aspect by sending/returning the goods all the time is an important negative factor", (Interviewee: I., C., D., female, 21 years old). In the end the buying process is connected with more work for the customer; not fitting products have to be returned and the customers have to be aware that the amount of money for not taken clothes will be transacted back by the retailer to their bank account.

An additional problem concerning the delivery process seems to be the often unknown delivery times of the products. 38 percent of all female and male respondents strongly dislike the current organization of the delivery process. If the customers are not at home at the same time the delivery agent is coming, the whole process becomes complicated and annoying according to these respondents.

Besides these disadvantages of online shopping, people interviewed also clearly see some advantages compared to the shopping process at local stores. The price differences between online and offline stores do partly influence the buying decisions. Especially respondents of the age between 16 and 25 actively compare the prices of items in local stores with prices on the internet. Online shops often offer the same or similar products at lower prices and therefore attract students and pupils with a lower budget. Furthermore, online shops offer the opportunity to return not fitting clothes within four weeks. More than 40 percent of all respondents do appreciate this time for consideration. With regard to the time of consideration, 60 percent of all female respondents do favour trying the clothing at home with the opportunity to test the products in combination with their own clothes from their wardrobe.

8.4 How Local Stores Can Improve the Shopping Experience of Customers

According to more than half of all interviewed people, there is a strong need for more fitting rooms and cash desks to minimize the often long waiting times in front of both. Additionally a better structure of the store and a clearer concept of the placement of the assortment is desired by 90 percent of all respondents. However there is no clear tendency of how stores should structure the assortment. On the one hand, half of all respondents argue that clothing has to be sorted by the characteristics of the items. On the other hand there is the wish of sorting the products according to the brands.

Furthermore the parking fee in the cities and park houses do annoy the shoppers. An idea to make the local store shopping more attractive for customer is to give price benefits for the parking fees. This idea already is practiced by some shopping malls or cinemas. For example the "Cinema Arthouse" in Osnabrück gives price privileges on the parking fee of the surrounding car park. Every customer who visits the cinema gets a stamp on the parking ticket and pays one Euro less than the normal parking fee. To adopt this concept, local stores could consort with each other. One possible solution could be a reward on the parking fee according to the amount of money the customer spent in a single shop. For every ten Euros of the sales check, the stores could give a benefit of ten cents on the parking fees. Therefore a system would be needed where the parking ticket is scanned at the cash desk and automatically reduced according to the individual amount of the customer.

A further suggestion is the implementation of chill out zones within stores. This could be realized by a small lounge with sofas and a bar which offers some soft drinks. This concept can help to increase the often hectic and uncomfortable shopping atmosphere in local stores. In the city centre of Osnabrück, this concept is already implemented by the big fashion house L+T (Lengermann & Trieschmann). The big store has several lounges with couches and snack points which give the customer the opportunity to take a rest while shopping inside the store. Additionally every customer who buys something gets a coin for a free soft drink. This marketing strategy gives people the feeling of a more comfortable shopping experience and is highly appreciated by the interviewed customers from Osnabrück and the surrounding areas.

8.5 How Online Clothing Shops Can Improve Their Stores to Attract More Customers / Zalando.de

Most of the respondents feel confident with the layout and structure of most online shops. A good overview and presentation of the goods are responded to make the shopping progress easy and less annoying compared to local clothing shopping. Nevertheless online stores have to find an innovative solution for the problem of not fitting clothes. Customers desire a tool which enables the virtual fitting of products. Some shops, for example H&M (Hennes&Mauritz) already implemented a kind of virtual fitting room on their web store. Customers can redesign their body proportions as well as skin and hair colour and construct their individual virtual person. However these avatars cannot be viewed from a 380 degree view and are limited to simple characteristic.

Furthermore the delivery times should be more flexible according to the individual wishes of the customers. Online

shops could implement delivery time schedules which list all possible delivery dates, where the customers can choose a date according to their availability at home. This process would eliminate the problem of undelivered goods and increases the satisfaction of the customers.

In addition, free shipping and free return are claimed to be not offered at all online shops. 70 percent of all respondents using the online buying opportunity do consider the individual shipping fee of online shops while making their buying decision.

Zalando.de is well known by all 40 respondents, however just 40 percent already ordered clothing on its web store. A main reason for not ordering clothes at Zalando.de was the wide variety in brands and clothing items that Zalando.de is offering. Most of the respondents stated that the huge amount of different brands and different items of course gives a great opportunity of choice. Nevertheless, the interviewees claimed that this wide range of variety leads to difficulties in finding the right item as well as to complicate the searching process. These arguments were also related to time wasting while searching the right item. Therefore Zalando.de was claimed to be equal to local stores concerning the time wasting aspect. Additionally the respondents missed the opportunity of virtual fitting rooms of Zalando.de, which can also be less found on competing online stores.

Concerning the assortment of online shops, the respondents were asked whether they prefer shops which sell single brands or focus on specific clothing items over shops like Zalando.de which offer a wide variety of brands and items. The given answers of the interviewees show a tendency that apathetic shoppers do prefer online shops concentrating on single brands and on single items. The respondents clearly recognized the downsides of less comparison and less choice, but the aspects of time saving and quickly finding the right item seem to be more important than a wide variety of products.

All apathetic shoppers which used the online opportunities for shopping stated that they do not use them because it is more fun than going for shopping at local stores. The online shopping process is still a shopping process like the local store shopping process, which has to be done because there is a specific need to do it.

9. DISCUSSION

According to Sit, Merrilees and Birch (2003) the main apathetic shoppers are males, married, aged 45 or older and have a high income per year. Apathetic shoppers are known to do the shopping process solely because there is the need to do it. This type of consumers does not relate any entertainment or fun factor to the shopping process. By trying to find reasons for this apathy towards shopping, several literature states the argument of times wasting. Apathetic shoppers experience the shopping process as a waste of time and effort. According to the examination of Gutman and Miller (1982) the apathetic shopper can be characterized to be not interested in actual fashion trends and has a neutral attitude towards clothing. McKinney () states that apathetic shoppers favour catalogue shopping over the local and online shopping process. The uninterested type of shopper is not risk-taking and therefore is brand loyal and stays with the product s/he is already familiar with. (Guiltinan & Monroe, 1980).

The findings of the presented investigation display a wide range of factors which negatively influence the buying behaviour of apathetic shoppers and partly correspond with findings of previous studies. The mainly founded reasons for the

consumers' apathy towards shopping at local stores are the aspect of time wasting and the missing overview of the assortment inside the store. The shopping atmosphere in centres is claimed to be hectic and uncomfortable. Consumers are missing the convenience compared to the online shopping possibilities. Online shops offer a broader assortment and have a higher amount of availability of different sizes and colours. Furthermore, customers appreciate the easy handling of the web stores and the clear structure of the pages. By using a searching tool and filters, the desired clothing can easily be found within a few seconds. The majority of the interviewees state that it often takes hours to search for a specific item in local stores and sometimes the search is without any success. Apathetic shoppers are also price sensitive and clearly see the price advantages online stores often have compared to local stores.

Nevertheless, the online shops do have one big downside which is claimed by all respondents. The fitting of the desired clothing cannot be tested online. If ordered clothing does not fit, customers have to return it and have to put a lot of effort in repacking the goods and bringing them back to the post office. This fact is one of the main arguments for apathetic shoppers, not to buy their clothes online.

Online shops try to make their goods as descriptive as possible. By uploading pictures of attractive models wearing the clothes and 3D-views of the product itself, consumers get a positive impression. Additionally, customers which already bought the product can recommend it and rate it on a scale according to their satisfaction with the product. All these tools help consumers in making their decision whether to buy the product or not. Nevertheless, it cannot replace the haptic experience in local stores. Even if apathetic shoppers dislike the local store shopping, they appreciate the advantages of feeling and trying the product. The colours of the clothing often are reproduced brighter or darker on the web pictures than they are in reality. The quality of the goods sometimes is less valuable than described or as shown on the photos. Due to these facts, the decision making process of customers whether to buy online or not is influenced by haptic factors. These findings corroborate the first hypothesis (H1: The haptic experiences in local clothing stores do negatively affect the online buying decision making process of apathetic customers.)

The results concerning the attitude towards the online buying process show no clear tendency that apathetic shoppers are more likely to buy at online shops than in local stores. There were two types of the respondents that have different opinions regarding online shopping as a substitute for local shopping. 80 percent of all respondents do not see the online shopping stores as an adequate substitute for the traditional way of offline shopping

The second hypothesis (H2: Apathetic shoppers are more likely to buy their products in online shops as compared to local stores.)

10. CONCLUSION

The study figured out a tendency that people who show a strong reluctance towards shopping have a more positive attitude towards the online shopping and are more likely to buy at online stores than people who just do not like shopping or have a less reluctant attitude towards shopping

Implementation of the findings to the previous model:

The second hypothesis (H2: *Apathetic shoppers are more likely to buy their products in online shops than at local stores*) cannot either be completely corroborated or rejected. The results of the investigation lead to the conclusion that two types

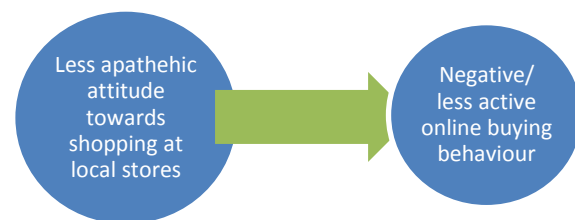
of apathetic shoppers do exist, which show a different attitude towards the online buying opportunities.

Apathetic Shopper Type 1:

This apathetic shopper type has a more or less negative attitude towards the local clothing buying process. The local shopping is not a favoured activity according to the respondents, but the apathy towards shopping is less strong compared to other respondents. This shopper type goes out for shopping clothes 1-2 times within a month, but uses the online shopping opportunities just once a month or less than once a month. The apathetic shoppers do not completely refuse the online shopping process but merely use it for specific needs and in special situations. There are differences according to the individual motives for using the online shopping opportunities. Most of the respondents browse at online stores because the right size of the clothing or the desired colour is not available in the local stores anymore

Basic clothing like t-shirts or trousers is stated to be bought traditionally in local stores. Dresses for festive occasions or shoes for a specific event are more likely to be bought online.

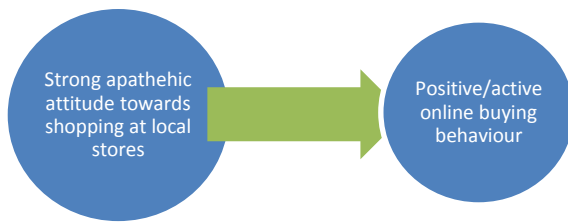
Apathetic Shopper Type 1:



Apathetic Shopper Type 2:

This type of apathetic shopper has a strong shopping apathy. It means of the amount of going out for shopping within a month, this apathetic shopper type tries to avoid the shopping process whenever it can. On an average, this type goes out for local store shopping once a month or even less than once a month. The apathetic shopper 2 therefore is more likely to use the only buying opportunities of shops. Apathetic shopper which stated to buy in local stores less than once a month, visit and buy at online shops 1-2 times within a month. Due to the fact that this type of shoppers does dislike any kind of shopping process, also the online shopping process is not one of the favourite activities of the respondents. Shopping clothing stays shopping clothing, doesn't matter if the process is done online or offline. Nevertheless this type of apathetic shopper appreciate the more comfortable way of buying clothing online and the less time and effort wasting and therefore is more likely to buy at online stores.

Apathetic Shopper type 2:



Furthermore, the results of the investigation do corroborate the first hypothesis of the paper.

(H1: The haptic experiences in local clothing stores do negatively affect the online buying decision making process of apathetic customers)

The interviewees stated that haptic experiences with the clothing and the fitting of those do positively influence their buying behaviour. More than half of all respondents explained that the haptic factors in local stores, as for example touching the clothes, fitting them and checking their quality are strong advantages compared to the online shopping stores.

The third hypothesis cannot be rejected rather than confirmed.

(H3: Apathetic shoppers are more likely to buy at shops which concentrate on selling items of a specific category than at stores selling a large variety of clothing.)

The results solely show a tendency that apathetic shopper do prefer shops which concentrate on single brands and items of a specific category over shops offering a wide range of clothing.

The fourth hypothesis of the investigation can be corroborated according to the findings of the interviews.

(H4: The apathetic shopper age (≥ 45) is less likely to buy online.)

Apathetic shoppers in the age of 45 years and older were less likely to use the online buying opportunities of stores. Often the respondents in the age category 4 (Age: 45-60; 4 female respondents, 6 male respondents) stated to not use or less use the online stores. Mostly respondents in the age of 50-60 claimed that the online shopping complex is too complex and also they felt insecure about the paying process. Additionally the apathetic shoppers in the age of 45-60 were the only age category were respondents stated to not have an internet connection. 30 percent of all respondents in the age category 4 (45-60 years), did not have an internet connection. Older consumers seem to more fear the risks of online shopping than younger consumers do. Possible risks of online buying were according to the respondents in the age category 4, not fitting clothes, non-trustworthy payment processes and delivery problems. Compared to all other age categories, the respondents of category 4 were most sceptical and resistant towards online shopping.

11. LIMITATIONS

Since the presented investigation focusses solely on the German clothing customer market, the findings are limited and cannot be universalized. Clothing customer target groups from other countries may show a different behaviour towards the online shopping opportunities and may use them to another degree.

Additionally, since the data was collected in a qualitative way it was not possible due to time limitations to establish a huge sample size. The sample size of the investigation therefore is too small to get a generally applicable result which reflects the whole German apathetic customer group. Due to the fact that the sample of the study was selected by aiming at an equal amount of younger and older respondents, it cannot be figured out, which age the “average” apathetic shopper has. Because of the fact that all respondents were chosen regarding to the criteria of disliking the local store shopping, the results give no output for the comparison with the normal type of shoppers. The results of the presented study only figure out tendencies to what extent apathetic shoppers use the online buying opportunities and which reasons may negatively affect their resistant behaviour towards local store shopping.

12. FURTHER RESEARCH SUGGESTIONS

One suggestion for further research is to evaluate whether the average apathetic shopper is predominately male or female and merely younger or older. Due to the fact that the presented investigation has an equal amount of female and male respondents as well as an equal amount of apathetic shoppers in different age categories, the results cannot figure out who the predominately apathetic shopper is. To examine this question, the data should be collected quantitative to get a broader impression and more statistically results.

Another suggestion for further research is to examine the online shopping attitude of apathetic shoppers in other countries to identify similarities and differences in consumer behaviour across different nations. These findings could enable online retailers to improve their online stores separately for each country according to the specific wishes and needs of the nations.

In addition, it could be interesting to get a comparison between the online buying behaviour and attitude of apathetic shoppers and non-apathetic shoppers. Due to the fact, that this examination is solely focusing on apathetic shoppers, further research investigations should implement a focus group of both, apathetic and non-apathetic shoppers.

13. REFERENCES

Brown, M., Pope, N., Voges, K., (2003), Buying or browsing? European Journal of Marketing, Vol.37 Iss 11/12 pp. 1666 – 1684, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/03090560310495401>

Darden, William R. and Fred D. Reynolds (1971), “Shopping Orientations and Product Usage Rates,” Journal of Marketing Research, 8

Eastin, S.K., Eastin, M.S., 2011, Hedonic Tendencies and the Online Consumer: An Investigation of the Online Shopping Process, Journal of Internet Commerce, Vol. 10, pp. 68-90, DOI: 10.1080/15332861.2011.558458

Ganesh, J., Reynolds, K.E., Luckett, M., Pomirleanu, N., 2010, Online Shopper Motivations, and e-Store Attributes: An Examination of Online Patronage Behavior and Shopper Typologies, Journal of Retailing, Vol.86, pp. 106–115

Girard, T., Korgaonkar, P., Silverblatt, R., 2003, The Relationship of type of product, shopping orientations, and demographics with preference for shopping on the internet, *Journal of Business and Psychology*, Vol. 18, pp. 101-120

Guitinan, J.P., Monroe, K.B., 1980, "Identifying and Analyzing Consumer Shopping Strategies", in *NA - Advances in Consumer Research* Vol. 7, pp.: 745-748

Gutman, J. & Mills, M.K. (1982). Fashion life style, self-concept, shopping orientation, and store patronage: an integrative analysis. *Journal of Retailing*, 58 (2), 64-86.

Lee, P., 2002, Behavioral Model of Online Purchasers in E-Commerce Environment, *Electronic Commerce Research*, Vol.2, pp. 75–85

Lumpkin, J.R. (1985). Shopping orientation segmentation of the elderly consumer. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 13 (2), 271-289.

McKinney, L., M., Creating a satisfying internet shopping experience via atmospheric variables

Pastore, Michael (June 14, 2001), "Why the Offline are Offline," accessed on July 21, 2001., <http://www.cyberatlas.internet.com>.

Sebastianelli, R., Tamimi, N., Rajan, M., 2008, Perceived Quality of Online Shopping: Does Gender Make a Difference?, *Journal of Internet Commerce*, 7:4, 445-469, DOI: 10.1080/15332860802507164

Sit, J., Merrilees, B., Birch, D., (2003) "Entertainment-seeking shopping centre patrons: the missing segments", *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, Vol. 31 Iss: 2, pp.80 – 94

Stone, G.P. (1954, July). City shoppers and urban identification: Observations on the social psychology of city life. *American Journal of Sociology*, 36-45.

Tatzel, M. (1982) Skill and motivation in clothes shopping: fashion-conscious, independent, anxious, and apathetic consumers. *Journal of Retailing*, 58 (4), 90–96.

Wolin, L., Korgaonkar,P., Lund, D., (2002), "Beliefs, Attitudes and Behavior towards Web Advertising," *International Journal of Advertising*, Vol, 21, pp. 87–114

Zhou, L., Dai, L., Zhang, D., 2007, Online Shopping Acceptance Model - A critical survey of consumer factors in

online shopping, *Journal of Electronic Commerce Research*, Vol 8, pp.505–8.

14. APPENDIX

14.1 Interview questions

Interview with apathetic (online/offline) shoppers

Name: Age: Gender:

1. How often do you go for clothing shopping a month? (shopping centres, city)
2. Do you see shopping as a necessary evil? Explain your answer.
3. Do you try spending as little time as possible with shopping clothing? Explain your answer.
4. What are the main reasons for not buying clothing at local stores?
5. How often do you buy clothing on the internet?
6. Do you make use of online clothing stores in specific situations only? (e.g. only if you need a specific item?) Explain your answer.
7. If you do a lot of online shopping, where do you get your inspiration for what to buy from? (TV-Commercials, advertisement...)
8. Do you think the online buying opportunity is an adequate substitute for the traditional local store shopping? Please explain your answer.
9. What are the main reasons for you, to buy at online shops?
10. How does your shopping behaviour differ from your behaviour buying in local stores?
11. Is the online clothing buying process more comfortable for you, than the local store shopping? Please explain your answer.
12. Which advantages/disadvantages does buying clothing online have compared to the traditional shopping in the city?
13. Did you ever buy at the online retailer Zalando.de?
- 13a. If yes, what do you like at Zalando.de?
- 13b. If yes, what don't you like at Zalando.de?
14. Do you prefer online shops which sell a wide range of different types of clothing (like Zalando.de) over shops which concentrate on single items or brands? (like for example the shoe online shop mirapodo.de)
15. Give some suggestions for local clothing stores(city/shopping centres) to make the shopping experience more comfortable according to your personal wishes and needs:
16. Give some suggestions for online clothing shops to make the shopping experience more comfortable according to your personal wishes and needs: