How E-Commerce Has Changed Consumer Shopping Behaviour: Analytical Essay

In recent years, researches have concentrated on exploring the nature of e-commerce and how it has rapidly created changes in a consumer's shopping behaviour. Since the commencement of the 1990's, e-commerce has radically altered consumer behaviour by initiating new retail channels (Ngai and Gunasekaran, 2007). Online shopping belongs to the family of electronic commerce (Gabriel et al., 2016). It comprises of the purchase of goods and services from a seller over the Internet. It refers to the process of exploring and buying products or services over the Internet (Varma & Agarwal, 2014). Most authors propose that the dynamic lifestyle of consumers have resulted an alteration in personal environment that contributes to a profound change in their shopping behaviour, (Schröder and Zaharia, 2008) where shopping in a store was once the predominant way to shop, online shopping is rapidly becoming a favourable way to shop for consumers around the globe. Therefore, e-commerce has grown to become an extremely competitive market, where the competition over the consumer is fierce. What is more intriguing, the growth of the e-commerce has shifted the traditional way of shopping, undeniably the online shopping business has increased these past years, online shopping can happen all the way and all the time whenever it is, according to narrate in (Ward and Lee, 2000), the reason for now people who shop online is that it is convenient and previously is low priced.

Hasslinger et al (2016) agrees with Yazdanifard and Shagvaliyeva (2014) that traditional markets also need to make changes to keep up with the pace of the times in order to be competitive in the market, therefore, e-commerce has become a matchless marketing canal in business transactions and the study of online shopping behaviour has become one of the most significant research agenda in e-commerce. These findings could not only indicate that there is such thing as e-consumer but also enhance the fact that it is uprising. Also, recent statistics demonstrate that consumers are more dedicated to e-commerce than ever. The prediction is that 46.6% of all internet users worldwide will patronise products online and is forecast to face rapid growth as the years progress (Statista, 2017). Again, Aditya, (2001) corresponds that e-commerce is fast gaining momentum in various industry sectors including a consumer's lifestyle and its speciality lies in the fact that, business or shopping on the internet which is an 'anytime -anywhere' medium, gives consumers the possibility to transact or purchase for 24 hours a day with little cost without moving from one retail shop to another. These findings show that e-customers do exist, however it still does not change the fact that some consumers are still accustomed to their traditional way of shopping. Consequently, it suggests that there is huge difference between an e-customer and a traditional customer, and this is supported by a research conducted by Kilcourse and Rosenblum (2009) that traditional stores prevails as the most popular way to purchase new products, as stores provide the instant satisfaction of buying product and experiencing the service. The next part of the literature review will discuss the difference between an e-customer and traditional customer by exploring and contrasting a variety of theories.