

Price's availability drugstores and the differences between online and offline shopping

Tomáš Krulický¹, Martina Kyprá¹

¹Institute of Technology and Business in České Budějovice Okružní 517/10, 370 01
České Budějovice, Czech Republic

Abstract

Which drugstore is the most convenient to shop at, according to the lowest prices, is nowadays a very common topic of discussion in society. Every family finds itself in a different life situation, so some households are considering whether it is more advantageous to visit a drugstore in their town or to buy the products from online websites. The basic method of data collection for solving this topic is the analysis of documents, the method of observation and the CAWI method, which addresses a hundred respondents regardless of their age, gender or education. Furthermore, the method of comparison was used, which was used for data evaluation. The results of the research show that the most advantageous brick and mortar drugstore in terms of the lowest prices is the Dm drugstore market s.r.o. If we chose a different range of products and different chain of drugstores, the results would be different. For this reason, it is necessary to direct research only to a selected assortment in the given drugstores. The second partial result is the finding that the most advantageous method of shopping is to shop from websites, i.e. through online drugstores. The benefit of the work is the recommendation for consumers regarding where to buy cosmetics or drugstore goods most advantageously, i.e. at the lowest prices.

Keywords: drugstores, consumer shopping behavior, prices of goods, consumer preferences

Introduction

The current generation is living in modern times and even this time brings with it a number of advantages and disadvantages. In the current covid pandemic, not every

potential customer has the same financial opportunities. Loxton et al. (2020) state that the covid-19 illness significantly affected and caused significant economic downturns and increased unemployment. Despite this fact, consumers are influenced by several factors that can influence their shopping behavior when choosing a store or service.

Baubonienė and Gulevičiūtė (2015) point out that comfort, simplicity and a more favorable price are among the main factors influencing consumers when shopping online. The analysis continued to show that men shop online more often due to lower prices, and respondents in the 25-35 age range prefer online shopping due to lack of time and a wide range of products (Baubonienė and Gulevičiūtė, 2015). Thus, it is clear that price, service quality, and physical environment significantly affect consumer satisfaction, and a change in price does not have a significant effect on customer satisfaction (Cristo, Saerang and Worang, 2017).

Agarwal and Singh (2018) found that the range of products offered has a significant impact on customer satisfaction. Consumers are affected not only by retail purchasing factors through advertisements or promotional leaflets, but also by factors from online stores. Due to speed, convenience, online shopping is becoming a very popular method of shopping (Zhang, Li and Azamat, 2012).

The aim of the case study applied in the Czech Republic is to compare the prices of cosmetics, including their classification, together with drugstore goods in selected brick and mortar drugstores in comparison with online stores and evaluate which of the stores is most advantageous to visit in a specific selected product due to the consistently low price of the product. At the same time, it will be crucial to find out whether it is more advantageous to shop in brick-and-mortar drugstores or on online drugstores through their relevant websites. This raises research questions:

V1: Which retailer offers the selected goods at the lowest prices?

V2: What is the difference between the prices of drugstore goods in brick-and-mortar stores and prices in online stores?

V3: Which of the retail stores is the most visited among consumers?

V4: Do consumers prefer price to quality or vice versa?

Literature research

In society, there is a question regarding whether it is more advantageous to shop in brick-and-mortar stores, or in other words through offline shopping, or, conversely, if it is more advantageous to choose the form of online shopping. Whereas Rubin, et al. (2020) states that online shopping has recently become a popular activity. Gupta (2015) observed online and offline shoppers and evaluated the values that are key to shopping through

both aforementioned channels, and pointed out the fact that it is very important to realize what factors can influence the process of choosing a shopping method (Gupta, 2015). Applying the conceptual model, it was found that women shop online much more than men and people over the age of 35 are less likely to shop online because they do not realize they possess the ability to shop online. It also shows that affective trust plays a big role in deciding between online and offline shopping. It turns out that this factor can play an important factor when one decides to buy online (Nghia, Olsen and Trang, 2020).

Zhou, Lu and Wang (2011) compared factors that may influence the increase and decrease in consumer shopping behavior online. Based on the application of group analysis, they came to the conclusion that the perception of the quality of services by consumers significantly affects their shopping behavior for online shopping, while the decline in online shopping is significantly affected by the quality of websites of individual online stores. Ads, and especially their content, are closely related to websites. Turley and Kelley (1997) examined the differences in advertising content in more detail, examining differences in several directions in the context of two types of merchandise advertising. Specific elements included headings, product returns, price information or the inclusion of an Internet address (Turley and Kelly, 1997).

The issue of shopping behavior was also addressed by Montoya et al. (2018), who specialized in selected generations. They obtained the results by applying a comparative analysis, which clearly showed that the most common factors that influence consumer decisions to buy online are practicality, trust and sufficient motivation (Montoya et al., 2018).

In addition to consumer shopping behavior, the issue of consumer willingness to pay a price premium for organic goods resonates. Kucher et al. (2019), on the basis of a comparative analysis, found that the higher the price premium, the fewer consumers are interested in purchasing the aforementioned organic goods. Friedrich (2020) shares this view and, in addition, contributes to this issue with research showing that young consumers are more ready and willing to accept higher prices for biofuel-based goods. The obtained research results are recommended to be used to assess the prospects for the development of the market for organic goods or to make a marketing decision that will be targeted within the relevant market segment (Kucher et al., 2019). In addition, Dunphy (2016) states that the amount and value of price mark-ups have decreased since previous years.

Today's market is very diverse and there are two types of consumers: online-to-offline customers explore goods and services online, but buy the final product or goods offline, which means in brick-and-mortar stores, and the second type of consumer is those who not only explore goods and services online, but also shop online (Watabe, 2018). The research results in suggestions that motivate consumers to prioritize offline shopping over online shopping (Watabe, 2018). Bharathi and Dinesh (2020) fully agree with this

result, adding that in today's modern world, strong competition is flourishing among retailers and it is therefore very difficult to attract customers.

Using the comparative method is the best method to compare the prices of drugstore goods in the online and offline shopping environment. After all, Wesley, Lehw and Woodside (2006) also chose this method for their research, by personally recording data in shopping malls. Using the same method, the collected data were analyzed using the mean and percentage (Bhartathi and Dinesh, 2020). Delaney-Klinger, Boyer, and Frohlich (2003) also opted for a comparative method that resulted in results that show how important a match between operations and marketing strategies is to a retailer's success.

Data and methods

In connection with online and offline shopping, we should not forget to mention the shopping behavior of consumers and their preferences.

The basic method of data collection will be document analysis and observation. The observation method will be used for some of the "brick-and-mortar" drugstores that can be visited in person. So, we will choose a drugstore in the vicinity of our residence and visit them in person. Image recordings will be made from scientific observations, which will then be processed into a clear spreadsheet in Excel from Microsoft. The file will show the classification of cosmetics and drugstore goods. From each category, we select 3 to 4 products that will represent the group. For each product, the price, brand and replacement brand will be listed, which could be purchased if the first brand were not available. If a situation arises where it is not possible to find the same assortment in a given category, we select the 3 cheapest products and use the average to get the average price and write names in the brand column, from which we calculate the average price. The last column will list the prices of the selected products in three selected retail stores. In the end, we will perform the sum of products in individual drugstores and find out in which retail store we can buy the given cosmetics or drugstore goods at the cheapest price. The comparison method will be used to evaluate the data.

The second research question will be processed in the form of the cheapest purchase. We will obtain the data through the analysis of documents from which we will take notes and through the method of observation, during which image recordings will be made. In order to know what consumers buy most often during monthly purchases, it will be necessary to study the results of several surveys on the website. Then we always determine the cheapest product from the individual categories, both in selected retail stores as well as online drugstores. The prices found will also be processed in Excel and the monthly purchases for a family of three in brick-and-mortar drugstores and online drugstores will be compared with each other. The aim will therefore be to compare brick and mortar drugstores with each other and also to compare brick and mortar drugstores versus online drugstores as a whole.

For the third and fourth research questions, the CAWI data collection method will be used through an online questionnaire, which will be published on the internet. The target group will be all respondents, regardless of age, gender or place of residence. Therefore, it can be anyone. In the questionnaire, we will directly mention the third and fourth research questions. We will also take into account the possibility that the respondents would want to answer in a different way than it the ones it will be possible to choose from in the created questionnaire. Therefore, we will add the possibility of another answer to these questions. The results of the questionnaire survey will be processed into bar charts in Excel with the description written in pie charts.

Results

As shown in Table 1, the most favorable of hair cosmetics is in the Dm drugstore market s.r.o.

Table 1: Prices of hair cosmetics

					Teta drogerie a lékárný ČR s.r.o.	Dm drogerie market s.r.o.	Top drogerie ČR s.r.o.		
<u>COSMETICS</u>	HAIR	shampoo	product	Head & Shoulders Citrus fresh shampoo against dandruff 400ml	154,90	139,00	154,90		
			alternative product	Syoss Full hair 440 ml	139,90	99,00	139,90		
		conditioner	product	Elseve Dream Long 400 ml	89,90	89,90	74,90		
			alternative product	Botanic Therapy coconut milk & makademie 200 ml	59,90	59,90	79,90		
		styling preparations	product	Taft - hair spray Volume Mega Strong, 250 ml	49,90	79,90	89,90		
			alternative product	Syoss hair spray Max Hold 300 ml	129,90	109,00	129,90		
		total					624,40	576,70	669,40

Source: Author.

Skin cosmetics are sold at the lowest prices in the Dm drugstore market s.r.o., as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Prices of skin cosmetics

					Teta drogerie a lékárný ČR s.r.o.	Dm drogerie market s.r.o.	Top drogerie ČR s.r.o.
<u>COSMETICS</u>	SKIN	wrinkle creams	product	L'Oréal Paris Age Specialist 65+ nourishing care against wrinkles daily 50 ml	199,90	159,00	249,90
			alternative product	Garnier Skin Naturals Visible Rejuvenation 55 + nourishing care against wrinkles daily 50 ml	129,90	139,00	159,90
		masks	product	Garnier Fructis Hair Food banana 390 ml	139,90	149,00	179,90
			alternative product	Garnier Botanic Therapy Ginger 300 ml	99,90	99,00	119,90
		micelar water	product	Garnier micellar water for sensitive skin 400 ml	139,90	139,00	139,90
			alternative product	Garnier BIO micellar water 400 ml	179,90	169,00	199,90
		lip balms	product	Astrid regenerating lip balm 4,8 g	29,90	39,90	29,90
			alternative product	Deer Tallow original lip balm placenta 4,5 g	44,90	49,90	32,90
total					964,2	943,8	1112,2

Source: Author.

In the case of Table 3, we can observe that the best prices are again recorded at the Dm drugstoremarket s.r.o.

Table 3: Prices of body cosmetics

					Teta drogerie a lékárný ČR s.r.o.	Dm drogerie market s.r.o.	Top drogerie ČR s.r.o.
<u>COSMETICS</u>	BODY	anti-perspirants	product	Rexona Sexy Bouquet antiperspirant spray 150ml	89,90	54,90	84,90
			alternative product	Adidas Climacool 150 ml	99,90	69,90	99,90
		creams	product	Astrid Almond Care almond nutritious day and night cream 50 ml	109,90	109,00	99,90
			alternative product	Nivea Soft fresh moisturizing cream 200 ml	119,90	109,00	119,90
		body lotions	product	Nivea Body Milk nourishing body lotion 400 ml	209,90	159,00	279,00
			alternative product	Dove bambucuké butter body lotion for dry skin 400 ml	184,90	129,00	179,90
		soaps	product	Dove Deeply Nourishing Moisturizing shower gel 250ml	89,90	89,90	89,90
			alternative product	Dermacol Aroma Ritual Delicious shower gel macadamia truffles 250 ml	59,90	39,90	59,90
total					964,20	760,60	1013,30

Source: Author.

The selected assortment of decorative cosmetics achieves the lowest prices in the Dm drugstore market s.r.o. This result is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Prices of decorative cosmetics

					Teta drogerie a lékárný ČR s.r.o.	Dm drogerie market s.r.o.	Top drogerie ČR s.r.o.
<u>COSMETICS</u>	DECORATIVE	nail polishes	product	Miss Sporty lak, Miss Sporty lasting color gel shine, Essence; Miss sporty, Essence, Trend IT UP; Regina, 7days, Revlon	43,23	34,90	64,30
		mascara	product	Dermacol Obsesión mascara for volume and length of lashes 12ml	149,90	119,00	149,90
			alternative product	Miss Sporty Studio Lash Dark Lashera 8ml	99,90	69,90	99,90
		Eye shadow	product	Dermacol, Miss Sporty, Rimmel London; s.he stylezone, alverde, Trend IT UP; Regina, Dekor, Davis eye	93,23	63,23	59,90
			total		386,27	287,03	374,00

Source: Author.

In the case of Table 5, which shows the prices of drugstore goods, it is clear that the drugstore Dm drugstore market s.r.o. is still the most favorable.

Table 5: Prices of drugstore goods

				Teta drogerie a lékárný ČR s.r.o.	Dm drogerie market s.r.o.	Top drogerie ČR s.r.o.	
<u>PHARMACY PRODUCT</u>	soaps	product	Sanytol Liquid soap disinfectant moisturizing aloe vera & green tea	69,90	59,90	69,90	
		alternative product	Dove Original Cream tablet for washing 100g	24,90	29,90	32,90	
	detergent	product	Persil washing powder Color Deep Clean, 90 washing doses	679,90	399,00	699,90	
		alternative product	Savo washing powder for colored and white laundry, 20 washing doses	179,90	99,00	179,90	
	separating agent	product	Cocolino Blue Splash 1.8 liter - 72 washing doses	129,90	74,90	119,90	
		alternative product	Silane fabric softener Suprême Romance 1200 ml - 48 washing doses	139,90	74,90	139,90	
	cleaning agents	product	Bref WC gel, 360 ml	99,90	99,90	99,90	
		alternative product	Bref EXCEL WC 700 ml	69,90	39,90	69,90	
	bleaching agents	product	Savo disinfectant spray against mold 500 ml	99,90	104,00	89,90	
		alternative product	Savo disinfection Original 1.2 l	49,90	59,90	49,90	
	total				1544,00	1041,3	1552,00

Source: Author.

From the point of view of brick-and-mortar drugstores, the cheapest is the Dm drugstore market s.r.o., and from a comprehensive view of online drugstores versus brick-and-mortar drugstores, online drugstores are more favorable, as shown in Table 6.

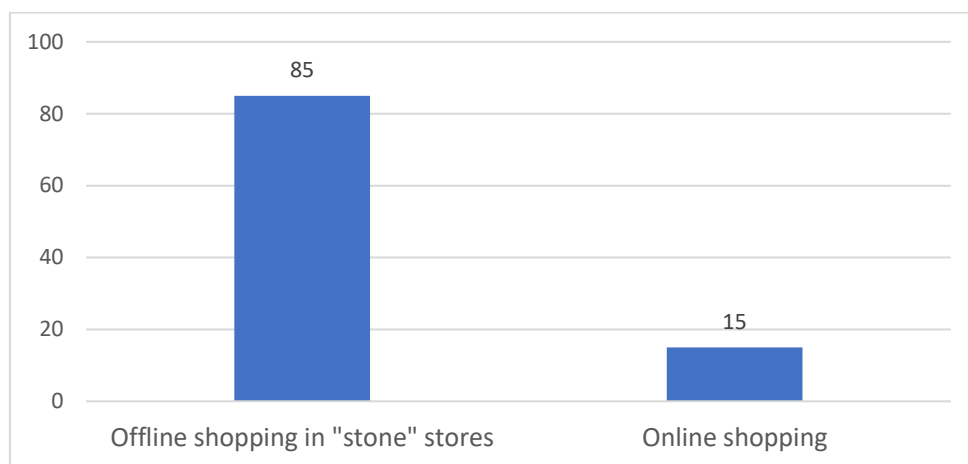
Table 6: Prices of goods in drugstores

		PRICES OF GOODS IN DRUGSTORE					
		brick-and-mortar store			online		
PRODUCT ASSORTMENT		Teta drogerie a lékárný ČR s.r.o.	Dm drogerie market s.r.o.	Top drogerie ČR s.r.o.	Eva s.r.o.	Ageo.cz	Mojedrogerie.cz
toothpaste		19,90	10,90	34,90	18,00	32,50	19,00
mouthwash		99,83	24,90	69,90	33,00	37,50	49,00
interdental brushes		69,90	59,90	99,90	39,00	104,90	49,00
toothbrush		19,90	24,90	29,90	19,00	9,50	25,00
washing powder		24,90	79,90	199,00	49,00	18,00	78,00
fabric softener		69,90	29,90	109,00	25,00	38,50	41,00
toilet paper		7,90	32,90	16,90	33,00	15,00	13,00
classic women's insoles		19,90	17,90	54,90	18,00	18,00	45,00
liquid toilet cleaners		39,87	24,90	44,90	33,00	19,50	35,00
liquid soap		39,90	19,90	34,90	24,00	38,50	36,00
window cleaner		25,90	24,90	49,00	18,00	21,50	32,00
detergent for dishes		19,90	22,90	69,00	22,00	24,50	24,00
dish sponges (10 pieces)		19,90	22,90	39,90	11,00	17,00	29,00
hair shampoo		29,90	19,90	69,90	19,00	43,90	27,00
conditioner		49,90	44,90	69,90	19,00	46,90	42,00
shower gel		29,90	17,90	49,90	32,00	36,50	25,00
kitchen towels		29,90	29,90	24,90	33,00	21,50	22,00
tissues		19,90	19,90	24,90	13,00	13,00	19,00
cotton buds		24,90	11,90	24,90	19,00	19,00	20,00
make-up removing tampons		24,90	12,90	19,90	19,00	19,00	25,00
razors		49,90	24,90	39,90	22,00	39,50	29,00
clothes pegs		19,90	39,90	24,90	16,00	22,50	18,00
washcloths		29,90	39,90	29,90	12,00	19,50	17,00
	total	786,60	658,70	1176,30	546,00	676,20	719,00
			2621,60			1941,20	

Source: Author.

From the questionnaire survey, it was found that mostly women residing in a municipality, and in the age category of 16-25 years old, shop at drugstores and visit them once a month. Furthermore, the results shown in Figure 1 found that consumers prefer to shop at a brick-and-mortar drugstore over online drugstores.

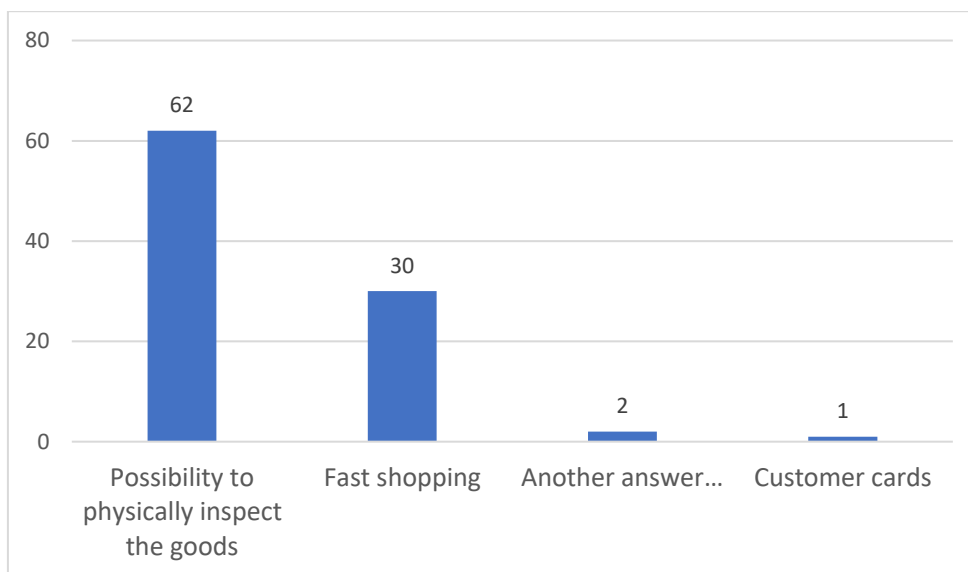
Figure 1: Which of the following options is more prevalent for you?



Source: Author.

Figure 2 shows that the respondents are most influenced by the possibility of physical choice when shopping in person.

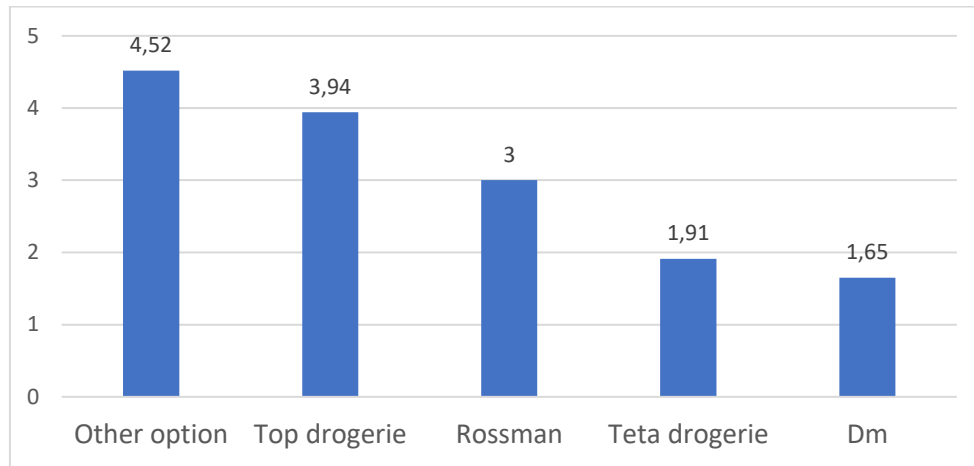
Figure 2: If you prefer to visit brick-and-mortar drugstores, which of the factors is decisive for you?



Source: Author.

Consumers physically visit drugstores other than those shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Which drugstore do you physically visit most often?



Source: Author.

Table 7 is closely related to Figure 3, as Table 7 shows other options that respondents indicated in the online questionnaire.

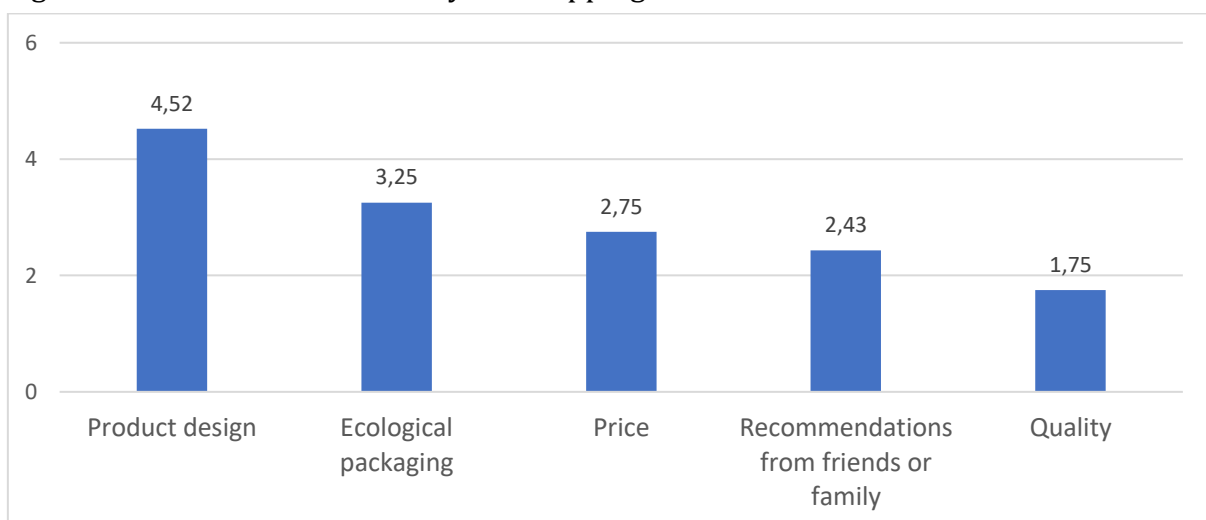
Table 7: Different options that consumers visit most often

I do not visit any	2
In a retail chain / supermarket / drugstore section in a hypermarket (Penny, Kaufland)	4
In the town I drive through	1
Vietnamese convenience in the town square	1
Dm drugstore market s.r.o.	3
Douglas, Notino	2

Source: Author.

In the case of Figure 4, the respondents were asked which factor influences their shopping behavior the most.

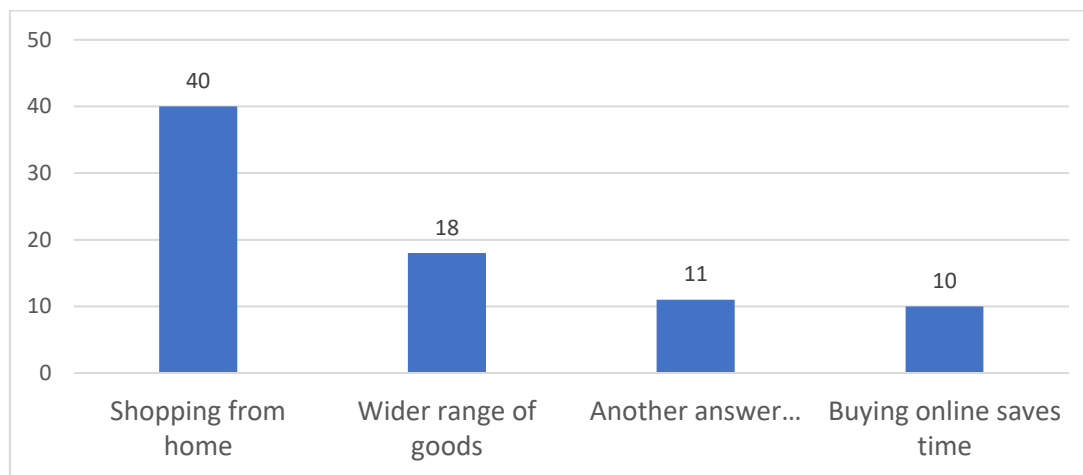
Figure 4: What factors influence your shopping behavior?



Source: Author.

If consumers buy cosmetics or drugstore goods over the internet, it can be seen in Figure 5 that this is due to shopping from the comfort of home.

Figure 5: Conversely, if you shop for cosmetics and drugstore goods online, then for what reasons?



Source: Author.

Discussion

Based on the obtained results, we are able to answer research questions that were determined:

Which retailer offers the selected goods at the lowest prices? This is a surprising discovery, because from our results we came to the conclusion that the cheapest retailer is clearly the Dm drugstoremarket s.r.o. In all categories of cosmetics, and also in the field of drugstore goods, the products we selected have always been the cheapest in the aforementioned Dm drugstore market s.r.o.

What is the difference between the prices of drugstore goods in brick-and-mortar stores and the prices on online shops? Regarding the differences between brick-and-mortar drugstores, we can say that in total there is a difference of approximately 518 CZK, if we subtract the highest and lowest total amount of purchases from online drugstores, then the difference is 173 CZK. Comprehensively then, it can be stated that shopping at a drugstore online through a website is more advantageous for consumers and will save them up to 681 CZK. At the same time, it is very important to mention that even regarding the cheapest monthly purchase, the Dm drugstore market s.r.o. again maintained the number one position, so even in this case, the Dm drugstore market s.r.o. is the cheapest. If, on the other hand, we had to interpret these results to find out which drugstore is the least advantageous to shop at, it would be mainly the Top drugstore CR s.r.o., which was the most expensive in the results compared to the Teta drugstore and pharmacy CR s.r.o.

Which retailer is the most visited by consumers? Most often, consumers buy the goods from the drugstore section of shopping centers, such as Penny or Kaufland supermarkets. Other places where consumers shop are Top drugstore CR s.r.o., Rossman, Teta drugstore and pharmacy CR s.r.o. and the least visited is the Dm drugstoremarket s.r.o.

Do consumers prefer price to quality or vice versa? Thanks to the questionnaire survey, we are able to answer that consumers really do prefer price over quality. However, the most important factor for consumers when shopping is product design. After that comes organic packaging, which is currently a heavily supported factor by most retailers, not only in terms of drugstores, but also in other industries, such as the food industry, and only after the organic packaging comes the price. Uncommon factors include recommendations from friends or family for a specific range or product, and in the last place, what is least important to consumers is the quality of the product, which is a very interesting discovery.

The limit of the research is the selected drugstores, because if the research was conducted again, different results could occur, due to the fact that the author is located in different part of the Czech Republic and the drugstores he would visit could have somewhat different prices for the same assortment chosen by me.

During the research, new questions arose that would be very interesting to include in the research. The question is: What would be the results after selecting the same drugstores and assortment if the research were carried out in cities other than those visited in this research. These could be, for example, the towns of Moravské Budějovice, Dačice and Třebíč. The second question that emerges from the research is what results would be obtained if the author chose the same assortment, but in different drugstores than those that have now been selected. I believe that the new issues should be addressed through document analysis, the method of observation and, finally, the use of the comparative method.

The results of the research will be beneficial not only for consumers, but also for the retailers themselves, which were mentioned in the research. For example, their management could change the current prices of the product assortment and the overall approach to consumers, so that their drugstore is the most preferred and popular among customers.

Conclusion

The aim of the paper was to analyze and then compare the prices of cosmetics and drugstore goods and find out which of the brick-and-mortar drugstores is the most advantageous to visit compared to online drugstores due to persistently low prices and also find out whether it is more advantageous to shop at brick-and-mortar drugstores or online drugstores.

The goal was met. In the results chapter, we responded to this goal by saying that the prices in brick-and-mortar drugstores for cosmetics are the most advantageous in the Dm drugstore market s.r.o., which always had the cheapest prices of hair, skin, body and

decorative cosmetics. The drugstore goods, which is also mentioned in the results chapter, were surprisingly also the cheapest in the Dm drugstore market s.r.o., which is a very interesting result.

The question of whether it is more advantageous to shop in brick-and-mortar or online drugstores was examined in more detail in the results and then interpreted in the discussion of results, which clearly showed that it is more advantageous to shop through online drugstores, due to the fact that the difference between brick-and-mortar and online drugstores is 681 CZK.

On the way to achieving the aim of the paper, we found out the limits of research, which are the selected drugstores and selected assortment. If the research were carried out by another author, different results would have been obtained, provided that the author of the work visited other cities than Moravské Budějovice, Dačice and Třebíč. Another situation where the results of the research would be different would be that other drugstore chains than those examined in this research were selected.

Another potential research goal could be to analyze the prices of the same range in other drugstores than those currently selected, or if it would be possible to apply research to other areas, such as the food industry, or it would be very interesting to conduct the same research in the pharmaceutical industry, specifically in pharmacies.

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Contact address of the authors:

Ing. Tomáš Krulický, MBA, PhD., Institute of Technology and Business in České Budějovice, School of Expertness and Valuation, Okružní 517/10, 370 01 České Budějovice, Czech Republic, e-mail: krulicky@mail.vstecb.cz

Martina Kyprá, bachelor student, Institute of Technology and Business in České Budějovice, School of Expertness and Valuation, Okružní 517/10, 370 01 České Budějovice, Czech Republic, e-mail: 27323@mail.vstecb.cz