



**University of Cyprus**  
**Faculty of Economics and Management**  
**MBA Program**

**E-COMMERCE IN CYPRUS ONE YEAR AFTER COVID IN THE FOOD &  
BEVERAGE AND ELECTRONICS SECTORS**

**ELSA MARIA KHOURY**  
**POLINA ANTONIOU**  
**CRISTHIAN GRANDE**  
**JOY ESTPHAN**  
**GEORGE CONSTANTINO**

**Nicosia**  
**November 2021**

An Applied Business Project submitted to the Faculty of the MBA program in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MBA (master's in business administration in the Department of Business and Public Administration and the Department of Accounting and Finance of the University of Cyprus.

**APPROVED BY**

Academic Advisor- Professor George Kassinis

Signature:

Second Grader-Professor Marios Theodosiou

Signature:

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We would like to express our appreciation and gratitude for all the support provided by our supervisor Professor George Kassinis who dedicated much of his valuable time to assist our team to complete our thesis and come up with a quality research study. Further, each member of our team worked extremely hard for this project and dedicated much effort, patience, and commitment to finish this project on time.

The writing part of this thesis has been a journey full of hard work and perseverance. However, it gave us all new insights concerning e-commerce in general and the new shopping experience trend mainly in the Food and Beverage and Electronics sectors. Finally, we would all, as team members, like to express infinite gratitude for our parents, for their continuous encouragements, love, support and understanding through all our academic year and who have always been part of our achievements.

## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this paper was to establish an understanding on whether the sectors of Food & Beverage, as well as Electronics in Cyprus should seek to expand their success in e-commerce in the future, according to their usage in 2019-2020. The objective was to determine why and how Covid-19 has affected the Cypriot e-commerce market and its consumers and why adopting e-commerce in Cyprus should be essential for the future in both sectors. Previous studies conducted by KPMG Cyprus and EY Cyprus have shown that the above two sectors breached in their online sales during the pandemic.

A combination of a descriptive and exploratory questionnaire has been completed with the contribution of 220 participants, all of which are Cypriot citizens or have been living in Cyprus for at least three years. The questionnaire's purpose was to investigate and discuss how the outbreak may have a long-term influence on consumers' buying patterns in Cyprus, particularly in the Food & Beverage and Electronics businesses.

It is evident that many participants found internet purchasing to be a very beneficial alternative during lockdowns. To increase sales and revenues, both the Food and Beverage and Electronics industries in Cyprus ensured that their online shopping experiences were at their best. E-commerce in Cyprus is essential for the future of businesses in the Food and Beverage, and Electronics industries as it was historically already in the process of taking shape in the pre-pandemic years. As seen by different studies and by our survey, the Covid-19 pandemic accelerated the urgency of adopting e-commerce.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Chapter	
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>7</b>
1.1 Background.....	7
1.1.1 Overview on the Coronavirus disease (Covid-19) .....	7
1.1.2 Impact of Covid-19 on businesses in Cyprus.....	7
1.1.3 Impact of Covid-19 on individuals in Cyprus.....	8
1.2 Problem discussion .....	8
1.3 Overall purpose and research questions .....	9
1.4 Outline of thesis .....	9
<b>2 LITERATURE REVIEW</b> .....	<b>10</b>
2.1 E-commerce.....	10
2.1.1 The history of e-commerce.....	10
2.1.2 E-commerce globally.....	11
2.1.3 E-commerce in Cyprus in 2020 and the Covid-19 impact .....	11
2.2 Economy of Cyprus.....	12
2.2.1 Overview of Cyprus economy.....	12
2.2.2 The effect of the economy of Cyprus in 2020 on different industries in e-commerce.....	14
2.3 Impact of Covid-19 on consumers and businesses and its future implications.....	15
2.3.1 Impact of Covid on consumer behavior.....	15
2.3.2 Impact of Covid on businesses .....	17
<b>3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b> .....	<b>19</b>
3.1 Research purpose.....	19
3.2 Research approach .....	20
3.3 Research strategy.....	21
3.4 Data collection and analysis.....	22
3.4.1 Questionnaire.....	23
3.5 Sample selection and techniques .....	25
<b>4 EMPIRICAL DATA</b> .....	<b>27</b>
4.1 Demographical questions: .....	27
4.2 General questions concerning e-commerce in Cyprus.....	28
4.3 Food and beverage sector .....	31
4.3.1 Research question 1 analysis.....	31
4.3.2 Research question 2 analysis.....	37
4.4 Electronic sector .....	41
4.4.1 Research question 1 analysis.....	41

4.4.2 Research question 2 analysis.....	46
<b>5 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION.....</b>	<b>52</b>
5.1 Conceptualization of research question 1 .....	52
5.2 Conceptualization of research question 2 .....	55
<b>6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>59</b>
6.1 Conclusion.....	59
6.2 Recommendations .....	60
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>APPENDIX.....</b>	<b>68</b>

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1- Demographic distribution of respondents according to age and gender.....	27
Figure 2- Opinion of participants concerning the usefulness of e-commerce during Covid .....	28
Figure 3-Opinion of consumers regarding the improvement of online shopping experience during Covid.....	29
Figure 4-Opinions expressing difficulties to adapt to online shopping in 2020.....	29
Figure 5-Opinions expressing difficulties to adapt to online shopping in 2020 based on age groups .....	30
Figure 6-Preferred payment method based on age groups.....	30
Figure 7-Frequency of online food orders.....	31
Figure 8-Change in frequency of online food orders due to Covid.....	32
Figure 9- Change in frequency of online food orders due to Covid based on age groups	32
Figure 10- Opinion on the ease of ordering food online.....	33
Figure 11-Satisfaction of the respondents with the online customer service .....	34
Figure 12-Satisfaction of respondents with the food delivery time .....	34
Figure 13- Preferred method to order food.....	35
Figure 14- Preferred method to order food based on age groups.....	36
Figure 15-Opinion concerning the increase of restaurants' advertisement for their online businesses during Covid .....	36
Figure 16- Platforms showing the increase of advertisements for restaurants' online presence based on age groups .....	37
Figure 17-Importance of restaurant 'online presence to boost sales .....	38
Figure 18- Importance of restaurants' online presence to compete in the future.....	38
Figure 19- Opinion of respondents concerning the frequency of food online purchases in the future .....	39
Figure 20- Opinion of respondents concerning the frequency of food online purchases in the future based on age groups.....	39
Figure 21- Preference concerning the method of ordering food in the future.....	40
Figure 22- Preference concerning the method of shopping based on age groups.....	40
Figure 23-Amount spent on online electronics purchases during Covid.....	41
Figure 24-Amount spent on online electronics purchases during Covid based on age groups .....	42

Figure 25- Opinion on the ease of ordering electronics online.....	42
Figure 26- Satisfaction of the respondents with the online customer service .....	43
Figure 27-Reasons behind purchasing electronics during Covid .....	44
Figure 28-Opinion concerning price increase of electronics during Covid .....	44
Figure 29- Opinion concerning the increase of electronics' advertisement for their online businesses during Covid.....	45
Figure 30- Platform showing the increase of advertisements for electronic 'online presence based on age groups .....	45
Figure 31-Importance of electronics online shops to boost sales .....	46
Figure 32- Opinion of respondents concerning the frequency of online electronic purchases in the future .....	47
Figure 33- Opinion of respondents concerning the frequency of online electronic purchases in the future based on age groups.....	47
Figure 34-Importance of online electronic shops to compete in the future.....	48
Figure 35-Preference concerning the method of shopping for electronics in the future	48
Figure 36-Preference concerning the method of shopping for electronics in the future based on age groups.....	49
Figure 37- Opinion on distance learning as an alternative in the future.....	49
Figure 38- Opinion on distance learning as an alternative in the future based on age groups .....	50
Figure 39-Opinion concerning work from home as an alternative in the future .....	50
Figure 40-Opinion concerning work from home as an alternative in the future based on age groups .....	51



## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1-Relevant situations for different research methods.....	21
Table 2- Demographic distribution 'of respondents according to age and gender .....	27
Table 3-Usefulness of e-commerce as an alternative for purchasing during Covid based on age groups .....	28

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

*The first chapter will establish a background to the thesis and thus explain what Covid-19 is, and its impact on businesses and individuals in Cyprus. The background will go over the research area, which will then be followed by a problem discussion. The statement of the research purpose will follow along with the research questions of the thesis. Thereafter, a layout of the thesis will be presented.*

### **1.1 Background**

#### **1.1.1 Overview on the Coronavirus disease (Covid-19)**

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the Covid-19 virus is a novel infection connected to the same family of viruses as “severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS)” and some kinds of common cold. Late in 2019, scientists began tracking the spread of SARS-CoV-2, a relatively new coronavirus that produces Covid-19. The virus was initially discovered in Wuhan, China.

The coronavirus disease outbreak (Covid-19) has been designated a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC), and the virus has expanded to a number of nations and territories. While plenty of causes of the virus Covid-19 remain unknown, scientists do understand that it is spread by direct exposure to an infected person’s bodily fluids, generated through coughing and sneezing. While Covid-19 continues to spread, communities must take steps to avoid future transmission, mitigate the outbreak’s effects, and support preventive actions.

#### **1.1.2 Impact of Covid-19 on businesses in Cyprus**

As the pandemic has impacted the entire business community in Cyprus, it was inevitable that business leaders and owners have had to mobilize quickly and make decisions for the short term with implications for the long term. Given the uncertainty surrounding the pandemic in terms of interruption in the day-to-day operations of enterprises, company leaders and owners are concentrating on resilience measures, guaranteeing risks are foreseen and handled for both employees and clients (Understanding the Implications of Covid-19, 2021).

### **1.1.3 Impact of Covid-19 on individuals in Cyprus**

As Covid-19 remains at a high risk in Cyprus, people's lives have been affected to a great degree. Based on the research conducted in 2020, *The Psychological Impact of Covid 19 Lockdown Measures on Cypriots' Mental Health and Quality of Life* (2020), it has been found that lockdown measures and social distancing have had an impact on people's quality and mental health. In the same research paper, it supports that those who worked frequently and those who stayed at home were more affected and had more obvious physical symptoms, anxiety, insomnia, health and mental problems and a worse quality of life than those who worked from home.

Certainly, many people have been impacted negatively by the outbreak of the virus. Yet, others have embraced the extra time on productive activities such as online shopping, organizing and cleaning their homes and exercising. As it has been a challenging time in the matter of social disconnection, reduced entertainment and domestic complications, people have tried to focus on keeping away from stressful situations and loneliness by taking what keeps them occupied and healthy during lockdowns.

### **1.2 Problem discussion**

Cyprus economy mainly relies on its service sectors. After the break of the pandemic, these sectors were severely hit causing an economic recession after years of economic expansion ("Growth on the Horizon", 2020). Hence, the Cypriot consumers' behavior and their purchasing ways changed. Afraid of the virus contamination, and following the safety measures imposed by the government, the Cypriot consumers drastically decreased their stores' visits and centered their purchases on basic needs. Therefore, the general purchases dropped significantly. Consequently, the online services promptly developed in most businesses. At first, the digital commerce was slow, then started growing fast as more Cypriots started embracing this way of trade ("Cyprus - eCommerce", 2021). Among the top sectors that registered online highest demand were the Food and Beverage and Electronics ones. Accordingly, their uptake of online activities was significant (Ernst & Young, 2020). This fact led to a boost in their sales and revenues during the pandemic. Today, the fear of Covid-19 contamination is not over. This is a situation that will keep affecting Cyprus economy. However, pillar sectors such as Food and Beverage and Electronics are able to overcome sales recession by adopting e-commerce, this will then induce resilience in Cyprus' economy.

### 1.3 Overall purpose and research questions

- **Overall purpose:**

Based on the problem discussion above, the purpose of this thesis is to reach a consensus on whether the Food and Beverage and Electronics industries in Cyprus should reinforce and continue to adopt e-commerce for the future.

- **Research questions:**

By answering the questions bellow, the research purpose will be reached:

**-RQ1: Why and how is e-commerce boosting sales within the Food and Beverage and Electronic industries during the pandemic (2020-2021)?**

1. How much was e-commerce affected during the pandemic (2020-2021) in the Food and Beverage and Electronics industries in Cyprus?
2. What were the different factors that allowed these sectors in Cyprus to boost their sales through e-commerce during the pandemic?

**-RQ2: Why adopting e-commerce in Cyprus is essential for the future of businesses in the Food & Beverage and Electronic industries?**

1. Where do consumers in Cyprus see e-commerce going in the future for businesses in these industries?

### 1.4 Outline of thesis

This thesis is composed of six chapters. In chapter one, we will introduce our subject by first giving some background information to then move on to the problem discussion of our thesis, which will finally lead us to a purpose with relevant research questions. Chapter two will present a literature review of previous relevant studies to the subject at hand. Following these two chapters, chapter three will describe the methodology behind our study. Chapter four will then present the collection and analysis of our empirical data which will then be followed by chapter five in which the data from chapter four will be combined with the existing studies from chapter two to be able to come up with some findings to our research questions asked in chapter one. Finally, in chapter six we will come up with a conclusion that will answer our research purpose followed by some recommendations.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

*In this chapter, we will deliver the literature review related to this research. First, we will review the concept of e-commerce as whole by talking about its history, its impact globally, in Cyprus and in relation to the pandemic. Second, we will state basic general knowledge about the economy of Cyprus followed by the sectors that got affected the most by the economy during the pandemic. Last, we will discuss different opinions concerning the impact of Covid on consumers and businesses in the future.*

#### **2.1 E-commerce**

E-commerce refers to the purchasing and selling of goods and services, as well as money transactions and data transfers through the Internet. This network enables people to do business disregarding the location and the time. Nowadays, almost everything can be purchased via e-commerce.

##### **2.1.1 The history of e-commerce**

Companies sought to establish "paperless" workplaces in the 1960s, which gave rise to e-commerce. After realizing how useful this feature was for businesses, it was made the only authorized method to send data on the Internet in 1983, allowing all computers to communicate information equally. E-commerce needed a comprehensive knowledge of computer science as well as a high extent of computer abilities, and as a result, only researchers and academics were competent to perform this feature at the time (Becker, 2007).

The most important development occurred in the 1990s, when NSFNET decided to remove commercial limitations on network usage, allowing the growth of e-commerce. As technology progressed, Advanced Network & Services (ANS) began providing internet access to business users in 1995, bypassing regulatory prohibitions on commercial activity online. ANS was then sold to America online, which was described as "a shift of backbone infrastructure from federal financing to full private commercialization operation of the Internet". The concept of e-commerce then became widespread, referring to the fast emergence of commercial Internet applications. When the commercial domain (.com) replaced the educational domain (.edu) in 1997, the

internet became the fastest expanding tool in economic history. During the late 1990s, e-commerce drew the attention of investors, companies, and consumers worldwide. Despite the setbacks of the dot-com sector, sales of e-commerce grew, indicating that e-commerce was still sustainable and increasing, according to Fortune Magazine (Adams, 2004).

### **2.1.2 E-commerce globally**

E-commerce has far-reaching implications for both businesses and customers, as well as for the society as a whole. For businesses it has the potential to boost efficiency and production. Besides, it gives employees a wider availability of information and services which may contribute to a positive company culture. Moreover, e-commerce offers clients a highly easy option to transact a variety of business 24 hours a day, seven days a week. E-commerce has the potential to enhance society's economic growth and possibilities, but it also has the potential to bring challenges and concerns in terms of implementation and privacy.

As e-commerce increases, people will continue to see changes in the way they think about organizations, transactions, and communications with a significant reconsideration of time and space constraints in economic operations (Becker, 2007).

### **2.1.3 E-commerce in Cyprus in 2020 and the Covid-19 impact**

E-commerce has grown in popularity in recent years, and today it represents a significant portion of worldwide retail and wholesale turnover. It has become one of the best ways to improve sales by reaching new consumers, not only in Cyprus but also across the world. It is similar to having a year-round business that is open 24/7. According to KPMG, Cyprus economy is one of the least reliant country on e-commerce in the EU ("Retail, Wholesale & E-commerce", 2020). However, the pandemic outbreak accelerated the adoption of the web trade in the island to the point that this trend is now thriving and has become a prominent corporate concept. In fact, due to the enforced lockdown, most of the retail commerce in department stores has been temporarily shut down. The bulk of merchants were unprepared for such a drastic drop in industrial production, some wholesalers have been unable to channel their inventory to end customers. To remain substantially operational, many wholesalers and retailers were obliged to improve their online presence and look for other sales channels such as electronic sales using websites,

applications, online marketplaces, telephone sales, etc. Simon Kemp's article in Data Reportal (2020) shows that in 2020, there were 1.02 million internet users in Cyprus, and through 2019 and 2020 this number grew by 7,692 (+0.8%) and as of January 2020, 85% of Cypriots have had access to the internet. A statistic study in Cyprus revealed that e-commerce activity appears to be influenced by an individual's age, education level, and profession. People with ages going from 25 to 44 are more engaged in e-commerce and people with higher education shop online more than those with a lower education. Besides, employers and students usually order more products and services for personal use via the Internet than unemployed or retired and/or inactive people ("Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Usage Survey in Households and by Individuals 2020", 2020).

Consistent with *International Trade Administration* (2020), business online was established by the Ministry of Energy, Commerce and Industry (MECI) to encourage and grow e-commerce as an innovating method of conducting business on the island. While consumers and businesses were hesitant to utilize e-commerce in the past, today, online services are largely active especially in supermarkets, food deliveries and apparel sales and purchases contributing to the elevation of e-commerce to the foreground. Thus, Cypriot consumers embraced the concept sooner than expected. Nowadays, most businesses have their own websites, Facebook accounts, and a larger social media presence. Furthermore, online banking is becoming increasingly common, and Cypriots are getting familiar to using it for financial transactions. In addition, the government's websites are also being improved, and more services and information are being made available over the internet.

## **2.2 Economy of Cyprus**

### **2.2.1 Overview of Cyprus economy**

Cyprus' economy surpassed expectations after the 2013 banking crisis and became one of the fastest growing economies in EU. The success behind this economical propulsion was the implementation of critical reforms, the strengthening of the investors' confidence and finally the launch of new incentives. To better elaborate, Cyprus is well known for the resilience of its small open economy. In fact, this country enjoyed a continuous expansion for three decades, then, in 2009, the economy fell into recession due to the global financial crisis. However, this recession didn't last long, and the economy bounced

back in 2013 right after the banking crisis and was able to return to growth starting 2015. Moving on, between 2016 and 2019, the economy recorded an average annual real 5.4 % GDP growth. Moreover, in 2018, the rate of the investment grade was rather good. Meanwhile, the banks consolidated and boosted their situation by opting for a diversification of their capital base as well as cutting by about two-third all non-performing loans. At the same time, reforms were applied in the public finances sector which allowed the government to pay back the debts to the IMF five years earlier than expected. It is important to note that before the Covid-19 pandemic, the services sector prevailed in Cyprus economy and it accounted for 82.7% of gross value, the industry accounted for 8%, the construction accounted for 7%, the agriculture, fishing and forestry 2.3%. In fact, the Cypriot economy has diversified over the last 20 years. Tourism constitutes a pillar sector for Cyprus' economy mainly because of its significant impact on employment and construction, on retail and on transport. Thus, tourism value-added a contribution. Today, the food services and accommodation are managed by financial and professional services and by real estate. Cyprus' growing value as an international business center was an important trigger that made the diversification possible. Besides, geographically, this island has a strategic location at the intersection of three continents which helped a rapid expansion for its communication and information services from a rather low base. Moreover, the administrative services were also rapidly growing due to the parallel expansion of the compliance industry. Cyprus, similar to a large number of developed countries, rely on the retail trade and wholesale sector to serve the tourists as well as its general population. The break of the pandemic significantly affected the Cyprus' economy. In 2020 the GDP growth dropped to minus 5.1% according to the world Bank national accounts data and OECD National Accounts data files ("GDP growth (annual %) - Cyprus", 2021). However, the second quarter of 2021 is rather positive with an estimation of 12.8% over the second quarter of 2020 ("Main Economic Indicators for Cyprus, 2017-2024", 2021). Today, the most important current focus of Cyprus is to pursue structural reforms to boost the economy and raise its competitiveness and thus, keep encouraging investment. Of course, the economy of Cyprus has taken a significant hit by the coronavirus pandemic, however, early measures were taken by the government to support the business activities and combat the immediate Covid-19 impact on the economy ("Growth on the Horizon", 2020).



### **2.2.2 The effect of the economy of Cyprus in 2020 on different industries in e-commerce**

The Covid-19 pandemic greatly affected people's lives globally as well as the overall economy. Consumers are spending more time at home, with reduced social life and restricted mobility as well as increased health fears and financial instability. In order to examine the changes that occurred in consumers' card spending, whether in value or frequency, in the most affected industries, we referred to reports analysis done by two prestigious accounting firms: EY's study published in June 2020, *Covid-19 Industry Pulse Report: Retail, Covid-19's* and KPMG study done with the collaboration of the bank of Cyprus, published in July 2021, *Market Insights, consumer behavior in the "Year of the pandemic"*.

Accordingly, consumers' online demands in industries such as Tourism, Health and Beauty, Food and Beverage and Electronics sectors were greatly affected during the lockdowns.

According to both studies and with reference to the Food and Beverage sector, sales soared substantially during the lockdown and continues to be way greater than last year's levels in all Cyprus, although this sector had moderate online sales owing to lack of knowledge and limited availability of click-and-pay services that reflect in-store pricing and product selection. The uptake of the online channel is further delayed by capacity constraints in delivery. However, even though the restaurants expenditure fell sharply after being forced to only have delivery services, it rebounded considerably. Many Cypriots moved from hypermarkets to shops nearby to minimize contamination risks which increased the revenues of the small shops and online services.

Second, with reference to the Electrical and Electronic sector, online sales increased significantly during 2020. EY analysis explained that, as more individuals work from home and as parents seek for ways to keep their children occupied, and as help was needed with distance learning, the technological items and devices such as low-cost PC's, tablets, printers and headphones gained traction during the pandemic, while according to EY, the electronics such as gadgets, accessories and Music Store market experienced a natural fall amid the lockdown. However, as people returned to shops across Cyprus following the lockdown, online sales dropped significantly, probably because people felt the need for physical connection with sales staff. Nevertheless, online sales remained strong in contrast to pre-lockdown records, indicating some improvement in technology adoption. Similarly, the KPMG study showed that following the lockdown, this sector

surpassed the previous year's levels. This observation could point to a substitution effect, with consumers placing a higher value on electronics and related durables and allocating a bigger portion of their discretionary earnings to these purchases.

## **2.3 Impact of Covid-19 on consumers and businesses and its future implications**

### **2.3.1 Impact of Covid on consumer behavior**

The crisis forced governments to take strict measures from total to partial lockdowns to reduce the viral contamination. This resulted in an unstable economy and change in the dynamic of different markets. Since consumers are the active players in the economic dynamics, their shopping behavior must be examined (Mehta et al., 2020). In 2020, the world witnessed an unforeseen growth of e-commerce and digital solutions. Indeed, according to Numerator, a data and tech American company, 30 to 50% of consumers replaced their in-store shopping with orders online ("Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) on Consumer Behavior in 2020", 2021). The intergovernmental organization UNCTAD - United Nation Conference on Trade and Development- states that both consumers and businesses increased their web trades from 14% in 2019 to 17% in 2020 ("How COVID-19 triggered the digital and e-commerce turning point", 2021). Thus, the spending behavior of consumers changed, and this new shopping habit became a new way of life. "Covid-19 and E-commerce" is a survey of 3,700 consumers that studied the way the pandemic triggered the use of digital solutions and e-commerce. It was conducted in 9 developed and emerging economies: Turkey, Switzerland, South Africa, Russian Federation, the Republic of Korea, Italy, Germany, China, and Brazil. The result showed that most consumers shifted to online shopping and the digital world. The online trade mainly concerned the ICT/electronics, education, pharmaceuticals, household products etc. Besides, after a shy start, e-commerce took off in the Food and Beverage sector with customers increasingly ordering and asking for fast delivery services which led online companies such as Google and Amazon to offer services such as "same day delivery" to satisfy the consumers' new needs (Castillo, 2021). According to the results of a study undertaken by the Bank of Cyprus and KPMG, the Covid-19 break combined with the restrictive measures implemented in the island significantly affected Cypriots' consumers shopping in volume and value. For instance, the Food and Beverage sector in Cyprus witnessed an increase in sales throughout the lockdown period while other sectors such as tourism saw an almost total pause in spending. Cypriot consumers shifted

their spending in restaurants to delivery services (KPMG & Bank of Cyprus, 2021). Another example is the rise of online shopping for electronics. In fact, according to Internet press news distributor EINPRESSWIRE, the Business Research Company's Consumer Electronic E-commerce Global Market Report 2021, states that around 53% of the world population have internet connection and 92.6% use their mobile phones to go online. Consequently, the shift to online shopping was not complicated. Besides, the trust in buying high value goods such as electronics (televisions, tablets, digital cameras, camcorders, accessories etc.) importantly grew, increasing the value of the electronic digital commerce market. Thus, the global electronic online market is expected to keep rising from \$ 310.23 billion in 2020 to \$ 343.34 billion in 2021 to reach about \$ 511.06 billion in 2025 ("The Shift to Online Shopping Is the Key Driver of The Consumer Electronics E-Commerce Industry", 2021). These figures reveal that consumers will keep their new online shopping habit post-covid.

The pandemic was behind people realizing how safe and convenient it is to use online shopping. In fact, even post-covid, there will be still safety measures for citizens to follow which will cause some inconveniences. Thus, shopping online from the comfort of home will continue to attract consumers. In addition, this new trend saves time, is less stressful and allows comparison of services and goods according to quantity, quality, and price. Customers are getting more and more familiar with the use of online platforms. Furthermore, they developed an appreciation for local products and got used to the delivery of goods at their door. The user-friendly websites, the fast delivery services, the non-hidden costs, the possibility of refunds and the secured payments help the adoption of e-commerce. According to the American business magazine, Forbes, the current customers behaviors will last post-covid mainly because e-commerce started pre-covid and the pandemic just accelerated its expansion. Moreover, it is safe and convenient (KUZIOR, 2021). The president of the UN General Assembly Volkan Bozkir assumes that e-commerce will continue to prosper after the pandemic. Similarly, Isabelle Durant, the UNCTAD acting Secretary-General considers that the transition to digital solutions and e-commerce will have a long-lasting effect and it will continue to be adopted by consumers in their daily lives. The consumers in developing countries are expected to become active players that will boost the digital economy by shifting increasingly to online shopping ("How COVID-19 triggered the digital and e-commerce turning point", 2021). However, even though online shopping significantly increased, the overall spending per month

dropped markedly as shoppers are focusing more on necessities ("COVID-19 has changed online shopping forever, survey shows", 2020).

### **2.3.2 Impact of Covid on businesses**

One thing the world learned from 2020 is that many things in our lives can suddenly change. The EY Future Consumer Index, a survey done in early 2021, went over thousands of customers since the start of the pandemic. It revealed that in the US, 80% of the people are still changing the way they shop and 43% shop more online than before. Accordingly, the geographic location of a business is less important than before as long as internet connection is ensured. Thus, 26% of consumers plan to live outside big cities and work remotely. Nowadays, according to the EY Embryonic Platform, the retailers are concerned to shift to a lifeline plan to survive the global pandemic impact. Businesses invested in new logistics to be able to survive. Among these logistics appeared the "Ghost Kitchens" a term that describes the restaurants that have transformed the dining area into a space for kitchen facilities and equipment. Also, appeared the "Dark Stores" which are retail centers that exclusively cater for shopping online. Retailers are increasing efforts in e-commerce innovations to be able to compete in future digital commerce. The main questions that retailers ask themselves about are the investments that they need to make to boost their e-commerce and the offers they can make to attract more consumers (Gramling et al., 2021). Education is another sector that relied on e-commerce to keep the educational process running. 2020 forced schools and universities to a quick adaptation to e-learning using digital learning platforms. According to UNESCO, in 2020 there were over 1,500,000,000 students worldwide that could not attend school. Consequently, the ed-tech market boomed, redefining the concept of learning and teaching. Across the world, teachers transferred their way of work from lecture halls and classrooms to e-learning almost instantly. This fact turned out to be a business opportunity for digital platforms of e-learning providers (Teras et al., 2020). Similarly, various businesses relied on e-commerce for their employees to work remotely. At Harvard Business school, Kristen Senz published an article "How Much will Remote Work Continue After the Pandemic?" in which the results of a survey conducted on around 1,800 people working in large and smaller businesses reveal that around one-third of companies that had employees working remotely consider that this new trend will last post pandemic especially for employees with high education. The survey suggests that about 16% of businesses employees will keep working from home post-covid. Another evidence about

continued remote jobs post-covid are the surveys conducted by Harvard Business school, the first on 1,770 owners or managers of an online platform, Alignable, and the second on 70 economists that work at the National Association for Business Economics, NABE. The final report reveals that almost 40% of remote employees will keep working remotely at least for a period of time after the pandemic (Senz, 2020). Cyprus government is also concerned about boosting e-commerce as a support to its future economy. Therefore, different strategies were put in place. For instance, the Ministry of Energy, Commerce, and Industry developed Business Online to help the expansion of the web trade. The Covid-19 crisis accelerated the adoption of this trend, and today e-commerce in Cyprus keeps a steady growth with most firms having websites, Facebook pages and presence on various social media platforms (*Cyprus - Country Commercial Guide, 2020*). In addition, Cyprus developed digital business laws and regulations covering e-commerce regulations that are applicable to both Business to Business (B2B) and Business to Consumers (B2C) transactions. The implemented law is based on the EU directive (2000/31/EC) concerning legal information services, especially for the internal market of electronic trade. For instance, the law for distance selling obliges the companies to provide the customers, in writing, clear information about the services or goods they are buying. Besides, there is a legislation for data protection, a framework for cybersecurity, an enforcement for brand online by registering intellectual properties (IP), the use of cloud location as well as center for data cultural norms, customers and trade, tax system for e-commerce and many more jurisdictions (Kasapi & Economides, 2021). As the economies will open up after the pandemic era, Cyprus has great potential in becoming a regional leader in digital commerce because of its strategic location at proximity of African, Middle Eastern and European markets. Thus, its location condition is very suitable for domestic and foreign online businesses to develop and grow. In November 2020, there was a report stating that Cyprus telecommunication authority (Cyta) is rolling high speed connectivity years in advance of schedule that will be a catalyst to e-commerce and will increase the competitiveness of companies in this new market. Nowadays, the Cyprus Association of Retails expect a “seismic shift” to online shopping (*Cyprus pursues digital commerce Ambitions 2021*).

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

*This chapter explains the methodology adopted in gathering the necessary information in this study. It highlights the research purpose, approach and strategy followed by a description of the way we decided to collect our data and our survey sample.*

#### **3.1 Research purpose**

Every researcher has their own personal motivation to conduct a scientific study. According to Robert K. Yin (1994), there are three different types of research purposes. They can be classified into one of the following categories: Exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory (casual) research. Yin highlights that the boundaries between the mentioned categories are not always clear.

***Exploratory research*** aims to study a new phenomenon. This type of research is usually characterized by its flexibility and is used when a problem is broad and difficult to demarcate. Therefore, the purpose of an exploratory study, is to collect as much information as possible concerning a specific problem to obtain valuable means of understanding what is going on, to seek new insights, to ask questions and finally to assess a phenomenon in a brand-new light. The goal of an exploratory research is to be able to formulate and define a specific problem more precisely, to clarify concepts, to gather explanations, to gain insights, to eliminate impractical ideas and to form hypotheses. There are many ways to carry out this type of research, it can be done through case studies, literature research, surveys and focus groups. Through the previously mentioned, exploratory research may develop different hypotheses, however, it does not seek to test them (Yin, 1994).

***Descriptive research*** is used when a specific phenomenon is being studied and the researcher's role consists of describing it, clarifying it, as well as explaining its inner relationships and properties (Huczynski and Buchanan, 1991). A descriptive study mainly focuses on covering accurate description and background information of the case in question (Yin, 1994). Moreover, this kind of research portrays an accurate and clear profile of people, situations, or events (Robson, 1993). In contrast with exploratory

research, descriptive research defines questions, subjects surveyed and methods of analysis before the collection of data starts. In other words, this type of research should be thought of as a mean to an end instead of an end itself. (Yin, 1994). Furthermore, descriptive research is often perceived as an extension of, or a continuation to, exploratory research (Saunders et al, 2000).

**Explanatory research** focuses on analyzing causes and relationships thus, explaining which causes produce which effects/relationships (Yin, 1994). The main concern in casual analysis is to know how one variable can affect, or is responsible for, changes in another variable. When conducting explanatory research, the researcher is more interested in understanding relationships between variables, as well as explaining, predicting and controlling them rather than detecting their causes. In addition, explanatory studies go beyond description and thus attempt to explain the reasons behind the phenomenon that was only observed in the descriptive study. In an explanatory study, hypotheses and theories are used by researchers to represent the forces that allowed a certain phenomenon to happen.

The research purpose and questions of this case study indicate that this study falls mainly under the exploratory and descriptive categories. This study primarily explores and describes how the pandemic might have a permanent impact on the shopping habits of consumers in Cyprus for the long term especially in the Food and Beverage and Electronics industries. The purpose of this study is exploratory as it tries to explore how a recent phenomenon can impact future behaviors. Not a lot of research has been done in this area in Cyprus. This study will thus give us more insights and a better understanding of the role of e-commerce and where it might be headed. This research is also descriptive via the collection of empirical data. Conducting a descriptive survey will help us find patterns in our exploratory research.

### **3.2 Research approach**

The research approach refers to the chosen way a researcher decides to treat and analyze the selected data. It is generally classified as being either quantitative or qualitative (Yin, 1994). The most important distinction between the two approaches is the use of statistics and numbers. Naturally, the choice of the research approach depends on the defined research problem and the data needed in solving it.

A qualitative approach emphasizes processes and meanings that are non-quantifiable in other words, that cannot be measured in terms of amount, quantity, frequency, or intensity. With reference to its context, the qualitative approach provides a more in-depth understanding of the phenomenon (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

As a result of the previous explanation, our study uses both qualitative as well as quantitative approaches. It is qualitative since our study mainly focuses on getting a clearer, more in-depth understanding of how the current use of e-commerce might affect future consumers' behaviors. This will be done by gathering different articles that revolve around this specific subject. Our aim is to find some sort of conclusions from our findings. To better support the claims to our research questions, we will also use a quantitative approach, we will gather statistics that will be extracted from our survey as well as from different articles found.

### 3.3 Research strategy

Five strategies have been identified by Robert K. Yin (2009): Experiment, survey, archival analysis, history and finally case studies. Each of which collects and analyzes empirical evidence in a different way. Three conditions allowed Yin to distinguish between these strategies. These conditions are based on the type of research conducted, the extent of control the researcher has over behavioral events and the degree of focus on contemporary events as opposed to historical ones (Yin, 2009).

METHOD	(1) Form of Research Question	(2) Requires Control of Behavioral Events?	(3) Focuses on Contemporary Events?
Experiment	how, why?	yes	yes
Survey	who, what, where, how many, how much?	no	yes
Archival Analysis	who, what, where, how many, how much?	no	yes/no
History	how, why?	no	no
Case Study	how, why?	no	yes

Table 1-Relevant situations for different research methods

Research questions are considered as being the most important factor to differentiate between strategies. Questions that start with "who", "what", "where", as well as their derivatives "how much", "how many" are likely to favor surveys and archival records. In



contrast, “how” and “why” questions lead our research strategies to experiments, history and case studies (Yin, 2009).

In this study our research questions will be reached by mainly answering questions that starts with “how much”, “what” and “where”. Also, this research deals with contemporary events and does not have any control over behavioral events. Consequently, the use of survey and archival analysis are the most appropriate strategies to conduct in our study: We will use a descriptive survey that comprises mainly of close ended questions, which will help us better define the attitude, opinion, and behavior of consumers living in Cyprus towards e-commerce especially towards ordering food from restaurants and ordering electronics online. We will also use archived data, which consists of data retrieved from research organizations, public records from government agencies, academic and similar institutions, research organizations etc. to develop a better understanding about the subject at hand which will be useful to widen our analysis. Using these two strategies, we will be able to answer our research questions and thus reach some sort of consensus towards our research purpose.

### **3.4 Data collection and analysis**

Data collection is a process of collecting information from relevant sources in order to find answers to the research questions, evaluate the outcomes and draw up conclusions. Data collection methods can be divided into two categories: primary and secondary methods of data collection.

**Primary Data:** it is the data that has been produced by the researcher, surveys, experiments, and interviews, mainly planned to get a better understanding of the research purpose, without resorting to any existing sources (Research Guides: Public Health Research Guide, 2021).

**Secondary Data:** it is the data that has been previously gathered by someone else, however, it was made available for others to utilize. They were once primary, nonetheless, they become secondary data when utilized by a third party once it becomes publicly shared (Blog, 2021).

To get a better understanding of the Covid-19 pandemic impact on the Cypriot market, specifically on the e-commerce and the online purchasing behavior of the island residents in Food and Beverage and Electronics sectors, a well-structured online questionnaire will be developed to measure, analyze, and study future business opportunities in these industries. The data gathered from this questionnaire will represent our primary data.

A detailed literature review using secondary sources constitutes a base that provides good overviews of the subject studied in our research. We utilized numerous sources as secondary data such as: Books, national and international journals, reliable and scientific websites, reports from banks, government agencies and research organizations etc.

The inclusion of primary and secondary data in our research study allowed us to reach a consensus on our research questions and research purpose. Based on that, we came up with some conclusions that we followed up with some recommendations.

### **3.4.1 Questionnaire**

A questionnaire is a tool used in research involving a series of questions that aim to collect information from respondents. Questionnaires can be compared to written interviews. They can be performed online, face to face, by telephone, or by email. Questionnaires provide a fast, relatively cheap, and efficient way of reaching a large amount of information from a considerable number of people. Data can be collected relatively quickly because the researcher would not need to be present during the process of filling out the questionnaire. This is beneficial for large populations where interviews would be unreasonable.

Data were collected through an online questionnaire conducted by “Google Form”. Various reasons lead to the selection of this particular method. First, this method is mobile friendly as it allows the respondents to directly record their responses on their mobile phones. Second, the results collected are precise; it uses an “Excel Sheet” in which questions and answers are documented automatically. This process permits us to analyze large data set in an easier way. Third, online surveys are flexible as they have the advantage of reducing geographical restrictions. Forth, online questionnaires provide an effective and fast way of gathering a large amount of information from the population at a significantly low cost when compared to other processes. Fifth, it permits to collect a rather accurate responses as it eliminates the possibility of being biased by the interviewer opinion (Malhotra et al., 2017). Lastly, an electronic survey allows the researcher to establish contact with out of reach participants. Besides, questionnaire forms can be completed by respondents whenever they find it suitable and at their own pace. The flexibility of this method gives the respondents time for reflection about the questions and answers. Consequently, online surveys are rather a reliable way of collecting data.

After elaborating the survey, each question aimed at a certain target that tests a particular variable. The targeted population had two conditions. First, the participants should be residents of Cyprus, second, they must have been living in Cyprus for at least the last three years. The choice of respondents was based on different individuals of the population that come from different demographic, psychological, financial, educational, and behavioral backgrounds.

The questionnaire's e-link was sent in different ways to reach a reasonable number of participants, thus leading to a more representative sample. Besides, social media applications, such as "WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger" were used to contact the targeted population directly, send the e-link, and specify the objectives of the study. As well, assistance was given, while filling the form, to some people over the age of 55 and to people who do not understand English.

The questionnaire includes 29 questions in English, including Yes/No questions, multiple choice, scale, and checklist. Simple questions format and words were used so that the respondent wouldn't feel confused. The questionnaire is divided into three sections, starting with general questions about the e-commerce in Cyprus and the behavior of the respondent while ordering online. Second, questions about the e-commerce in the Food and Beverage sector in Cyprus and finally, questions about the technology sector in Cyprus regarding online shopping. The questionnaire sent starts with an explanatory paragraph introducing the topic and ensuring about the privacy of the answers, and it ends with a sentence specifying that respondents should be residing in Cyprus for at least the last three years to ensure that the participants represent only the targeted population needed for our study. In Addition, the general section starts with demographical questions such as age group and gender. Information that will enable us to analyze the responses and make trends, analyze the backgrounds, and understand why the respondents answered the way they did ("Demographic Survey Questions that Yield Valuable Insights", 2020).

Finally, to analyze the data gathered from this questionnaire, Microsoft Excel was used to conduct a descriptive analysis. This software was also used for its statistical techniques. Pie charts and histograms of frequency and different chart types will be presented to develop a better understanding of the results. Those data will be combined with data

found in our literature review to come up with conclusions and relations between different parameters and factors beneficial to strengthen our study.

### **3.5 Sample selection and techniques**

The sample can be chosen from a wide group of people, known as the population, or it can be directly based on results from a subset of population, without having to investigate every individual or all possible cases. Sample selection is a process through which respondents of the survey are selected and sorted out. In addition to that, sampling techniques provide different methods to lessen the amount of data that needs to be assembled. It is important to note that if data is gathered and analyzed from every possible case or group, it is then called a census. Nevertheless, the fact that a census survey can offer more accurate results than a well-planned sample survey is not exactly true. Sampling presents a valid substitute when:

- It is inconvenient to conduct a study on all the cases (the population)
- The chosen cases are pertinent to the study's purpose, and the respondents have a large amount of information on the studied phenomenon (Holme & Solvang-1991)
- The sampling saves cost and time which constitutes an important benefit.

Furthermore, there are two types of sampling techniques: Probability and non-probability sampling: On one hand, probability sampling involves random selection, allowing you to make statistical inferences about the whole group, and where all the individuals in the population have the same chance of being selected. The non-probability sampling on the other hand, involves non-random selection based on convenience or other criteria, allowing you to easily collect initial data.

For an fruitful coverage and a reduced cost, a non-random sampling technique was implemented to pick out the respondents of our online survey, resorting to three different methods; the purposive sampling which requires from the researchers to use their expertise in order to select the most convenient sample that meets the purposes of the research, the convenience sampling method which basically includes people who appear to be available or accessible for the researcher due to time and movement constraints in view of the pandemic, and the quota sampling, which allows a better understanding of a population by splitting up the population into strata or groups such as age, gender and specific sub categories etc. (Base & methods, 2021).

Non-probability sampling techniques are usually used in exploratory, descriptive studies. In our study, a systematic sampling technique was utilized to choose a total of 220 Cyprus residents that constituted our sample size: Between 40 and 50 responses were selected for each age category, split equally between genders. We tried our best to reduce sampling bias during our selection as well as increase the number of people selected in order to have a better representation of Cyprus's whole population. The principal criterion for selection was that the respondent should have been a resident of the republic of Cyprus for at least 3 years, in other words for a period that covers at least one year that precedes the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2019, until now. This requirement is important to enable us to check and study their online purchasing behavior in the period covered in our research which is before, during the pandemic and in the future. So given the large spread of Cypriot population, these insights are confidently believed to be a good representation of the overall online purchasing behavior of the Cyprus market.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### EMPIRICAL DATA

A survey was conducted for the residents of Cyprus living at least three years, to get a better understanding about their views on e-commerce, especially in the food/beverage and electronic sectors. The answers collected from our survey will allow us to get better insights concerning our research questions, which will then help us in our findings. Our survey was sent to 220 participants and was spread evenly between genders and age groups.

#### 4.1 Demographical questions:

Row Labels	Female	Male	Prefer not to say
18-24	34	12	-
25-34	16	28	1
35-44	24	21	-
45-54	17	25	2
55-Above	19	19	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>5</b>

Table 2- Demographic distribution 'of respondents according to age and gender

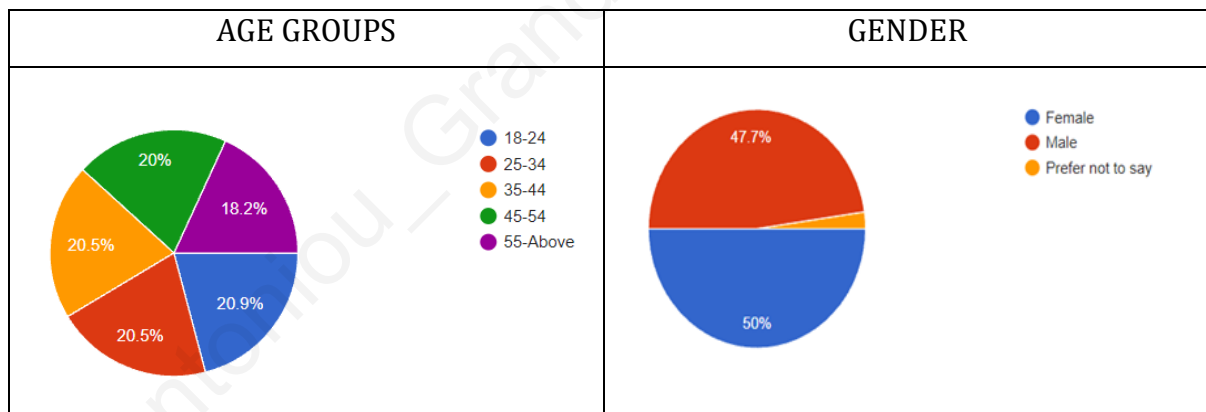


Figure 1- Demographic distribution of respondents according to age and gender

As it is visible from the table and pie charts above, our survey, which was sent to people from different backgrounds, was distributed evenly between different age groups (around 20% in each age group) and genders, to be representative of the Cypriot population.

## 4.2 General questions concerning e-commerce in Cyprus

**Question 3:** Do you think online shopping (e-commerce) was a useful option during Covid for your purchases?

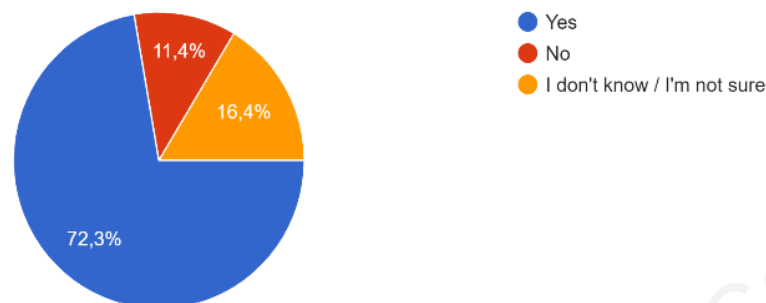


Figure 2- Opinion of participants concerning the usefulness of e-commerce during Covid

The purpose of this question is to show whether e-commerce was useful to individuals during the pandemic. According to the results, most people, 72.3%, felt that online shopping was a useful option during Covid for their purchases. Only a small percentage of people, 11.4%, believed that e-commerce was not a good option during the last year.

The table below shows in more detail the approach of each age group toward the above question:

Row Labels	I don't know / I'm not sure	No	Yes
18-24	2%	2%	96%
25-34	0%	2%	98%
35-44	18%	7%	76%
45-54	14%	25%	61%
55-Above	53%	23%	25%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>72%</b>

Table 3-Usefulness of e-commerce as an alternative for purchasing during Covid based on age groups

According to this table, we can clearly see, that more than 60% of individuals between the ages of 18 and 54 agree that having online shopping platforms was a very useful option during the pandemic. In fact, almost all respondents, between the ages of 18 and 34, agree that e-commerce was extremely helpful during Covid. However, the older the generation (35 years and above), the more the feeling of uncertainty starts to rise. This feeling is mostly present at the ages of 55 and above where more than half of the

respondents claimed that they are uncertain whether e-commerce was a useful option or not.

**Question 4:** On a scale of 1 to 5 (1=least and 5 =most) how much do you think companies in Cyprus improved the consumers' online shopping experience during Covid?

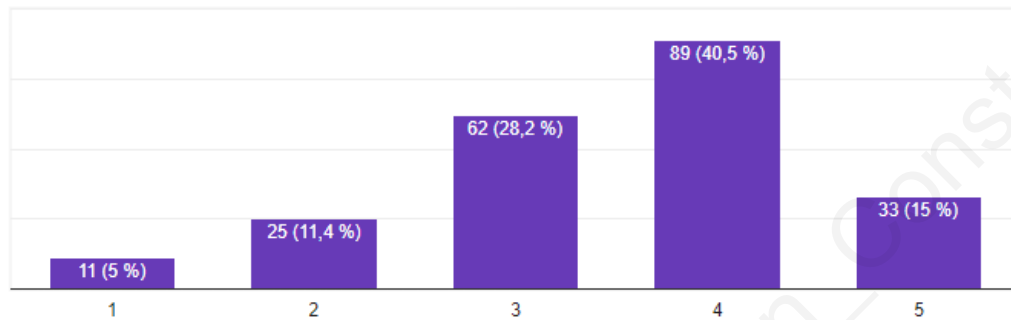


Figure 3-Opinion of consumers regarding the improvement of online shopping experience during Covid

The bar chart displayed above, shows how much people believe that companies in Cyprus improved their online shopping experience during the last year.

A great part of the population, more than half of the respondents, rated the improvement as being either 4 or 5 out of 5. Specifically, most people, 55.5%, believe that companies, due to Covid, invested in their online platforms to improve it and make it more user-friendly. In fact, only 16.4% of the people surveyed believed otherwise, which is a small percentage and 28.2% were unsure and as a result took a neutral position concerning the question asked.

**Question 5:** Did you find any difficulties adapting to online shopping in 2020?

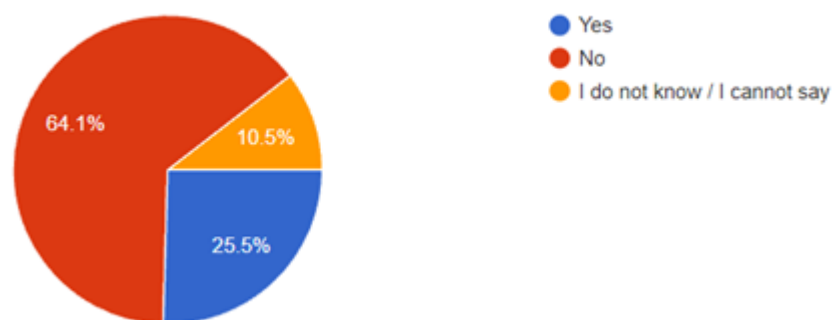


Figure 4-Opinions expressing difficulties to adapt to online shopping in 2020



This graph shows that more than half of the surveyed population (64.1%) did not find any difficulties in adapting to e-commerce during the pandemic. However, 25.5% of the participants experienced a difficult transition during the last year.

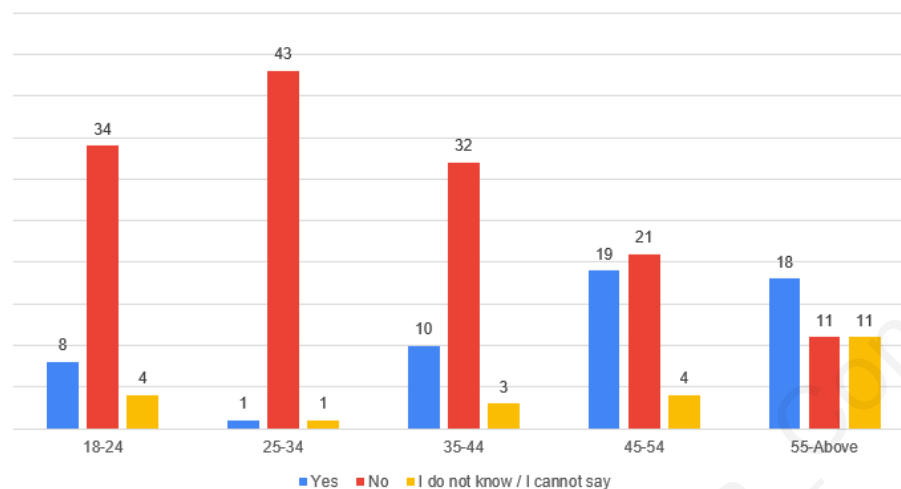


Figure 5-Opinions expressing difficulties to adapt to online shopping in 2020 based on age groups

According to the histogram above, we can conclude that the younger the age range is, the less difficulties they experienced in adapting to e-commerce. In fact, people between the ages of 18 and 44 seem to be the ones who adapted easily to this transition, whereas people above 44 mainly correspond to the ones that experienced the most difficulties.

**Question 6:** What was your preferred payment method?

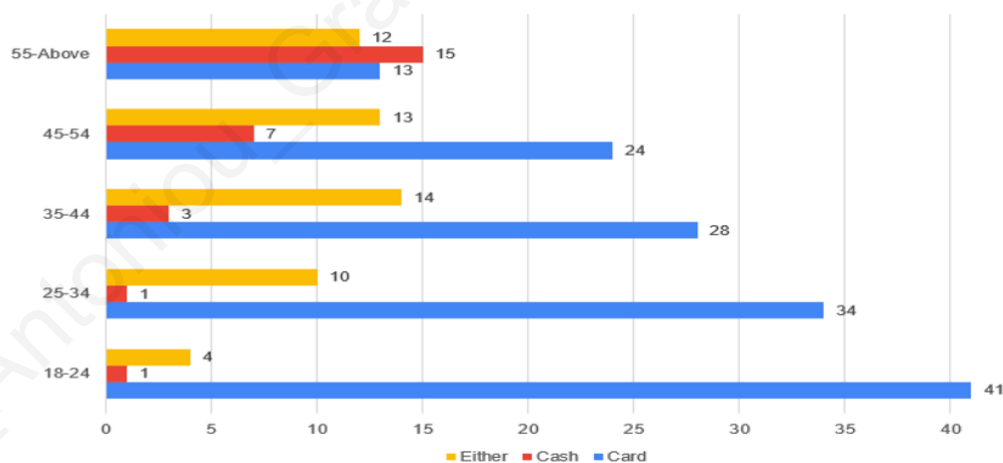


Figure 6-Preferred payment method based on age groups

In this question people had the option to choose more than one method of payment: They could either choose “Cash”, “Card” or “Either”.

From the survey, we can conclude that the card payment is the most used and preferred payment method in Cyprus by far, especially for people between the ages of 18 and 45.

This preference decreases the older the individual is. Consequently, people aged 55 and above mostly selected “Cash” as being their preferred payment method. However even though many of the respondents in this age range chose cash (15 respondents), we can clearly see that most people in this age group are either happy with the use of cards or indifferent to the payment method (25 responses).

To sum up, based on the above questions, we can conclude that even though for some age groups the transition to e-commerce was difficult, e-commerce was a useful option to use during the pandemic. Besides, having cards as preferred payment method eased the transition to e-commerce especially for younger generations. In fact, companies noticed the increase of e-commerce during the pandemic and therefore invested in improving their online shopping experience to increase their sales.

### 4.3 Food and Beverage sector

In this section, “shopping online” means ordering food online from restaurants.

#### 4.3.1 Research question 1 analysis

- **How much was e-commerce affected during the pandemic (2020-2021) in the Food and Beverage industry in Cyprus?**

**Question 7:** How frequently do you order food nowadays from restaurants online?

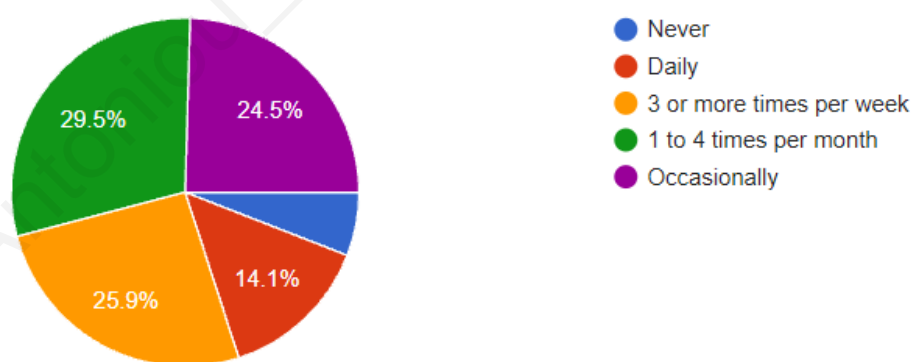


Figure 7-Frequency of online food orders

From this graph, we can see that ordering food online is a common practice for most people living in Cyprus. Accordingly, almost 70% of the respondents, state that they frequently order food online. Out of the 70%, 29.5%, which constitute the biggest portion, state that they order 1 to 4 times per month. The second biggest portion, 25.9%, goes to

people who claimed that they purchase 3 or more times per week. Finally, the smallest portion 14.1%, correspond to the respondents who said that they order food online daily. We can conclude that most people out of the 70%, 39.1% order at least 3 times per week and sometimes daily. In contrast, only around 30% of people claimed that they occasionally (24.5%) or never (6%) order food online.

**Question 8:** Do you believe that you were more active in online shopping during the past year (because of Covid)?

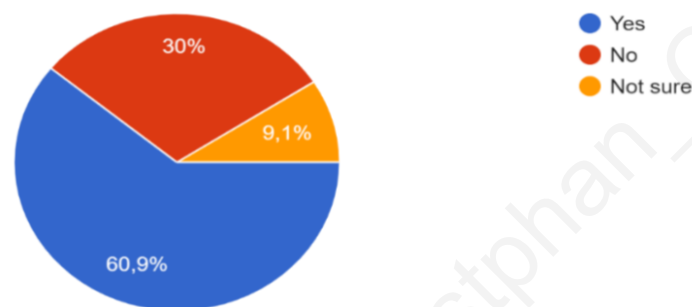


Figure 8-Change in frequency of online food orders due to Covid

According to the pie chart, approximately 61% of the respondents believe that the pandemic pushed them to be more active in using online platforms to order food from restaurants. Only 9.1% are not sure about whether they were more active online in the past year and 30% claimed that the pandemic did not affect their frequency of shopping online.

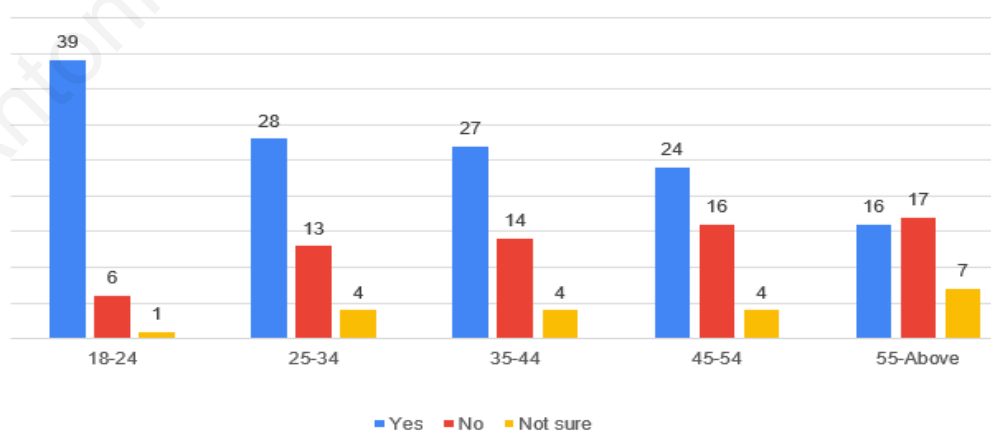


Figure 9- Change in frequency of online food orders due to Covid based on age groups

According to the histogram, we can see that the younger the individuals are, the more they believe that their frequency for ordering food online increases due to Covid. People between the ages of 18 and 54 correspond to the ones that agree the most with the fact that they were more active during the pandemic. In contrast, the older the individuals get, the more they are convinced that the pandemic did not affect their frequency of shopping online. This is mostly true for people who are 55 and above.

- **What were the different factors that allowed the Food and Beverage sector to boost its sales in Cyprus through e-commerce?**

**Question 9:** In the last year. Do you believe online shopping has become easier to use according to your own experience?

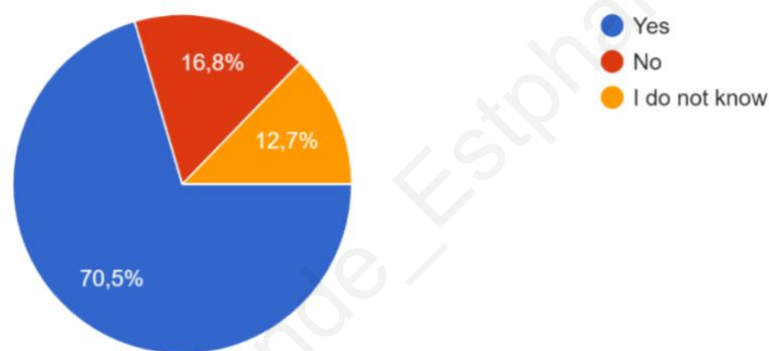


Figure 10- Opinion on the ease of ordering food online

This graph shows the results of the change towards a more user-friendly and convenient online shopping for the Food and Beverage sector in the past year. It is clear from the pie chart that most participants, 70.5%, found that ordering food online has become easier because of the pandemic. Only 16.8% of the participants believed otherwise and 12.7% are not sure about the change.

**Question 10:** On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = very dissatisfied and 5 = very satisfied) how satisfied are you with the customer service while ordering food online nowadays (2021)?

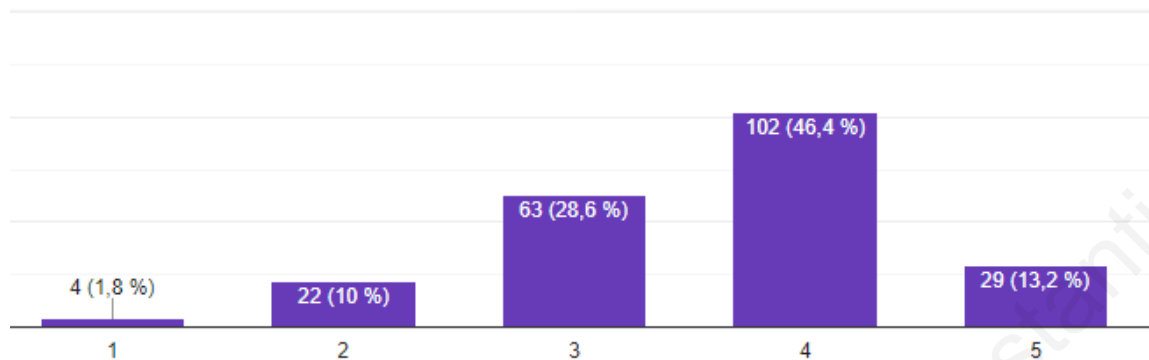


Figure 11-Satisfaction of the respondents with the online customer service

The bar chart displayed plot numeric values of how satisfied or dissatisfied the population is with customer service nowadays while ordering food online. A greater part showed that they are satisfied with the help line of restaurants' websites. In fact, more than half of the participants, almost 60% (131 participants), voted customer service to be either 4 or 5 out of 5. This chart also reveals that 28.6% (63 participants) of the respondents find customer service acceptable and only 11.8% (26 participants) believe that it is bad (with only 1.8% voting as being extremely dissatisfied with customer service). Consistently, we can conclude that nowadays, customer service is mostly considered to be satisfactory and acceptable by most people in Cyprus.

**Question 11:** On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = very dissatisfied and 5 = very satisfied) nowadays (2021), how satisfied are you with the delivery time when ordering online?

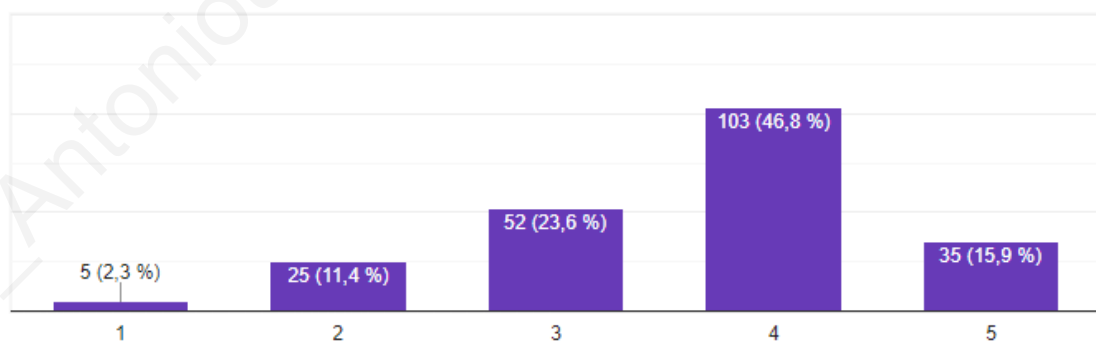


Figure 12-Satisfaction of respondents with the food delivery time

The bar chart displayed plot numeric values of how satisfied or dissatisfied the population is with the delivery service nowadays, while ordering food online. Most of the respondents claim that they are satisfied with the delivery time. With more than half, 62.7% (voting 138 participants) a 4 or a 5 out of 5. This chart also reveals that 23.6% (52

participants) of the respondents find the delivery time acceptable and only 13.7% (30 participants) find it bad (with only 2.3% voting it as being extremely bad). Accordingly, we can conclude that nowadays, the delivery time is mostly considered to be satisfactory and acceptable by many people in Cyprus.

**Question 12:** While ordering online do you prefer:

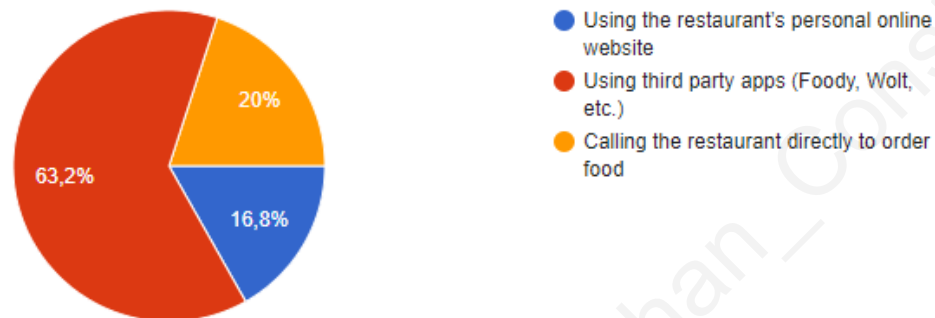


Figure 13- Preferred method to order food

This question was asked to comprehend the preferred channel of communication between people and restaurants. Knowing the preference of the respondents will allow us to get a better understanding of which method mainly contributed to the boost in sales during the pandemic.

While answering the question, the respondents had three options to choose from, either using the restaurant's personal online website or using third party apps such as Foody, Wolt, etc., or calling directly the restaurant to order food. The pie chart shows that many of the respondents, 63.2%, prefer ordering food online from a third-party app. The remaining, 20% prefers calling the restaurant directly and 16.8% prefer to order directly from the restaurants' personal website. Consequently, we can conclude that most of the people in Cyprus, 80%, prefer to order food online.

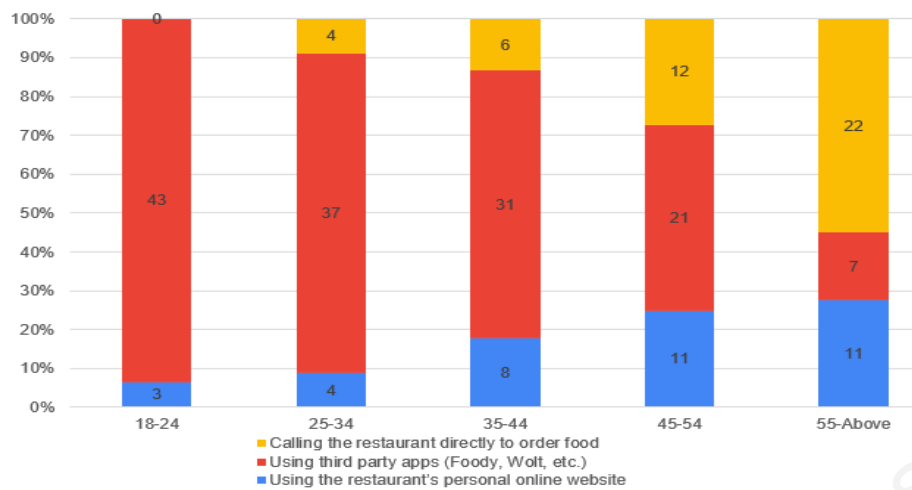


Figure 14- Preferred method to order food based on age groups

This graph shows in more detail how the preferences of the respondents vary with different age groups. In fact, the younger the generations are, the more likely they are going to use a third-party app to order food. Similarly, the older the generations are, the more likely they are going to order food either by calling the restaurant directly or by using its personal website. It is also noticeable that third-party apps are mostly popular for people between the ages of 18 and 54. Besides, individuals above the age of 55 correspond mainly to ones that prefer to call directly.

**Question 13 (part 1):** In the last year (2020-2021), did you feel that restaurants have increased their advertisements for online shopping (delivery services)?

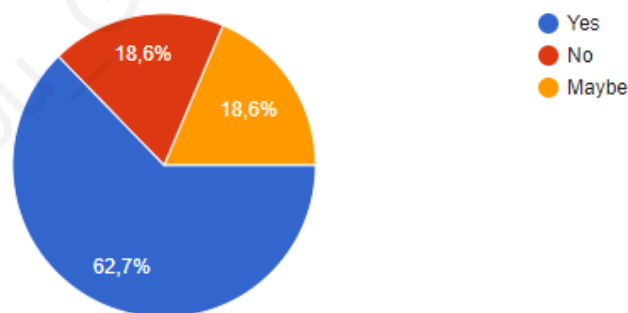


Figure 15-Opinion concerning the increase of restaurants' advertisement for their online businesses during Covid

Most people in the survey, 62.7%, answered that advertisement for ordering food online had increased dramatically in 2020-2021. In similar standpoint, 18.6% of the participants answered that the advertisements for online shopping have not increased at all or that they were not sure about the increase.

**Question 13 (part 2):** (IF YES), In which platform have you mostly noticed the increase in advertisements (TV, radio, billboards, social media, etc.)

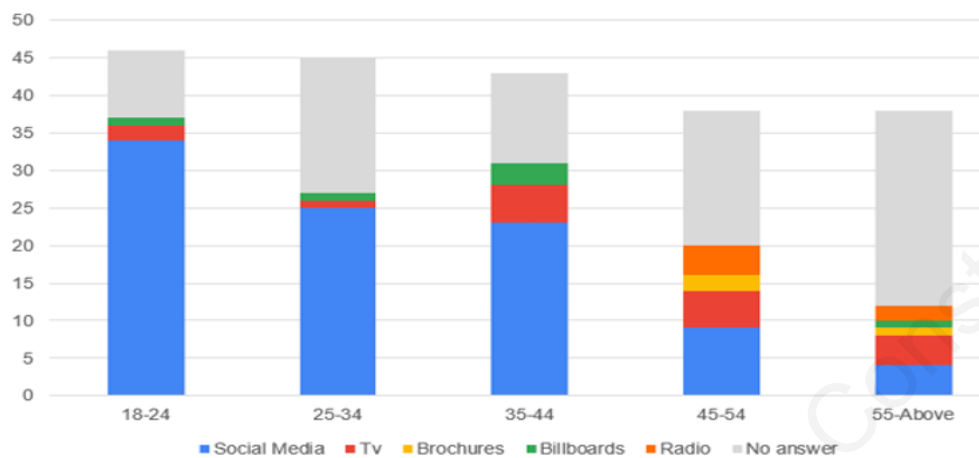


Figure 16- Platforms showing the increase of advertisements for restaurants' online presence based on age groups

When answered yes, most participants stated that they have mainly seen the increase in advertisements for online shopping on social media platforms. In fact, in this graph, the younger the generation is, the more exposed it is to social media platforms whereas the older the generation is, the more it is exposed to other kinds of platforms: TV, brochures, billboards, and radio. This is largely true for people above the age of 44. Moreover, even though social media platforms reveal themselves to be dominant where consumers perceived the advertisement increase, television advertisements proved to be the second most notable platform especially for older generations above 35 years old.

#### 4.3.2 Research question 2 analysis

- **Where do consumers in Cyprus see e-commerce going in the future for businesses in the Food and Beverage industries?**



**Question 14:** Do you believe nowadays (2021), it is important for restaurants or similar businesses to have an online presence to boost their sales?

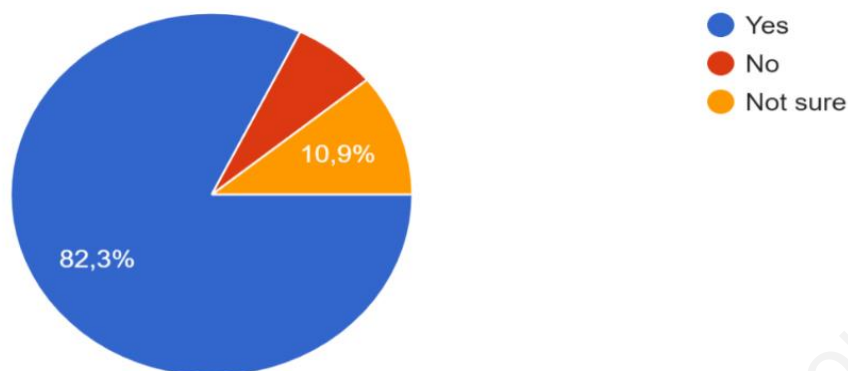


Figure 17-Importance of restaurant 'online presence to boost sales

According to the pie chart, there is a strong consensus about the importance of having an online platform nowadays in order to boost sales. In fact, 82.3% of the people believe that an online presence is essential for restaurants to increase their revenues. Besides, a very insignificant percentage, 6.8%, believe otherwise.

**Question 15:** Do you believe that, because of the pandemic, having an 'online store' will be essential for businesses to compete in the future (regardless of Covid)?

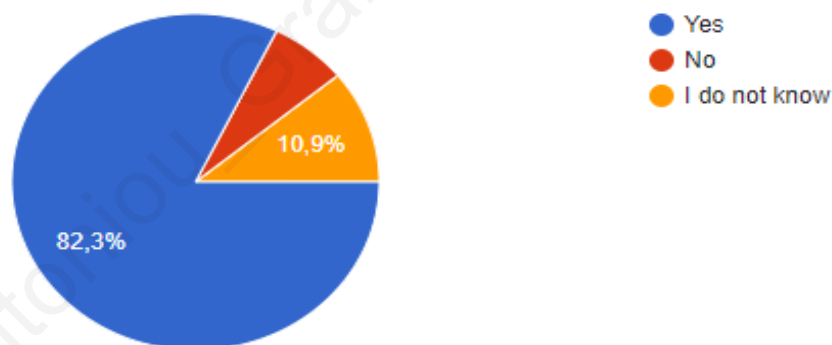


Figure 18- Importance of restaurants' online presence to compete in the future

From this question, we can see that 82.3% people strongly agree with the fact that businesses (restaurants) should have an online platform to be able to keep up with their competitors in the future. Very few disagree (6.8%) with the fact that being present online constitutes a main competitive advantage.

**Question 16:** In your opinion, do you believe that in the future (regardless of Covid) shopping online in Cyprus will:

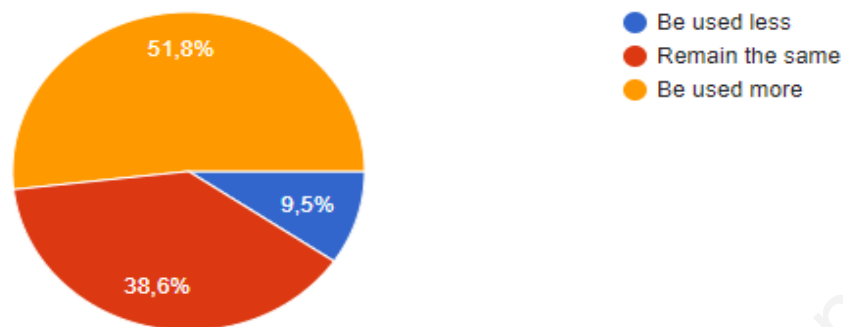


Figure 19- Opinion of respondents concerning the frequency of food online purchases in the future

The aim of this question is to realize how people living in Cyprus view online shopping in the future. As we can see, around half of the participants (51.8%) believe that ordering food online will increase in the future. In contrast, a considerable percentage of 38.6% respondents, answered that it would remain the same in the future. A very small percentage, only 9.5%, believe that ordering food online will be used less in the upcoming years.

Conclusively, we can see that almost all participants, 90.4% are convinced that online shopping will either stay the same as during the pandemic or increased in the future. Moreover, since in Question 8 most of the participants claimed that their online activity increased during 2019, we can conclude that most participants who responded to this question believe that online shopping will not go back as it used to be prior Covid and thus increase in the future.

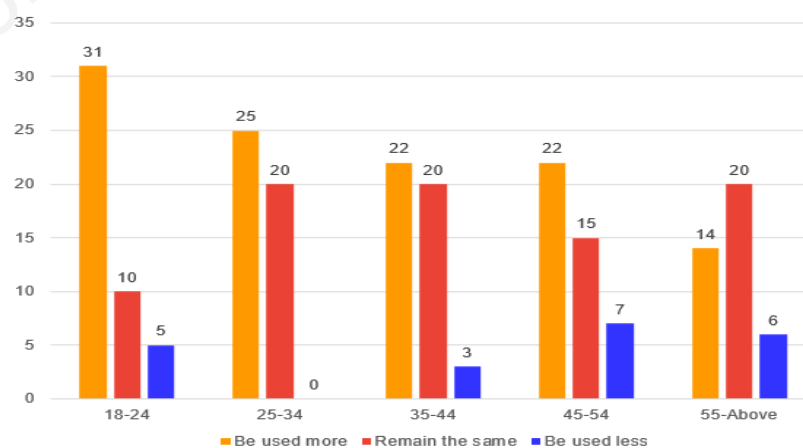


Figure 20- Opinion of respondents concerning the frequency of food online purchases in the future based on age groups

According to this graph, in Cyprus the younger the generation is, the more they believe that shopping online will be used more in the future in the Food and Beverage sector, whereas the older the generation is, the more they believe that online shopping will remain mostly the same or be used less.

It is noteworthy to add that individuals between the ages of 18 and 24 are the ones that are the most confident about the increase in ordering food online in the future. Moreover, individuals aged 55 and above correspond to the ones that voted mostly about the fact that e-commerce in the Food and Beverage sector will either remain the same or decrease in the future.

**Question 17:** Do you believe that you will shop more in person or online in the future (regardless of Covid)?

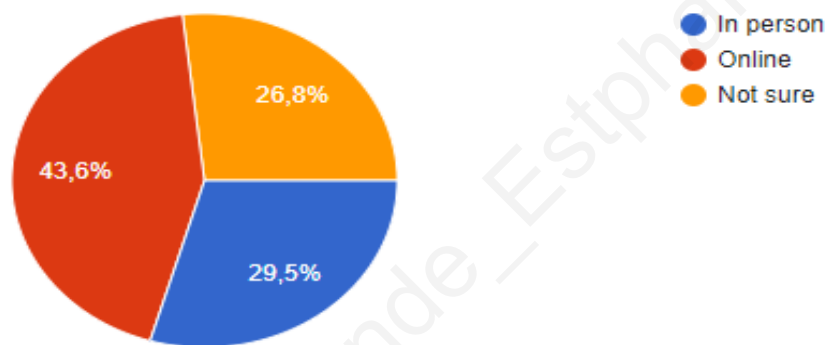


Figure 21- Preference concerning the method of ordering food in the future

According to this pie chart, most of the participants said that in the future they are more certain that they would prefer ordering food online (43.6%) rather than going and ordering food in person (29.5%). The rest 26.8% of the population answered that they were not sure, perhaps because of the pandemic's current situation.

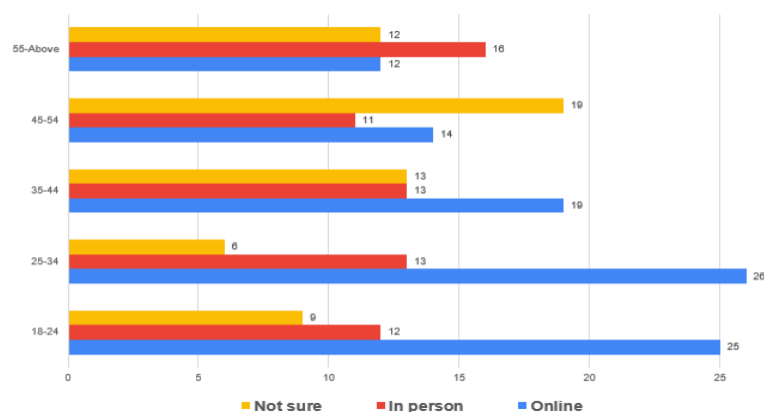


Figure 22- Preference concerning the method of shopping based on age groups

From the bar chart displayed above, we can see that people between the ages of 18 and 45 mostly claim that they would be ordering food online more frequently than going in person. In contrast people 55 years old and above, correspond to the main people that claim that they would prefer to go order in person rather than online.

#### 4.4 Electronics sector

##### 4.4.1 Research question 1 analysis

In this section, “online shopping” means ordering electronics using online platforms.

- **How much was e-commerce affected during the pandemic (2020-2021) in the Electronics industry in Cyprus?**

**Question 18:** Have you spent less, more or the same amount of money in 2019 as in 2020 buying electronics online?

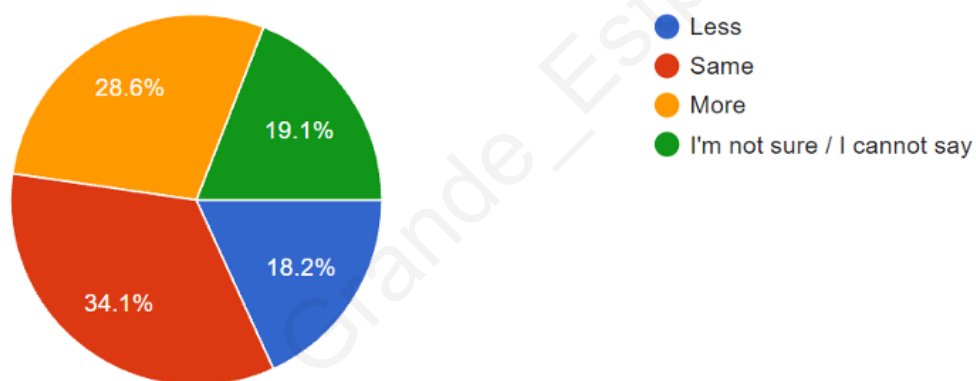


Figure 23-Amount spent on online electronics purchases during Covid

Comparing the year 2019 to 2020 in terms of spending, people have said that they have spent rather the same amount of money on electronics online with a percentage of 34.1. Similarly, 28.6% of the surveyed population showed that they have spent a larger amount of money in the sector of Electronics e-commerce. There was no significant difference regarding the population which was not sure or could not accurately say with the population which spent less by 19.1% and 18.2% respectively.

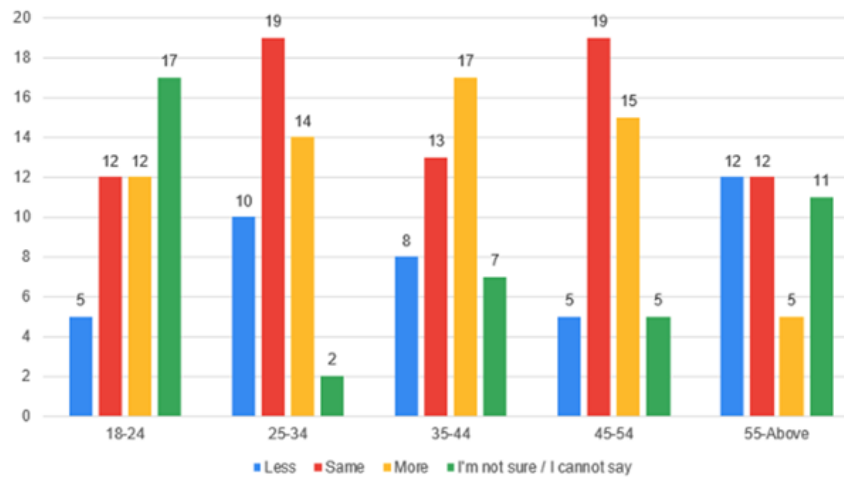


Figure 24-Amount spent on online electronics purchases during Covid based on age groups

To conclude this question, e-commerce for the Electronics sector was affected by a big percentage since many people answered “more”. However, Covid did not affect the purchase of electronics a great deal since most people said that they have spent the same amount of money as 2019.

- **What are the different factors that allowed the electronic sector to boost its sales in Cyprus through e-commerce during the pandemic?**

**Question 19:** Do you believe online shopping has become easier to use according to your own experience in the last year? (2020-2021)

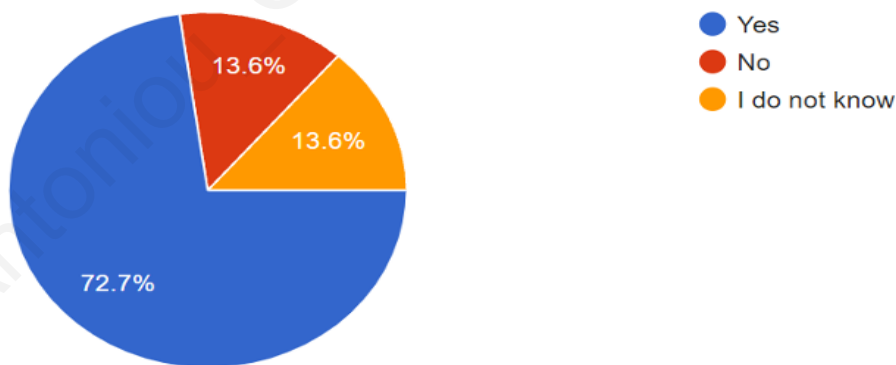
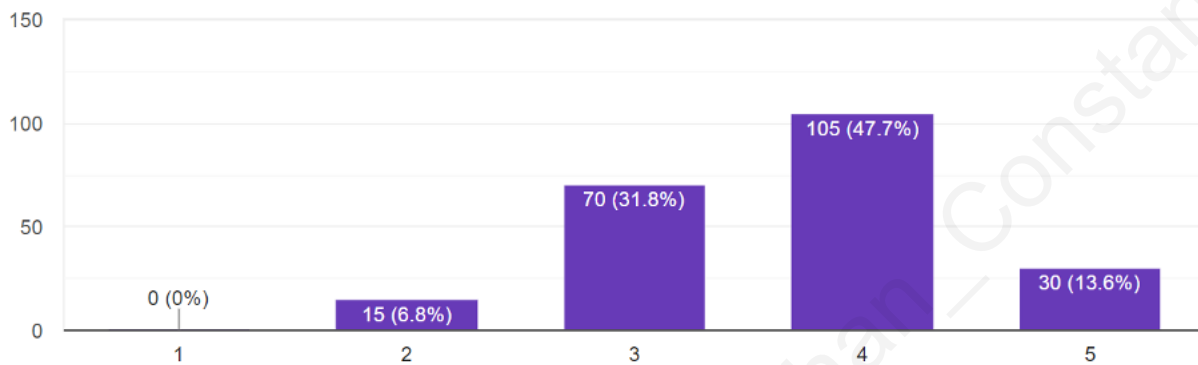


Figure 25- Opinion on the ease of ordering electronics online

This graph shows the results of the change towards a more user-friendly and convenient online shopping in the Electronics section. It is clear from the pie chart that the majority of participants found online shopping easier to use by 72.7%. In similar standpoint,

13.6% of the participants answered that it has not become significantly easier, or that they were neutral to the question.

**Question 20:** On a scale of 1 to 5 (1=very dissatisfied and 5 =very satisfied) how satisfied are you nowadays (2021) with the customer service while ordering electronics online?



*Figure 26- Satisfaction of the respondents with the online customer service*

The bar chart displayed plot numeric values of how satisfied or dissatisfied the population is, nowadays, with electronics' customer service. A greater part showed that they were satisfied with the help line of electronics websites. In fact, 61.3% (105 participants) voted customer service to be either a 4 or a 5 out of 5. This chart also reveals that 31.8% (70 participants) of the respondents find customer service acceptable and only 6.8% (15 participants) believe that it is bad. However, none of the participants voted to be extremely dissatisfied with customer service. Accordingly, we can conclude that nowadays, customer service is mostly considered to be satisfactory and acceptable by the majority of people in Cyprus.

**Question 21:** In the last year (2020-2021), have you purchased any electronics for Education, Work or Personal purposes? (In this question, the respondent had the chance to select more than one answer)

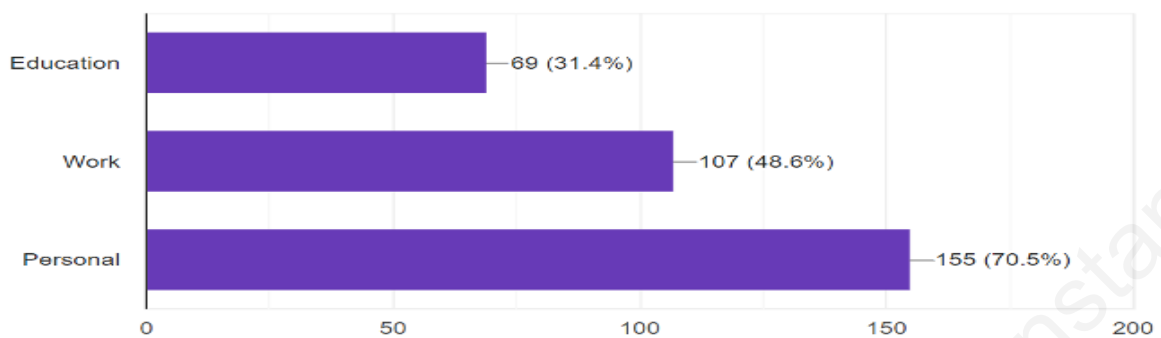


Figure 27-Reasons behind purchasing electronics during Covid

The graph above showed that 70.5% of the people being surveyed, responded that they have purchased electronics for personal reasons mostly during the years of 2020-2021. Then, followed by individual reasons were the work-related purposes by 48.6%. Lastly, 69 of the surveyed population showed that they have purchased electronics for education by 31.4%.

**Question 22:** In your experience, have the prices gone up due to Covid?

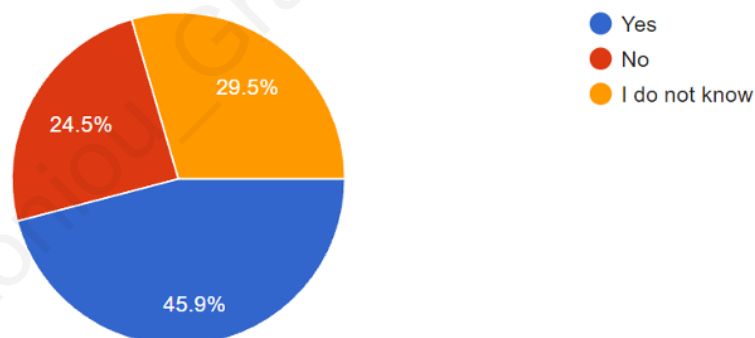


Figure 28-Opinion concerning price increase of electronics during Covid

When participants were asked whether they think prices have gone up due to the pandemic and the transition to e-commerce, the best part answered yes with the highest percentage of 45.9%. In contrast, 24.5% answered that they did not acknowledge any change in the price whereas 29.5% answered that they do not know if anything has changed at all.

**Question 23 (part 1):** In the last year (2020-2021), did you feel that companies selling electronics have increased their advertisements for online shopping?

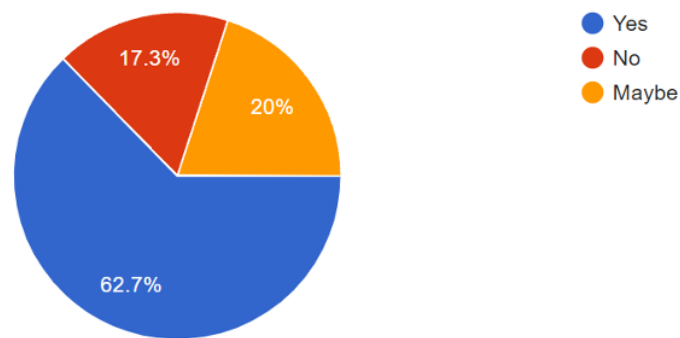


Figure 29- Opinion concerning the increase of electronics' advertisement for their online businesses during Covid

Most people in the survey, 62.7%, answered that advertisement for electronic e-commerce has increased dramatically in 2020-2021. A good 20% of the participants answered that companies selling electronics might have increased their advertisements for online shopping and the remaining 17.3% did not acknowledge any change at all and thus answered “no”.

**Question 23 (part 2):** (IF YES), In which platform have you mostly noticed the increase in advertisements (TV, radio, billboards, social media, etc.)

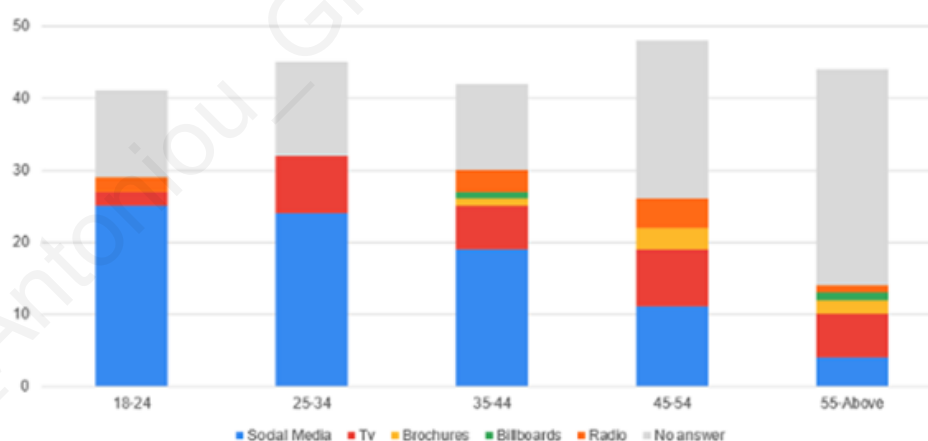


Figure 30- Platform showing the increase of advertisements for electronic 'online presence based on age groups

When answered yes, most participants stated that they have mainly seen the increase in advertisements for online shopping on social media platforms. In fact, as we can see in this graph, the younger the generation is, the more exposed it is to social media platforms whereas the older the generation is, the more it is exposed to other kinds of platforms:



TV, brochures, billboards, and radio. This is especially true for people above the age of 44. Moreover, even though social media platforms reveal to be the main platform where consumers perceived the advertisement increase, television advertisements proved to also be a significant platform for individuals above the age of 25.

#### 4.4.2 Research question 2 analysis

- **Where do consumers in Cyprus see e-commerce going in the future for businesses in the Electronics sector?**

**Question 24:** Do you believe nowadays (2021), it is important for the electronic industry (or similar businesses) to have an online presence to boost sales?

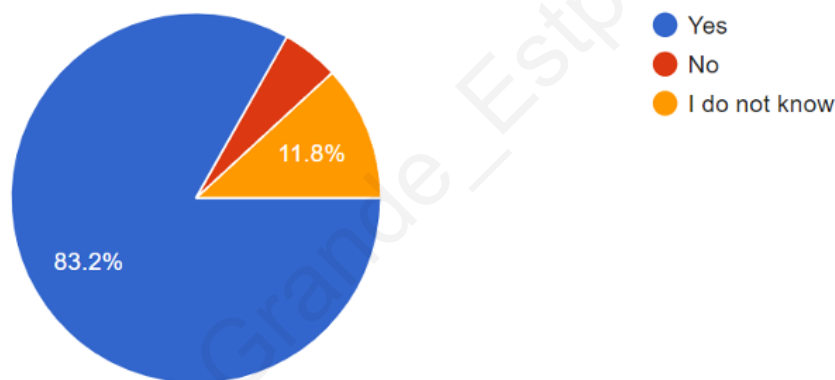


Figure 31-Importance of electronics online shops to boost sales

The above question was vital for people to convey their point of view to whether online presence is essential for Electronics industry. A substantial amount of the participants of 83.2% answered that it is important to have an e-commerce to boost sales while 11.8% placed themselves neutrally with the "I do not know" response and 5% answered "No".

**Question 25:** In your opinion, do you believe that in the future (regardless of Covid) shopping online in Cyprus will:

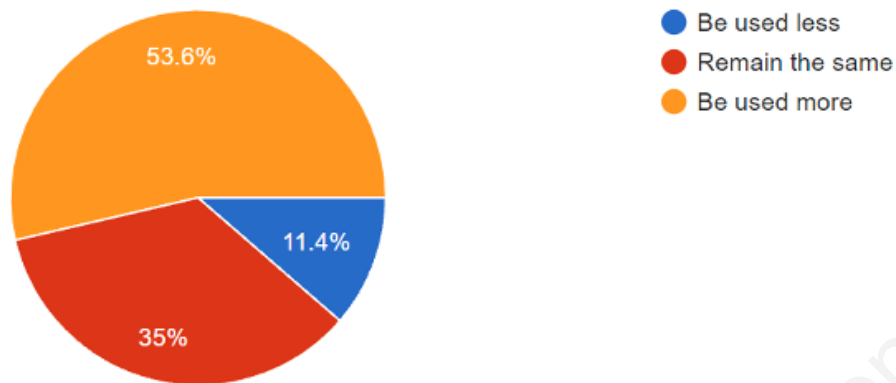


Figure 32- Opinion of respondents concerning the frequency of online electronic purchases in the future

Regarding the question of electronic online shopping status in the future, around half of the participants, 53.6% answered that it would certainly be used more. 35% of the population said that it would remain the same and the rest 11.4% had no hopes for future e-commerce of electronics and said that it would be used less.

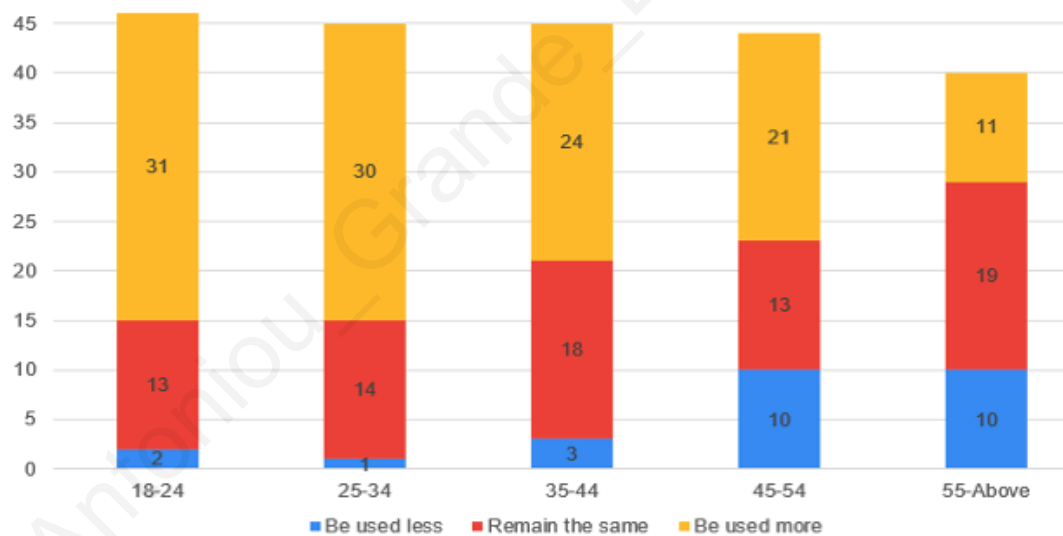


Figure 33- Opinion of respondents concerning the frequency of online electronic purchases in the future based on age groups

According to this graph, in Cyprus, the younger the generations are, the more they believe that shopping online will be used more in the future in the Electronics sector, whereas the older the generations get, the more pessimistic they become concerning online shopping in the future.

It is noteworthy to add that individuals between the ages of 18 and 34 are the ones that are the most confident about the increase of e-commerce in the future. Moreover, individuals aged 55 and above correspond to the ones that are most certain that e-commerce will either remain the same or decrease in the future.

**Question 26:** Do you believe that it will be important for businesses to have an online presence to compete in the future (regardless of Covid)?

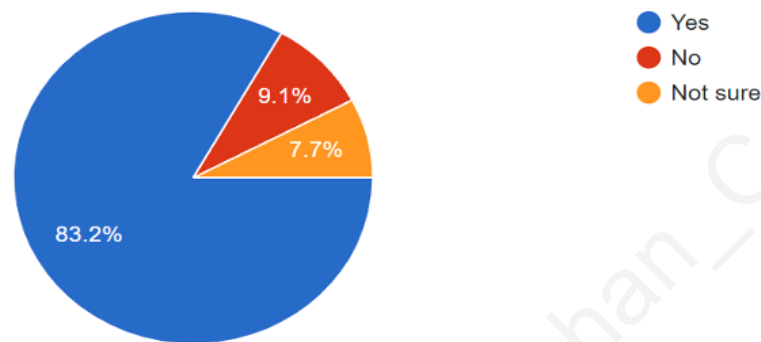


Figure 34-Importance of online electronic shops to compete in the future

The largest amount of the surveyed population answered that it is fundamental for businesses to have an online presence as it becomes more convenient for consumers. More specifically, 83.2% said that regardless of Covid businesses in the Electronics sector must have e-commerce to be able to compete in the future. The rest 9.1% and 7.7% answered respectively that having an online presence in this industry is not essential to have a competitive advantage and that they were not sure.

**Question 27:** Do you believe you will shop more in person or online in the future (regardless of Covid)?

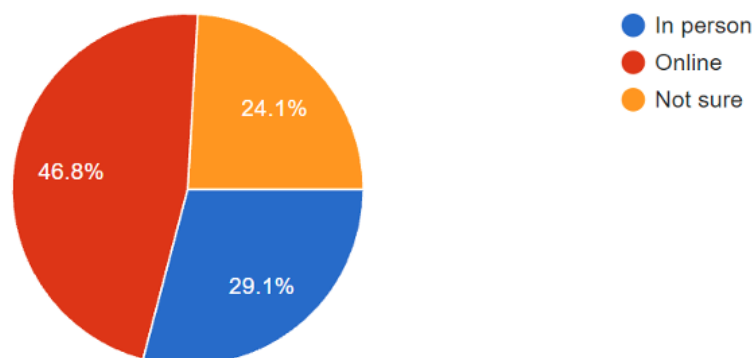


Figure 35-Preference concerning the method of shopping for electronics in the future

Almost half of the participants said that in the future they are more certain that they would prefer to shop for electronics online (46.8%) rather than from physical stores (29.1%). The rest 24.1% of the population answered that they were not sure, perhaps because of the pandemic's current situation.

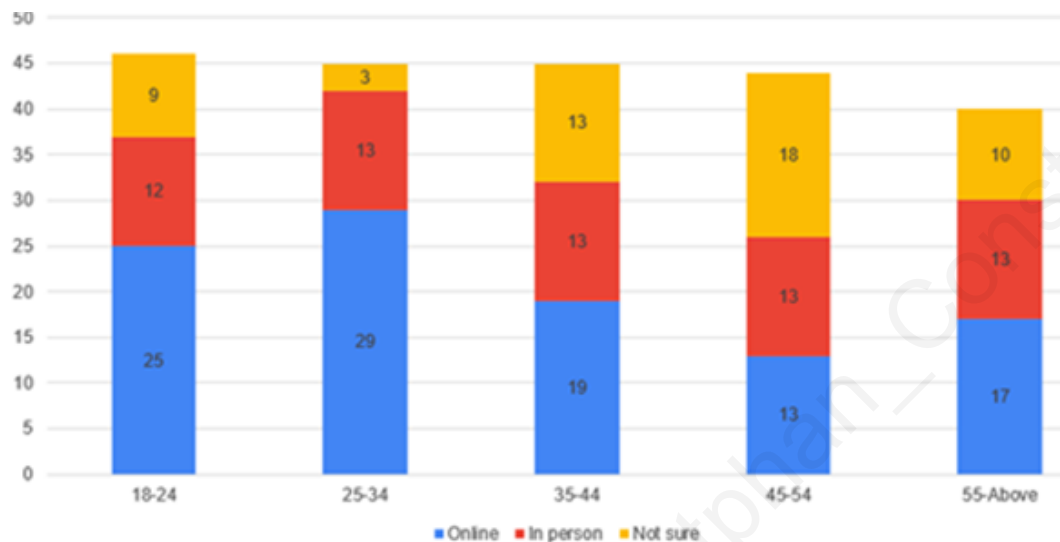


Figure 36-Preference concerning the method of shopping for electronics in the future based on age groups

From the chart displayed above, we can see that people between all age groups agree that they would be shopping for electronics online more frequently than going in person.

**Question 28:** In your opinion, is distance learning going to remain a good alternative to face-to-face learning in the future (regardless of Covid)?

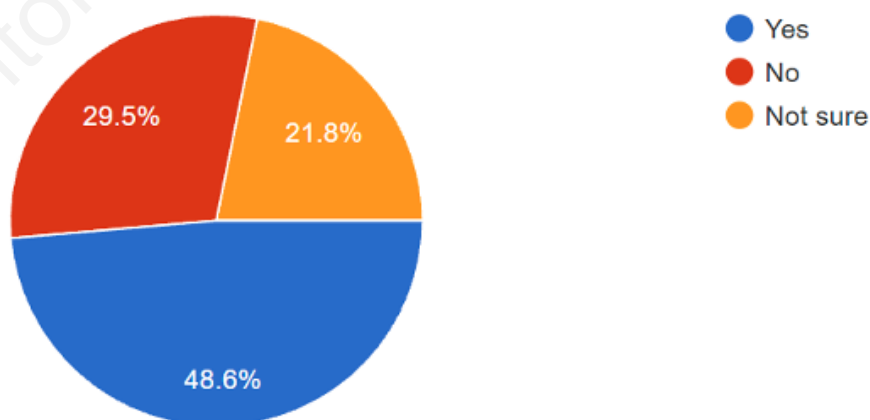


Figure 37- Opinion on distance learning as an alternative in the future

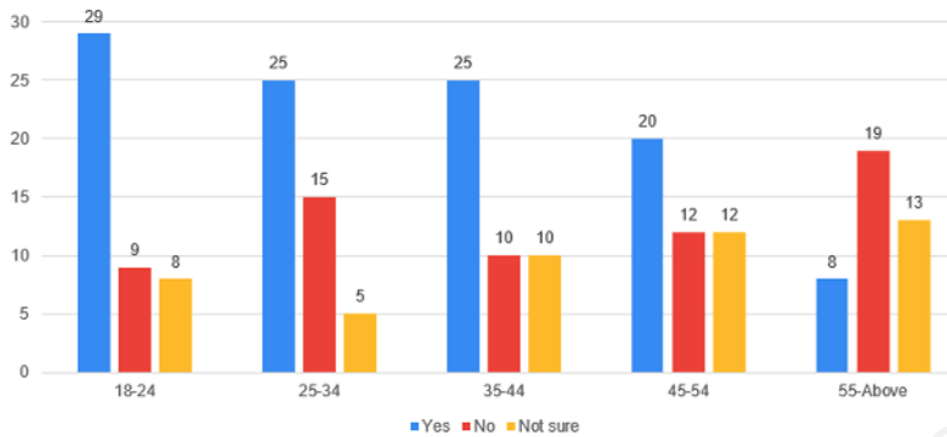


Figure 38- Opinion on distance learning as an alternative in the future based on age groups

This pie chart shows that 48.6% of the participants, mostly younger to middle age generations (18-54), answered “Yes” because they were more related to distance learning. In contrast, 55 and above answered “No” on a larger degree than any other age group. In general, 29.5% answered “No” and 21.8% answered that they were not sure due to the pandemic’s circumstances.

**Question 29:** In your opinion, is working from home still going to remain a good alternative in some fields in the future?

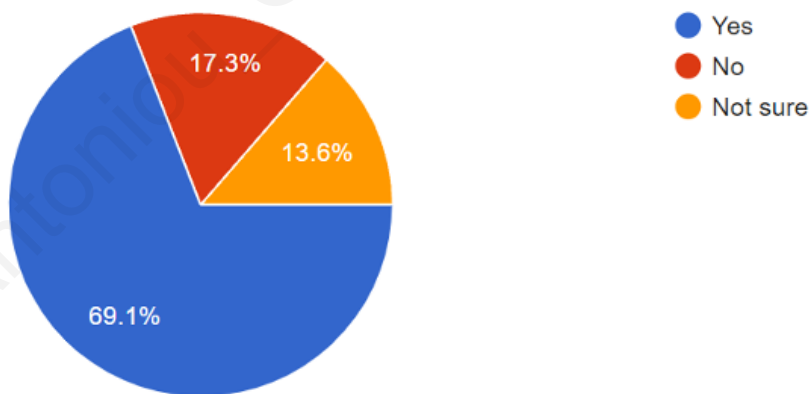


Figure 39-Opinion concerning work from home as an alternative in the future

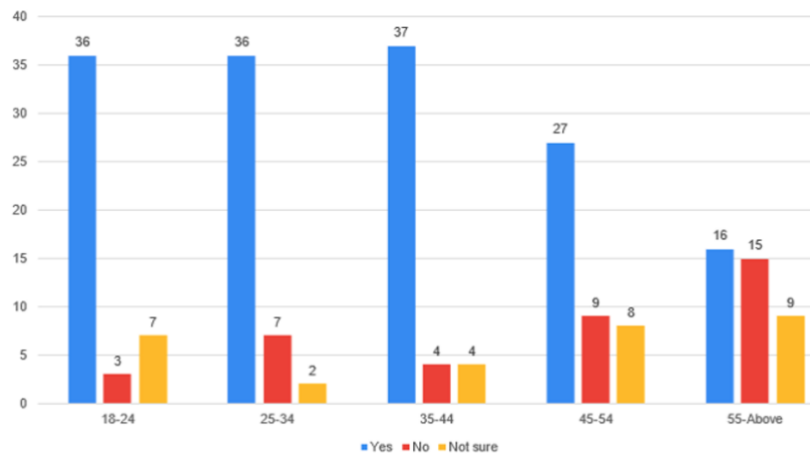


Figure 40-Opinion concerning work from home as an alternative in the future based on age groups

Similarly, younger adults to middle aged participants said that it is more possible that working from home will remain a suitable alternative in the future. In particular, 69.1% (152 responses) said that it will remain as an option and 17.3%, mostly 55 and above, said that it will not remain as an option. The rest 13.6%, which are mostly aged 45 and above, answered that they were not sure about this choice of working remotely.

It is notable that sales of electronics will most probably stay high in the near future as people consider that either working from home or distance learning might stay as an alternative. In other words, for educational, work, or personal purposes, people are most likely to invest in electronics in the future.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

*In this chapter, we will attempt to answer our general research questions by combing our findings from our literature review with our survey analysis. The findings will then help us, in our conclusion, reach a consensus on the overall purpose of our research.*

#### **5.1 Conceptualization of research question 1**

##### **RQ1: Why and how is e-commerce boosting sales within the Food and Beverage and Electronic industries, during the pandemic?**

It is undeniable that Covid-19 pandemic spurred the shopping online trend. This pandemic induced governments to impose severe restrictions and lockdowns. Accordingly, people's mobility was significantly reduced, and the traditional way of shopping became unmanageable. On one hand, consumers had to request approval to go out, wear masks, respect social distancing and have limits on the number of customers that could enter a shop at the same time. As a result, most people turned to the digital world as it was an easier and a safer way to purchase their essential needs since it reduces the risks of virus contamination. On the other hand, businesses found in e-commerce the means to move on despite the pandemic and disregarding the location and the time. Consequently, e-commerce sales were boosted worldwide. The findings of our survey in Cyprus confirm the above given fact as about three quarters of the surveyed respondents admitted that online shopping was a very useful option during lockdowns. The majority of the participants that agreed with this statement belonged to generations aged between 18 and 54. Most of the individuals that showed uncertainty belong to the ages of 55 and above. Yet a quarter of them, which is still a valuable percentage, considered shopping online very useful. Thus, the utility of e-commerce during the pandemic is evident for all age groups (Question 3). Besides, according to the survey, the majority were aware about the effort put by the companies in Cyprus to improve their online platforms to ease the digital trade (Question 4). Similarly, to the world countries, the Cyprus' economy was severely hit in 2020 by the pandemic outbreak and as a result, several businesses went bankrupt. However, the government established structural reforms to propel the economy. Therefore, the island witnessed an increase in e-commerce activities, especially in the Food and Beverage and Electronics sectors. During the lockdown periods, restaurants had to close their doors and therefore, their sales drastically dropped. Their only way out was to shift to online delivery services. So, they promptly started investing in the development of friendly web platforms. In fact, our questionnaire highlights that most residents in Cyprus are frequently using online services to order food with 40%

ordering daily or at least three times per week and 29.5% ordering between 1 to 4 times per month (Question 7). Accordingly, the awareness of businesses to develop their online presence and the percentage of the population using online food services confirms the utility of e-commerce during the pandemic. The survey results shed light on the increase of online activity in 2020 in the Food and Beverage sector with the majority, almost 70% of participant, claiming so. In fact, we can say that this increase took place widely across all age groups, even for senior people above the ages of 55 years old as 40% of them increased their activity which constitute a big percentage (Question 8). This increased online activity in this sector is confirmed by the results of the study conducted by *KPMG* and the *Bank of Cyprus*. The Food and Beverage sector were not the only sector that gained popularity in e-commerce activities during the pandemic.

The lockdown also boosted the online shopping of electronic products. First, employees from diverse businesses had to work remotely and needed equipment for work purposes such as PCs, printers, headphones, camera etc. Second, students from kindergarten to university graduates were obliged to follow their courses from the comfort of their homes. They, thus, had to be well equipped to do so. Accordingly, electronics sales such as laptops, tablets, cameras etc. were frequently ordered online. Third, as people were spending significantly more time at home, they tended to buy different kinds of electronics that could ease their lives and their children's. All the above-mentioned facts contributed to propel e-commerce for electronics on the island. In fact, referring to *EY* and *KPMG* reports, shopping for electronics increased during lockdowns, then dropped as soon as severe restrictions were released. Nonetheless, online sales surpassed those of the pre-pandemic years. Besides, our survey results support these findings as most of the participants claimed that their spending for online purchases of electronics was either more (28.6%) or same (34.1%) between both years 2019 and 2020. We can say that the demand for electronics online increased overall even though a big percentage of people claimed that their purchases were the same as the year prior to the pandemic simply because the percentage of people that claimed that their purchases increased during the pandemic are way higher than those that stated that it decreased (Question 18). The results also suggest that the e-commerce spending for electronics was mainly related to personal use, 70.5%. However, the online purchases were also important for work (48.6%) and education purposes (31.4%) (Question 21). The fact that students worldwide had to attend school online was attested by UNESCO and was the reason that triggered ed-tech booming in 2020.

We can briefly sum up that during the pandemic, e-commerce boosted the sales in Food and Beverage sector because of the convenience it provided for consumers in term of acquiring vital needs with a least exposure to virus contamination, and in the Electronics sector because of the need of products that can help ensuring continuity in education and



work fields, in addition to personal needs purposes. It is important to add that e-commerce usage increased significantly in the Food and Beverage sector in Cyprus during the pandemic while it comparatively remained timid in the Electronics sector.

The lockdowns significantly affected businesses worldwide and led to the creation of a rapid response from most businesses to be able to remain operational. As a first step, online services were almost instantly developed. In Cyprus, both Food and Beverage and Electronics sector made sure to have their online shopping experience at its best to boost sales and revenues. According to our questionnaire, the fact that most restaurants and electronic retail shops have an online presence, invested in their online platforms to make it more user friendly and in their customer, services provide evidence of the importance of e-commerce for these two industries. When referring to the survey conducted, we first find that the respondents' answers are in accordance with the above-mentioned improvements in both sectors. Indeed, more than 70% of participants believe that ordering food online and using the web trade to buy electronics became an easier task since the pandemic (Question 9 and 19). The survey also indicates that 80% of the island residents prefer ordering food from online platforms. Moreover, we notice that the younger the generation is, the more they are attracted to the use of third-party apps while the older generation, the more preference they have to use restaurant's personal websites. Direct calls remain an unavoidable option, especially for the old generation above 55 years old. Nonetheless, online orders are the ones taking the lead especially for the young generations (Question 12). Furthermore, the majority of participants declare contentment from online customer services in both Food and Beverage and Electronics sectors (Question 10 and 20). In addition, delivery time for online food orders showed to be rather satisfactory as 62.7% of participants stated having been satisfied or very satisfied from that service (Question 11). The percentage of consumers expressing dissatisfaction with customer service and delivery time can be considered as being insignificant. Thus, we can conclude that restaurants and retails electronic shops consider customer satisfaction to be an essential element to boost sales and revenues, especially since the pandemic. Accordingly, they gave great attention to their digital services.

As another step to face the drastic economic recession in these two sectors, restaurants and electronic shops turned to advertisements to reach a broader audience during the pandemic breakout. So, their objective was to create a mind awareness for their online platforms. The advertisement activities appeared on various platforms such as social media networks, TV, brochures, billboards, radio etc. The advertisements' increase for online services in Food and Beverage and Electronics sectors was felt by more than 60% of respondents for each sector. The survey also suggests that the younger the generations are, the more they saw the increase in advertisements on social media networks. This is especially true for people between the ages of 18 and 44. However, the older the

generation gets the more they are exposed to this increase on different kinds of platforms, mainly television (Question 13 and 23). In fact, advertisements have always been a powerful strategy to boost sales. During the pandemic, it needed to be reinforced in terms of online shopping. Our survey answer to question 23 indicates that the strategies followed to boost sales and revenues in the electronic industry worked since 45.9% of respondents noticed an increase in electronic products prices during the pandemic. This could be an indicator of high demands, probably due to the need for these products for education, work, and personal use during this crisis (Question 21).

To summarize, the fact that businesses in the Food and Beverage and Electronics sectors invested and gave importance to their customer online experience along with the increase in advertisements were the main factors that boosted e-commerce sales.

## **5.2 Conceptualization of research question 2**

### **RQ2: Why adopting e-commerce in Cyprus is essential for the future of businesses in the Food and Beverages and Electronics industries?**

Ever since the commercial domain took over the educational one, e-commerce started gaining popularity worldwide and gradually started being essential for most businesses as it enables most type of companies to increase their revenues by allowing selling goods and services everywhere. Thus, it can enhance the economic growth of a country. Even prior to the pandemic, the use of e-commerce was expected to move forward as time went by. Indeed, this prediction makes sense as according to Simon Kemp's, internet connection is reaching more and more users as years go by, with 85% of Cypriots having internet connection as of 2020. According to KPMG, Cyprus pre-pandemic e-commerce activity, was not at its top when compared to other EU countries. However, the pandemic fueled and accelerated the adoption of the web trade by businesses and consumers in Cyprus. On one side, businesses needed sales channel alternatives that can reach a large number of consumers to be able to remain operational. On the other side consumers needed an easy, safe and convenient way to acquire their needs during this crisis. Besides, according to KPMG, EY and our survey analysis in the first research question, e-commerce usage significantly increased in the Food and Beverage and Electronics sectors during the pandemic. Today, by collecting data and findings, we can predict that adopting e-commerce post-pandemic in Cyprus will be essential for future businesses in these sectors.

First, concerning the Food and Beverage sector, the results of our questionnaire indicate that most of the island's residents (82.3%) believe that it is essential for restaurants or

similar businesses to have an online presence nowadays in order to increase their future revenues (Question 14) and thus develop their market competitiveness for the coming years (Question 15). This outcome is in accordance with EY and KPMG studies, which state that the e-commerce in the Food and Beverage sector in Cyprus significantly increased as Cypriot consumers shifted their expenditures in restaurants to food delivery services. However, when the respondents were asked about the future e-commerce usage in the Food and Beverage industry, about half of the respondents, 51.8%, believed that ordering food online will keep increasing in the future regardless of whether the pandemic will remain or not. In contrast, 38.6% of respondents, mainly aged above 55 years, expect that their frequency of ordering food online will remain the same. Hence, ordering online will continue but in a steady manner. The combination of these two percentages, 90.4% represent the residents that will not decrease the frequency of their online orders for food delivery post pandemic. If we also refer to the 70% of individuals that affirmed an increase in their online food orders frequency during the pandemic, we can foretell that e-commerce will continue booming in the future. Besides, when considering the post-pandemic consumer behavior, we noticed that a considerable percentage, 43.6%, claim that their main way of shopping for food in the future will probably be through the use of online platforms rather than in person. We also observe here that the younger generations are mostly the ones that select e-commerce over traditional way of consuming. However, a significant percentage, 29.5%, of participants prefer physical contacts and 26.8% do not have a clear idea. Thus, on a general note, we can predict that since almost half of the participants believe that e-commerce will be their main way of ordering food in the future, and since the other half is either hesitant or convinced that traditional way of purchasing will prevail, we can conclude that even though online shopping will continue its fulgurant expansion, restaurants should give equal importance for their physical presence as well (Question 17). Consequently, the importance and increase in e-commerce usage in the Food and Beverage sector in the future is best explained by Forbes, the UN General Assembly and the UNCTAD acting Secretary-General which state that the change in consumers' behavior concerning ordering food online became a lifestyle. Thus, e-commerce in Food and Beverage will remain at the forefront of the consumers' experience. Accordingly, it is essential for restaurants and all other related businesses to adopt updated technology to support their digital business to remain competitive in the future, to increase their revenues by maintaining the customer experience.

Second, similarly to the Food and Beverage sector, it is essential for businesses in the Electronics industry to also continue adopting e-commerce for the future. KPMG states, that post lockdown, the online sales in Electronics sector in Cyprus surpassed the previous years. This statement is in concordance with what was happening worldwide in 2020 according to UNCTAD. In fact, the data collected from our survey also supports the importance of having e-commerce in the Electronics sector in the future as the majority (83.2%) of people living in Cyprus believe that having an online presence nowadays is essential to boost sales and to increase competitiveness in the coming years (Question 24 and 26). Moreover, more than half of the participants (53.6%) believe that this wave of shopping electronics online will most probably increase in the future. Besides, the younger the generations are the more they believe that online purchasing of electronics in Cyprus will increase in the future. Thus, we can conclude from the findings that since the majority believes that e-commerce in this industry will continue its increase, businesses in this sector should give prime importance to their online platforms and thus should keep improving them. This is in accordance with figure 35 in which the majority of the respondents, 46.8%, predict keeping their acquired habit of shopping electronics online more than physically. However, even though the majority believe that they will shop more online, we cannot deny that a considerable percentage 29.1 % tend to believe otherwise and will probably purchase more electronic through the traditional way. So, we can say that physical shops will resume normal operations even though the general tendency will move more toward digital trade. Besides, it is important to note that personal and online shopping reveal almost similar percentages in all generations, however, e-commerce is mainly at the forefront especially for the young generations (Question 27).

Consequently, we can conclude that since most people believe that online shopping for electronics will eventually increase in the future, and since electronics web trade is an important mean to boost sales and revenues as well as increase competitiveness, it is of prime importance for the electronic industries to adopt this trend and continue improving their online presence. This trend will most probably continue its growth especially that the young generations believe that working and studying remotely will keep being a feasible option in the future (Question 28 and 29). This is confirmed by studies from Harvard Business School that predict that working remotely will last post-pandemic, especially for highly educated employees. In other words, the demands for technological items and devices are not going to decrease and these demands will mostly

be fulfilled online. In fact, according to EIN NEWSdesk, it is expected that the global electronic online market will grow by around \$200 billion between 2020 and 2025.

To sum up, e-commerce in Cyprus is essential for the future of businesses in the Food and Beverage and Electronic industries as it was historically already in the process of taking shape in the pre-pandemic years. As seen by different studies and by our survey, the Covid-19 pandemic accelerated the urgency of adopting e-commerce. The adoption of this trend was not easy for all the population, mainly for the older one (Question 5) however, most of them managed to overcome this difficulty. Accordingly, businesses such as the electronic industries and restaurants have a high interest in developing furthermore their online presence, as the majority of the population made the leap in terms of adaptation. In fact, as previously proved, it has become part of the lifestyle of consumers. Besides, since most Cypriots became more familiar in using online banking for their financial transactions, and according to our survey, card's payments are the preferred payment method (Question 6), we can conclude that e-commerce usage cannot but continue its expansion in the future. In addition, the Cypriot government was aware of the importance to boost its economy. Thus, it directly embraced the e-commerce concept and the MECI established "Business Online", developed digital laws and regulations to encourage the development of this trend for its importance for Cyprus future economy.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*In this chapter, based on our findings, we are going to reach a consensus concerning our overall purpose. This section will, in accordance with our findings and conclusion, give recommendations on how to improve and continue the adoption of e-commerce in the Food and Beverage and Electronics sectors in the future. This will give businesses some ideas concerning the next step that can be taken to further boost their sales and compete.*

#### 6.1 Conclusion

Based on the analysis of our research questions, we could finally reach a consensus on whether the Food and Beverage and Electronics sector in Cyprus should continue reinforcing and adopting e-commerce in the future. Today, it is still uncertain if the coronavirus will become an endemic disease or not. Thus, it might keep a lasting effect on Cyprus economy. Therefore, it is important for companies, mainly the ones involved in the Food and Beverage and Electronics sectors, to continue developing and investing in their e-commerce presence for numerous reasons. First, they were among the top sectors that were most affected by e-commerce demands during the pandemic. Second, they have already invested in improving online experience during the pandemic, and today, all they need is to ensure the continuity of the process. Third, the usage of online services has become for consumers a lifestyle that is expected to last. Moreover, the habit of using this new trend was reinforced by businesses raising people's awareness concerning their online platforms during lockdowns. Even the older generations that experienced difficulties the most in the transition to the digital world are becoming more and more familiar with online shopping because it proved to be an easy, convenient, and safe way. Besides, it offers multiple options. Forth, e-commerce is a tool that allows businesses to boost their revenues in a cost-effective way regardless of lockdowns, time and location. Besides, the Cyprus government is facilitating the transition to the digital world by offering support to current and future businesses. Finally, historically, e-commerce started gaining popularity in the pre-pandemic era, and with the spread of the internet worldwide, it is expected to become the way of trade on a daily basis. Hence, it is essential for the Food and Beverage and Electronics industries to adopt e-commerce to remain competitive post-pandemic. However, even though all the above-mentioned

reasons constitute future-proofs that e-commerce will have a long-term success, it is also important for businesses to give equal attention to their physical shops as human contact will remain a necessity for some people. Besides, physical shops will be a support channel for online business. In conclusion, the reinforcement and adoption of e-commerce for Food and Beverage and Electronics sector is a must as it is the future for businesses.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

The following correspond to some suggestions that can help businesses boost their sales through e-commerce in the Food and Beverage and Electronics sectors:

- ❖ Cyprus is an upgrading market on e-commerce which aids in the development of businesses and in making them more competitive. Our research found that most people (63%), use third party apps in the Food and Beverage sector, such as Wolt, Rapid, Foody, etc. Consequently, entering third party apps is an opportunity for small local food businesses, to improve the use of their electronic platforms and thus reach more clients (mainly being younger generations), taking into consideration that most of them do not have enough resources or expertise to create and manage their own online platforms (giving opportunity for consulting companies to help small businesses in this process).
- ❖ Working and studying remotely seems to remain an alternative for the future. In this regard, it would be interesting for electronic firms to widen the availability of products related to these matters. To boost their online sales, electronic stores, especially big ones, can offer online bundles at attractive prices or discounts related to these kinds of products to increase their online demand. Besides, companies should be aware of advertising online offers on the right platforms depending on the targeted customer. For instance, some offers might be more interesting for the younger generations than for the older ones and vice versa. Consequently, advertising on social media platforms would be the best choice to target the younger generations. Television and radio are also very important to advertise on as they can target all generations, mainly senior ones. In addition, the timing for advertising is crucial for better results. For instance, it is best to advertise these kinds of products on television in the evenings were students and working people will be done with their work and

would want to relax, or on the radio in the mornings, when people are in their cars going to work, school or university.

- ❖ Businesses face more challenges regarding elderly shoppers using the internet since they are the ones that are the least active online. Thus, they should support and encourage them to use their online interfaces by making it easier for them. To do so, businesses in the Food and Beverage and Electronics sectors could distribute pamphlets / brochures, especially to the senior people, that include a step-by-step explanation on how to access and use its different online platforms. Moreover, providing personal assistance in physical stores in terms of downloading and using online applications might be helpful to them. In addition, since usually senior shoppers prefer direct communication with staff, it can be useful to add a live chat box on businesses' websites.
- ❖ The majority of Cyprus' residents believe that e-commerce will continue its expansion in the future in the Food and Beverage and Electronics sectors. Thus, the concepts of "Ghost Kitchens" in the Food and Beverage sector and "Dark Stores" in the Electronics sector became a feasible and interesting option to consider especially that these concepts are cost savings. These concepts can help big businesses to expand their activities into different geographical locations without having to open physical stores. This would constitute a significant cost-saving issue. Besides, their reputation will be an important support that will probably propel their online sales. The smaller businesses that do not have enough financial means can also benefit from these concepts by selling their goods without the burden of the physical store opening cost.
- ❖ E-commerce in Cyprus should provide in both Food and Beverage and Electronics sectors a "Comments" and "Reviews" system which will provide businesses feedback that can help them to improve their operations. Besides, this will help businesses to better understand consumers' wants and needs and increase the Service Experience Satisfaction.
- ❖ Food and Beverage and Electronics sectors should focus more on promoting their online stores through game activities, bundles, surprises, special gifts, offers and many other promotional and fun activities at colleges, school centers and any similar



place where the main target market concentrated. As it has been visible in our questionnaire statistics, this should be done mainly on social media platforms when targeting young generations (especially students) and on other platforms mainly television and radio, when targeting older generations.

## REFERENCES

Adams, F. G. (2004). *The business revolution & the new economy: E-economics after the dot-com crash*. Mason OH: Thomson/ Southwestern

Becker, A. (2007). *Electronic Commerce: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications*. IGI Global.

Buchanan, D., & Huczynski, A. (1991). *Organizational Behavior* (second edition.). Prentice Hall.

Base, K., & methods, A. (2019). An introduction to sampling methods. Retrieved from <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/sampling-methods/>

Blog, F. (2021). Primary vs Secondary Data:15 Key Differences & Similarities. Retrieved from <https://www.formpl.us/blog/primary-secondary-data>

Cyprus - eCommerce. International Trade Administration | Trade.gov. (2021). Retrieved from <https://www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/cyprus-ecommerce>

Charalambous, A., Christodoulides, E., & Damianides, C. (2020). *Information And Communication Technologies (ICT) Usage Survey in Households and By Individuals 2020*. Mof.gov.cy., from [https://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/cystat/statistics.nsf/All/64ED3E44EF682B90C22573A70036B736/\\$file/Summary Results-ICT HH-2020-EN-181220.pdf?OpenElement](https://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/cystat/statistics.nsf/All/64ED3E44EF682B90C22573A70036B736/$file/Summary%20Results-ICT%20HH-2020-EN-181220.pdf?OpenElement)

Castillo, D. (2021). *2021 trend outlook: E-commerce for the food and beverage industry*. Sana Commerce. Retrieved from <https://www.sana-commerce.com/blog/shorten-time-market-e-commerce-food-beverage-industry/>

COVID-19 has changed online shopping forever, survey shows. Unctad.org. (2020). Retrieved from <https://unctad.org/news/covid-19-has-changed-online-shopping-forever-survey-shows>

Cyprus - Country Commercial Guide. (2020). *International Trade Administration / Trade.gov*. International Trade Administration. Retrieved from <https://www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/cyprus-ecommerce>

Cyprus pursues digital commerce Ambitions. (2021, April 28). *Invest Cyprus*. Retrieved from <https://www.investcyprus.org.cy/blog/cyprus-pursues-digital-commerce-ambitions>

*Discover E-commerce: the hottest current business trend in Cyprus*. start-business-online.com. (2020), from <https://www.start-business-online.com/discover-commerce-hottest-current-business-trend-cyprus-a-15.html>

Demetriou, S. (2020). *COVID-19, Industry Pulse Report: Retail*. Ernst & Young. Retrieved from [https://assets.ey.com/content/dam/ey-sites/ey-com/en\\_cy/covid-19-updates/ey-covid-19-pulse-report-retail-final.pdf](https://assets.ey.com/content/dam/ey-sites/ey-com/en_cy/covid-19-updates/ey-covid-19-pulse-report-retail-final.pdf)

Demographic Survey Questions that Yield Valuable Insights. (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.qualtrics.com/blog/demographic-survey-questions/>

*Growth on the Horizon*. Cyprusprofile.com. (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.cyprusprofile.com/page/economy?lang=en>

*GDP growth (annual %) - Cyprus | Data*. Data.worldbank.org. (2021). Retrieved from <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?locations=CY>

Gramling, K., Orschell, J., & Chernoff, J. (2021). *How E-Commerce Fits into Retail's Post-Pandemic Future*. Harvard Business Review. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/amp/2021/05/how-e-commerce-fits-into-retails-post-pandemic-future>

Guba, E.G., Lincoln, Y.S, (1994), "Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences, in Handbook of Qualitative Research", ed. by Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, SAGE Publications, Inc, 1.ed. pp. 106

Hadjicharalambous, D., Parlalis, S., & Erotocritou, K. (2020). The Psychological Impact of COVID-19 Lockdown Measures on Cypriots' Mental Health and Quality of Life. *Journal Of Interdisciplinary Sciences*, 4(2), from [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3722584](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3722584)

*How COVID-19 triggered the digital and e-commerce turning point.* Unctad.org. (2021). Retrieved from <https://unctad.org/news/how-covid-19-triggered-digital-and-e-commerce-turning-point>

*Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) on Consumer Behavior in 2020.* Numerator.com. (2021). Retrieved from <https://www.numerator.com/resources/blog/impact-covid-19-consumer-behavior>

Kemp, S. (2020). *Digital 2020: Cyprus — DataReportal – Global Digital Insights.* DataReportal – Global Digital Insights, from <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2020-cyprus>

KPMG & Bank of Cyprus. (2021). *CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IN THE "YEAR OF THE PANDEMIC".* Cyprus: KPMG. Retrieved from <https://assets.kpmg/content/dam/kpmg/cy/pdf/2021/consumer-%20behaviour-in-the-year-of-the-pandemic-july2021.pdf>

KUZIOR, W. (2021). *What is the future of e-commerce after the pandemic?* Spyrosoft. Retrieved from <https://spyro-soft.com/blog/the-future-of-e-commerce/>

Kasapi, X., & Economides, G. (2021). *Digital business 2021: Laws and Regulations: CYPRUS: ICLG. Cyprus: Digital Business Laws and regulations.* Global Legal Group. Retrieved from <https://iclg.com/practice-areas/digital-business-laws-and-regulations/cyprus>

*Main Economic Indicators for Cyprus, 2017-2024*. MINISTRY OF FINANCE. (2021). Retrieved from <http://mof.gov.cy/en/economic-indicators/macroeconomics/main-economic-indicators/main-economic-indicators-for-cyprus-2017-2024-april-2021>

Mehta, S., Saxena, T., & Purohit, N. (2020). *The New Consumer Behaviour Paradigm amid COVID-19: Permanent or Transient?* SAGE Journals. Retrieved from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0972063420940834>

Malhotra, N., Nunan, D., & Berks, D. (2017). *Marketing Research, an applied approach* (5th ed.). Pearson Education LTD.

*Retail, Wholesale & E-commerce Sector trends & current challenges*. (2020), from <https://assets.kpmg/content/dam/kpmg/cy/pdf/2020/06/sectoral-developments-and-covid-19-retail-wholesale-e-commerce.pdf>

Robson, C., (1993), "Real world Research: a resource for social scientists and practitioner researchers", Blackwell, Oxford.

Research Guides: Public Health Research Guide: Primary & Secondary Data Definitions. (2021). Retrieved from <https://researchguides.ben.edu/c.php?g=282050&p=4036581>

Senz, K. (2020, August 24). How much will remote work continue after the pandemic? *HB Working Knowledge*. Retrieved from <https://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/how-much-will-remote-work-continue-after-the-pandemic>

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2000). *Research Methods for Business Students* (second edition.). Financial Times/Prentice Hall.

*The Shift to Online Shopping Is the Key Driver of the Consumer Electronics E-Commerce Industry*. Einnews.com. (2021). Retrieved from [https://www.einnews.com/amp/pr\\_news/544161147/the-shift-to-online-shopping-is-the-key-driver-of-the-consumer-electronics-e-commerce-industry](https://www.einnews.com/amp/pr_news/544161147/the-shift-to-online-shopping-is-the-key-driver-of-the-consumer-electronics-e-commerce-industry)

Teras, M., Suoranta, J., Teras, H., & Curcher, M. (2020, July 13). Post-Covid-19 education and education Technology 'solutionism': A seller's market. *Postdigital Science and Education*. Springer International Publishing. Retrieved from <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s42438-020-00164-x>

*Understanding the implications of Covid 19*. KPMG. (2021), from <https://home.kpmg/cy/en/home/insights/2020/03/understanding-the-implications-of-covid-19.html>

Who.int. 2021. *Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) – World Health Organization*. [online] from [www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019](http://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019)

Yin, R., (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods* (2nd ed.). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publishing.

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (4th Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

## APPENDIX

### Questionnaire:

- **Description:**

In this survey, we are aiming to analyze Covid-19's impact on online shopping in the Food and Beverage (online delivery services) and Electronic industries after one year of Covid-19.

NOTE: People that have lived at least the past three years in Cyprus are eligible to answer this survey.

- **Section One: Demographical questions:**

1. Age
  - a. 18 – 24
  - b. 25 – 34
  - c. 35 – 44
  - d. 45 – 54
  - e. 55 – above
2. Gender
  - a. Male
  - b. Female
  - c. Not specified

- **Section Two: General questions concerning e-commerce in Cyprus:**

3. Do you think online shopping (e-commerce) was a useful option during Covid for your purchases?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I do not know/ I am not sure
4. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1=least and 5 =most) how much do you think companies in Cyprus improved the consumers' online shopping experience during Covid?
5. Did you find any difficulties adapting to online shopping in 2020?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I do not know/ I am not sure
6. What was your preferred payment method?
  - a. Cash
  - b. Card
  - c. Either

- **Section Three: Food and Beverages Sector:**

**Note: online shopping here means food delivery services**

7. How frequently do you order food from restaurants online?
  - a. Never
  - b. Daily
  - c. 3 or more times per week
  - d. 1 to 4 times per month
  - e. Occasionally
8. Do you believe that you were more active in online shopping during the past year (because of Covid)?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Not sure
9. In the last year. Do you believe online shopping has become easier to use according to your own experience?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I do not know
10. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = very dissatisfied and 5 = very satisfied) how satisfied are you with the customer service while ordering food online nowadays (2021)?
11. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = very dissatisfied and 5 = very satisfied) nowadays (2021), how satisfied are you with the delivery time when ordering online?
12. While ordering online do you prefer:
  - a. Using the restaurant's personal online website
  - b. Using third party apps (Foody, Wolt, etc.)
  - c. Calling the restaurant directly to order food



13. (Part 1) In the last year (2020-2021), did you feel that restaurants have increased their advertisements for online shopping (delivery services)?
- Yes
  - No
  - Maybe

(Part 2) (IF YES), In which platform have you mostly noticed the increase in advertisements (TV, radio, billboards, social media, etc.)

14. Do you believe nowadays (2021), it is important for restaurants or similar businesses to have an online presence to boost their sales?
- Yes
  - No
  - Not sure

15. Do you believe that, because of the pandemic, having an 'online store' will be essential for businesses to compete in the future (regardless of Covid)?
- Yes
  - No
  - I do not know

16. In your opinion, do you believe that in the future (regardless of Covid) shopping online in Cyprus will:
- Be used less
  - Remain the same
  - Be used more

17. Do you believe that you will shop more in person or online in the future (regardless of Covid)?
- In person
  - Online
  - Not sure

• **Section Four: Electronics Sector:**

18. Have you spent less, more or the same amount of money in 2019 as in 2020 buying electronics online?
- Less
  - Same
  - More
  - I am not sure / I cannot say
19. Do you believe online shopping has become easier to use according to your own experience in the last year? (2020-2021)
- Yes
  - No
  - I do not know
20. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1=least and 5 =most) how satisfied are you nowadays (2021) with the customer service while ordering electronics online?
21. In the last year (2020-2021), have you purchased any electronics for Education, Work or Personal purposes? (You can choose more than one)
- Education
  - Work
  - Personal
22. In your experience, have the prices gone up due to Covid?
- Yes
  - No
  - I do not know
23. (Part1) In the last year (2020-2021), did you feel that companies selling electronics have increased their advertisements for online shopping?
- Yes
  - No
  - Maybe

(Part 2) (IF YES), In which platform have you mostly noticed the increase in advertisements (TV, radio, billboards, social media, etc.)

24. Do you believe nowadays (2021), it is important for the electronic industry (or similar businesses) to have an online presence to boost sales?
- Yes
  - No
  - I do not know
25. In your opinion, do you believe that in the future (regardless of Covid) shopping online in Cyprus will:
- Be used less
  - Remain the same
  - Be used more
26. Do you believe that it will be important for businesses to have an online presence to compete in the future (regardless of Covid)?
- Yes
  - No
  - Not sure
27. Do you believe you will shop more in person or online in the future (regardless of Covid)?
- In person
  - Online
  - Not sure
28. In your opinion, is distance learning going to remain a good alternative to face-to-face learning in the future (regardless of Covid)?
- Yes
  - No
  - Not sure

29. In your opinion, is working from home still going to remain a good alternative in some fields in the future?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Not sure