

Mobile Retail Shopping by Millennial Township Consumers: A Resistance Perspective

Dr. Tatenda T. Chabata, and Prof. Nombulelo Dilotsotlhe

University of South Africa | UNISA, Department of Marketing and Retail Management, South Africa

Abstract

Purpose: General trends indicate an increase in the adoption and use of mobile shopping applications (apps) and shopping online, in general. However, the trend does not seem similar to that of township millennials in an emerging economy such as South Africa. Township millennial consumers in this region seemingly prefer going in-store to buying products rather than via available mobile and online platforms. This study explored the reasons for the resistance of township millennial customers to the adoption and use of mobile shopping apps during the COVID-19 pandemic to purchase products. **Design/methodology/approach:** This study's applicable and adopted research design was explorative. A qualitative research approach was adopted, and data was collected through online semi-structured interviews. A sample size of ten (10) township millennial consumers from four (Tembisa, Soweto, Katlehong, and Diepkloof) townships in South Africa participated in the interview process. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the collected data and determine the findings of the study. **Findings:** The main findings indicated that participants perceived some concerns related to security and privacy if they were to use retail mobile shopping applications. There was a lack of knowledge and awareness regarding mobile shopping apps and their function, which further resulted in resistance to usage. Township millennial consumers are stuck with the habit of buying in-store. Cost is another factor highlighted as a cause for resistance, as they do not want to pay for delivery fees and hidden costs that arise from using retail mobile apps. This paper further provides valuable contributions in novel and uncommon environments such as COVID-19, confirming that security, privacy, lack of app awareness, and inertia are theoretical contributions to mobile app resistance. The limitations and future study avenues are provided.

Keywords: Mobile retail shopping applications, millennials, township consumers, COVID-19