PERCEPTION OF DBS MASTER STUDENTS TOWARDS OPT-IN EMAIL MARKETING IN THE ONLINE RETAIL OF APPARELS

Dissertation submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MSc in Marketing at Dublin Business School

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Declaration:
I, Ameya Ajit Saraf, declare that this research is my original work and that it has never been presented to any institution or university for the award of Degree or Diploma. In addition, I have referenced correctly all literature and sources used in this work and this work is fully compliant with the Dublin Business School’s academic honesty policy.

Signed: _____________________________
Date: 03/01/19
Abstract
This study is aimed to understand the perception of the master students towards email marketing of online retail stores and what type of email are more effective in email marketing campaigns. For primary research mixed methods approach which comprised of survey of master students of DBS for quantitative analysis and two in-depth interviews for qualitative analysis was used. Later, the data collected was analysed and compared to know if the results from the qualitative and quantitative data collection were in agreement with each other. The data analysis procedure resulted in email marketing being considered to be an effective tool for product promotion and sales for online retailers. Furthermore, personalized email turned out to be more efficient in terms of increasing the click through rate of any email campaign and brand name of the retailer was the main reason which contribute to the increase in the open rate of any email campaign. Also, the popularity of internet enabled smart phones has added to the success of the email marketing by making it easier for the recipients to open the emails through the mobile phones and click through them to make the desired purchase. Overall this research helps the marketers and online retailers to better understand the online retail buying behaviour of the master students which will help them in designing their email marketing campaigns in a better way and help them gain competitive advantage. This research helps in contributing to the research in the field of buying behaviour in online retail.

Keywords: Email Marketing, Online Retail, Customer Loyalty, Customer Retention, Mobile Shopping, Apparels Retailing, Digital Marketing.
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1. Introduction

As the internet has become popular, there has been a revolution in the industry which has led to the change in the way people do business. People have started selling goods and services through websites and mobile apps. This change has given rise to the omnichannel retailing. The retailers have started integrating the brick and mortar stores with the online retail stores to expand their business. The process of carrying out the business through internet is called Ecommerce. Due to the Ecommerce boom, there has been a rise in the number of people purchasing online, which has led to a competition amongst the retailers to increase their visibility online so that more and more online traffic is generated on their websites. Also, due to the popularity of android phones it is seen that people are always connected to the internet in the offices by desktops or laptops and in the home by mobile phones. As of now the total number of mobile users in the world is 4.57 billion (Statista, 2018) This is also a reason contributing to the popularity of Ecommerce. Amongst all the product categories in the retail industry the ones which are benefited the most are apparels, electronics and accessories. Also, amongst these three apparels is the one which is being widely promoted in the online retailing. The reason being it is one of the most lucrative business.

There are numerous ways in which the online presence of any website can be increased. These are called as digital marketing channels. There are various channels through which the products can be marketed online. One such way is Email marketing. Email marketing is considered to be one of the most cost-effective channels whose success can be measured easily. (Valdimar Sigurdsson, 2013). It can also be easily implemented. This is why Email is considered to be one of the most important mode of communication in the business world. It is easy for companies to inform about their products and services through emails (Shishir, 2018). Email marketing is used by online retailers for customer retention as this channel can be used to constantly stay in touch with your target audience.

But even though email marketing is easy to implement there are certain challenges the company faces while carrying out an email campaign. It is very difficult to make sure that the emails being sent by the company are not ending up in the spam folders. Spam emails are the ones which are usually not read by the recipient. This is why it is important to consider only those recipients who have opted-in (subscribed) for the emails from the retailers, while running the email campaign. Also, it is very important to know if email is effective form of marketing as there is no guarantee that the recipient will open the email and carry out the desired action of purchasing the products.

There have been many research conducted in relation to the email marketing which talk
about the success of the email campaigns being run and what all criteria should be considered to decide if the email campaign is a success. But before we consider that, we have to understand the process of how the email marketing is exactly carried out and what happens when bulk emails are sent by the retailers.

![Email Marketing Flowchart](image)

Figure 1: Email marketing flowchart
Source: thetechpoint.org

There are various possibilities as to what happens once the subscribed emails are received by the desired customers (Refer Figure 1). As we can see the customer might open the email and make the desired purchase or might just ignore the email or even unsubscribe the sender of that email.

### 1.1 Context for the Research

The main focus of the research is on the email marketing channel and the industry that is taken into consideration is the ecommerce (online retail). The product category is apparels (fashion). The population for this research is the master students from DBS college. Even through the students belong to various nationalities the whole population currently resides in Dublin, Ireland. So, research conducted will be in the Irish context as the researcher will try to understand the effectiveness of email campaigns being conducted which target the master students of DBS.
1.2 Aims for the Proposed Research

The researcher wants to know if the subscribed email campaigns run by the online apparel retailers are able to successfully target the master level students. Do these students really make a purchase or they just ignore the email or instead they choose to unsubscribe so that they do not receive such emails again in the future. The researcher wants to know if email marketing campaigns are effective in terms of encouraging the master level students in purchasing the apparels online. Even though the email marketing is being used extensively; does it really help the online retailers to generate revenue.

The main research question is to know how many master level students of DBS really purchase online after receiving a promotional email?

As it will help in understanding how many students are habitual in opening the email and making the desired purchase of the apparels that are sold online. This would help us in understanding if email marketing is effective enough to generate revenue and does it have a future in the industry. From the perspective of an online retailer it would be really beneficial to know if there is a target audience for email marketing.

The research objectives are:

1. To know what kind of emails are most effective in increasing the click through rate of an email campaign when targeting the master students of DBS, personalized or generic.

2. To know what contributes more to the open rate of the email campaign targeted towards the master students of DBS, subject line or the brand name of the retailer (e.g. Amazon).

3. To know if the popularity of mobile phones has created a positive effect on opt-in email marketing of apparel retailers.

Email which are personalized based on the products are the ones which get positive response from the recipients (Sunil Wattal, 2012). So, the researcher is interested in knowing if that is true in case of the students as well. Moreover, the blank subject line can also make the recipient curious enough to open the email, but that does not mean the recipient would carry out the desired action (Lourenço, 2016).
1.3 Dissertation Roadmap

Chapter 2 will review the literature for the research. Here the secondary research pertaining to the topic is carried out. In that four themes are discussed which are related to the topic and the literature conclusion is drawn from it.

Chapter 3 will deal with the research methodology being used for the primary research. In this chapter the research philosophy, approach to theory development, research strategy, methodological choices and time horizon adopted by the researcher are mentioned.

Chapter 4 will examine the data collection and the analysis of the data from the primary research. In this chapter data analysis will be used to come up with the findings which will help in answering the research questions and achieving the research objectives.

Chapter 5 will discuss the findings with respect to the research questions and sub questions. It will also, discuss how the main objective of the research was achieved from the data collected through the primary research and whether the conclusions of the previous research carried out are in agreement or in contrast with the conclusion of this research. This chapter will also discuss the limitations of this research in details.

Chapter 6 will conclude this research along with the recommendations based on the limitations for the future research and for the online retailers in the industry who are planning to implement email marketing campaigns to sell their products.

Chapter 7 will reflect on the author’s journey from being student to becoming a researcher.

1.4 Scope and Limitation of the Research

The scope of the research focuses on the email marketing as a channel of communication and how effective it is when it is used to target the students who are pursuing their master level studies. So, here the population which is taken into consideration is the master level students of Dublin Business School (DBS). Also, the industry is online retailing and the product category is apparels. The researcher wants to know about the open rate and the click through rate of the promotional emails sent by the online apparel retailers and received by the DBS master students.

There are certain limitations to this research. The target population being DBS students, the data collected does not include the students from other institutions and countries. So, the data collected may differ if other institutions and countries are included. The researcher has not taken into consideration the consumer behavior on the basis of gender and the behavior of an individual receiving the email may differ depending upon the individual’s gender. The industry taken into consideration is only apparels and so the data pertaining to the other industries may vary. There are several industries in online retailing and every industry
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has its own target market and own strategies to carry out the businesses successfully. Furthermore, this research is limited only for the online retailers and offline retailers are excluded from this research. The effect of the email campaign targeted towards the master students conducted for a brick and mortar store may yield different results.

1.5 Major Contributions of the Study
This study will help the marketers in knowing if email marketing is suitable for online retailing, especially for the apparel category as it is one of the product categories in which online retailing is booming. There have been various researches conducted on email marketing, but none have spoken about the effectiveness of email marketing for master level students. This research will help the companies to understand if email marketing works best when they are targeting the younger audiences.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Literature Introduction
This chapter talks about how the retailing industry has changed due to the onslaught of Ecommerce and the contribution of email marketing to online retailing. There are various themes the researcher has discussed in this chapter. Through these themes the researcher had explained the revolution that has happened due to the popularity of the internet and Ecommerce. The researcher has reviewed the previous research papers and tried to understand to what extent the research in the field of ecommerce and email marketing has been carried out and accordingly has founds the gaps in the literature. There are four themes discussed here. 1) Online Retailing, 2) Opt-in/Subscribed Email Marketing of online retail, 3) Customer Loyalty and 4) Popularity of Mobile Phone usage for online shopping. Online retailing is spreading across all the geographies. This has been popularised because of the popularity and reach of the internet. Ecommerce has disrupted the retailing industry as we can see new online retailer are springing up in the market to take over their offline counterparts. Moreover, there are other offline retailers who are opening the online storefront to withstand the Ecommerce onslaught. This has given rise to the new term omni-channel retailing. We get to know how online retailing is gaining prominence and how the competition amongst the online retailers is increasing. To deal with the competition the retailers are making use of various online channels to increase their market reach and connect with more and more customers. One such important channel is Email Marketing. Email marketing has become one of the frequently used channels for marketing in the
Ecommerce industry. We get to know the importance of email marketing in online retailing and how the channel helps the retailers in reaching their target audience. What all factors affect the success or failure of the email campaigns. Email is a form of direct marketing where the customers get to know about the latest products and promotions through the emails. Email is one of the main marketing tools used for customer retention and maintaining the customer loyalty. Online retailers are able to convey various types of discounts and offers through email marketing. This helps them to upsell and cross sell to their customers which in-turn helps in increasing their revenues. Also, parallel to the onslaught of Ecommerce, there is also a boom which is experienced in Mobile shopping. Mobile shopping has led to the researchers focus their studies on the new concept known as Mobile commerce (M-commerce). Mobile commerce is nothing but the purchasing of goods and services through mobile with the help of internet instead of the computer devices. It is observed that the people spend time in front of their PCs during the working hours while they spend the leisure time using the mobile phones. In case of master students, working hours are replaced by college hours. So, either way they are connected to the internet either via PC or via mobile phone. In the literature review the researcher has tried to convey the importance of email marketing by focusing on all the four themes. The researcher wants to indicate the importance of email marketing in online retailing especially from the future perspective.

2.2 Literature Theme: Online Retailing
Since the beginning of the human history, human beings have conducted various transactions involving the exchange of goods and services to fulfil their needs. Due to the advances in the technology the human beings are able to carry out the same transaction online with the help of internet (Bazargan, 2018). In the recent years it has been observed that internet is having a great impact in the field of marketing. This is why most of the customers feel comfortable in buying products through the online mechanism (Ziaullah Muhammad, 2014). These type of transaction which involve the exchange of goods and services through the internet are called as Ecommerce (E. E. Grandon, 2004). By establishing the trust in the online marketplaces, the consumers are encouraged to purchase online (P. Thaichon, 2014). This has led to the rapid growth of online retailing. Ecommerce is one of the most important things that is carried out over the internet (A.Seetharaman, 2017). The Retail industry can be categorised into seven segments to facilitate the study of one component. The seven segments are gasoline and fuel, food and beverage, consumer durable goods, general merchandise, mail order/telephone order (MOTO), specialty stores
and online retail firms. (Laudon, 2014). The online retail is the one which is the youngest amongst all, but now is gaining prominence. Mail order/telephone order is the predecessor of online retailing. The companies falling in the MOTO segment are the ones who were responsible behind the concept of fast delivery of small orders. They were the ones who created such experiences for the customers and now some of them have set up an online storefronts which has given rise to the pure online retailers (BABA, 2015). Essentially, an online retailer is a seller who displays his products through images on the internet, which facilitates information of the end consumer and the whole process of placing an order and paying for that product is then made using the specific tools on the internet. This is how the business is carried out, to facilitate the buying decision of the consumer. Online retailing can cover unlimited area. It can only be limited if the communication networks do not exist. In spite of the lack of physical way between consumer and provider, many of the products, such as apparels, books, etc. are displayed through images and this information is enough to trigger the buying decision (BABA, 2015).

Online retailing is undergoing rapid growth worldwide, under the aggressive innovation and wide application of information technology (Yuagao Chen, 2016). This online retailing has led to the tremendous competition between the retailers online and offline alike. To deal with this competition the retailers have started using advanced technologies. The advancement in the technologies has made the online retailers capable enough to make use of the information of the consumers to a great extent. The firms use the information of the consumers to tailor the communication on an individual basis across various departments like marketing, sales and customer services. Pure online retailers like Amazon suggest their products to the consumers based on the browsing history and the buying behaviour of the consumer they are planning to target (Sunil Wattal, 2012). Through this information the retailers are able to figure out the various factors that govern the buying decision making process of the shoppers. Online shopping decisions are strongly influenced by income level, gender and the ease of use of online shopping applications. Factors such as age, education etc. do not affect the shopping decision making process for online as well as offline retail. The males prefer to shop online as compared to the females and moreover the higher the income the higher are the chances of buying online (Arlina Nurbaiti Lubis, 2018). As the age is not the factor affecting the online buying decision, we can see that the students aged between 20-35 can also make purchases online. The factors that encourage students to buy online are usability of the product, clarity in the content of the product being displayed online and the personalization in the form of suggestions given by the online retailers for making online purchases (SUNDAR, 2016). The clarity of the product refers to the quality of
the information pertaining to the product which is being conveyed across the online marketplace where the product is listed. The factors governing the quality of the information are currency, accuracy, timelines, completeness and understandability. There are various other factors discussed by different researchers which influence the buying behaviour of the students while making an online purchase. These factors were perception of the individual, past purchase experience, security and demographics (Scheufele, 2002). The other studies showed convenience as the major factor as the product is delivered at your doorstep. It also has better pricing and saves time. There are also online product reviews which help in knowing the user experience (Comegys, 2003). A. Seetharaman et. al. in their article have discussed other factors that influence the growth of online retailing. These factors are trust, awareness, transaction cost, culture and customer satisfaction. The trust building of the customers in done product reviewing system This review system helps in building trust among the customers who purchase online. Although there are people who argue that third party rating on the ecommerce website will help in increasing the trust of the customers in that website. But, to achieve the customer satisfaction it is very important to first gain the trust of the customer in online retailing. So, trust is a very important factor that influences the satisfaction (Berry, 2000). Many researchers have considered trust as the main determinant that helps in developing a long-term relationship between the seller and the buyer. Awareness is considered to be another determinant for the change in the preference of the consumers (A. Seetharaman, 2017).

The overall transaction cost seems to be cheaper in online retail as compared to the offline retail which help people to buy the products online. Good website quality is also considered one of the main reasons for the consumers to make purchases.

Due to such popularity of online retailing, offline retailers have realised that maintaining a strong presence on the web is inevitable in the today’s global economy (Krishnamurthy, 2005). In the future the business will be conducted in the online market platforms allowing the companies to compete on the common grounds irrespective of their size (Palmer, 1997). This has given rise to the term omnichannel retailing. As more and more consumers are indulging in the use of various channels for shopping, more and more retailers are opening up to newer channels to increase their market reach. The popularity of various channels like social media, mobile phones and internet is on the rise and this has led to the revolution in the experience of the retail consumer. Now consumers can shop anytime anywhere. The customers have started using multiple channels while buying products from the retailers (Deloitte, 2014). This is why it has become very important that the online retailers should focus on retaining the customers and encouraging them to go for repetitive purchases if
they want to survive the competition. So, to make sure the customers are retained, the firms are indulging in various activities. One such activity is email marketing. Many online retailers send emails to their customers who have opted-in for the newsletters. These newsletters inform them about the ongoing discounts and offers which can be availed by the customers. This is what brings us to another theme in the literature review which is Opt-in email marketing of online retail.

2.3 Literature theme: Opt-in/Subscribed Email Marketing of online retail

As discussed in the previous section, due to advent of the internet more and more retailers are going online. For more than a decade the internet is the fastest growing channel for shopping the world has to offer (Dawson, 2010). The rapid expansion of the online shopping can be credited to the various perks it offers its consumers. These perks include access to the wide range of products along with the competitive pricing, ease of purchasing and saving of time. And as the retailers go online, the need to retain the customers and to have an advantage in the highly competitive market increases. This has created a new channel for marketing. It has been described as the most important innovation since the inception of the printing press and that will not only transform the way people do business with each other but also the very definition of what it is to be like a human being in the society (Hoffman, 2000). Email is a result of the evolution of traditional mailing. Email share a very close relation to the internet as it has been observed that most of the sessions on the internet involve the usage of email (Tezinde, 2002). There is unique form of transition from the traditional form of business management to the Ecommerce. The impact of this change in the way companies communicate with their customers is altering the way in which the companies are marketing their products and the way in which they are delivering their message to their respective prospects (Chittenden, 2003). Email is used to by the companies to inform their respective potential and clients and the current customers through the help of internet and is the most popular element that is used on the web (Gay, 2007). This is why email marketing is considered as an effective internet marketing tool (Chittenden, 2003). E-mail can be a powerful mode of communication for marketing. Many marketers and companies favour this mode as it provides a faster and cheaper way to reach their target audience (Drèze, 2009). According to a survey by McKinsey, more than 80% of companies worldwide use promotional e-mail campaigns to reach their respective customers (McKinsey Quarterly, 2007). It is one way of communicating with your customers on a personal level. Moreover, the online environment provides various tools which help in measuring accurately
the actions of the consumers who receive the promotional email (Wallace, 2001). This has become a boon to the marketers who always intend to optimize the effectiveness of the marketing efforts and measure the return on investment (ROI) of the marketing expenditures (Drèze, 2009). E-mail is one of the fastest-growing communications technologies in history. There were 2 million e-mail accounts in 1985, which has grown to 891.1 million e-mail accounts at the beginning of 2001. This exponential growth tells us that Email marketing has a lot of potential if used wisely. It was expected that the number of e-mail accounts across the globe would cross the 1 billion mark during 2002. It has also changed the way how, with whom and about what people communicate. Also, email has made executives to learn to type and grandmothers to sign up on to the Internet (Rettie, 2002). E-mail marketing is considered to be the hottest and the most effective mode of marketing since it gives a perfect forum to keep the consumers informed about the latest developments and upcoming trends in the market (Rajkumar, 2014). In-spite of that e-mail response rates started out high (especially when compared with those reported for online and offline advertising), but eventually they declined and are now below 2.5% (Direct Marketing Association, 2005). The results showed that there is a significant correlation between the response rate and subject line, e-mail length, incentive, and the number of images (Chittenden, 2003), but the main reason behind it being spam email which were being sent and received across the globe. Spam poses a main threat to the e-commerce growth (Moustakas et al., 2006). Commercial email which are sent without the permission of the recipient are considered as spam (Morimoto, 2006). Moreover, the email can also be considered as spam if it is not in connection to the recipient’s personal needs and provides disproportionate benefits to the sender (Kumar, 2014). The main concern for the recipient of spam is the volume of it. Out of the 210 billion email sent per day, spam accounts to 78% (Fletcher, 2009). Furthermore, as per Gratton apart from the volume, the spam is also characterized by it’s fraudulent, illegal and offensive nature, the absence of an opt-out option and when it is in violation of privacy guidelines (Gratton, 2004). If the email campaign gets classified as spam, then the response rate will be a fraction of the potential of that campaign (Duffy, 2007).The solution to this problem is the Opt-in email marketing or the permission-based email marketing (PEM). The results suggest that permission-based/opt-in email is more effective as compared to spam email advertising. Solicited email, is perceived less intrusiveness by the recipients if the email advertisement offered them financial incentives. (Hsin Hsin Chang, 2013). Opt-in email campaign helps in highlighting relevant new products and special promotions, it reduces consumers’ search and purchase costs (Merisavvo, 2004). While the internet has turned out to be a retail force to be reckoned
with, its’ success is dependent, to some extent on other promotional tools. One such tool is Opt-in or Permission email marketing (PEM). (Vaughan Reimers, 2016). The outcome of the study carried out indicate that Opt-in email marketing positively influences the perceived usefulness, enjoyment experienced and ease of use from shopping online. Moreover, it also serves to reduce the perceived risk (Vaughan Reimers, 2016). Opt-in email marketing is defined as an e-mail which is promotional in nature and is sent to consumers who have given consent to receive such messages from the sender (Marinova, 2002). So, the ability of opt-out and opt-in of the receiving such emails is not only the main characteristic of the Opt-in email marketing but also it is the defining component of the anti-spam legislation (Kumar, 2014). The purpose of Opt-in emails is to initiate, maintain and develop communication with the recipient over the time, and while doing so, to generate a more loyal and profitable consumer (Kent, 2003). Opting-in to voluntarily receive promotional e-mails not only takes care of the issue of intrusiveness, but it also addresses privacy concerns as to how the recipient’s contact details came into the possession of the sender (Vaughan Reimers, 2016). Opt-in email marketing also offers potential benefits to the online retailing. As generation of web traffic to the website and retaining the customers are the two main goals of online retailing. These two goals are the governing factor which contribute to the generation of online sales (Heijden, 2000). As stated by 2016 Email Marketing Metrics Benchmark Study, the transactional email are the ones which get more open rates and click-through rates (CTR) (IBM, 2016).

However, considering the email open rate as the only way of being responsive could be misleading. Study shows that some of the active email openers are the ones who are least active in their purchase behaviours. In addition, the findings show that some email-inactive customers are relatively active when it comes to purchasing (Xi (Alan) Zhang, 2017). So, form the literature it is clear that email marketing is one of the main instrument used for customer retention and increasing the customer loyalty in the industry. This brings us to another theme of literature review and that is the customer loyalty.

2.4 Literature Theme: Customer Loyalty

It is observed that one of the most important reasons why the companies indulge in Email marketing is because they want to retain their customers and emails are one of the most cost effective medium (Chittenden, 2003). Retaining the customer is achieved by making the customers loyal. Which brings us to the new topic that is customer retention in online retailing. Customer loyalty is considered as the attitude of the customer which is favourable towards an online business which leads to the repetitive purchase (Anderson, 2003). From
the perspective of the consumer behaviour, customer loyalty deals with the intentions of the customers to purchase from their preferred retailer and then recommend the same retailer to others for making purchases. Various authors have mentioned the importance of understanding as to how the customer loyalty is developed as it is very crucial to all the online retailers. (Goode, 2007) (Reichheld, 2001) (Reichheld, 2000). This importance is due to the competitiveness of the ecommerce business as the number of online retailers is ever-increasing. It has been argued that in the online retailing, a long-term profitability and sustainability can only be achieved when the online retailers take up the challenge of nurturing the online customer loyalty (Wang F., 2000). Moreover, loyalty development of online retailers is not only more important but also pretty difficult as compared to their offline counterparts. The competitiveness has led to the cut throat competition amongst the retailers carrying out business online. The Internet has made it pretty easy for the consumers search for the alternative suppliers online and this searching is pretty cost effective. This has led to the concept of comparison-shopping. The switching of the retailers is just a click away and which is why customer loyalty becomes all the more important for online retail (Mohammed Rafiq, 2013). Also, as the cost of acquiring the online customers is high and so maintaining the customer relationships is non-profitable in the initial stage of the customer life cycle. It is only in the later stages of the customer life cycle that the cost of customer retention goes down and the relationship becomes profitable (Reichheld, 2000).

This is why customer loyalty is one of the main concerns of the relationship marketing (Sheth, 1996). According to the relationship marketing theory it is more lucrative for any retailer to develop and maintain the close and long-term relationship with the customers than having a short-term transactions. The customers who are acquired through long term relationships are observed to be purchasing more and tend to also spend more for the goods and services offered by the firm. They also tend to trust and be emotionally connected with that firm. (Kumar, 2003). Even though it is very difficult to retain the customer in the online environment, there are certain factors which are in favour of online retailing when competing against their offline counterparts. These factors are relatively low product search cost as opposed to offline store, greater market reach and wider range of product availability (Srinivasan SS, 2002). Loyalty of the customer is considered to be the important factor which contributes to the profitability of the firm. The increase in the customer retention by just 5% can result in the increase of the profits of that firm b from 25%-95% depending upon the industry. These numbers are even higher for online businesses. The loyalty of the customer positively influences the profitability of the firm by reduction in the cost of marketing on one hand and increasing the sales per customer on the
other (Reichheld, 2000). Also, the customers are quite understanding towards the brand they are loyal to when something goes wrong. This helps in maintaining a good brand image in the market. It is also easy to cater to such customers and satisfy them as the retailer knows the requirements of the customers. (Heskett, 1994). Furthermore, it is very easy for the customers to promote their preferred retailer by recommending them in the online environment as compared to the brick and mortar stores and so the loyalty becomes more important factor. Online marketplace eBay is the biggest example wherein the cost of attracting new customers was cut down by such referral program (Reichheld, 2000). The success of some well-known websites which are online marketplaces for e.g. Amazon can be partly attributed to the loyalty of their customers towards them, as 66% of purchases on Amazon are made by the returning customers (The Economist, 2000). There have been researches conducted which suggest that the customer loyalty is dependent on two main factory viz. customer’s trust and the perceived quality of the service offered. The customer relationship quality is one of the most important factor which influences the loyalty of the customer. In case of online retailing trust is important as in the online retailing the customer have to trust that the retailer will not cheat them and deliver the desired product after the payment is made for the order placed. The customers have to trust that the online retailers will not try to take an undue advantage of this situation by having unfair pricing, providing incorrect information or by distributing the personal data and the purchase history without the prior permission and make unauthorized use of the credit card information (Gefen, 2000). There is no way that the retailer can assure that the latter would adhere to the terms of the agreement. The only way the business can be carried out online is by having the trust of the customer. This trust can be won and maintained by enhancing the quality of the service provided. There has been research carried out previously which suggests that customer loyalty is mainly based on the quality of the service provided by the seller (Gefen, 2002). As the service is something the customers look forward to, providing them with a good service quality can arguably encourage the customers to come back and do a repetitive purchases from the online retailer. The service quality is nothing else but the subjective assessment which is carried out by the customer. It is the subjective comparison that is made between the service that is expected by the customer and the actual service the customer gets (Parasuraman A., 1985).This quality can be improved by indulging in developing a communication with the customer through a certain medium. There are various ways of personalized communications viz. a viz. decision personalization, transaction personalization and post purchase personalization (Sinha, 2013). These personalization can be carried out by implementing email marketing as a medium. By identifying the major
factors that contribute to the customer loyalty the retailers can design the online strategies for enhancing such factors with which they can achieve higher levels of customer loyalty (Jingjun (David) Xu, 2011). According to the social exchange theory human behaviour is all about exchange, especially rewards. (Homans, 1961). The social exchange theory puts forward the fact that people provide each other with mutual gratification to maintain the social relationships. So, if we apply this theory to our discussion it is observed that customer loyalty is a behaviour that makes the customer desire to purchase more from the retailer and recommend that retailer to other customers. For online businesses apart from the customer loyalty the other factor which has helped in increasing its popularity is the increased usage of the smart phones. The next theme in the research talks about the contribution of the popularity of mobile phones in the increase of online shopping.

2.5 Literature Theme: Popularity of mobile phone usage for online shopping

After the popularity of internet and ecommerce there was also a revolution in the field of telecommunication. This revolution led to the popularity of smart phone usage among the people. Mobile phones (smartphones) have become the dominant factor that is driving the growth of mobile shopping (Betty Ho, 2017). Initially the function of the cell phone was to transmit and receive the thoughts and ideas between through phone calls and short message services. But as the storage and processing capacities increased, cell phones became more sophisticated (Choy Har Wong, 2012). The development in the wireless telecommunication networks such as 3G and 4G has given rise to Mobile Shopping or Mobile Commerce (M-commerce). Mobile shopping is nothing but a kind of electronic shopping (e-shopping) wherein the customers purchase products and services and make payments through their mobile phones which are connector to the internet via wireless networks (Yang, 2010). The omnipresent characteristic of internet enabled mobile phone is changing the way people access and use the information and services in their day to day lives. The increase in the use of mobile phones connected to the internet has resulted in the creation of various new services which provide new opportunities to the companies for catering their customers (Yu, 2012). M-commerce has not only changed the way the businesses are done but also made our lives easy by making it possible for us to use the cell phones for booking tickets, banking etc. (Su, 2009). One such area which has gained popularity is mobile shopping. This is an offshoot of online retailing through mobile phone apps. Mobile shopping is any transaction that involves the purchase of services or goods through internet enables mobile phones or wireless telecommunication network. To an extent mobile shopping is
differs from online retailing as it has certain characteristics such as personalization, mobility, flexibility and convenience (G. Shin, 2002). In their research Ant Ozok and Wei have stated that online retailing is no more limited to desktops, laptops and wired connections (A. Ant Ozok, 2010). Retailing industry is trying to capitalize on the rapid adoption of mobile phones which are internet enabled by implementing technology mediated mobile services. This has emerged as a new channel to serve and connect with the retail consumers (Liesse, 2007). As per the recent study the mobile shopping industry is valued for $2.2 billion (Retail Merchandiser, 2011). As stated by (Giaglis, 2012), the volume of mobile commerce is growing at the rate of 39% every year and was expected to reach $31 billion by 2016, which accounts for 7% of online retail. The mobile phones usage is popularised to such a great extent that almost 80% of the consumers across the globe now own a mobile phone, these belong to both, the developed countries as well as the countries whose economy growth rate is high. That is why the online retailers like JD which is the largest B2C online platform in China launched their mobile application in February 2011, Amazon launched their mobile shopping application in July 2009 and Tmall which is B2C online platform of Alibaba came up with their mobile shopping application in April 2012. Even though Mobile payment is relatively a new concept, it has been observed that it is gaining prominence on a global scale. 47% of the customers in the emerging market have claimed that they have carried out online transactions on their mobile phones and also made payments through the same. The number for this in the developed markets is 20% (Vaggelis Saprikis, 2018). From this we can very well understand that mobile shopping has emerged as a highly effective medium for connecting retailers and consumers and contributing to the increase in the sales (Kim, 2012). Due to such a growth of Mobile shopping various researcher have carried out research in pursuit of having a comprehensive understanding of this subject. Thus, various studies have been carried out taking into consideration different perspectives like wireless network infrastructure, wireless user infrastructure, m-commerce theory etc, trying to gain insight into consumer’s mobile behaviour (Vaggelis Saprikis, 2018).

There are various advantages of mobile shopping. The customers can shop anytime and anywhere due to uninterrupted connection to the internet. Therefore, there is no need for them to be physically present in the store when to want to make a purchase (Su, 2009). These advantages result in saving time, convenience and improve the overall quality of life (J. Aldas-Manzano, 2009). Also, the whole online retail sales cycle of logging in, product surfing, price comparison, ordering and the after sales services can be conducted through the mobile phone (Su, 2009). Moreover, even the retailers can send customized information about their services and products to the consumers’ mobile phones for the purpose of
promotion (Yang, 2010). This has led to an increase in the multi-channel shoppers something that promotes omnichannel retailing. Multi-channel shopping would lead to better revenues in the long run for the retailers (Y. Kuo, 2009).

The vast majority of consumers across the globe keep their mobile device at arm’s reach all the times. This has positioned mobile phones to be an important and the most trusted of all the devices that are being used in today’s date. Therefore, mobile phones are turning into the most reliable and direct medium of engagement for marketers. But conventional marketing and selling techniques and strategies are not applicable to the cell phone users. (Vaggelis Saprikis, 2018). As stated by Yang and Forney, the factors which encourage customers to go for mobile shopping are utilitarian as well as hedonic. Moreover, the facilitating conditions are also one of the factors. It was observed that facilitating conditions became a factor due to the preconditions like the availability of mobile phones at a lower price and the technological capabilities of mobile phones through which the customers can receive the various services at a cheaper prices (Forney, 2013). It is the preference of the consumers that encourages them to adopt mobile shopping. So, the online retailers should focus on applications which are mobile friendly and try to come up with strategies keeping in mind the mobile shoppers (Tan, 2012). This way they can increase their revenue. That is why the retailers should strengthen their relationships with their respective consumers by making them a trusted partner. This can be achieved by providing value in the form of rewards, discounts and special preferences. Also, the online retailers should refine their data collection and analysis so that they are more data driven and will be able to understand the consumer behaviour in a more precise manner. This would help them in communication with the customer and building a base of loyal customers (Vaggelis Saprikis, 2018). Even though there are other reasons governing the customer loyalty, mobile shopping can also be made into one of the factors if used wisely as a medium for promotion of brand by the online retailers. As we come to the point of communication, one of the most effective way of direct communication is email marketing. The online retailers can have a direct communication with their customers via the medium of email. In this research the researcher wants to understand as to what extent is the email marketing effective and does it hold importance in the future. Also, can online retailer gain edge over their offline counterparts by implementing email marketing as a channel to connect with their customers and retain them?
2.7 Literature Conclusion

The literature review focuses on the 4 main themes. The first one (online retailing) talks about how the Ecommerce has disrupted the retail industry by introducing the online retailing. The literature review focuses on the researches carried out in the past on the topics related to online retail and the consumer’s perceptions towards it. It also puts light on the reasons why consumers are turning towards online shopping. What all factors influence people to shop online. As we go further the consumer behaviour of the students is also discussed and the literature is referred which deals with the perception of students towards online shopping and the reasons why students are encouraged to purchase online. These reasons tell us why more and more students have started shopping online instead of brick and mortar stores. The second one (Opt-in/Subscribed Email Marketing of online retail) takes us through the discussion related to the importance of email marketing in online retailing. It talks about the past researches which talk about how email marketing helps the online retailer in marketing their products. Also, it tells the reader that opt-in email marketing it also beneficial in terms of responsiveness of the recipients as spam email are the ones which do not usually receive any responses. We also understand that to measure the success of any campaign only open rate is not enough and we have to check the click through rate as that is the desired purchase from the recipient. Moreover, we can see that personalized email can be more effective as compared to the generic email if the sender wants the recipient to be more responsive. The third one (Customer Loyalty) talks about how important customer loyalty for online retailers is. It tells us that in Ecommerce it is really essential that there should be repetitive purchase from the customers as that is the only way we can ensure profitability as opposed to brick and mortar stores. We also get to know that email marketing is used to a great extent to increase the loyal customer base in online retailing. The fourth one (Popularity of mobile phone usage for online shopping) deals with the how the market has changed due to the popularity of the smart phones. The researcher tells us as to how the internet enabled mobile phones gave rise to mobile shopping and how that is changing the way retailers are doing business.

So far it has been observed that according to the previous research email marketing is an effective tool in the online retail space for customer retention. So, it does relate to our main objective of the research where the researcher wants to know if opt-in email campaigns are successful in targeting the master students. Moreover, we also see that personalized email may not always have a positive response (Sunil Wattal, 2012), so the researcher would like to know about this in details in the first sub question of the research which is talks about
what type of email is more effective personalized or generic?. Furthermore, the blank subject lines may help in the open rate of an email but does not help in encouraging the recipient to take the desired action (Lourenço, 2016). So, in the second sub question the researcher would like to study what is more effective in the promotional emails, brand name or the subject line of the retailer? Also, from the literature it is clear that popularity of the mobile phones has led to an increase in the mobile shopping, but does that also contribute to the success of opt-in email marketing of online retailers? It is also seen that the researches have been conducted on email marketing and consumer behaviour towards it. But there has been no research conducted which specifically focuses on the master level students as the consumer and studies their behaviour towards email marketing of online apparel retailers. Moreover, there is no research conducted that tells us if students prefer online shopping or offline shopping when it comes to availing the deals.

3. Research Methodology and Methods

In this research the researcher has followed the research onion by Mark Saunders et. al. (Mark Saunders, 2016) where various aspects were taken into consideration.

![Research Onion](image)

**Figure 2: Research Onion**
Source: Saunders el. al. 2016
As we can see in Figure 2, there are various layers to the onions, the researcher has studied and analysed these layers and passed through them in order to reach the data collection and analysis stage and achieve the research objectives.

3.1 Research Philosophy

The first layer of the research onion is the research philosophy (Refer Figure 2). In this research, the researcher wants to focus on the research objectives and the research questions discussed in the section 1.2. So, this research circles around those questions and objectives. The research problems do not specifically suggest a particular type of method that is to be adopted and so as per the pragmatic view it is possible to have different methods or approaches to carry out the primary research (Mark Saunders, 2016). So, due to this the research philosophy that was applied is pragmatism. Pragmatism states that the relevant concepts are only those which are supported by the actions (Mark Saunders, 2016). In this research the researcher wants to know if email marketing is applicable in the near future. For this the approach is to understand the opinions of the master level students as they are the immediate consumers of the future and their actions will prove how important is email marketing. Furthermore, as the pragmatist always strives to reconcile both the subjectivism and objectivism (Mark Saunders, 2016), so apart from collecting the data from the master level students the researcher also wants to know the opinions of the professional from the industry who have carried out email campaigns and the academic from the institutions who teaches email marketing to master level students. So, this would help in understanding the perspective of the industry which conducts email marketing and furthermore the opinions and values of the academic who has the knowledge of the industry and interacts on a regular basis with the master level students would help in providing a common grounds for the opinions of the industry versus perception of the students. By collecting the data from all of these sources the researcher would have a clear picture of how the email marketing is perceived when it is targeted towards the master students by online retailer. According to Pragmatism there are various ways in which we can interpret the world and carry out the research. There is no single point of view or opinion through which we can get an entire picture as there is a possibility that there are multiple realities (Mark Saunders, 2016). So, the pragmatists always make use of the method or methods that help in collecting reliable, well-founded, credible and relevant data that help the research to advance (Kelemen, 2008).

The positivism could not be a part of this research as it would demand that the researcher only rely on the data collection through survey. A positivist always concludes by relying on
the data that is collected. Also, the data collected is facts which are measurable and statistical (Mark Saunders, 2016). There would be no place for the in-depth interview which would help in understanding the perspectives of the professionals who study the consumer behaviour and accordingly come up with an email campaign targeted towards specific audiences. Also, if the researcher had to understand the opinions of the email marketers, then he had to make a questionnaire for them and had to carry out the survey on professionals. For designing the questionnaire, the researcher is expected to have in-depth knowledge of email marketing so that all the areas are covered in the questionnaire. Which would be very difficult to achieve.

In case of critical-realism, the researcher does not totally rely on the data collected form the surveys as there is a possibility that there might be some variations in the data. The critical realist is of the opinion that there is always more to it than what meets the eye (Mark Saunders, 2016). So, if this philosophy was to be taken up then the researcher had to conduct multiple survey with various populations and surveys. In this case the various population would be the master level students from different colleges and every population would have different samples on which the survey had to be conducted. This would be practically impossible due to the time constraint.

Interpretivism states that different people from different cultural backgrounds tend to make different meaning at different times (Mark Saunders, 2016). This philosophy demands that the research method should contain focus groups so that even though the number of participants are less, the data that is collected would be rich in nature. The researcher has to make sure that the people who are in the same focus group should be from different backgrounds. For e.g. if the focus group comprised of email marketers then the group should comprise of a minimum of 6 people belonging to various online retailers who have conducted email marketing of apparels targeting the master level students of their respective markets. Bringing such professionals together and conducting a focus group was impossible as the participants would not be comfortable talking in presence of their competitors and the data collected would not yield the desired results.

Postmodernism philosophy emphasizes on the fact that language is the most important thing and the dominant ways of thinking are not always the best. It seeks to expose the power relation that retain the dominant realities (Mark Saunders, 2016). So, it would not be recommended to conduct a survey in this approach and then the researcher would have to carry out in depth interviews of the master level students to understand their perception towards the email marketing as a whole. Moreover, it would become mandatory that the participants should be chosen from different colleges and universities and belonging to
different nationalities. But, as the nature of the research demands that the researcher conduct a survey of the student so that he would get a clear picture if students prefer to open and check the email campaigns that they receive and mostly what kind of email campaigns are opened. This way the researcher would get a clear picture of the situation. Due to this contradiction postmodernism philosophy was not adopted.

3.2 Approach to Theory Development

The second layer of the research onion talks about the approach of the researcher towards the development of the research theory (Refer Figure 2). As we know every research has a theory, there are various approaches to developing a theory viz a viz Deduction, Induction and Abduction (Mark Saunders, 2016). In this research the researcher wants to know if email marketing is effective enough for retaining the master level students who are the customers and have subscribed for the email newsletters of the online retailer who sells apparels. The researcher has an objective in mind. The approach used by the researcher to develop a theory in this research is inductive. The reason behind using an inductive approach is because there are certain things that are observed by the researcher on the basis of which the premises is decided. These premises are the observations which form the basis for the researcher. These observation are that Email marketing is being used by almost all the online retailers for customer retention and upselling and cross-selling. Moreover, students are the people of new generation which makes them tech savvy. Also, the students like to follow latest trends in the market when it comes to purchasing the apparels. So, by taking these observations into consideration the researcher is conducting this research and wants to reach a conclusion. This conclusion will help the researcher to address the research objectives which have been originated from the research questions. This is how the researcher intends to work on the logic gap between the premise and the conclusion.

The deductive approach was not applicable because the researcher did not start the research by referring the literature and then coming up with the premise. Moreover, even though there is a lot of research conducted on email marketing and online retailing, there is no proper research that has been conducted in the context of email marketing of online retailing of apparels category targeting the master students. So, it is nearly impossible to derive the hypothesis on the basis of the research literature available. The deductive approach demands that the researcher starts with the theory which is often developed by the researcher on the basis of the academic literature which he/she has referred. The research strategy is then designed to test whether that theory is correct or not (Mark
Saunders, 2016). As per the deductive approach if the premise formed from the academic literature is correct then the conclusion which is derived from the primary research should be correct. So, the researcher either confirms or contradicts the theory. Moreover, when having a deductive approach usually the quantitative data is the only source of primary data which is being collected. But, in this case the researcher is implementing quantitative as well as qualitative technique as the philosophy of the researcher is pragmatic. The researcher also, could not implement the abductive approach to the development of the theory as it requires that researcher carry out multiple survey and in-depth interview (Mark Saunders, 2016). Abductive approach is applicable only when the researcher does not have time constraint. Here it is expected that the research should be completed, and the conclusion should be reached within the span of couple of months. So, the primary data collection can be done only once. In abductive approach known premises are used to generate the testable conclusions (Mark Saunders, 2016). Once the conclusions are derived then it is compared with the theory. If they contradict then the theory is modified accordingly and again the primary data is collected and theory is modified further. The abduction is the combination of deduction and induction (Suddaby, 2006). It focuses on the richness of the data and the patterns which can be derived through various phases of primary data collection. In this case the phenomenon that is being researched is not a surprising one and comes from the observations of the researcher. That is why inductive approach is the best suited approach for this research.

3.3 Methodological Choice

The research design is the plan of action which will be adopted by the researcher to find the answer to the research question. That is why it is very important to derive clear objectives from the research question as they are the deciding factors for the research design. Research design are the next three layers of the research onion (Refer Figure 2). These three layers are the ones that focus on the research design. The third layer of the research onion talks about what methodological choices the researcher has made to carry out his/her research.

The first choice the researcher had to make was to choose between the qualitative, the quantitative or the mixed approach for the primary research. The researcher chose both the approaches for his research viz a viz the qualitative approach and the quantitative approach. The reason behind going ahead with both is because the research demands that there should be primary data collection from the students as they are the target population and also to back that data there should be someone from the industry to provide the researcher
with the practical insight into what exactly is happening from the perspective of the online retailer pertaining to the email marketing. Furthermore, there should also be someone who would talk about the email marketing campaigns for students from the academic perspective. The academic should be the one from the digital marketing discipline who is teaching email marketing to the master level students. He would serve as a link between the industry and the master level students. As mentioned earlier the research philosophy was based on pragmatism. it demands that the nature of the research questions, the context of the research and the consequence of the research should be considered as the driving forces while making the methodological choices (Nastasi B.K., 2010). Pragmatists are the ones who value both qualitative and quantitative research. So, in this case the researcher has chosen the mixed methods (Refer Figure 3).

![Figure 3: Different Methodological Choices](source: Saunders et. al. 2016)

In mixed methods the qualitative and quantitative approaches are mixed in various ways ranging from the simple concurrent forms of methods to the complex sequential forms of methods. The simple concurrent mixed method comprises of two separate use off qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection in the single phase. The qualitative and quantitative methods are used parallel to each other and are independent of each other (Mark Saunders, 2016). In this research the researcher used concurrent mixed method. So, the quantitative survey of objective questionnaire was conducted on DBS master level students and the qualitative in-depth interviews of two people were conducted. The questions in the quantitative survey were pertaining to the online purchase behaviour of these students and how they reacted to the reception of the campaign email sent by the online retailer of apparels (Refer Appendix 1). In the qualitative In-depth interview, the
people who were interviewed were the professor from the DBS college who is in-charge of teaching Digital Marketing and email marketing subjects while the other is the professional from the industry who has conducted the email marketing campaigns for various companies. The questions asked to the professor of DBS and the professional from the industry were almost the same (Refer Appendix 2). This helped the researcher to understand the perspective of two different people, one from the industry who is always in the corporate environment while the other from the college who is always in the academic environment. Moreover, the intention of the researcher behind choosing the concurrent mixed method was because the research is to be conducted only in the single phase as it is a master level research and should be completed in the span of 3 months. Moreover, the research demanded that the researcher conducts research on the senders and the recipients of the emails. The data collected will be compared for analysis so that the researcher will know if the qualitative and the quantitative data support each other. Based on that the conclusion can be reached. On the other hand, in the mixed sequential method, the data collection is done on the same group or individuals in a sequence. So, the research design implemented in this research is the concurrent triangulation design.

3.4 Purpose of the Research Design

The purpose of the research design depends upon the research questions and the research objectives. There are various purposes of the research design. In this research the researcher wants to understand how effective the email marketing is when the master level students are being targeted. This would help the researcher in knowing if email marketing would be used by the companies as an effective mean of communication with their customers in the near future. The purpose of the research design is evaluative. In this research the researcher wants to evaluate the effectiveness of the email marketing campaign of apparels which is targeted towards the students who are pursuing their masters. The purpose of the evaluative research is to figure out how well and to what extent something can work (Mark Saunders, 2016). Here the comparison will be made between the data collected from the survey and the information gained from the in-depth interview of the professionals. Through evaluation the researcher can reach the conclusion pertaining to the effectiveness of the email marketing in the online retailing business.
3.5 Research Strategy

The research strategy can be considered as the plan of action the researcher would take to find answers to his/her research questions. It is the methodological link that connects the research philosophy to the choice of methods of data collection and analysis (Mark Saunders, 2016). There are various strategies that can be used to carry out the research. These strategies are related to the qualitative, quantitative or the mixed methods of data collection. Moreover, they also depend upon the research philosophy and the approach to the development of the theory.

In this research the researcher chose the combination of two different strategies viz a viz the survey and the case study.

Surveys help in the collection of easily comparable and standardizes data in a highly economical way which allows easy comparison. Also, survey is a kind of a strategy which is considered by many researchers to be easy to explain and understand. Survey helps in collecting and analysing the quantitative data with the help of descriptive and inferential statistic (Mark Saunders, 2016). In the survey the researcher has a structured questionnaire for the students. This questionnaire comprises of 12 questions that are objective in nature. These questions are related to the effectiveness of email marketing in online retail world and the contribution of mobile phone to the email marketing.

A case study is an in-depth analysis into the phenomenon, a concept or a topic in the real-life setting (Yin, 2014). A ‘Case’ in the case study may refer to a person, a process change, a group of people, an association, an organization, an event and many such other subjects.

Choosing a case for studying and then deciding the boundaries of the case study are very crucial for implementing the case study research strategy. A study of a case within its real-life setting is what make this strategy different from other strategies. This is why through case study we can generate an insight from in-depth research (Mark Saunders, 2016). It helps in understanding any phenomenon in its real-life context which leads to rich theory development (Yin, 2014). In this research the researcher wanted to study the effectiveness of email marketing when it comes to promoting an apparel brand through online retailing. So, case study strategy was implemented by the researcher. Moreover, the research was conducted in the DBS college and the target population was students. To have an in-depth understanding the researcher also chose to conduct an in-depth interviews of a professor in DBS and the industry professional. Through these interviews the researcher would have a proper understand of how the email campaigns are run and what is the response for the same.
This research is not a theoretical research and so archival and documentary research strategy would not have been applicable in this case. The researcher is conducting primary research for data collection and archival research strategy can only be used for the theoretical research wherein the researchers carry out the secondary research for data collection and then analyse the data to reach the conclusion.

The experiment research strategy uses the prediction which are called the hypothesis instead of the research questions and this is because the researcher assumes if there is any relationship between the variables. In this research there were research questions and not the hypothesis. It was not possible for the researcher to jot down the hypothesis in this as the research talks about the consumer behaviour towards email marketing wherein the students are considered to be the consumers. This is why the experiment as a research strategy was not applicable.

Ethnography is a study of the social group or a cultural group. In literal terms it means a documented account of a people belonging to a specific cultural group (Mark Saunders, 2016). Ethnography demands that the researcher live among the group of people upon whom the research is being carried out. It is an observational type of a research and so could not be implemented here and so was rejected by the researcher.

Action research is a type of a strategy that is iterative process of inquiry which is used by the management researchers in the companies. This strategy is developed to find the solutions to the problems which are faced by the organizations (Mark Saunders, 2016). This research is carried out by taking the necessary actions and then evaluating them (Refer Figure 4). As our research demands the collection of data and then finding the answers to the research questions, action research as a strategy was not applicable for this research.

Figure 4: The Action Research Spiral
Source: Saunders et. al. 2016
Grounded theory is a research strategy which consists of the study of social sciences and so is used when the social research is carried out. It comprises of the data collection and then categorizing that data and then comparing and analysing. The researcher categorises the data depending upon the analytical codes that have emerged from the data collected. There are three coding stages viz a viz open coding, axial coding and selective coding. These are the three stages through which the grounded theory research strategy is carried out. The research has to switch between induction and deduction and has to carry out multiple data collection so the approach to the theory development is abduction. In this research the intention of the researcher is to study of the perception of the students of DBS towards Email marketing and so there was no need of multiple data collection. So, grounded theory was not selected as a research strategy for this research.

Narrative Inquiry is a type of a research strategy wherein the researcher collects the data in the form of a narrative instead of collecting it in bits and pieces through the interview questions. The researchers who make use of this strategy are the ones who believe that the proper way of collecting a data is through in-depth interviews wherein the participants narrate in the form of a story and there is a continuous flow of information. This way it contradicts the ideology of the grounded theory where the information is collected in parts and then categorised according to the codes. Here the researcher takes a small sample of the population and then conducts the interview on that sample. This sample represents the whole population of the research (Chase, 2011). Even though the data collection is time consuming, the collected data is in the chronological order. So, when the research demands that the data should be in the chronological order, then narrative inquiry. The narrative inquiry was not taken up by the researcher as this strategy was not applicable to the nature of the research.

### 3.6 Time Horizon

The important things to be taken into consideration while carrying out any type of a research is the time taken to finish the research and reach the conclusion. The question that the research is supposed to find an answer to is whether he/she wants a research to be a snapshot which is taken at a particular time or wants it to be like a diary or a series of snapshots taken over the period of time. The single snapshot is called as a cross-sectional research while the diary or the series of snapshot over the specified period of time is called longitudinal research. The time horizon for any research is dependent upon the research question.
In this research the researcher chose the cross-sectional research as the research question is about finding out the consumer behaviour of the master level students towards the email marketing of online retail. In this research the research population is DBS students which comprise of students of various nationalities belonging to Asia, Africa, Europe etc. So, the data collected once can provide enough information to understand their behaviour. A single phased of primary data collection would yield the required information and there is no such need of indulging in multi phased data collection.

4. Data Analysis/Findings

4.1 Settings
As mentioned in the methodology, the approach to the research method was mixed. That is why the primary research comprised of two parts. The survey and the in-depth interview. The Survey was conducted on the master level students in Dublin Business School. The researcher did not carry out any form of sampling and so included the whole population of master students. The survey conducted was through email and 12 questions were asked in the questionnaire. These questions were pertaining to the opt-in email marketing, online purchasing and mobile shopping. Google forms was the tool that was used to conduct the survey and the link was shared through emails, WhatsApp and Facebook groups of the DBS students. The researcher got 104 valid responses. The population consisted of students belonging the various nationalities viz a viz Ireland, France, India, Nigeria, Germany etc. These students were pursuing their master level course in various disciplines like MSc. Marketing, MSc. Finance, MBA General, MSc. Information Systems, MSc. Addiction studies etc. when the research was being conducted.

The In-dept interview was conducted for two people, one is the professional from the industry who is working with the digital marketing firm and has implemented email marketing campaigns for various online retailer of apparels, while the other is the academic who is a lecturer of master level students in DBS and teaches modules like email marketing and digital marketing.

4.2 Survey results
In the survey that was conducted among the 104 participants 95(91%) (Refer Figure 5) said they have purchased clothes online at some point of time while only 9(8.7%) said they never made online purchase. It means the majority of the students shop online. Also,
58 (55.8%) out of 104 participants had subscribed for email newsletters (refer Figure 6) of online retailer of clothing and out of them 48.4% people said that they usually open and check the newsletters that they had subscribed for. So, we can see that almost half of the people who have subscribed for the newsletters do open and check the newsletters regularly. So, the other half of the respondents check the newsletters occasionally. This means that the opt-in/subscribed email marketing is quite effective. As the open rate of the

Q1. Have you ever purchased clothes online?

104 responses

![Pie chart showing 91.3% Yes and 8.7% No for Q1.]

Figure 5: DBS Master Student Survey
Source: Google Forms

Q2. Have you subscribed for any email newsletters of online clothing retailer?

104 responses

![Pie chart showing 55.8% Yes and 44.2% No for Q2.]

Figure 6: DBS Master Student Survey
Source: Google Forms
opt-in email campaign is close to 50% when the master level students are the target audiences (Refer Figure 7).

Q3. If you answered previous question as no, go directly to the next question. If yes, then whenever you receive such a newsletter do you usually open it and check?

64 responses

Figure 7: DBS Master Student Survey
Source: Google Forms

In the survey the researcher also asked the question whether personalized emails are more effective of generic emails, the intention of the researcher was to know what kind of emails are more effective when the email campaign is conducted. The results showed that 48

Q4. Do you prefer personalized emails more or generic emails for discount campaigns?

104 responses

Figure 8: DBS Master Student Survey
Source: Google Forms
(46.2%) out of 104 of the respondents chose personalized over generic while 36 (34.6%) respondents did not care if the emails that they received were generic of personalized. So, a very small number of respondents (19.2%) were the ones who preferred generic emails (Refer Figure 8). It shows that if the online retailers are keen on targeting their audiences then it is beneficial to personalize the emails as it helps in grabbing their attention and increasing the open rate and click through rate (CTR) of the email campaign.

Q5. Has it ever happened that you have purchased any product online because you received an email offering a discount for that product?

104 responses

![Figure 9: DBS Master Student Survey](source: Google Forms)

In the survey the question was also asked if the students purchased online because they received a promotional email offering a discount (Refer Figure 9). The majority i.e. 58 (55.8%) out of 104 students said yes. It means that majority of the students did take into consideration the discount email campaigns. This means that out of 104 respondents 55.8% not only opened the emails but also clicked through it and made a purchase. These students contributed to the click through rate of the email campaigns being conducted.

The next two questions that were asked were pertaining to the frequency of the email newsletters that the students receive (Refer Figure 10). The intention of the researcher behind including these question was to know if the frequency of the email newsletters which were being sent was too high and if so, then what should be the frequency according to the students. This would help the researcher in knowing how important the frequency of emails is when conducting the email marketing campaign. As it is observed that the frequency plays a vital role in the success of any email campaign and is more important than the irrelevant content of the email campaign for driving away the customers (BlueHornet, 2013). So, these two questions were asked consecutively to know the opinion of the participants.
Q6. Do you think you receive promotional email too frequently, which is irritating?

Out of 104 responses we can see that 91 (87.5%) say that they receive the promotional emails too frequently which is quite irritating. This number shows that most of the participants irrespective of whether they have opted-in for any newsletter or not, do feel that the frequency of promotional emails is high, and is irritating. Also, the next question was about what should be the frequency of the emails that an individual should receive (Refer Figure 11)? As we can see 50 (48.1%) of the

Q7. What should be the frequency of the emails that you should be receiving?

Out of 104 responses we can see that 91 (87.5%) say that they receive the promotional emails too frequently which is quite irritating. This number shows that most of the participants irrespective of whether they have opted-in for any newsletter or not, do feel that the frequency of promotional emails is high, and is irritating. Also, the next question was about what should be the frequency of the emails that an individual should receive (Refer Figure 11)? As we can see 50 (48.1%) of the
respondents have suggested monthly frequency for any email newsletter. This means that almost half of the respondents feel that the frequency should be once in a month for any email campaign. 39 (37.5%) which is more than one third of the respondents feel that the frequency should be weekly while 7 (6.7%) out of 104 respondents felt that the frequency should be daily. As this question in the questionnaire was an open question the researcher also received other 8 responses. Out of these 3 said that they would like to receive an email only when there is a special offer. The remaining never wanted to receive any emails. So, we can see that 96 (92.3%) of the respondents were interested in receiving email newsletters but with less frequency.

In the next question the researcher wanted to know if the students are really interested in receiving the newsletters from the online retailers for discounts. This would help in understanding if students perceive email marketing campaigns positively (Refer Figure 12).

79 (76%) of the participants said that they find it beneficial to subscribe for the newsletters as it helps them to lean about the offers and discounts that are available which helps them in saving money. While 25 participants thought that subscribing for the email newsletters does not help the students in saving money. From this we can see that more than 3 quarters of the students we in favour of newsletters subscription when it comes to receiving discounts and offers.

In the survey the researcher also wanted to know as to what motivates the students to open a promotional email. Is the subject line a motivation or a brand name (Refer Figure 13)?
Q9. Whenever you open a promotional email, what do you think was the reason which motivated you to do that? Is it the subject line or the brand name of the retailer?

104 responses

![Survey Results]

Out of 104 valid responses 75 (72.1%) voted for brand name as the main reason that motivates them to open a promotional email while 29 (27.9%) said it is the subject line which is the main motivational factor for opening the promotional email. So, we can see that a vast majority of the participants chose the brand name to be the main reason over subject line.

In the survey the researcher also, asked about the popularity of different channels of digital media just to understand where does the email marketing stand in comparison to the other channels. The comparison was made between 4 main channels of marketing which were Email Marketing, Social Media Ads, Google Ads and Mobile Ads (Refer Figure 14). The participants were told to rate these channels on the scale from Very low appeal to very High appeal. These were marked on the scale (Very Low appeal = 1, Low appeal = 2, Average appeal = 3, High appeal = 4, Very High appeal = 5). Email marketing received highest number of average appeal (44 respondents), while the social media ads received very high appeal (25 respondents) and high appeal (37 respondents) from most of the participants. Google ads also fared well as many participants (23 respondents) found them to be highly appealing and many more (34 respondents) found their appeal to be average. Mobile ads were the ones which seemed to have performed badly as most of the participants (31 respondents) thought they are of very low appeal. From this data we can understand that Email marketing has an average ranking when compared to other digital marketing channels. This helps the researcher in understanding that email marketing has an overall average appeal among the master students of DBS.
Q10. Which form of online marketing is more appealing to you? Rank them on the scale.

![Graph showing ranking of online marketing forms](image1)

Figure 14: DBS Master Student Survey  
Source: Google Forms

In the next question the researcher wanted to know from whom the students would choose to purchase if they get the same discount from both online and offline retailer (Refer Figure 15). Through this question the researcher would know the consumer behaviour of the master level students in terms of their shopping preferences. 70 (67.3%) respondents chose offline retailer to make a purchase if they see the same offer available offline and online both. This shows that students would always give preference to the offline stores over online stores if the prices of the products sold are the same.

![Pie chart showing preference between online and offline retailers](image2)

Figure 15: DBS Master Student Survey  
Source: Google Forms

Q11. If you get the same discount from offline retailer and online retailer, which one would you prefer to shop?

104 responses
The last question that was asked in the survey was pertaining to the contribution of the smart phone to the popularity of email marketing (Refer Figure 16).

Q12. Do you think due to mobile shopping it has become easy for the students to receive the email notification for new discounts in clothing through which they can click-through and shop online?

![Figure 16: DBS Master Student Survey](source: Google Forms)

As we can see 96 (92.3%) of the respondents said yes to this question which means that they think the popularity of internet enabled smart phones has made it easy for the recipients to open and click through the promotional emails that they receive from the online retailers. It helps them to shop online with ease. It shows that there is a huge majority of master level students in DBS who are favour of Opt-in email marketing of online retail of apparels.

### 4.3 Survey Data Analysis

For analysis the researcher made use of tool Power BI. This tool is developed by Microsoft. The researcher collected the data form the survey and combined various variables (answers to survey questions) to come up with the findings. There findings were then used to answer the research questions and achieve the research objectives.

The first two variables that were combined form the survey was:

Q2. Have you subscribed for any email newsletters of online clothing retailer?

Q5. Has it ever happened that you have purchased any product online because you received an email offering a discount for that product?

This helped the researcher to understand the number of students who had subscribed for the newsletters and made purchase when they received an email form the retailer offering a discount. Out of 104 respondents there were 39 students who has subscribed and
purchased. While there were 19 students who despite of not subscribing to any newsletters had purchased online after receiving a discount email (Refer Figure 17).

![Bar chart showing Y and N responses](Image)

**Figure 17: DBS Master Student Survey Analysis**  
Source: Power BI

From Figure 17 we can see that the 39 out of 104 i.e. more than on third of the respondents had subscribed for newsletters and made purchase when they received an email mentioning the discount. This shows that if the master students are targeted for email campaigns by the retailers, they will get positive response if the emails are relevant and consist of the discounts on apparels. **This analysis answers our main research question that 58 out of 104 of the students who participate in the survey make online purchase after receiving a promotional email from online retailers. This is 55.8% of the total participants.**

In the next section the researcher combined three variables which were:

Q2. Have you subscribed for any email newsletters of online clothing retailer?
Q4. Do you prefer personalized emails more or generic emails for discount campaigns?
Q5. Has it ever happened that you have purchased any product online because you received an email offering a discount for that product?

In this the researcher would know how many respondents prefer personalized and how many respondents prefer generic email. Moreover, out of them how many have subscribed for the newsletters and have made purchase online after receiving an email which consisted of the discount. So, this analysis would help the researcher to know what kind of emails contribute more to the click through rate of an email campaign, personalized or generic?
From Figure 18 we can see that out of 104, 28 respondents were the ones who had made purchase online and voted in favour of personalized emails. Moreover, out of these 20 (19.2%) respondents (Highlighted) were the ones who had subscribed for the newsletters. While 18 respondents were the ones who had purchased online after receiving a discount email but said they do not care if the discount campaign emails are personalized or generic, while 13 (highlighted) out of them were the ones who had subscribed for email newsletters. There were 12 respondents who preferred generic emails over personalized ones and out of them only 6 (Highlighted) respondents had subscribed for newsletters. From this data we can see that the almost one fifth of the respondents were the ones who are in favour of personalized email and have subscribed for newsletters and purchase online as and when they receive discount emails. Also, from Figure 18 it is obvious that most of the students are the one who favour personalized email communication over generic. Therefore, it is seen that the majority of the master level students of DBS prefer personalized email campaigns.

This analysis answers the first sub question of the research. We can see that 48 out of 104 respondents prefer personalized emails. This is 46.2% of the total participants. This is close to half of the total participants. So, personalized emails are the most preferred emails in email marketing campaigns. Also, 20 (19.2) out of 104 students are the ones who opted-in for the newsletters, made purchase after receiving a discount email and are the ones who prefer personalized emails. From this we can see that close to one fifth of the participants clicked through the email because they were personalized and only 6 students (5.7%) clicked through for generic emails. So, personalized email help in increasing the click through rate (CTR) of email campaigns as compare to generic emails when targeted towards the master students of DBS.

In the next section of analysis, the researcher combined 3 variables which were:

Q2. Have you subscribed for any email newsletters of online clothing retailer?
Q5. Has it ever happened that you have purchased any product online because you received an email offering a discount for that product?

Q9. Whenever you open a promotional email, what do you think was the reason which motivated you to do that? Is it the subject line or the brand name of the retailer?

By combining these variables, the researcher was able to find how many students chose to open the discount email that they received because of the brand name of the retailer and how many chose due to the subject line of that email, these were the students who had subscribed for the newsletter and have made purchase online after receiving a discount email.

![Figure 19: DBS Master Student Survey Analysis](Source: Power BI)

From Figure 19 we can see that 37 (35.5%) out of 104 participants said that the brand name of the online retailer is what motivates them to open the promotional email and are the ones who have purchased online after receiving the discount email and 24 out of them are the ones who have subscribed for the email newsletters. On the other hand, 21 participants are the ones who said it is the subject line that motivates them to open the promotional email and 15 out of them are the ones who have subscribed for the email newsletters.

From this data we can answer the second sub question of this research. There are 24 (23%) students out of 104 who have opted-in for newsletters, are motivated to open the email and have made purchase due to the brand name of the sender. On the other hand there are only 15 (14.4%) who have opted-in for newsletters, are motivated to open an email due to the subject line and have made purchase after receiving a discount email. **So, brand name of the retailer is the one which contributes more to the open rate of the email campaign when targeted towards the master students of DBS as compared to the subject line.**
The researcher in the next analysis combined the following 3 variables:

Q2. Have you subscribed for any email newsletters of online clothing retailer?

Q5. Has it ever happened that you have purchased any product online because you received an email offering a discount for that product?

Q8. Do you think as a student it is beneficial to subscribe for the newsletters of online retailers as you get to know about the offers and discounts which help in saving money while shopping?

By combining these variables, the researcher came to know how many DBS master students who have subscribed for newsletters and made purchase after receiving a discount email really think that newsletters help in saving money while shopping.

![Figure 20: DBS Master Student Survey Analysis](Source: Power BI)

From figure 20 we come to know that 49 out of 104 participants said they purchased online after receiving a discount email and feel that subscribing for newsletters of online retailers is beneficial for students in knowing offers and discounts which help them in saving money. Out of these 36 (highlighted) are the ones who have subscribed for email newsletter of online retailer of clothing. On the other hand, there were only 9 participants who in spite of making online purchase after receiving an email feel that subscribing for email newsletters of online clothing retailer is not beneficial for students in terms of saving money. Also, out of them 3 participants were the ones who had subscribed for the newsletter of online clothing retailer.

So, from this data we can interpret that 36 (34.6%) out of 104 of the participants in this research are in favour of email newsletters which is close to a third of total number of participants. **So, we can see that students do consider subscribed/opt-in newsletters as beneficial and it does have some importance in the academic world.**
The research in the next analysis combined 2 variables which are as follows:

Q2. Have you subscribed for any email newsletters of online clothing retailer?
Q5. Has it ever happened that you have purchased any product online because you received an email offering a discount for that product?
Q12. Do you think due to mobile shopping it has become easy for the students to receive the email notification for new discounts in clothing through which they can click-through and shop online?

By combining these variables, the researcher could know the number of students who have subscribed for newsletter, out of them who all have made purchase online after receiving a discount email and how many of them feel that mobile shopping has made it easy for them to receive discount email and click through to make purchase.

From figure 21 we can see that 53 (50.96%) out of 104 students are the ones who feel that mobile shopping has made it easy for them to receive the discount emails through which they can click through for purchasing and have made purchase online after receiving a discount email. It means that almost half of the participants feel that mobile shopping has created positive effect on email marketing. Out of these 53 there are 38 (Highlighted) participants who have subscribed for newsletter of online clothing retailer. While only 5 participants feel that mobile shopping has not made it easy to receive and click through the mobile campaign. Also, out of them only 1 (Highlighted) person had subscribed for the email newsletter of apparel retailer. This answers our third sub question of the research that most of the students feel that the popularity of mobile phones has created a positive effect on opt-in email marketing of apparel retailers.
4.4 In-depth Interview Result

There were two people who were interviewed during the primary research. One was the academic from DBS who taught email marketing to master level students while the other was the professional from the industry who had carried out the email marketing campaigns for various online retailers for apparels.

As per the in-depth interview which was conducted by the researcher the questions that were asked yielded the results as follows.

When the participants were asked if opt-in email marketing was effective in online retailing of clothing, the academic said that it is pretty much effective emphasizing on opt-in specifically. Moreover, he referred to IBM survey of 2016 (IBM, 2016) stating that 70% of the emails are opened. Even the professional’s opinion was the same as he said that opt-in email marketing is effective even though it is not a major traffic driver to the website, but it can still help the retailers in initiating conversation with their customers in unexpected ways. Also, he emphasized that the senders should segment and target their audiences accordingly and not just come up with mass mailing if they are expecting some positive results.

In the next question the researcher wanted to know if email marketing can help in customer retention for online retailers. The academic agreed that email marketing does help in customer retention and said that companies like Salesforce and Sugar CRM talk about customer retention and bonding strategies. He also mentioned that relational communication is more important than transactional communication. Moreover, he spoke about studying the order history of the customer and then segmenting them and targeting them according to their buying preferences. This would help in better retention of the customers through opt-in email marketing. The professional also agreed to that opt-in email marketing can help in customer retention for online retailers but he also said that for achieving the retention the retailers should send the email which consist of discounts and loyalty programs as the customers are always interested in getting something and that is what catches their attention.

In the third question the researcher wanted to know the approximate open rate and click through rate of an email campaign of online clothing retailer. As per the academic the open rates and click through rates depend upon the type of email that is being sent. For general emails it is as low as 1% but for transactional emails it is as high as 70%, moreover the email that have no call to action, then in that case the open rates but no CTRs. The professional on the other had spilt the numbers, according to him the open rate is
between 15-25% while the CTR is between 3-5%. So, we can see that both the people had a different opinion on this question.

In the next question the intention of the researcher was to know the effectiveness of the email campaign of clothing when it is directed towards the master level students. The academic considered email marketing to be an effective tool when targeting the master level students. According to him it is beneficial for any firm to upsell or cross sell through an email campaign as it helps in increasing the revenue. Also, it is a part of CRM which talk about managing customer loyalty and reduction of churn rate. Even the professional agreed that email marketing is beneficial when targeted towards the students and said that master students would check for emails almost every day as opposed to the working professionals. So, we can see that both are agreeing that email campaign of online apparel retailer is effective when targeted towards the master students.

The next question was about what kind of emails are more effective between generic and personalized and what should be their frequency. On this the academic said that generic email is considered as a spam these days and this is the reason behind retailers coming up with personalized communication and loyalty programs. As we are in the era of hyper marketing, sending a generic email is different than sending an email with a call to action wherein the recipient might actually subscribe to the newsletter. This is a process of moving from the advertising funnel and making them the brand ambassadors or they can become “Apostils”. About frequency he said that it depends upon the type of industry. So, in case of clothing there are four major email campaigns for a year viz a viz Christmas, Autumn, Spring and Summer. During these seasons the frequency can be as high as daily email while other times it can be reduced to weekly. Moreover, the communication should be interactive wherein the students should be provided with discounts so that they get something from the campaign. The Professional too agreed that personalized emails are more effective as compared to the generic emails. He said that generic emails may work once in a while, but personalized emails always grab the attention of the recipient. When the recipient’s name is mentioned in the subject line, it arouses the curiosity in the mind of the recipient and that is what encourages him/her to open and check the email. About frequency he said that it is subject to the perspective of the marketers. Some marketers think twice or thrice a month is ideal while according to him twice or thrice a week is also fine provided the content of the email is not repetitive and the sender is sending the targeted promotions and the content is relevant.

When the researcher asked the question about the preference of the master students when it comes to choosing between online deals and offline deals, the academic said that when it
comes to choosing between the online and offline stores, the customers would choose the offline stores as there is a scope of building personal relationships like the shopkeeper might provide an extra scarf along with the clothes that are being purchased. This kind of thing is not possible in case of online retailing. Even the professional agreed that the customers would prefer the physical storefront as the customers prefer to try before buying anything and so this is possible only in case of a brick and mortar store.

In the next question the researcher compared email marketing to other digital channels like social media ads, google ads and mobile ads. The academic referred to the Wolfgang’s KPI report. As per that report Email marketing ranked third behind SEO and Google Ads, so according to him email marketing may not be in the top position but still it is one of the most effective channels for marketing. The professional too stated that email marketing even though not on the top position is not going to fade anytime soon. It is the most cost-effective channel and the retailers get the data of the recipients as opposed to the social media, google ads and mobile ads. But he did rank social media above email marketing as opposed to what the academic stated.

In the last question of the interview the researcher asked if the popularity of the mobile phone had made any difference in the open rate and the click through rate of the mobile campaign. For this both the participants equally agreed that mobile phone has created positive difference for email marketing as earlier people used to open emails only through the desktops and that would happen when they were at home or in the office, but due to the popularity of the mobile phones, the customers are able to open and click through any email through out the day. They need not be at home or in the office, they can open it even when they are travelling. Moreover, the open rates have increased by 45-60% due to mobile phones.

4.5 Overall Data analysis

As the researcher had a mixed method approached and collected the data quantitatively (survey) and qualitatively (In-depth Interview), the data was analysed and compared to find the answers to the research questions and achieve the research objectives. It is observed that the majority of the data that was collected through the In-depth interview was in line with the survey. Which means that the participants of the interview were in agreement with the participants of the survey to a great extent.

Talking about the main research objective:

The researcher wants to know if the subscribed email campaigns run by the online apparel retailers are able to successfully target the master level students.
From the survey it was evident that 58 out of 104 of the students who participate in the survey make online purchase after receiving a promotional email from online retailers. This is 55.8% of the total participants. Also, in the in-depth interview both the participants agreed that opt-in email marketing is effective when targeted towards the master students. So, from this we can see that both the qualitative and the quantitative analysis yielded the same results.

Now talking about the sub question for the research:

1. **To know what kind of emails are most effective in increasing the click through rate of an email campaign when targeting the master students of DBS, personalized or generic.**

From the survey out of 104, 28 respondents were the ones who had made purchase online and voted in favour of personalized emails. Moreover, out of these 20 (19.2%) respondents were the ones who had subscribed for the newsletters. While 18 respondents were the ones who had purchased online after receiving a discount email but said they do not care if the discount campaign emails are personalized or generic, while 13 out of them were the ones who had subscribed for email newsletters. There were 12 respondents who preferred generic emails over personalized ones and out of them only 6 respondents had subscribed for newsletters. This shows that most of the students chose personalized emails over their generic counterpart. Moreover, in the in-depth interview both the participants were in favour of personalized email as the academic mentioned that the retailers should use personalized email to convert the customer in loyal brand ambassador while the professional mentioned that generic can be used occasionally, but personalized email are the ones that grab the attention of the recipient and are more effective.

2. **To know what contributes more to the open rate of the email campaign targeted towards the master students of DBS, subject line or the brand name of the retailer (e.g. Amazon).**

From the survey it is evident that 37 (35.5%) out of 104 participants said that the brand name of the online retailer is what motivates them to open the promotional email and are the ones who have purchased online after receiving the discount email and 24 out of them are the ones who have subscribed for the email newsletters. On the other hand, 21 participants are the ones who said it is the subject line that motivates them to open the promotional email and 15 out of them are the ones who have subscribed for the email newsletters. From this data we can answer the second sub question of this research. There are 24 (23%) students out of 104 who have opted-in for newsletters, are motivated to open the email and have made purchase due to the brand name of the sender.
3. To know if the popularity of mobile phones has created a positive effect on opt-in email marketing of apparel retailers.

From the survey we can see that 53 (50.96%) out of 104 students are the ones who feel that mobile shopping has made it easy for them to receive the discount emails through which they can click through for purchasing and have made purchase online after receiving a discount email. It means that almost half of the participants feel that mobile shopping has created positive effect on email marketing. Out of these 53 there are 38 participants who have subscribed for newsletter of online clothing retailer. While only 5 participants feel that mobile shopping has not made it easy to receive and click through the mobile campaign. Also, out of them only 1 person had subscribed for the email newsletter of apparel retailer. Even in the interview both the participants the academic as well as the professional agreed that the popularity of mobile phone has created a positive effect on the open rate and the click through rate of the email campaigns as the recipients can now open and click through any email at any time of the day and it is observed that 45% of the emails were opened through mobile phones as per previous year’s data.

5. Discussion

The results confirm that the subscribed email campaigns run by the online apparel retailers are able to successfully target the master level students. The research was conducted by the mixed methods approach and so there was a survey (quantitative) and interview (qualitative). The results from both the methods supported each other and answered the main and sub questions of the research. In the survey it was found that the more than half of the DBS master students purchased after receiving promotional email and out of them two third had opted-in for the email newsletters also, both the interview participants spoke in favour opt-in email marketing as a tool to promote the products of online retailers when targeting the master students. So, we can see that opt-in email marketing campaign is an effective tool for the master students of DBS. From these findings it is clear that opt-in email marketing even though not a very popular channel for promotion of brands and products, is still one of the most effective means of direct communication in online retailing. As we know that the master students are the potential consumers of the immediate future, we can see that their preferences and consumer behaviour is important for us to understand how the online retailing will be in the near future. This would help the online retailers to understand that opt-in email is more effective when promoting their businesses as opposed to the spam emails. These findings replicate the findings of Hsin Hsin (Hsin Hsin Chang, 2013) who
stated that permission based (opt-in) email is more effective as compared to the spam emails.

Our first sub question as to which email is more effective personalized or generic was answered as in the survey almost half of the students said that they prefer personalized emails over generic ones and the same was seen in the interview wherein both the participants of the interview spoke in favour of personalized emails. While a small set of students chose generic. So, we can understand from this that majority if not all of the students were in favour of personalized emails. So, online retailers now can design their email campaigns and decide upon focusing more on personalized email as they are more effective as compared to the generic email campaigns. This would help in increasing the open rate and the click through (CTR) rate of the email campaign. These findings are in accordance with the finding of Tam and Ho (Tam, 2006) who found that sending personalized greeting to the recipients had a positive effect in terms of response from the consumers but are in contrast with the finding of Sunil et.al. (Sunil Wattal, 2012) who stated that the negative response from the consumers after receiving personalized email was most likely due to the privacy and security concern.

Our second sub question talked about what contributes more to the open rate and click through rate of an email campaign. The data for this question was purely based on the survey and was not collected from the interview as the open rate and click through rate can only be better determined by the recipient and not by the sender. So, when the email campaign is targeted towards the students then in that case the students were considered to be the ones who could answer this question more appropriately and so from the findings it was evident that more than two third of the students said that the brand name motivates them to open promotional emails. So, brand names are more effective a driver to increase the open rate of any email campaign as compared to the subject line. From the findings of second sub question it is also clear that when the email campaign is targeted towards students the recipients consider brand name of the sender while opening an email. So, for retailers it is very important create a good brand name which would contribute to the success of email campaign and not just come up with creative subject lines as it is not much fruitful.

The third sub question was if the popularity of mobile phones has created a positive effect on opt-in email marketing of apparel retailers. For this more than 90% of the students said that they believe that popularity of mobile phones has created positive effect on email marketing by contributing to the open rate and click through rate and out of these students 38 were the ones who had actually subscribed and purchased after receiving promotional
emails. Furthermore, both the participants in the interview also agreed that mobile phones have helped email marketing in increasing their open rate and one of the participants also said that 45% of the promotional emails are being opened through mobile phones as per last year’s data so we can see that qualitative and quantitative analysis yield the data that is shows mobile phone popularity has created positive effect. The finding for the third sub question is important for the marketers to know that the number of emails being opened from mobile phones is on the rise and this has led to the change in the way people surf the internet and make online purchase. So, this change in the consumer behaviour should be studied in detail before designing the email campaign as it would help in the success of that campaign. This finding somewhat goes in-line with the findings of Garry Wei-Han Tan (Tan, 2012) who stated that perceived usefulness is one of the most significant factor for the adoption of mobile shopping.

5.1 Limitations
Just like any other research there are limitations to this research as well. These limitations should be used for carrying out the study in the future by other researchers. The limitation are as follows:
The target population of this research is the master level students of DBS and so these findings should not be applied to any other group. The results may vary if the research is conducted in other colleges and universities in Ireland.
The master students belong to the low-income group and so if the population is working professionals the results may differ as they fall into the high-income group and their buying preferences and consumer behaviour may be different.
As the target population was master students, so the 100% of the population had completed their bachelor’s degree. It means that the whole population was literate and tech savvy. For such population adoption of technology and making online purchase is easier as compared to the illiterates. So, this findings of this research are not applicable to the illiterate population.
The research was conducted in Ireland which is a developed country and even if the target population for this research belonged to various nationalities (including the developing countries), the population belonged to the financially stable families. Therefore, they had easy access to the technology such as emails and mobile phones. If the same research was conducted in the third world countries the finding might differ on the basis of the population being targeted as not everyone may have access to computers and mobile phones.
This research being cross-sectional, the findings were obtained at a single point of time. The intention of the recipient to opt-in for email newsletters may change in the future. Also, due to the large scale of innovations that are being carried out in the digital world, there is a possibility that email marketing will be completely replaced by some other channels for marketing and if the research is conducted at that point of time then the finding would be totally different.

As this research focuses on the email marketing of apparels as the product category, the finding should not be generalized to other product categories such as toys, home décor, electronics, musical instruments, sports equipment etc. The findings will vary as the consumer behaviour also depends upon the products that is being promoted through an email campaign. Furthermore, retailing industry falls into the B2C and so the findings of this research may not be applicable to the B2B.

6. Conclusion/Recommendation

This research provides insights into the consumer behaviour of students towards email marketing of apparels. Statistical analysis was conducted by the researcher to analyse the response of the students towards opt-in email marketing. It was observed that all the research objectives were achieved during the research from the findings. The researcher discovered that opt-in email marketing even if not the leading channel for online retailers, serve as one of the most effective tools for promoting and selling apparels to the master students of DBS. It tells us that email marketing can be used successfully for customer retention. It also shows that opt-in email marketing will not go obsolete soon. Overall this research contributes to development of the email marketing plan for the marketers when they want to target the master students for the promotion and sale of apparels through online retailing.

First, this study demonstrates that the master students even in today’s date consider opt-in email newsletters as the means to get discounts and offers when it comes to online apparels shopping and so opt-in email marketing is effective when targeted towards the master students of DBS. So, it is recommended that marketers should continue using the email marketing as a channel but have to make sure it is permission based and should avoid spamming the inboxes of the recipients. There should be further study carried out on the working professional to understand what their opinion on opt-in email marketing is.

Second, the personalized emails turn out to be more effective as compared to the generic emails so, the marketers should make sure they focus on sending more personalized emails to generate online traffic. Generic emails are advisable in the beginning or occasionally but
for regular communication personalized emails should be used. As this study was focused on DBS master students further research should be carried out on master students of other institutes and universities to know if the findings are the same.

Third, the brand name of the sender plays a vital role in encouraging the recipients to open the promotional email. So, the marketers should focus more on building their brands as they contribute to the open rate and the click-through rate of any email campaign. Even though the attractive subject lines do create some positive effect, still it may only encourage a small number of recipients to open the email. The further research should be conducted which would comprise of two email campaigns. One with a well-known brand and the other with a strong subject line. The researcher should check the open rate and the click-through rate for both the email campaigns.

Fourth, the popularity of the internet enables smart phones did have a positive effect on the success of opt-in email campaigns as more and more people are opening the campaign emails through their smart phones as opposed to the desktops and laptops. This has led to an increase in the open rates of the emails being sent as it has become easier for the recipients to open the emails at any time of the day. So, the online retailers should come up with a mobile friendly platform through which the consumers can easily purchase. Further research should be conducted to know if students prefer to purchase through website or through mobile platforms.

Fifth, we discovered that subscribing for email newsletters of online retailers is perceived to be helpful in saving money for master students. Form this it is evident that master students would for sure subscribe for email newsletters even in the years to come. The online retailers should specifically target master students when they come up with discounted campaigns and stock clearance campaigns. The further research should be conducted to know what other factors can encourage master students to subscribe for newsletters of retailers.

Sixth, we also found that the frequency of the opt-in email campaigns should not be more than weekly or less than monthly when targeting the DBS master students. That is why it is highly recommended that online retailers should keep the frequency of email campaigns between weekly and monthly depending upon the festive seasons for shopping. As the target population for this research was residing in Ireland which is a developed country, the master students had access to the internet 24/7. The further study should be conducted on the master students of other developing countries where the internet access is limited to know if the findings differ.
Seventh, we discovered that DBS master students preferred offline retailers over online. This means that the online retailers should come up with discount campaigns with more competitive pricing as compared to their offline counterparts to make sure recipients click through and make purchase. Even if the discount offered by online are same as that of offline, the students would prefer to go to offline stores and shop. The researchers should carry out further study on the buying preferences of working professionals and try to find if they also choose offline over online as they are the ones who have jobs and are busy for at least 40 hours a week. So, these people may find it convenient and time saving to shop online as opposed to the students who get enough free time to go to the brick and mortar stores and purchase.

Eighth, we also found that email marketing stands third with respect to appeal when compared to social media ads, google ads and mobile ads. This shows that email marketing has an average appeal from the perspective of the consumers. The online retailers are recommended that they should not totally depend upon email marketing for promoting their products and services. It is advisable to make use of other digital channels such as social media, SEO, google AdWords, mobile ads, affiliate marketing, content marketing etc. In the future the study should be carried out on the digital marketing mix to understand if the use of other digital marketing channels can help in complementing the opt-in email marketing campaigns and contribute in increasing the open rate and the click through rate of any email campaign of online retailer.

7. Reflection

This section deals with the reflective learning of the researcher in terms of the development of the learning skills and the critical analysis of the journey of the researcher while carrying out the research. It tells the readers about the journey from being a student to becoming a researcher while carrying out this research. This section is divided into four themes: secondary research skills development, primary research skills development, time management skills development and personality development.

7.1 Secondary Research Skills Development

The researcher had some basic skills pertaining to the secondary research before initiating this research, but this research helped him to enhance these skills. As we all know that due to the internet there is a large amount of data that is available. This data is sourced from books, journal articles, websites, blogs etc. So, for any researcher it is easy to access this data due to the easy connectivity to the internet.
During this research the researcher learnt that it is practically impossible to analyse all the data that is available as it is very vast. So, the researcher learnt to preauthorize the data based on the credentials of the author, publication date and credentials of the publisher and the source of the data. For example, the author learnt that the data from the journal articles available in the DBS library were more authentic source as compared to the blogs posted on websites on the internet. The journal articles talk about the previous researches that were conducted with proper research objectives and hypothesis in mind. It is also easy to understand how the author came up with the findings as opposed to the blogs where there is no mention of the source of the findings and the data analysis that was carried out. From this the researcher learnt to critically analyse the journal articles in the literature review.

7.2 Primary Research Skills Development

Before the commencement of the research the researcher had no prior experience in primary research. Due to this research the research developed primary research skills. This research helped researcher in understanding various methods of data collection and also helped in understanding the importance of qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approached. The researcher realized that both the approaches are equally important and have pros and cons. So, to get rid of the cons the researcher adopted the mixed methods. In this way the researcher learnt how to prepare a closed questionnaire and conduct a survey on the large population and then prepare questions for the interview and conduct an in-depth interview.

This research also helped the researcher in learning how to analyse the data after the data collection process by applying statistical and graphical analysis and find the answers to the research questions by achieving the research objectives. Moreover, the researcher referred the research onion to finalize on the methodology for the research. Due to this the researcher got an understanding of the various research philosophies, approach to theory development, different research strategies, methodological choices and time horizons.

7.3 Time Management Skills Development

During this research the research faced challenges pertaining to the completion of certain tasks on time in the initial phase of the research. The researcher had created Gantt chart allocating time for all the activities in this research. But literature review took more time than what was allotted. So, the researcher had to rework on the time table and be done with the literature review. This helped in researcher in learning how to plan and allocate proper time to each activity. Later, during the primary research after the completion of the
survey, the researcher was not able to fix appointment with the academic and the industry professional for the in-depth interview on time due to the unavailability. This again delayed the primary research data analysis by a week. This experience helped the researcher in knowing that primary data collection is something that should be allotted more time and should be completed as soon as possible as it is the only area of the research which is beyond the control of the researcher. It totally depends upon the availability of the participants.

7.4 Personality development

This research helped the researcher in developing his personality and build up his confidence. As the researcher had to conduct a survey and in-depth interview, the researcher was initially hesitant to approach the DBS students asking them to participate in the survey. But later, it helped the researcher to get rid of his inhibitions and approach the strangers. Moreover, approaching the college professor and the marketer from the industry helped the researcher to learn how to interact with people in a professional manner by fixing appointments and conducting the interview. All these activities helped the researcher in boosting his confidence and enhancing the interpersonal skills which in turn contributed in the overall personality development.

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Appendices

I. Questions for Interview

Q1. Do you think opt-in email marketing is effective in online retailing of clothing, especially when they target the master level students? If so, please elaborate.

Q2. Does subscribed email marketing help online retailers to retain their customers?

Q3. What according to you is the approximate open rate and click through rate of any email campaign related to online retailing of clothing?

Q4. In your opinion is it effective to target the master level students in an email campaign pertaining to the discounts of clothing?

Q5. What types of emails are more effective, generic or personalized? Also, what should be their frequency?

Q6. What do you think master level students prefer more while shopping for clothes? Online deal or offline deals?

Q7. Where do you think Email marketing stands if we have to compare it with other forms of Digital media like Social Media Ads, Google Ads and Mobile Ads?

Q8. Has the popularity of mobile phones made any difference in the open and click through rates of the email campaigns?

II. Interview Transcripts

In-Dept interview Academic

Q1. Do you think opt-in email marketing is effective in online retailing of clothing, especially when they target the master level students? If so, please elaborate.

A: I do think it is effective, Op-in specifically is effective in clothing retail. When you go shopping in large departmental store for apparels, there is a provision of sending the receipts via email. It shows there is an attempt made to contact the customer and make them subscribe for newsletter. As per IBM survey of 2016, 70% of emails are opened. So, if someone purchases a product in Debenhams and asks for a receipt through email, then not only does Debenhams add you to their pool of customers, but also makes them understand that 7out of 10 people who accepted their receipt would open it and check it and be exposed to more offers. There will be further engagement with the brand, offers and further promotion.

Q2. Does subscribed email marketing help online retailers to retain their customers?

A: Yes, it does. Because again a lot of CRMs like Salesforce, Sugar CRM etc. and other such software are all about growing and retaining your customer base through various bonding
strategies. A part of such a bonding strategy is relational communication as opposed to simply transactional communication. As a marketer it is important to know that relational communication is more important as opposed to transactional communication. When the people are a part of customer base who have subscribes for emails, we can begin to build profiles and record their purchases and buying cycles and create a persona which can help us in segmentation and targeting within the customer base. We can then customize out goods and services to match the hierarchy of the loyalty of our customers.

Q3. What according to you is the approximate open rate and click through rate of any email campaign related to online retailing of clothing?
A: There are CTRs related to different types of email sent. For general email sent it is pretty low, as low as 1%. So different types of email, their frequencies, what is exactly the relationship with the customers receiving the email, what is the churn rate can determine the numbers. But mostly as per the IBM survey 2016 around 70% of the transactional email are opened. So, that’s a huge open rate. Also, if we send email without links there will be open rates but no CTRs. So, it is kind of an impression similar to Google PPC, but there is not click through. So, there is a correlation in Open rate and CTRs.

Q3.1 Is it applicable to master students as well?
That data can be collected through survey, so I cannot comment on that. The master students are of different age group, so it is kind of unpredictable.

Q4. In your opinion is it effective to target the master level students in an email campaign pertaining to the discounts of clothing?
A: Yes, because a part of a psychology of selling is giving people something that contains additional value. So, if we directly communicate with people, it is of more value. Also, if we cross sell or upsell to existing customer then we have a greater opportunity to increase sales. A part of CRM is how we manage loyalty and retain our customer and decrease the churn rate.

Q5. What types of emails are more effective, generic or personalized? Also, what should be their frequency?
A: The most effective form of email in terms of Open rates is transactional email. So, if you have an opportunity of selling something to someone then you have to follow through that opportunity by asking him if they like a receipt as we know the open rate of that is 7 out of 10. Part of the difficulty is if we send generic email, then it is a spam. This is why we develop loyalty program and personalized communication. We are in the era of hyper marketing. We spend a lot of resources on simple type of model. The model is we plan, we execute, we measure, we iterate so that we get better at what we do. So, sending a generic
email to everybody is different than send an email with a call to action (CTA) wherein the recipient might actually have to subscribe to the newsletter thus providing us with their email. That is all a part of moving people through an advertising funnel towards making them the loyal customers and after that possibly we can think of making them the brand ambassadors or they can become “Apostils”.

Frequency depends upon the industry. So, for clothing industry there are 4 major email campaigns for a year. The Christmas campaign (winter campaign), the autumn campaign, the spring campaign and the summer campaign. So, there is a quarterly frequency that governs the whole marketing yearly. But, it also, depends upon the product buying cycles. If people have opted-in during the season the frequency might be daily and post-Christmas it might be weekly. But the whole idea is there is a relational communication. So, it should be interactive and not just push communication. The communication should involve the invitation to be a part of a social media etc. The sender should build a community around his/her brand. So, all of these students would be given an offer because they are loyal customers, or they made a purchase in the past.

Q6. What do you think master level students prefer more while shopping for clothes? Online deal or offline deals?
A: If the deal is the same online and offline then it comes down to personal preference. In brick and mortar stores there is a scope for personal relationship by communication. For e.g. giving an extra scarf along with the product being sold. This kind of things is not available with the online stores. This might be a motivational factor for the customers to visit the physical stores.

Q7. Where do you think Email marketing stands if we have to compare it with other forms of Digital media like Social Media Ads, Google Ads and Mobile Ads?
A: It stands at 3rd. the first is SEO, then it is SEM and the third is Email marketing asper Wolfgang digital KPI report. They did this by tracking the online traffic.

Q.8 Has the popularity of mobile phones made any difference in the open and click through rates of the email campaigns?
A: It has made a positive impact. Earlier people opened email on their desktop PCs. Now there are multiscreen behaviours. People behave in different ways in front of different screens. Now it is clear that desktops are meant for official use and tablets are used for social media and entertainment. The mobile phone is our decision device. So, people make purchase decision on mobile phone. Talking about email, when the email is sent, the phone alerts the user. So, now the email is opened in the bus, or while standing in the queue etc.
All the place where there was no access to the email once now have access via mobile phone.

**In-depth interview Professional**

Q1. Do you think opt-in email marketing is effective in online retailing of clothing, especially when they target the master level students? If so, please elaborate.
A: yes. Although email marketing may not be the major traffic driver, but opt-in email marketing can carry out conversion in unexpected ways. But it all depends upon the way you segment your subscribers and target them. There cannot be a same campaign to all the subscribers. Only then we can expect some traffic.

Q2. Does subscribed email marketing help online retailers to retain their customers?
A: Yes, as long as the personalized emails are being sent which contain the discounts or loyalty programs it does help retain customers. The customers are really not interested as long as the retailer does not provide them with something that catches their attention. They should get something in return.

Q3. What according to you is the approximate open rate and click through rate of any email campaign related to online retailing of clothing?
A: Open rate between 15-25% and CTR between 3-5%

Q4. In your opinion is it effective to target the master level students in an email campaign pertaining to the discounts of clothing?
A: Yes, it would be the best channel to target the students since they are pursuing their studies, they would be checking the emails for discounts almost every day. It would not be the same case with other people. 7 out of 10 would not check it, but for master students for sure they would check for promotional emails.

Q5. What types of emails are more effective, generic or personalized? Also, what should be their frequency?
A: Generic should work once in a while, but personalized email always grabs attention. When the name of the recipient is mentioned in the subject line, it generates curiosity in the minds of the recipient to open that email. So, in term of response it is personalized email that are more successful. Email frequency it is all about perspective. Some marketers think twice or thrice a month is ideal, but I would say twice a week is also fine as long as the content is not repetitive or spamming the subscriber’s inbox with unwanted stuff. As long as the sender is sending the targeted promotion it is fine.

Q6. What do you think master level students prefer more while shopping for clothes? Online deal or offline deals?
A: Even though it depends upon customer’s perspective. But most of the times customers prefer to try on before buying the clothes. So, I would say the customers would go for the offline store as they can try many options and then finalize on buying what they like.

Q7. Where do you think Email marketing stands if we have to compare it with other forms of Digital media like Social Media Ads, Google Ads and Mobile Ads?
A: Even though Email marketing looks like it is fading away, it won’t vanish anytime soon. As it is 2-way communication and the marketing cost of email marketing is very low as compared to the other channels. Also, the sender knows who their target audience is in email marketing. The amount of data that can be collected by the marketers through email marketing is way more than social media or other display ads like google or mobile ads. In email marketing, people can share the same ad with their friends and family. Moreover, if there is email automation set up then there is no human intervention involved so the customers get a reply for any action taken by them in email communication. That is not the case with social media or google ads. So, email marketing even if not leading it is still effective. So, it may be last but still pretty much effective.

Q.8 Has the popularity of mobile phones made any difference in the open and click through rates of the email campaigns?
A: Yes, not everyone carries a laptop around, but everyone has a mobile phone. 60-70% open rates for email marketing are generated through cell phones. As per last year’s data it was somewhere around 45% and from last year till now it was 45-60%. So, mobile optimized email is really a good idea.

III. Questionnaire for Survey

By continuing with this survey, you are agreeing that: (1) you have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet, (2) questions about your participation in this study have been answered satisfactorily, (3) you are aware of the potential risks (if any), and (4) you are taking part in this research study voluntarily (without coercion).  
https://drive.google.com/open?id=1auPcHlKCKqtIscfBA13txQW6C9bFPSbx7SJCAxToW3Q

*Required*

Please fill below your Full name, your Course name and Student ID separated by commas.

Q1. Have you ever purchased clothes online? *
Mark only one oval.
Yes
No

Q2. Have you subscribed for any email newsletters of online clothing retailer? *
Q3. If you answered previous question as no, go directly to the next question. If yes, then whenever you receive such a newsletter do you usually open it and check?

Mark only one oval.
Yes
No

Q4. Do you prefer personalized emails more or generic emails for discount campaigns? *

Mark only one oval.
Personalized
Generic
Doesn't Matter

Q5. Has it ever happened that you have purchased any product online because you received an email offering a discount for that product? *

Mark only one oval.
Yes
No

Q6. Do you think you receive promotional email too frequently, which is irritating?

Mark only one oval.
Yes
No

Q7. What should be the frequency of the emails that you should be receiving? *

Mark only one oval.
Daily
Weekly
Monthly
Other:

Q8. Do you think as a student it is beneficial to subscribe for the newsletters of online retailers as you get to know about the offers and discounts which help in saving money while shopping?

Mark only one oval.
Yes
No

Q9. Whenever you open a promotional email, what do you think was the reason which motivated you to do that? Is it the subject line or the brand name of the retailer?

Mark only one oval.
Subject Line
Brand Name

Q10. Which form of online marketing is more appealing to you? Rank them on the scale *

Mark only one oval per row.
Q11. If you get the same discount from offline retailer and online retailer, which one would you prefer to shop? *
Mark only one oval.
Online Retailer
Offline Retailer

Q12. Do you think due to mobile shopping it has become easy for the students to receive the email notification for new discounts in clothing through which they can click-through and shop online? *
Mark only one oval.
Yes
No

IV. Minutes of the Meeting with the Supervisor

Dissertation Meeting/Progress Monitoring Report

Name of Student: Saraf Ameya Ajit  Student No.: 10382960
Name of Supervisor: David Duff  Meeting No.: 1
Date of Meeting: 18th October 18  A.S.Location of Meeting:

==================================================================

Review/Comment on Progress Made (since last meeting):

[Perception of DBS Master Students towards Opt-in Email marketing in the Online Retail of apparels]

First meeting
Topics/Issues discussed/addressed at meeting: Action Agreed/Progress expected before next meeting:

- How to gather research
- Methodologies
- Lit review, targeting

Overall Summary/Conclusion of Meeting:

- Contact about survey
- Timeline
- Literature review

Date of next meeting: ____25th October 18______________________

Signed (supervisor):  ___David Duff_______________________

Signed (student):  _____ Saraf Ameya Ajit _____________________

Note: Please complete and retain a copy report for each student meeting. Please attach supporting documentation as appropriate.

Dissertation Meeting/Progress Monitoring Report

Name of Student: Saraf Ameya Ajit    Student No.: 10382960
Name of Supervisor: David Duff    Meeting No.: 2
Date of Meeting: 25th October 18    C.H.Location of Meeting:
Review/Comment on Progress Made (since last meeting):

Introduction, Lit review and Primary research all developed or work nearing completion.

Topics/Issues discussed/addressed at meeting: Action Agreed/Progress expected before next meeting:

Include mobile phone usage in intro.
Inclusions of smart phones into Lit review
Questionnaires and interview questions written or in the process.
Contact admin to gain access to the MBA students to survey
Contact interviewees to lock in dates

Overall Summary/Conclusion of Meeting:

Date of next meeting: ____15th November 18____________________

Signed (supervisor): ___David Duff_______________________

Establish clear dates and times to start gathering primary data.
Expand sample groups for both approaches.
Continue and finalise Lit review.

Signed (student): _______ Saraf Ameya Ajit ___________________

Note: Please complete and retain a copy report for each student meeting. Please attach supporting documentation as appropriate.
Dissertation Meeting/Progress Monitoring Report

Name of Student: Saraf Ameya Ajit  Student No.: 10382960
Name of Supervisor: David Duff  Meeting No.: 3
Date of Meeting: 8th Nov 18  C.H. Location of Meeting:

==================================================================

Review/Comment on Progress Made (since last meeting):

- Introduction done
- Lit review 60% done

Topics/Issues discussed/addressed at meeting: Action Agreed/Progress expected before next meeting:

- Main point is to lock in dates for interview
- Develop survey and send out to ensure data comes back giving enough time to review.
- Expand on questions
- Extend timeline
Overall Summary/Conclusion of Meeting:

Lock in dates for interview and survey, priority.
Finalise Lit review and start Methodology

Date of next meeting: ____ November 18______________________

Signed (supervisor):  ___David Duff_______________________

Signed (student):  _______ Saraf Ameya Ajit ___________________

Note: Please complete and retain a copy report for each student meeting. Please attach supporting documentation as appropriate.
Dissertation Meeting/Progress Monitoring Report

Name of Student: Saraf Ameya Ajit Student No.: 10382960
Name of Supervisor: David Duff Meeting No.:4
Date of Meeting: 15\textsuperscript{th} Nov 18 C.H.Location of Meeting:

==================================================================

Review/Comment on Progress Made (since last meeting):

Survey out to respondents and data collected
Interviews questions done and interviews
Move on from Lit review

Topics/Issues discussed/addressed at meeting: Action Agreed/Progress expected before next meeting:

Strategy to get more respondents
While waiting on data return, start and complete methodology
Prepare to receive data and analyse by the third week in Nov
Overall Summary/Conclusion of Meeting:

Complete methodology
Conduct interviews
Start to analyse data

Date of next meeting: _____ 29th November 2019____________________

Signed (supervisor): ___David Duff_______________________

Signed (student): _______ Saraf Ameya Ajit ___________________

Note: Please complete and retain a copy report for each student meeting. Please attach supporting documentation as appropriate.
Dissertation Meeting/Progress Monitoring Report

Name of Student: Saraf Ameya Ajit   Student No.: 10382960
Name of Supervisor: David Duff      Meeting No.:5
Date of Meeting: 29th Nov 18        C.H. Location of Meeting:

==================================================================

Review/Comment on Progress Made (since last meeting):

Lit and methodology nearly completed
Survey responses at a good level

Topics/Issues discussed/addressed at meeting: Action Agreed/Progress expected before next meeting:

The need to finish lit and methodology section
Data analysis to start
Re appraise deadline to meet completion date
Overall Summary/Conclusion of Meeting:

Data analysis to commence.

Date of next meeting: _____ 6th Dec 2019______________________

Signed (supervisor): ___David Duff_______________________

Signed (student): _______ Saraf Ameya Ajit ___________________

Note: Please complete and retain a copy report for each student meeting. Please attach supporting documentation as appropriate.
Review/Comment on Progress Made (since last meeting):

Lit review and methodology done and will share

Topics/Issues discussed/addressed at meeting: Action Agreed/Progress expected before next meeting:

Data analysis to be done
Overall Summary/Conclusion of Meeting:

Share the paper with David to review as a whole.

Date of next meeting: ____19th Dec 2019______________________

Signed (supervisor): ___David Duff_______________________

Signed (student): _______ Saraf Ameya Ajit ___________________

Note: Please complete and retain a copy report for each student meeting. Please attach supporting documentation as appropriate.
Dissertation Meeting/Progress Monitoring Report

Name of Student: Saraf Ameya Ajit    Student No.: 10382960
Name of Supervisor: David Duff    Meeting No.:7
Date of Meeting: 19th Dec 18    A.S. Location of Meeting:

==================================================================

Review/Comment on Progress Made (since last meeting):

Data analysis done needs to be written.

Topics/Issues discussed/addressed at meeting: Action Agreed/Progress expected before next meeting:

Analysed data and set out strategy to write and present.
PERCEPTION OF DBS MASTER STUDENTS TOWARDS OPT-IN EMAIL MARKETING IN THE ONLINE RETAIL OF APPARELS

Overall Summary/Conclusion of Meeting:

Finalise completed document and send to David

Date of next meeting: ____3rd Jan 2019______________________

Signed (supervisor): ___David Duff_______________________

Signed (student): _______ Saraf Ameya Ajit ___________________

Note: Please complete and retain a copy report for each student meeting. Please attach supporting documentation as appropriate.
PERCEPTION OF DBS MASTER STUDENTS TOWARDS OPT-IN EMAIL MARKETING IN THE ONLINE RETAIL OF APPARELS

Dissertation Meeting/Progress Monitoring Report

Name of Student: Saraf Ameya Ajit   Student No.: 10382960

Name of Supervisor: David Duff   Meeting No.:8

Date of Meeting: 3rd Jan 2019   A.S.Location of Meeting:

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Review/Comment on Progress Made (since last meeting):

Document complete

Topics/Issues discussed/addressed at meeting: Action Agreed/Progress expected before next meeting:

Final layout and content review before submission
Overall Summary/Conclusion of Meeting:

Ready to submit

Date of next meeting: __________________________

Signed (supervisor):  ___David Duff_______________________

Signed (student):  _______ Saraf Ameya Ajit ___________________

Note: Please complete and retain a copy report for each student meeting. Please attach supporting documentation as appropriate.