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Online and Traditional Clothes Shopping Practices by Young Adults in the Coastal Region of Cameroon

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Executive Summary

This study entitled "online and traditional clothes shopping practices by young adults in the coastal region of Cameroon". Taking into consideration the notion of online shopping and the reasons that impede its practice from the perspectives of young adults will be the center of discussion. Based on the fact that online shopping is something that is gaining ground in general terms everywhere, this is a very substantial issue. This implies that more internet access increases the tendency for people to execute buying online. For this reason, it is important for businesses offering this kind of activities to consumers. They should try to understand the conditions necessary for online shopping. Also, by extension they must focus on selling and buying using the traditional way.

To understand the factors which deter this practice and the possible ways for the government and sellers to encourage this practice, a qualitative method was employed. The primary data was collected from young adults selected within the three chosen cities in the coastal region of Cameroon. With a semi-structured interview with open-ended questions to describe their experiences concerning online shopping. The findings prove that limited accessibility and availability of internet access, inadequate delivery address, insufficient bank accounts, high cost of transportation, inadequate availability of online shops, and previous online shopping experience were found to be the major aspects hindering the practice of shopping online in the coastal region of Cameroon. A comparative study with an interpretive iterative approach permitted the realization of the said findings. Before arriving at the findings, existing literature and theoretical considerations were conceived to form the conceptual framework which was used as an instrument for the thematic analysis of the findings.

The main findings were discussed referring to what has been found in other emerging economies. The study ended up presenting the key factors hindering the practice of online shopping and what could be done by the government and sellers to encourage this practice in the study area. This study will improve the researcher's understanding connected with the notion of consumer decision-making towards purchasing online. The findings cannot be generalized for online shoppers across the study context and other countries due to the specific sample group. Further research may talk about the demographic variables of the respondents and a different sample of respondents may alter the outcomes.

Keywords: Online shopping, traditional shopping, decision-making, buyers, sellers, young adults, deterring factors, Cameroon coastal region.

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COVID-19 - Corona Virus Disease 2019

UNCTAD - United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

CNN - Cable News Network

CEMAC - Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa

B2B – Business-to-Business

B2C – Business-to-Consumers

GESCI - Global E-Schools and Communities Initiative Internet

ITCs - Information and Communications Technology

PC - Personal Computers

MOMO – Mobile Money

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Every aspect of our life in the 21st century has been made almost easy and comfortable due to the emergence of the internet and the rising urbanity of communication technology. Almost all the sector such as commerce, education, business, health, etc has been permeated with the development of communication technology. The applicability of the internet in commerce has developed an effective and efficient method in the shopping surroundings. It allows consumers to make or alter decision anywhere and anytime (Yoon and Occeña, 2015).

Recently, our knowledge is improved by obtaining information from numerous offline and online sources. In the information era, the consciousness of consumers is comparatively high about the products and services offered. They are revealed with numerous sources of product and service associated information. That is how technology assists them to make a purchase decision and obtain product-related information (Narwal and Schdeva, 2013; Kashyap, Kumar and Gwalior, 2019). These days, many people in the world make purchases online since they can shop from anywhere anytime at their comfort zone. On the other hand, the traditional approach of making purchase continues since most people still use the traditional approach for their purchases. Some people prefer to shop using the traditional method so that they can feel, touch and immediately take the product home after payment. In this our present era, customer's loyalty rest upon the steady ability to deliver quality, value and satisfaction. Some will go for online shopping; others will go for traditional or physical way of shopping and others will prefer both channels for shopping.

Several issues are of key importance for the consumer to consider before making a purchase online are as follows: convenience; availability and accessibility of internet; accessibility to the online store at any time; avoid pressure during face-to-face communicating with the retailer; avoid traffic on their way to the physical store; product variety; product type; previous online shopping experience; availability of product and services; availability and accessibility of product information; ease of finding desire products, brand familiarity; store frequency; consumers can easily compare the product and prices of various stores within a short period; offers; payment methods; delivery time; security certificate; product information; reviews about the product and the sellers; ease of use on the web stores; web store designs; successful delivery; etc (Chang, Wu, & Lai,2010;Abiodum, 2013; Mark, 2016; Nadu, 2019).

In cases where people use the traditional approach for purchase, the most important factors that may influence them include bargaining of prices; the authenticity of the product; perceived risk; taste and preference; product type; environmental specifics; etc.

These are the general aspects the researcher has to consider; however, it is also important to keep in mind that these aspects may differ based on particular economic context – in this case developing and emerging economies.

So probably people who live in an advanced economy would be more likely to buy online because they have less constraint. For example, the more usage of computers and internet availability and accessibility with more opportunities in the advanced economy is more likely that people will go for the decision to buy online whereas this will not be the case for developing economies.

However, this may not be the case due to the recent COVID-19 pandemic. The reasons previously listed are the general conditions where there is no pandemic which encourages people to make decisions to execute shopping either online or in a traditional way. With the pandemic, the situation is different as social contact is limited, and quarantine is enforced. For example, in the developed countries more people find it very safe to engage in shopping online as it limits them from getting in contact with others. In the case of emerging or developing economies people frequently use the traditional way to buy their product despite being fully aware it is not safe for them. All these may be due to other reasons which will be explained while developing the thesis.

Furthermore, this does not cancel the fact that the COVID-19 lockdown has increased the number of online shoppers in the African continent (Lewis, 2020). According to Federiksson, the head of trade in the UNCTAD, the growth of new platforms has been accelerated by the Covid-19 lockdown. That is many businesses in Africa have found new ways to bring goods and services to their customers. Also, 'Jumia' which is one of the largest e-commerce operators in the African continent disclosed to the CNN business report that as of the second half of March, it made a four-fold increase in the groceries sales when compared with the same period the previous year (Lewis., 2020). Shopping through the traditional way was greatly reduced due to the lockdown, which in turn limited the circulation of cash especially in Rwanda and Kenya as people have heard a lot of news about how the virus is transmitted from one person to another and figure that cash may be one of the ways. Thus, influencing them to rely on shopping from an online store that is cashless (Lewis., 2020). Undoubtedly,

this pandemic has brought a lot of awareness about using the online platform to emerging economies, and after the pandemic, both small and big entrepreneurs stand to benefit from the online trade. As well as it is true that this increase in online consumers will not be for long because many countries in Africa are experiencing limited internet accessibility, transport, and infrastructural development to handle the online shopping activities.

The core of my investigation is online shopping and the most substantial factor which encourages this process - for example more internet access increases the tendency to execute their purchases online in general. This study may be very significant to businesses that execute purchases of goods. It may help them decide whether they should emphasize on online selling and under what conditions, and what will be the extent to which they have to rely on the traditional way of selling and purchasing.

Therefore, the beneficiaries of this study will be businesses that engaged in this process of exchange and the sellers. This is important because it will help them to know the general plan and understand the consumers before engaging into such business activities. From another perspective, it is important for the buyers as well. Implying that in this study, the sellers are more concentrated because one seller sells to many buyers. So, the beneficiaries are more concentrated whereas the individuals or the buyers are more dispersed, and whatever the researcher will uncover will be more difficult providing advice to those who are participating in this activity.

Online commerce is to be integrated into modern marketing which is one of the aspects of research and development. Later, within the development of the internet, online shopping has become progressively popular (Kannaiah, 2015; Barvin, 2014; Mark, 2016; Nadu, 2019). The system of traditional marketing is gradually being swapped by online shopping, despite the fact that real-time marketing has its own drawbacks such as privacy concerns and internet security (Lim and Dubinsky, 2004; Haq, 2007; Mbayong, 2016). Consumers must thoroughly think over these issues before deciding to engage in online shopping or not. The sophistication of internet-based marketing has led to an increase in the practices of online shopping as a segment of the consumer remain captivated by shopping online, thus creating new business and investment potentials in the internet shopping world (Amichai-Hamburger, 2002; Kotler, 2003; Hills and Argyle, 2003).It is obvious that the studied phenomenon is online shopping and the market specific context is emerging or developing economy.

1.2 Problem Statement

The main aspect which continuously runs through in the minds of consumers during the purchasing decision is where they should purchase products. Several products can be acquired through varied ways such as offline stores, television, catalogs, and online stores (Sua, 2006). These numerous shopping choices create unique challenges for business as they review and modify their marketing strategies to target customers to secure a competitive advantage. In the past, the key techniques used by companies or businesses for networking, obtaining industry-related education, distributing information, and remained up to date had until lately been tradeshows (Robert, 2010). However, consumers recently have dissimilar interest in buying apparel. With respect to this, the US Census Bureau in 2005 has placed the apparel product class the fifth in the US in the leading sales category on the internet (US Census Bureau, 2005). This implies that consumers are recently buying more from the web stores rather than the past wherein more of their purchasing was from the physical stores.

In the world today, buying clothes using online platforms has become a practice by young adults in developed countries and few in developing or emerging countries, however, in Africa and in Cameroon in particular it is not (Mark, 2016; Nadu, 2019; Mbayong, 2016; Njomo, 2019). This implies that most of the consumers in Cameroon still rely on traditional methods for buying clothes, thus making shopping for clothes using the traditional way still relevant (Mbayong, 2016; Mark, 2016).

The increasing internet penetration and the use of electronic devices such as smart phones, laptops, and iPad in the Cameroonian market sphere have gained ground in the last few years with respect to online shopping which has led consumers to have other channels for shopping although to a limited extent (Alangeh, 2014). Most of the research conducted in the field of e-commerce, and more in particularly online shopping context, had started in the US and Europe (Gibbs et al., 2003; Thompson, Liang, and Liang, 2012; Bayley and Nancorrow, 1998). However, few academic studies provided reliable data on online shopping attitudes in the African markets with little or none in relation to the Cameroon market sphere (Mark, 2019; Falode et al., 2016, Njomo,2019; Mbayong, 2016). There are few studies which has been conducted in this aspect of online shopping in the study country but none of them has actually investigated why the practice of shopping online is very limited in the coastal part of Cameroon - which is the objective of this research.

In this thesis, the coastal region of the Cameroon is considered as the study area because it is the most vibrant and populated region endorse with many economic activities and most importantly it has the biggest seaport in the whole of the CEMAC zones. Within the Coastal region, the researcher selected three most vibrant cities which are Douala, Limbe and Kribi. For instance, Douala is the economic capital of the country which has the largest coastal population, the biggest seaport and international airport, and has about 60% of the country's industries (Alemagi et al. 2006). Limbe and Kribi are also booming with many economic activities such as seaports and few industries especially Limbe having one of the biggest petroleum company in the country. This study will consider shopping using the traditional way as shopping from the physical store.

Consequently, there is a need for this research to be able to notify businesses, academicians, and marketers on the gap and dissimilarity in the practice of online and traditional shopping for clothes in the coastal region of Cameroon. The outcome of this study can be used in other aspects of shopping practices and in marketing.

1.3   Problem Formulation

This study critically examines how online clothes shopping are practiced by young adults between 25 to 35 years of age, who are postgraduates from the Coastal region of Cameroon. Consequently, the following research topic and questions have been formulated to provide this study with a clear direction. In this study, there are two research questions to cover the identified research gap.

Research Topic: What are the factors that deter the practice of purchasing clothes online by young adults in the coastal region of Cameroon?

Research Question 1: What are the key factors that hinder consumer's decision from buying clothes online?

Research Question 2: What are the recommendations needed to improve on consumer decision towards buying clothes online?

1.4   Research Motives

The objective of the study is to explore consumption practices from the perspective of young adults and understand why they are not in the practice of purchasing clothes online in the coastal region of Cameroon.

That is from the standpoint of those who have once had experience on the phenomenon in order to boost the business and academic world with practical knowledge on the phenomenon which can aid businesses fighting to understand it.

From the academic lookouts, this study will fill the knowledge gap of the existing literature as there is little research done in Cameroon which has highlighted the various difficulties involved in online shopping without explaining why these obstacles exist. Comprehending from the literature that there are problems related to the subject, this study will be developed base on these ideas and use theory to obtain data concerning the origin of these obstacles.

From the managerial viewpoint, it will help businesses to know and to understand the consumers and the business environment before making a decision to penetrate such a market for business purposes.

In the next pages, the study continues with the following chapters namely: literature review, methodology, finding and analysis, discussion, conclusion and recommendations, and practical implications, limitations and further research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review, Theoretical Considerations and Conceptual Framework

After identifying the problem from the introductory chapter, I will present the literature review and the theoretical consideration chapter. This chapter will keep on exploring the gaps previously identified in the problem by scholars in this area of study. The chapter will be divided into two sections with the first section describing the concept of consumer buying decision with respect to online and traditional shopping, and the second section will be describing the elements of the practice theory of Elizabeth Shove, in which both sections will be underlying the research questions. Lastly the two sections will be integrated to form the conceptual framework of this research with respect to the context.

2.1   Section I. The Concept of online shopping

This section begins with the concept of online shopping and points out the difference which exists between online shopping and traditional shopping, followed by the decision-making process, the factors influencing consumer's decision to purchase online, and limitations. These factors will be classified into three groups such as: conditions needed for the execution of online shopping; the conditions for people to buy online; the expectations of sellers or servers which encourages consumers to purchase on their online stores.

2.1.1   The definition of online shopping

Online shopping has numerous connotations which are used similarly in the existing literature. These are web shopping, electronic shopping, and internet shopping. Many researchers and scholars have defined online shopping. Birkin, Clarke, & Clarke (2002) define online shopping as a solely, homogenous action, the buying of goods and services through the World Wide Web (www). According to the business dictionary, online shopping is the process of buying products or services over the internet (Business Dictionary). Also, online shopping is defined as when consumers make use of online stores up until the transactional level of buying and logistics (Monsuwe, Dellaert, and Ruyter, 2004). An e-commerce system which shoppers make use of is web shopping in the context of business-to-business (B2B) or business-to-consumer (B2C) (Liang, Chai, and Piew, 2010). These definitions mean that online shopping needs the presences of a retailers' websites through which shopping is conducted in a computer-generated environment without physical interaction between the buyers and the sellers. To entice shoppers, keep them for longer period, and wanting them to return to the sites, the e-tailers should design and push for

friendly user-websites. Eventually, the key aim of online shopping is to provide shoppers with a platform for the exchange of goods and services with retailers.

2.1.2   Differences between online and traditional shopping

The distinction between the processes of online and traditional shopping may be the key powerful forces that influence the sales capacity of a retailer. As highlighted by Danaher and Davis (2003) that the online shopping enables customers to easily acquire information about the product, and the buyers can purchase the previous product they brought before by making use of a special online shopping list with a saving engine. On the contrary, consumers take a more perceived risk in online shopping than the consumers who shopped traditionally.

The process of making a decision, which refers to the product choice and price sensitivity, is entirely different during online purchase and traditional shopping. To a big extent, the differences depend on consumers' purchase environment and information search process. Also, online consumers are more traditionalist than those with the traditional approach in the mall. Furthermore, price is one of the vital factors in the process of making decisions by the consumers as well. Taking into consideration the amount of money saved during shopping, online shopping saves more money as compared to traditional shopping (Andersone and Gaile-Sarkane, 2009), but this is not true in the case of the coastal region of Cameroon with respect to this study.

Lastly, there is a great difference in terms of delivery time as compared to online and traditional shopping. The delivery time is longer in online shopping as compare to traditional shopping because the customer takes the product immediately once it is paid for. This is in line with the data reveal in this study.

2.1.3   The Online and Traditional Consumer Decision-making process

The process of making a decision by a consumer be it online or offline (traditionally) is similar. The online decision-making process occurs when customers see promotion online or banner ads, and these advertisements may entice customers' interest and motivate their interest in specific products. Additional information is needed by the consumers to assist them in making such decisions. They will search using other online channels such as search engines, or websites, online catalogs if the information needed about the product is not enough (Laudon and Traver, 2009). Once the customers have all the necessary information needed, they will proceed to compare the product or service choices offered. The customers

might need to look for customer feedback or product reviews in the search stage. They will discover which company or brand presents them the best suitable for their expectation.

During this phase, the well-established website arrangements and attractive design are vital things to convince consumers to be fascinated in purchasing the product or service (Koo et al., 2008). Moreover, the origin of the source of information may influence buyer action. The most valuable attribute of the internet is that it aids the pre-purchase phase as it assists customers to compare dissimilar choices. During the buying stage, information quality, product variety, and sale services seem to be the most vital point to assist consumers to decide what product they should choose, or what seller they should purchase from (Koo. Et., 2008). After their online purchase, post-purchase behavior will become very vital. Sometimes, consumers have concerns or a challenge about the product, or they might desire to change or return the product that they have purchased. Therefore, making return and exchange service becoming very essential at this phase (Liang and Lai, 2002).

With respect to the traditional consumer decision-making process, consumers buying decision commonly begins with need awareness, followed by searching for information, and then evaluate alternatively, deciding to buy, and finally, post-purchasing behavior (Katawetawaraks and Wang, 2011).

2.1.4   Factors Influencing Online shopping

2.1.4.1   Conditions necessary for online shopping to be executed

2.1.4.1.1   Competence and skills

Computer skills are needed for a consumer to be able to be shopped online (Novak et al. 2000; Wang & Hsiao 2012). This simply means that for online shopping to be executed the consumers must have a certain level of computer literacy to be able to use, and a certain level of internet penetration rate is needed. Thus, the level of literacy and the level of penetration rate will make it possible for the adoption of online shopping. For instance, Norway with a literacy rate of 99% has a penetration rate of 97.2%, and Iceland with a literacy rate of 99% has a penetration rate of 97.8% (Internet World Statistics, 2012).

A study conducted by Kim and Ammeter (2008) opined that effective shopping online needs that the consumer should be to a certain extend familiar with computer knowledge and be able to navigate the internet. In line with this, it was observed that e-tailers target a particular age group, termed "the Net-generation, which constitutes persons (Net-genres) brought into

being between 1977 and 1997 by Global E-Schools and Communities Initiative Internet (GESCI, 2012). Unfortunately, all this is lacking in Cameroon's technology industry (Alangeh, 2014).

2.1.4.1.2 Material and infrastructure

Computers and devices such as laptops, tablets, smartphones, and computers are needed for online shopping to be carried out (Noorshella Che Nawi et al 2019). Internet infrastructure is a general term for all software and hardware systems that transfer and receives information from a diversity of unconnected networks and systems. There are several components involved in internet infrastructure, including data centers, networks, storage devices, and more. In some areas of the world, the hardware constituents of the internet infrastructure may be localized. Although the network infrastructure crosses the whole world (Cheung and Lee, 2003).

According to GESCI (2012), internet infrastructure refers to the software applications, equipment, or hardware and services connected with ICTs, including grid networks, electricity, and telecommunication (Fleenor and Raven, 2003). From this, the presence of electricity supply, personal computers, access to the internet, and electronic payment methods will greatly favour the execution of online shopping. In addition, Mathwick et al (2004), stated that the ability for a user to search extensively requires maximum internet consumption.

It was argued by Odedra-Straub (2003) that in developing countries, the accessibility to the internet is still very costly both in absolute term and relative to per-capita income in these countries. He went further to say that while PC prices have dramatically fallen over the previous decade, they stay far off the touch of many enterprises and individual users in the countries (Njomo, 2019).

2.1.4.1.3 Technology in online shopping

Technology plays an influential role in the aspect of shopping online. This is because customers are required to know the technicalities involved in the whole process of shopping online. This idea is expanded with the notion of Raymond Burk study which was conducted from 2002, implying that "for businesses to realize the importance of new innovations in customer interface technology, they are required to understand the importance consumers place on technology as a role on the process of shopping" (Burk, 2002, p. 411). He went

further to add that customers are hardly satisfied with the level of available product information and services offered, proposing that recent online technologies could solve this issue using applications design particularly to attained customer demands (Burk, 2002).

2.1.4.1.4 Regulatory framework

These are laws implemented by the state to protect the rights, obligations, and responsibilities of the suppliers and users of the internet services in case of any issues. The absence of such rules will create distrust and doubts in the minds of online shoppers, and which will consequently hinder its execution. In confirmation of this, Alghamdi, Drew, and Alhussain (2012) argued that the absence of e-commerce law will lead to distrust in the environment in terms of conducting buying transactions. Similarly, as claimed that without the presence of the adequate control of regulation, personal information of every single customer may be used against their consent and knowledge (Li, Yadav, and Lin, n.d).

2.1.4.1.5 Meaning and image

Consumers should be oriented on what exactly online shopping is about. That is an enormous, multi-media advertising campaign that centres online shopping as other efficient and effective to traditional shopping, and which shows the various advantages of online shopping (Abiodun, 2013).

A study was conducted by Heijden & Verhagen (2002) on the image of online shopping practices which was concluded that factors that are connected to image signify a considerable part of consumers' approach concerning online buying by about 30 % of the variance. From their point of view, this notion should be regarded as a decisive factor when the customer is in doubt whether to purchase a product or not from a company. Another revealed from their study is that "store style and store familiarity have just a weak relationship with online buying" (Heijden & Verhagen, 2002, p. 615). They went further with this idea by proposing that businesses should concentrate on making the process of buying online as favourable, easy, and possible to customers and at the same time, investing in capital and time to increase the level of trustworthiness in their businesses.

Similarly, the aspect of image interactivity and appearance within the area of online shopping has been examined in a study carried out by Lee et al. (2010). The study revealed that the degree of interactivity and appearance had a positive result on consumer's enjoyment shopping experience, and noticing that the combination of perceived risk and shopping

enjoyment had a considerable effect on customer-retailer behavior, proposing it plays an essential role in safeguarding consumer's faithfulness (Lee et al., 2010).

According to Heinemann & Schwarzl's (2010) study, a segment of consumers is appreciating social interaction presented by the physical store more than the level of social interaction offered on the online stores. This is conformity with study conducted in Nigeria by Inegbedion et al. (2016).

2.1.4.2 What are the conditions so that people can buy online?

The proper understanding of purchasers in the virtual world as in the physical world cannot be successful if the factors affecting the buying decision are not taken into consideration and understood. Many authors from different studies on online shopping have come up with several different factors influencing online shopping with respect to the result of the studies.

2.1.4.2.1 Convenience

Convenience has always been a motivating factor for consumers shopping online. Consumers can easily search for information and find the products online, then compare with the traditional store which sometimes takes a long time to search and find the product they want because it is done manually. Convenience can be a situation when the online shop offers the buyer the opportunity to shop 24/7 which takes lesser time, lesser physical efforts, and is flexible (Gilon Miller, 2012; Falode et al., 2016). Shopping can be effectuated in a minute despite when someone is busy. Convenience as claimed by Robinson, Riley, Rettie, and Wilsons (2007) is the key motivation for online shopping in terms of purchasing at any time and having your products delivered at your doorstep. As posit by Nikhil Srivastava (2016), convenience is the quickest way to get what the consumer wants and needs as compared to online shopping where the consumer will not need to stand on those long lines to pay for what they want to purchase on the counter thereby saving time.

Even though consumers ceaselessly shopped from a brick and mortar store, consumers feel so convenient to purchase online as it liberates them from visiting the physical stores physically. A study conducted by Rohm and Swaminathan (2004) in the northeast United States on online grocery retailer for active and lapsed customers taking into consideration the aspects of time and efforts with respect to convenience in shopping. The result proved that convenience varies in regard to different consumers and the type of shopping practiced.

As regards to shopping online, the customers saves time as the customers sit in their comfort zones and place their order 24/7 (Gilon Miller, 2012; Nikhil Srivastava, 2016), but deliveries are not immediate as compared to offline shopping wherein the customers travel to the brick and mortar stores to shop and gets the product immediately (Rohm and Swaminathan, 2004). Thus, accepting the fact that convenience is amongst the key factors motivating shopping especially online shopping. In acceptance with this, convenience is measure as and when the consumer decides to visit the internet to buy, the customer stand the chance of enjoying many convenient opportunities in the form of shopping flexibility, less physical efforts, user-friendly websites, and advertisements and promotions (Pavlou 2003). But contrary to this, a study conducted on the Cameroonian online marketplace on the factors influencing online shopping behaviour with Buea town being the case study proves that online shopping was not convenient enough as their websites were not user friendly and the whole transaction process takes so much time (Njomo, 2019).

In addition, a study was conducted on college students in India by Usha Vaidehni (2014) on the factors driving them to shop online, and the studies reveal that convenient when taken considerable time saving, product availability, ease of payment, and promotion on the e-retailers stores make them shop online (Usha Vaidehni, 2014).

2.1.4.2.2 Information Accessibility

According to Wang et al (2005) accessing data has been made easier over the internet. Given that customers hardly ever get the means to feel and touch the product and service online before making a decision, more information about the product is provided normally by the online seller that customers can rely on during purchasing (Lim and Dubinsky, 2004). Also, consumers can get information from the websites from the product reviews by previous customers to make a purchasing decision.

Technologically, online shoppers are less satisfied with the product information and the level of services provided so new online technologies might provide a solution to meet customers' demands for this issue by using specific applications created for this purpose (Burk, 2002).

2.1.4.2.3 Availability of products and services

Transactions have been made easier than ever before due to the advent of e-commerce and consumers benefits from a variety of products and service offered to them by the online stores that they can make buying choices (Lim and Dubinsky, 2004).

2.1.4.2.4 Price

At the time of buying, product price is of the key factors that influence customers. Customers ceaselessly try to get the most attractive deal, which meets all the demands they pursue at the greatest possible price (Bhimalingam and Shrivastava, 2008). Price is always considered as the only thing in the mind of the customer according to the retailer. But this is not the case as claim by Shih (2004), that there are certain elements that influence the perception of the price before the decision of buying is made. These factors include transparency in the online store, discounts and promotion, and value for money.

-Transparency: The truthfulness of online buying in terms of its price is a decidable factor in customer perception before making a buying decision. Stores that look for means to increase sales with low priced deals then inflate the price during payment is not the best to follow. Such a practice is highly denied by the potential customer, not because the product final price is high but because they feel cheated by the store (Bhatnagar and Ghose, 2004b).

-Discount and promotion: It's very important to know from the beginning of the store position in terms of the price. In several cases, a timely deal from an online store that has become recommended for the user can be very attractive than the routine lower prices of other online stores (Shim and Eastlick, 2001).

-Value for money: This talk about the quality and price of the product in an online store. An extremely low price of a good can produce mistrust, especially in customers who visit the online store for the first time. Also, if these customers have once purchased the same product in other online stores, they will be uncertain about the huge difference in the price reference that they have, except there is a logical explanation as a particular price or wholesale price (Shwu-Ing, 2003).

A study conducted by Mbayong (2016) in Cameroon, claimed that consumers' nature to purchase online is not deterred by the price, but by the product, the variety offered, and the perceived good design. In consistent with this claim, Chiu et al. (2019), conducted a study in Taiwan on the reason why consumers spend longer time shopping online. The study reveals that price is one if not the most vital aspect swaying purchasing when retailers widen their brick and mortar shops to the internet. In addition, as claim by Roy (2007), online customers are most often presented with a good deal that they can get similar products at a lower cost as they buy in the store.

2.1.4.2.5 Security and Privacy

Security in this context is the control over consumers' personal information, the expectation of confidentiality, and the expectation of keeping ones' privacy. As stated by Chen and Chang (2003) that security is among the issues practitioners often associate with the failure or success of an online business. The security of financial transactions is one of the greatest fears with producing trustworthy and efficient online commerce that takes place over the network. The concerns are not only about the value security but also about information society trust. The key concern for customers buying goods and services online is customer data safety and transaction security. Several websites have published security statements and privacy policies in order to ease consumers' concerns about security and privacy in their transactions (Burke, 2002). Research conducted by Mohd at al. (2006) shows that the intention to buy products is inversely related to the amount of perceived risk associated with the purchase.

2.1.4.2.6 Situational factor

It can moderate the connection among consumers and their attitudes to shopping online. Several consumers find convenience and approachability from online shopping since they shop with an enjoyable feeling in their friendly environment (Benedict et al., 2001; Monsuwé et al., 2004). Sometimes people think about online shopping when they need special items, overcome geographical distance, or expect to find attractive alternatives. For instance, when people are faced with a situation of 'lack of mobility' they might switch to online shopping for a limited time for traditional shopping. Looking at Nielsen's research of online shopping, 49% of online consumers responded that they shop online to buy products they hardly find in a traditional store and 57% answered they buy from e-retailer abroad in the past six months (Nielsen, 2016b).

2.1.4.2.7 Product Characteristics

The product characteristic offers online is also a vital factor required for successful online purchasing. These product characteristics are features that can be included in the product meaning to lengthen the explanation of every single product. Examples of the characteristics are colour, shape or weight, quality, and size. Later on, these characteristics can be used to search for products. It is claimed by Rowley (2000) that once the definition of the attributes is

generated these can be associated with a product and then produce other products (Rowley, 2000). These characteristics include the following described below;

Physical appearance: This refers to product size and shape, colour, in a very detailed manner as possible.

Purpose: it refers to the product value. It also implies the importance of a specific product benefits the user or consumer. For example, how the product makes the consumer life easier, more enjoyable …?

Craftmanship: The creation of the product should be done very well and properly. The product should be durable with a long-lasting lifespan. It should be described to the consumer on how to use it and guarantee information, if relevant. A consumer will require this information to dictate the complete quality of the product.

Price: The product price is very vital. A consumer desire to always have the very most of their money. A good business that wants to get their share of the market must sure to have a good price deal. When they draw up a fair price, they can work with discounts and promotions, sales in order to lure customers to purchase from them.

Comparing Criteria: This is simply how distinct a product is in the market. A business should be capable to inform their potential customers why their product is the first among others. It should attempt to know and understand it, competitors, to a larger extent and be able to explain without doubt why the specific product is relevant than the one the competitors are offerings (Chiange and Dholakia, 2003).

The propensity of people to shop online is determined by the attributes of the product (Benedict et al 2001). In specific, standardized or familiar products customers' intention to shop online increases (Monsuwé et al., 2004). For example, books and clothing are the most popular product during online shopping, with a percentage of 46% of books and 41% of clothing purchase in 2010 (Nielson, 2010), while in 2015, 50% books and 55% clothing (Nielsen, 2016a), and 62% of online consumers said they will shop online for electronics only when the prices were lower (Nielsen, 2016a). Nevertheless, some products may not be appropriate for online shopping. For example, people may want to touch, feel, smell, and try before purchasing some types of products such as cars or personal-care products. According to Nielsen's findings, 4% of hire cars were online purchased and only 5% of sports collected (Nielsen, 2010).

2.1.4.2.8 Previous online shopping experience

The previous experience of an online consumer has a direct influence on online shopping intention (Chang, Wu, & Lai, 2010; Monsuwé et al., 2004; Benedict et al 2001). The good method of payment, delivery, information perception, or enjoyment, which may result in satisfaction, will lead to repeated future purchases and a positive experience (Monsuwé et al., 2004; Zhou et al., 2007). The most used method of payments in online shopping is a credit card with 53%, followed by 43% of digital payment systems and 39% of debit card payments (Nielsen, 2016a).

2.1.4.2.9 Trust

Online trust is the main issue for e-tailers willing to create long-term relationships with consumers (Ruiz-Mafe et al., 2014). In addition, trust has been noticed for producing contented and expected results in internet shopping (Ling, Gading, and Chai, 2010, 66). The purpose of online trust is the technology, or internet, website, which could be observed as a store from the angle of forming customer trust (Prompongsatorn et al., 2012). To this light, the degree of interaction that a customer share with a store is the same as that which that shared with the website, and this degree of interaction creates the base of website trust.

Online trust such as the level of confidence in the site, consumer perception of how the site will deliver on expectations, and how true and reliable the site information is. Trust is vital because it allows consumers to subdue perceptions of risk and uncertainty; by so doing, they are helping to relate in trusting attitudes with online retailers, such as making purchases or sharing personal information (McKnight, Choudhury, and Kamar 2002, 335). Thus, confirming the fact that the ability to trust is essential for consumers' behaviours towards internet shopping. The trust which is considered important by other researchers to consumers' internet behaviour includes Prompongsatorn et al. (2012) and Metehan and Yasemin (2011).

2.1.4.2.10 E-Service Quality

This refers to "the degree to which a website enables efficient and effective shopping, buying and delivery of products and services" (Parasuraman et al., 2005). According to Santos's (2003) definition, e-service quality is the "complete customer evaluation and judgment in connection to the superior and the quality of e-service delivery in the online marketplace". E-service quality is turning out to be an essential criterion to quantify e-retail websites and an essential element to business accomplishments. It was suggested by Cox and Dale (2001),

that the absence of a quality management approach that assures quality from its suppliers, systems, and staff, a business cannot be capable to deliver a suitable level of service quality to satisfy its customers. Service quality in online stores is especially vital for the interface between the customer and the web store.

2.1.4.2.11 Payment Method

Online shopping retailers normally offer numerous ways of payment, such as online payment regarding credit card usage, and telegraphic remittance. Most consumers select a payment method not just base on convenience, but on security which is very vital. As highlighted by Franzak et al. (2001), online shoppers require websites to provide for secure payment, keep online communication private, and protect personal data. In the case of this study context, payment is done alternatively with the use of mobile money from data collected online from customer service about the consumers. Mobile money (MOMO), according to Shrier et al. (2016) is a service that permits customers to easily access financial services with the use of cellular devices.

2.1.4.2.12 Product Variety

The availability of a wide variety of products is usually key for online sellers to encourage consumers to shop in their web store. Providing many more choices, there will be a higher opportunity to sell the product. According to Christian and France (2005), online retailers who have presented a broad variety of products and selections seem to be very successful. Consumers require online retailers to present a broad range of product variety so as to easily reach the internet and the possibility to follow specialty goods and services. Also, a broader selection of products may be enticing to customers, and the decision to buy online would be very positive when online stores present quality product variety.

2.1.4.2.13 Delivery Service

The delivery service offered by the online store vary from location to location. That is the fees are charge depending on the customer location. As opined by Christian and France (2005), delivery is simply the length of time needed for the package to leave from the distribution point to the customer's address or door. Delivery problem is a very general phenomenon occurring in the online shopping environment in the developing or emerging economies like Africa for example (Inegbedion et al., 2016; Abiodun, 2013). In an online shopping environment, not solely is the consumption of goods disconnected from production,

thus making it essential for consumers to receive their goods before consumption, there exists a delay in the goods to be delivered. Delay delivery hinders the practice of buying online (Christian and France, 2005; Inegbedion et al., 2016; Abiodun, 2013).

2.1.4.2.14 Environmental Aspect

These include factors that are associated with the environment which can either motivate the consumers to buy online or discourage them from purchasing online and preferring to shop from the physical store. Generally, most consumers in developing economies, especially in Africa tend to prefer shopping from an online store rather than the physical when they have a ceremonies like weddings, graduation, etc and during a particular period of the year for example during Christmas and new year's celebrations. This is because they believed the online store will offer varieties of products which are unique with great quality and at affordable price (Mbayong, 2016).

Taking into consideration the period in which we are that is the COVID-19 pandemic, where physical contact is limited; shopping online has increased in some parts of Africa due to the lockdown. A study conducted by Nielsen from market research firms discovered that during the period of lockdown around 30% of online consumers in some countries in Africa shopped more online such as South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya (Anon., 2020).

2.1.4.3   What should servers do to encourage buying decisions online

Sellers need to implement certain facilities to be able to encourage consumers to engage in online purchasing. Many academic journal articles and books have been written by many researchers and academicians on what servers need to do in other to motivate customers to shop online. There exist several salient factors which will be discussed below.

2.1.4.3.1   Ease of Use

Ease of use is when the server's systems are easy to use and usefulness to their consumers. If an online shop system is consider difficult to use it will discourage consumers from engaging in online shopping. Ease of use is a situation where the buyer can easily access information, ease to make purchase arrangements, level of user-friendly websites, easy utilization of systems (Benedict et al., 2001; Halimi et al 2011; Falode et al., 2016). As per Halimi et al., (2011), the ease with buying arrangements are made, the ease with taking advantages of services, ease with searching and finding information, and the easy utilization in general.

Academicians who view ease of use as a vital factor that sellers should rely on to influence a consumer to shop online are of the opinion that easy buying arrangement, degree of user-friendliness on the websites, easy information searching, easy taking advantage of services, and easy utilization in general, to a greater extent, influences online shopping decision of consumers (Puto and Haryanto, 2015; Alkasassbeh 2014; Halimi et al., 2011).

As stated by Calisir et al. (2009), usability is regarded as the extent to which consumers utilize the internet facilities with ease and appropriateness of its function. Therefore, web usability is simply organizing web design making it looks simple enough to enable the task to accomplish faster and effortlessly as possible by internet consumers (Jun and Jaafar, 2011). Consequently, usability concerns the extent to which potential consumers and online customers acknowledge the internet facilities usable for online shopping. Since online shopping is centered on the internet, and the website is the main platform of transaction online, website usability is considered to have a notable impact on the success of an online shop and the perception of consumers (Jun and Jaafar, 2011).

2.1.4.3.2 Websites design/Features

Website design is one of the most influencing factors which can attract more consumers to purchase products online. An online consumer expects online servers to make their online store looks attractive with captivating graphics, good atmospheric web and has a very attractive layout and website design (Prashar, Vijay and Parsad, 2015). A study which was conducted by Yasmin and Nik (2010) proves that there exists a significant relationship between websites design with online shopping activities. This factor with respect to online shopping can be a motivational factor that leads to either a positive or a negative feeling towards the consumer. Well-created website design with great quality characteristics by the seller can drive consumer very easily to purchase online which intend makes transaction successful and this encourages the consumer to purchase again from this websites or they can motivate different consumer with word of mouth to buy from this website. This implies that web design quality or website characteristics in accordance with (Liang and Lai, 2000) has a direct effect on online shopping user.

In addition, a good website design should be clear, orderly and the user interface should be visibly good-looking. As postulated by Kim, Kim, and Lennon (2011) that fruitless website design and lack of pertinent information about the goods or the product can lead to a risk to those consumers leaving the website without buying any product. The website design should

be easy for the user to use, simple and the navigation process within the website should be easy. Consumers will not think twice to purchase from a website that is easy access and well-constructed. Consumers can compare products easily and make good decisions with a highly organized design of an online shop that provides more information about the products (Kasuma et al., 2020)

According to Kapsalis et. al., (2004), website design is a framework of varied applications that connects information, layout, interactive or communicative characteristics, energy management, and graphics image. Website feature or design comprises all elements experience by the consumer at the website such as personalization, information search, product section and order processing. A good-looking website should highlight how good a website can direct its user and on how easily it can be used (Jun, M., Yang, Z. and Kim, D., 2004).

2.1.4.3.3 Security and privacy

Security is a vital issue and matters for online consumers, and it is among the most pertinent factors for an online business whether the business is successful or not. Security is a domineering factor that affects online shoppers. Several internet users avoid shopping online because they are uncertain of the security provided by the website due to post-purchase service, credit card fraud, non-delivery risk, privacy factors and usually too hackers create a fake website which is identical to the online shopping website (Niranjanamurthy and Dharmendra, 2013).

As highlighted by Loonan and Loughlin (2008) that security and privacy holds an important position particularly in banking industry online since consumer or user claimed that all website suppliers have a safe website as a fixed criterion for shopping online. Safety of information or personal details and credit cards becomes the main concern for consumers when deciding to shop in an online store. Therefore, users or consumers all the time look forward to the fact their records and personal information or details be kept safely and secretly by the online website owner (Loonan and Loughlin, 2008).

As opined by Bhatnagar and Ghose (2004), security is amongst the main aspects which limit purchasing using websites as consumers claim that there exists a vast portion of internet consumers who dislike purchasing online because they fear the security of their personal information being hacked by others. One of the unquestionable vital issues is security or

privacy when a consumer buys or purchases online. This is also because security or privacy is to look upon as the level of protection of a buyer safety and consumer information of network against scammers or hackers.

The absence of website security and privacy will make the consumers lack confidence in shopping online which is disadvantageous for online shopping, and which intends to hinder the development of internet shopping. Servers or online shopping owners should tighten and reinforce the security of the transaction online and provide the consumer with a privacy policy thus improving consumer satisfaction, confidentiality, and purchase intention.

2.1.4.3.4 Customer service assistant

Customer service is a situation wherein the servers meet the desires and needs of any customer. Some of the attributes of good customer service include:

-*Professionalism*: Every single customer should be professionally treated, which implies the use of skill or competence to look forward to is of professionals. Professionalism proves to the customers that they are cared for.

- *Promptness*: Delivery must be on time as promised. The avoidance of cancellations and delays of product.

- *Personalization:* According to Schlosser (2003), creating effective loyalty towards customers is using their name. Customers enjoy the fact that they are recognized at a certain level personally by those they do business with.

- *Politeness*: Politeness is nearly a vanish art. Part of good customer service includes saying 'sir', 'good day', 'thank you very much', and 'hello'.

Customer service through e-mails and chats has become a routine with the coming of the World Wide Web and computers. There have been changes due to customers' expectations. They expect to relate to a product through a mass number of digital channels. Access to online services by customers and users is done through different platforms, including apps and web browsers, which are from a mobile device. Also, customers and users expect convenience, flexibility, consistency of their experience when migrating from one platform to another (Forrester, 2006).

For customer service to be successful the server has to implement the following;

Value – It is essential to keep in mind the purpose of your e-care digital system, which is to meet customers and user needs, and it must be flexible and adaptable to meet those needs when it changes. Customers and users must be able to visualize the value from your services online and must feel in command (Njomo, 2019).

Simplicity – A straight forward yet successful user interface is pivotal for functionality and operability. Simplicity is best for low-cost maintenance and to sustain internal technical support not only for your user level of soundness in judgments (Njomo, 2019).

Intuitive – Is your digital e-care system easy to search for information among menus? Is it functional? Is your e-care system easy to navigate and use? (Njomo, 2019).

Consistency – As previously mentioned, users and customers need to be capable to access online services and search the information they know is existing faultlessly. Thus, consistency is vital. The servers should abstain from advancement and information that are not necessary to their e-care digital system (Njomo, 2019).

All the above mention points will help to increase the server digital e-care system for their users, and which will intend drives them to shop online. Customer service at the smallest level has to be a point of contact for all customer questions, whether that is before, during, or after a sale has been made. They should respond to all the inquiries about the product, price, delivery time, stock, and issues concerning the product (Shang et al., 2005).

It is of great importance for the researcher to take into consideration the present situation, that is the current pandemic which has influence the study phenomenon in one way or the other, there is a need for an overall comprehensive evaluation of the specifics of online and traditional shopping concerning the general conditions and in the specific conditions of COVID-19. Before the current pandemic, the factors which influence consumers into deciding to purchase clothes online include; promotion on the web stores, product variety, advertisement, convenience in terms of purchasing 24/7, low prices, product and seller reviews, availability of unique product, previous online shopping experience, instant gratification and friendly customer service assistant. Regarding, the traditional or physical way to buy clothes in the coastal region of Cameroon before the pandemic the following is considered; product authenticity, the possibility to bargain the prices, taste, and preference, high availability and accessibility of physical stores, inadequate delivery options when you purchase online, insufficient online payment methods, most people don't use and they don't have a bank card, cash is the most suitable and acceptable form of payment, stores are graded

from low to high quality which is easily affordable, one can try the product before payment, the opportunity for a family gathering, and immediate possession of the product after payment.

On the other hand, the conditions are different during this pandemic. With the pandemic, social distancing is one of the requirements generally accepted to reduce the spread of the coronavirus which will therefore increase the rate of shopping online by consumers. During the first half of the lockdown in Cameroon, most sellers turn to other social media platform such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram and Imo to get to their customers. It was notice that mobile money was highly used as a means of payment online, expensive intermediaries were avoided as digital service providers were brought to small farmers and market sellers directly, and shopping across Cameroon was not possible as all its borders was closed (Ehl., 2020). But this was not effective for a long period because of poor transportation facilities, insufficient internet availability, and inadequate infrastructure. This, therefore, made most people go back to the traditional way of shopping without being afraid of the risk of getting infected with the coronavirus in other to avoid the difficulties involved in shopping from the online platform (Ehl., 2020).

2.1.5 Limitations

These are the factors that deter the decision of consumers to engage in the practice of buying from an online store. The limitations of these factors will hinder the decisions of consumers to buy from an online store. These include;

-Inadequate regulatory framework to protect online buyers

-Poor delivery systems

-Insufficient internet accessibility

-Inadequate product information

-Lack of educational and trained personnel to educate people on the benefits of shopping online

-Intangibility of online product

-Lack of trust

-Lack of social contact

-Dissatisfaction with the online shopping

-Inadequate e-payment methods

-Difficulties to navigate some web store systems

-Poor quality product

-Slow shipment process

-Insufficient computer equipment (soft and hardware) and internet personnel to build and maintained internet applications.

(Inegbedion et al., (2016); Abiodun, (2013); Njomo, (2019); Mbayong, (2016))

These limitations can be of varieties of ways, but in the case of Cameroon they are high cost of transportation, lack of bank accounts, inadequate product information, inadequate availability of online shops, lack of home addresses, high taxes, longer delivery time than expected, most at times what you order is not what you get and which is very difficult to return to the suppliers, insufficient e-customer service and complications of refund from the supplier, if the goods ordered, does not get to the consumer, and the COVID-19 pandemic provokes longer delivery time.

2.2 Section II: Theoretical Considerations

2.2.1 The Practice theory

This section will focus on the theoretical outlook of this research. I will start with the definition of practice, next with the components of a practice which is focused on the sociologist Elizabeth Shove's social practiced theory, and continue with its dynamics, development, applicability, and lastly the limitations of the practice theory. Shove social practiced theory is focus on three interdependence elements such as skills or competencies, materiality or technology, and meaning or image. These elements of the practice theory will be use as the main themes which will assist in the development of the conceptual framework and questionnaire use in this study to examine why young adults in the coastal region of Cameroon are not so much into online shopping of clothes.

2.2.2 Definition of Practice

As define by Reckwitz (2002), "a practice is a routinized habit in which things are clarified, subjects are handled, objects are managed, bodies are shift, and the globe is understood.

<…>it is a "sort" of performing and comprehension that materializes at a divergent place and at an unalike position in time and is executed by dissimilar body/mind" (p.250). According to Schatzki (2001), practice necessitates embodied, materially mediated gathering, and shared meaning' (p.3). Taking this to be so, practices trust the being of basic elements which contains the type of competence or skills, images or meanings and in many cases materials or technology or objects as well. As claimed by Reckwitz (2002), he made use of this theme: 'conveying a practice recurrently indicates operating or consuming particular things in a well-defined way. This may be totally unessential to stress that pleasing to play football a ball and goals are required as important "resources"' (p. 253) … though it is not. He continues to elucidate that; objects are centrally and unavoidably involved in the production and reproduction of practice. In view of the authors Reckwitz and Schatzki's ideas about practice, the researcher will deal with the concept that practices involve the functioning combination of material or technology, forms of skills or competencies, and meaning or image.

2.2.3 What does the practice consist of?

Shove brings out the differences between practice-as-performance and practiced-as-entity, and the two exist in practice. Practice-as-performance is special and mentions the performance of a practice that occurs in space and time. Performance concentrate on societal action and how the actions are carried out. Practice-as-entity mentions the elements that are involved in a practice (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 19 – 20). Therefore, Buch (2017) asserted that practice must be appreciated as a unit that manages actions in a specific manner (p. 42). Practice-as-performance entails the active blending of the elements, and practice-as-entity constitutes style and habits (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 131). With respect to the above explanations, Shove refers to the practice as an interdependence connection among three elements: material or technology, competence or skills, and meaning or image (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 36).

2.2.4 The Elements of Practice

Material (materiality) or technology is the first element that Reckwitz signifies to it as objects, which is associated with infrastructure, objects, tools, hardware, and the body itself. In addition, materiality is considered as the constitutive element of practice according to Shove. Social and societal circumstances are constructed into designed of material objects, hence deciding the social context, and our manner of action as well (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson, 2012, p.132).

Competence or skills is the second element, which is linked with understanding and practical knowledge (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson, 2012, p.34). Practical knowledge and understanding signify routines and habits, including laws and rules which are guided. This element is connected back to Reckwitz's understanding of knowledge by Shove, Pantzar, and Watson (2012) that precis distinct modes of knowing, feeling, interpreting undoubtedly, and linking to the globe (p.23). Competence in daily life is through learning that happens all the time and from time to time unconsciously. Competence must also be comprehended as an embodied knowledge of how the practice is carried out (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson, 2012, p.59). In addition, competence or skills assist to evaluate performance if it is pertinent. But it does not imply having the skills it takes to perform this performance (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson, 2012, p. 35).

Meaning or image is the third and last element. This element handles the social and figurative sense of part-taking in practice and must be looked upon as a synthesis of what Reckwitz reports as values, mental activities, motivational knowledge, and emotions along with Schatzki's notion of teleo-affective structures (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson, 2012, p.35). The style in which the globe is understood, and the sure styles of acting are focus on the social order implanted in the practice of practice.

The presence of all the elements described above at the same place and time is a necessity for a practice to happen. That does not signify that practice will take place but that it is possible. In addition, it signifies that all the elements can be linked to each other in distinct ways. The elements are formed and interconnected to each other as shown in the figure below (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson, 2012, p. 36, 45).

Meaning: cultural conventions, expectations and socially shared meanings

Material: objects, tools, infrastructures

Competence: knowledge and embodied skills
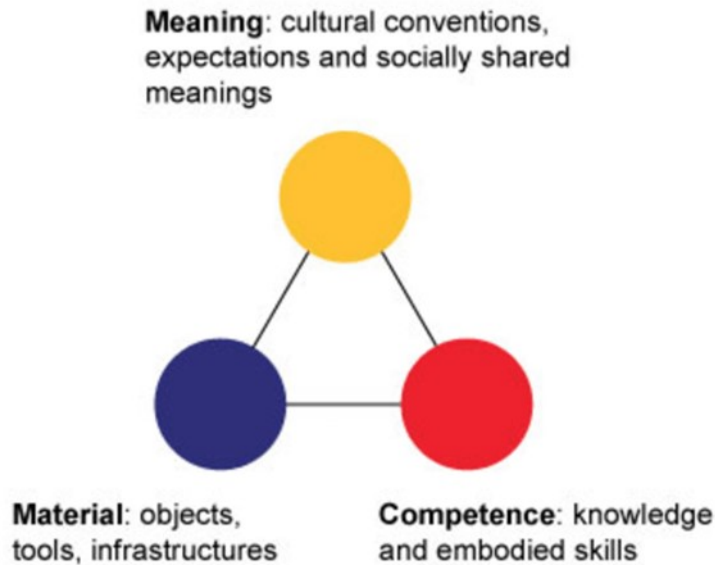
Figure 1: The Elements of a practice (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 40)

These elements are relatively steady and competent to circulate around places where the practice is ever-present "… in the course of creation …" (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson, 2012, p. 55). The connection among the elements is forceful and continuously changing. Thus, the circulation among the elements is partially within the same practice, but between dissimilar practices as well. Elements from a particular practice may come back to a different practice so that the same elements are components of other practices. Therefore, other practices can be linked too through elements they have the same characteristics with (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson, 2012, p. 48).

A practice is never lonely because often there are the presences of other practices. For instance, three dissimilar elements can be connected to one other through the elements they have in common. Taking as an example the chef cooking practice, which is connected to the practice that was done in the cooking school. In addition, chef's cooking practices are linked to the workplace practices too and several other practices as well which have not been mention (Buch, A., 2017). This is simply as the elements are joined to create one. In a practice, other practices may be bundled together too. Shove, Pantzar, and Watson (2012), concerns to bundles as "… lose-knit designs build on the co-existence and co-location of practices" (p.92). The practices are therefore connected to designs build on place and time. The unalike practices collaborate and compete together. The time used in practice cannot be spent on another, and therefore the future of the practice relies on how the persons taking part in the practice carry out their daily activities (Shove, Pantzar and Watson, 2012, p. 138).

Notwithstanding the competition, the different practices are concurrently unified by the common elements (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson, 2012, p. 100).

2.2.5 The Dynamics of Practice

The assumption of Reckwitz's that man is considered as a carrier of practice moved Shove. Man can control many varied practices without the practices being related. The carrier could go about carrying on the practice, not only through time and location, but also on the place where the practices are carried out (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson, 2012, pp. 20, 137). When practices are moved on through place and time, or when the elements of a practice mingle among various practices, the word travel is used (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson, 2012, p. 54). The material or technological element is a physical object, and it travels by shifting the objects from place to place. By contrast, the traveling of competence and meaning is very difficult and could occur in various manners (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson, 2012, p. 79). According to the sociologists, a practice could spread through what she describes as "… social contagion …" (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson, 2012, p. 79). A practice could be very popular through social contagion, by persons who shared a common thought. Individuals connected to other people are more likely to be attached to a practice. The chef's cooking practice, educational practice, and the social network workplace practice are therefore very vital for the spread of practice (Buch, A., 2017). Though, some practices are adequately well-founded that they obviously happen even if they are not attached to a particular social network. Therefore, the spread does not happen through social contagion, but on the opposite, either the spread is strengthened or weaken (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson, 2012, p. 79).

Shove is inspired by Gidden's idea of the circuit of reproduction: "In his view of schematic description, the circuit of reproduction involves rings of feedback (and positive comments) between individual performers concern in observing the constant flow of activity, and amid these and the structural possessions of social systems. Although labelled as the circuit of 'reproduction' such connection does not ensure continuity" (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson, 2012, p. 109).

A practice continuously changes with time as an outcome of learning that is built on experience. The experience is by feedback. Feedback can be by observing through the technical help, however too through internal reward (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson, 2012, p. 79). A positive comment is an action consider based on the hope of assessment. The action is thus motivated by anticipations. Circuits are always available in a practice and learning

therefore depends on which comment is replied to (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson, 2012, p. 109). Also, practice to changes with time from the understanding of what is currently normal has never been considered normal. In addition, Shove & Spurling (2013) highlighted that what is consider normal nowadays will not be the same in the future (p.2).

Shove is attracted to how practices developed and change. Practices unfold when new elements have been introduced or when the present elements are united in other ways (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson, 2012, p. 131). In this way, the elements actively and persistently evolved. If practices are to be maintained, the elements should always be together (Shove, Pantzar, and Watson, 2012, pp. 86,87). The internal reward is one of the ways to preserve a practice., and it can also be considered as a good practice. When the performers in the practice become engaged, their acts change to match their activities. If it does not make sense or is not beneficial to carry out the practice, the practice will be developed or fade with time (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, pp. 82, 86).

2.2.6 Developments in Practice

A research of practice can shape the roots for an understanding of social phenomena at the macro, micro, and meso levels. The micro-level is composed by particular actions, the meso level is involved with the building of laws, and the macro-level is an intensely structural level of tendencies (Shove, 2002, p. 3). Shove, Pantzar, & Watson (2012) thinks that there are incorporations among the micro-level practices and the macro-level materials circumstances and dialogs, in that the micro-level is formed by the macro-level constructions (p. 103, 122). Shove, Pantzar, & Watson (2012), quotes that "first, climate change arguably signifies the most long-term dares to confront human race… Second, it is challenging just because the views of any real responses vary on altering social practice" (p.151). Shove in the quote, admits the significance of changing social practices to resist climate challenges. The development of social practice is changeable, which is why it does not make sense to put objectives for a practice change. Though, through political interference, it is likely to increase the possibility of a change within the elements in practice (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 158). Though, it is vital to note that policy interferences aspired at changing person behavioral prototypes are ways of maneuvering consumers, which can be thought to be morally wrong (Shoves, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 153). Most of the maneuvering we are subjected to in daily life occurs as an involuntary and unintentional part of our behavior. Equally, persons' actions can influence and change the structure, therefore changing the

methods in which power is used together at meso and macro levels (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 148).

The origin of change behavior relies on the development of practice. "…Policy creators will very well respect parallel paths that is vital to the carrier of the practice they pursue to change" (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 170). Shove trust that the state should think that competition among unrelated practices might influence consumer actions, which is why it very vital to consider what happens to the carrier of practice. Furthermore, it is achievable to bring dissimilar actors (producers and organizations) together as part of a deliberate plan to change practices in a very ecological direction (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 172). It is about altering the way of reasoning, routines, and habits, and thus consumer behavior styles, together with the structures near them (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 174). Political interference can be by forming and determining the carrier of practice and bringing dissimilar actors together, affects and change the flow of the three elements.

Shove is enthused by Schatzki's meaning of when practice changes character or dissolve: "… when changes in companies are rapid or extensive, or a practice schemes and responsibilities are easily not done, previous practices fade…" (Schatzki, 2002, p. 244). When a practice vanishes or dissolves, it could be owing to a complete change in practice. Schatzki claims that innovations bring changes in habits and routines and therefore consumer performance, thus changing or vanishing an ancient practice in favour of another one (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 85). A practice vanishes or dies by not performing responsibilities or schemes (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 133). Some practices turn out to be intensely planted in the community while others die. When the link among the elements is shattered, some elements suit part of different practices while others just vanish (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 45).

2.2.7 Applicability of the Practice Theory

In this thesis, the sociologist social practice theory is proposed to help explain the reason for young adults not practicing online clothes shopping based on the interdependence among the three elements. By understanding the elements, the dynamics in them, and the development among them, knowledge can be derived concerning how the elements affect the performance of the practice. Shove belief that the source of the changes in behavior rest in the development of practice, and thus the social practice theory of Shove can be of importance to describe how practices can be modified and developed to encourage the practice of traditional

and online consumption in procuring practices. Also, the elements of the practice theory will be used as the main themes of the factors that influence consumers buying decision, which will be demonstrated in the conceptual framework.

2.2.8 Limitation of the Practice Theory

Although the practice theory was very helpful to this thesis, yet it has its drawbacks. Firstly, noticeable regularities are outcomes of the joint responsibility of performances. This implies that the position for an experiential review into the social actions' basic accountability does not essentially validate seeing the practice as a developing entity. This is because the suggestions do not signify which actions should be regarded as practices, nor how might the limits to practice be made, recognized normally, and sociologically. If a practice is to be regarded as an entity, in addition to an aggregate total of numerous comparable normatively mutually regulated performances, it needs vigorous ways of recognition.

Secondly, there is a huge unwillingness to use the notion of habit which is the main attribute of daily life and daily consumption patterns (Warde & Southerton, 2012). Also, habits may be imagined as embodied actions. Routines and habits are unimaginable in the absence of the practical affordance provided by instruments and machines. Bodies and things are recognized to be vital, but better clarifications are still needed for their roles. Thirdly, most explanations frequently examine individual behavior, though as performances rather than intended, premeditated individual choices. Nevertheless, they give less time to the formation of standards, values, and organizations which creates shared processes and shared understanding.

Lastly, the practice theory does not focus on people, the carriers of practices; it mostly focuses on the practices themselves.

All in all, these factors described above impact the decision-making process of the consumers to either buy online or from the physical stores. The factors which generally, motivate consumers to make the decision to purchase from online stores are convenience, price, information accessibility, security and privacy, ease of use, product characteristics, previous online shopping experience, trust, website design, e-service facilities, etc. In the context of this study, the key factors which encourage young adults to purchase from an online store include information accessibility and product information, product varieties, previous online shopping experience, price, ease of use, convenience, environmental factor, promotion and

discount of the product, and advertisement from the online stores through social media apps like Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp.

In addition, there are other factors which are a link to the specific of the product because the product is clothing, and which sets certain limitation. Then they are factors which are associated with the inaccessibility of everything needed in order to buy online such as insufficient internet accessibility, poor delivery systems, inadequate product information, poor websites design, lack of social contact, lack of trust, poor quality product, dissatisfaction with the online shopping, insufficient e-payment methods, slow shipment process, difficulties to navigate some of the web stores systems etc. In this particular study, I have to take into consideration the following limitations; high cost of transportation, lack of bank accounts, inadequate product information, inadequate availability of online shops, lack of home addresses, high taxes, longer delivery time than expected, most at times what you order is not what get and which is very difficult to return the product to the suppliers, insufficient e-customer service, no refund from the supplier if the goods ordered does not get to the consumer, the COVID-19 pandemic provokes longer delivery period and very high cost is involved in the process of shopping online, which hinders young adult from deciding to purchase cloth from the online stores, thus encourage them to purchase from the physical store.

The major factors which impact the decision-making process of the consumers to either buy clothes online or from the physical store from the study context will be integrated with the practice theory element to form the preliminary themes and then two additional themes from the study data which will be the base for the conceptual framework, and it is also the major reason for which the researcher had to develop the interview guide in the nature it is. The figure below shows the factors influencing consumers buying decisions online, and the limitations of those factors will cause the consumers to decide to buy either from the physical store or online.
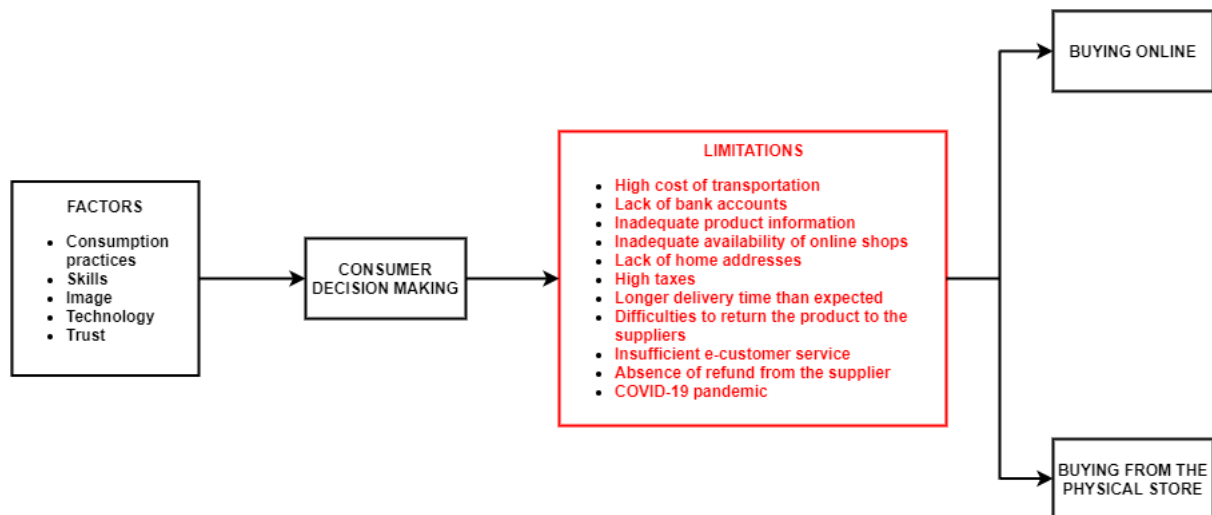
Figure 2: Conceptual Framework   (Own Creation)

The framework above is developed from the literature review and elements of the practice theory of Elizabeth Shove which is to be used as an instrument to examine the consumer buying decision in the coastal region of Cameroon. The conceptual framework has the factors on one side, the decision-making process on one side, the constraining factors, and then the outcome where they decide to go for online or a traditional way (physical store) of purchasing. It will help in collecting the data regarding the three cities (Douala, Kribi, and Limbe) of interest selected within the coastal region of Cameroon with interview guide questions focusing on the key aspects for this research which has been clarified in the literature review and theoretical considerations. This conceptual framework will examine the relationship between the factors influencing, consumer buying decision, and the limitations of these factors, in deciding to buy either from the online store or using the traditional way (physical store).

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter is the heart of this thesis as it describes the methods and steps used to find answers to the previously identified problem. Explaining why these methods have been selected and used as the suitable instruments for the purpose of this study, the data comes from a qualitative method with the researcher being an interpretivist following the iterative approach. All these decisions made by the researcher will be explained subsequently. As highlighted by Bryman (2012), researchers are focusing most at times on trying to close certain knowledge gaps or bring into previously research areas within the study of social science research. For this reason, this study struggles to understand the reason why young adults in the coastal region of Cameroon are not so much into practicing online shopping for clothes. It is vital to equate research questions to the real research methods in other to keep clear of any academic drawbacks in understanding research methods in social science as suggested by Bryman (2012). After reflecting on this study, the researcher decided on following the guide of research methods by the author Alan Bryman (2012) in his book title Social Researched Methods (4th edition).

3.1   Philosophy of Science

The philosophical stance is very important in every research as it tries to describe clearly the reality of the study. To easily understand the philosophy of science in this research, the right techniques to use to analyse the obtained data of the formulated problem and to understand the philosophical position of the researcher in this study, reflections will be initiated and explained on the epistemological, ontological, and methodological considerations.

3.1.1   Ontological Considerations

This concerns the researcher's views towards reality, what is to be real, and the way the world functions. The key concern to social ontology according to Bryman (2012) is the nature of social entities. Here the main reason is to decide whether the social entities in this study should be looked upon as objective and have actuality that is external from the social actors, or whether these entities are built by insights and actions of social actors, also in that situations, these actors should not be capable to disconnect totally from the objective of the research, as they possibly are building these social entities (Bryman, 2012). This description of the ontological stance mentions previously corresponds to objectivism and constructionism respectively. In this study, the goal is to create results through constructionism because it is

focusing on gathering and examining the perspectives and beliefs of a group of individuals in the Coastal region of Cameroon between 25 – 35 years of age.

With that, it signifies that I as the researcher think that there is no objective fact that can be uncovered regarding this study. Thus, it is my view of reality and actions which inspires the study outcome and will power the 'truth' that this study is attempting to exposed, which will be built through in this study, rather than originated, as it would be in the instance of the ontological paradigm of objectivism. The main reason for using this paradigm in this research is the insinuations of the study topic, which includes the factors and influences in online and traditional consumption of clothes by young adults in the coastal region of Cameroon. In the case of this research, the researcher has concern this to be a social phenomenon, which involves dissimilar actors with many different opinions of truth, which is the reason for considering constructionism as the best preferable approach for this qualitative study.

3.1.2 Epistemological Considerations

Concerning the aspect of epistemology, which originated on the specialty connecting to the question of what is, or should be, stared as an acceptable knowledge within a specific discipline. Here the main issue is whether the social world could and must learn agreeing to the same procedures, discipline, and ethos as natural sciences. Natural science is always related to the epistemological stance term positivism (Bryman, 2012).

Bryman (2012) opines that in positivism, knowledge is anything, that can either be established by touchable proof or mathematical numbers, in which the aim of the study is to produce a hypothesis that could be analysed, and then accepted or rejected either. The researcher making use of this epistemological position is expected to remain totally separated from the study goal itself to be capable to search and show the objective truth as an outcome of the hypothesis, which is not the purpose of this research. Agreeing to Bryman (2012), just as the split of thoughts in ontology, the place of epistemology is double, where positivism has an equivalent which is the term interpretivism. He went further by proposing that this position is built on the perspective that certain strategy is expected to examine the distinction among individuals that are typically the key element of social entities and the objects of natural sciences and thus interpretivism expects social scientists to get the subjective significances of social actions (Bryman, 2012).

Seeing that the epistemological stance of interpretivism is precisely explaining this thesis envisioned research approach, I will be willing to choose this as the angle of this research. Apart from that, I trust that the key components of this study will come from the replies of the respondents interviewed, which are individuals and not objects, and thus interpretivism is arguably the most suitable for this study. In addition, this research is targeting to understand the sense and inspiration behind the individual action in small scale research, in which the core is to understand the individual's inspirations for their actions, in a context of consumption of clothes online and in the physical stores (traditional).

3.2   Research Strategy

A qualitative research method was adopted with a data collected from the primary source in this study to obtain an idea of the factors affecting consumer decision in the practice of buying clothes online by young adults who are postgraduates. In social research, it is of great importance to describe the distinction between a quantitative and qualitative research method when carrying out a study. These two methods can be described as such: quantitative research makes use of measurement and qualitative research doesn't, and in this study, measurement is not used (Bryman, 2012). Also, qualitative researchers look for 'illumination, understanding, and extrapolation in findings whereas in a quantitative study, researchers pursue fundamental purpose, forecast and generalization of similar circumstances' (Hoepfl., 1997).

For this study, the researcher decide to make use of the qualitative research method because the researcher will not build the interview guide and strategy around collecting information clearly similar such as numbers but on information open for an explanation, which will be further explicated in the interview guide. Also, this method of research clarifies the perspectives of respondents, main phrases which adds up to the experiences of the respondents and to seek their motives behind the decisions they make (Vinten., 1994).

The researcher employs this qualitative method to study practices – in particular, interviews. This method has generally been used in practice theory, and it has been criticized at the same time. This is because practices are not conscious every time, and observation could be a better way to study what persons physically do, and not what comes out from their mouth about what they are doing. Most importantly the researcher adopted the qualitative research method in this study base on the fact that not much is yet known about why young adults in the coastal region of Cameroon are not into the practice of buying clothes from an online store. The qualitative method appears the most appropriate approach to be assumed to get in-

depth information about online shopping, consumers decision-making, consumers perception and experiences, and other told aspects which cannot be substantially gotten from a survey study.

As stated in Bryman (2012), qualitative research strategy mostly highlights words, in place of mathematical figures and quantification in gathering and examining the data. The research strategy related to this research method is mostly interpretivist and constructionist, in which this thesis obeys both.

3.3 Research approach

In this thesis, the iterative research approach will be applied, which according to Patton (2002), refers to a more recursive, repetitive, and systematic process in the assessment of qualitative data. The reason for selecting this approach to be the most appropriate for this research can be attributed to many factors, which include the pliability that enables the researcher to go back and forth amid the preliminary data collection and research designs. Also, it is from the back and forth amid elements of the study, such as that between discovery and design, or between preliminary evaluation, collection of data, and further collection of data, that makes the study an iterative one (Mills, Durepos & Wiebe, 2010).

The researcher is certain in this study sample technique as it makes use of information-rich respondents which qualifies the study approach an iterative one.

3.4 Research Design

This section will explain the essentials of the research design together with the applicability of the said design to this study. The research design is the mixture of many parts of the research that strive to bring a rational and significant conclusion to the identified problem (Bryman, 2012).

In this study, the comparative research design is obeyed, which involves studying a phenomenon within a case using an identical approach. Specifically, this research is a national comparative study, which objective is to elucidate the factors that weigh in on the decision of young consumers to purchase clothes from either a physical or an online platform in the coastal region of Cameroon.

For this research to be finalized, I started by reflecting on my experience back home with the online shopping processes, subsequently with carrying out a desk study, which gave me an

essential understanding of this area of study. It was from this that I obtained the maximum information to reveal the knowledge gaps, which eventually form the identified problem statement, and powered my curiosity.

The knowledge gaps include the fundamental factors that young adults between the age of 25 to 35 from the Coastal region of Cameroon are deterred by, when deciding to buy clothes from either the physical or online platform. This study aims to explore the said gap and add an explanation to the unsolved. This will be examined using the conceptual framework to better understand the factors that influence buying decision while also understanding the changes between those factors.

The researcher will maintain on viewing the world. The aim of the researcher when applying the use of the conceptual framework as an instrument is that it will aid as an observer through which the world can be view. Assisted by this instrument, the researcher will uncover and learn the connectedness of social phenomenon as proposed by Schatzki. As practice theoretical notions are differed and have numerous meanings, the researcher has decided to rely on Elizabeth Shoves' understanding of practice theory as elucidated in the theory section.

3.5   Methodological Considerations

3.5.1   Research Methods and Techniques

This section will rely on Alan Bryman in demonstrating the six stages when exploring a qualitative study, which will be explained in connection with the study in the paragraphs below.

3.5.2   Constructing general research questions

The first step among the six other steps in a qualitative research process according to Bryman is called constructing general research questions (2012). He further emphasizes the significance of constructing general questions that are originated from the area of study in which the researcher is examining (Bryman, 2012). In the early phase of this study, the researcher began with many questions that have been vital to the construction of the research questions. With the help of the literature review and the theoretical considerations, the researcher managed to find many repeated themes and patterns that connect to online and traditional or physical consumption of clothes, which the researcher decided to further investigate. The interview guide will facilitate the explanation and analyses of the uncovered themes later in this research. Also, it is from that comprehension of the subject that aid the

researcher to reflect on who the respondents should be, how to construct the interview questions, and how to gather the data.

3.5.3 Selection of relevant site(s) and subjects

The second step of the process as highlighted by Bryman (2012) is founded on discovering the optimal criteria for what the topic should meet, and consequently, who would be appropriate for this study, and where the study will occur (Bryman, 2012).

After reflecting on the purpose of this study built on the literature review chapter, the researcher reached the conclusion that the respondents should be individuals who are postgraduates and has used the two channels to buy clothes or who are very much familiar with the two platforms to buy clothes, which is classified as young adults aged between 25 and 35 years old in the coastal region of Cameroon.

Several factors were taken into consideration before making the demographic decision in this study. The purpose behind this focus is that the researcher's aim to examine the consumption of clothes among postgraduates aged 25 to 35, since they are very much active on the internet than any other age group (Alangeh, 2014), while also having the same status as being a postgraduate. This decision greatly do away with the fluctuations in income, which is vital when grasping consumption behavior as the size of their disposable income is alike, which the researcher considers is essential because being fit to handle their consumption should be at an equivalent limit.

The researcher decided to focus on the coastal region of Cameroon, in other to investigate and compare the cities within the case study concerning the pattern of themes, the study tries to examine. Also, the author of this research is originally from Cameroon and has lived in these cities in question. The researcher knows from personal experience without a doubt and the literature review that, the inadequate infrastructure for delivery and the inadequate internet availability and high prices with limited product varieties were powerful factors in the inability of purchasing clothes either in the physical store or online, but there was no prior knowledge from the researcher as to how powerful they were.

Concerning the sample size, it is very vital to note that this study sticks to qualitative research, which frequently uses a sample size smaller as in a quantitative study. This is obvious because qualitative research is aspiring to deliberately pick individuals rich in information for an in-depth study, from which the basic importance to the drive of the

research can be studied (Patton, 2002). So, the number of respondents has to reflect the quantity of data needed and not the contrary. For this study, the researcher found that using six respondents was adequate for producing enough pertinent data to be examined in line with the theory, and most importantly the problem formulation. These six respondents were gotten by the researcher with the help of family members and friends in Cameroon within the selected cities in the coastal region.

3.5.4   Collection of relevant data

This is the third step of the process which is created for the researcher to clarify how the needed information was obtained, and what was considered and taken to arrive at that conclusion (Bryman, 2012). To find the essential data for the analysis, a series of well-prepared and theme-classified questions were presented to six people, suitable for the criteria as being postgraduate student between 25 and 35 years old, selected within the chosen cities that is two consumers from each city were selected, where one of them live around the city center and the other few kilometers away from the city center, all from the coastal region of Cameroon. The researcher organized the areas of questions around the problem formulation which are intended precisely to obtain insights into the dynamics of elements studied from the conceptual framework while placing all in the precise context of this study.

Regarding the method of sampling, this research will make use of the criterion of purposive sampling that is postgraduates between the age of 25 and 35 in the coastal region of Cameroon. Alan Bryman exemplified that the criterion sampling signifies that all sampling components should meet particular criteria, which this study is reliant on (Bryman, 2012). Now that the area of the study has been decided and defined, and the criteria for the interviewees, the researcher will continue by explaining the tools use in order to gather the relevant data to examine. This study will use semi-structured interviews because this method of collecting data enables the researcher to gather rich qualitative data (Lewis-Beck, Bryman & Futing Liao, 2004).

The author designed open-ended questions that will permit the respondents to bring in what they feel is needed, which eventually will leave the research with a considerable size of information that will be examined. Also, all the interviews will be recorded by audio. This will create an opportunity for the researcher to listen and re-listen to the interviews especially as the researcher will be codding the interviews only by herself. This will ease in understanding the tone and the emphasis the interviewees might express, which is difficult to

explain by means of a written transcription. These recordings will be given a part in the appendix, where they will be available in its entirety.

3.5.5   Interpretation of data

Transcription and coding are the fourth steps in the process, and these are the basic stages before being able to explain the data collected. As mentioned earlier, all the interviews conducted will be audio recorded, which implies that the researcher will be able to listen not only to what the interviewees said but how the respondents say it, which is, as highlighted by Bryman (2012), is very necessary and important when coding your interviews.

In this study, the researcher decided to go with thematic analysis to code the data, which permits the researcher to classify the responses from the interviewees and appropriately analyze them. The researcher's reason for choosing thematic analysis in analyzing the collected data is because it helps in identifying interesting patterns in the data and to use these themes to answer the research question. It further permits the researcher to capture complex contradictory relationships that exist in the real world. This approach provides the researcher with the possibility to construct a well-structured analysis since it makes use of the themes as groups, where the responses are quickly comparable (Bryman, 2012). As it was covered already, these themes are founded on the element explained in the practice theory.

The interpretation of the data collected involves several elements of a study and could be regarded as the foundation of a study (Bryman, 2012). At this stage, the researcher is coping, examining, and interpreting the data collected. The interpretation of data is closely related to the technique of gathering data, and as it has previously been categorized, this study follows the qualitative method, which most often produces a huge quantity of data that requires to be interpreted (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

In the case of this study, there are more than 2 hours of recordings among the six respondents. As reported by (Wolcott, 1990), the significant task of a qualitative study is not to accumulate data, but to get rid of it, implying that in order to keep the findings centered on the research question, one might have to exclude certain data. This is in accordance with Bryman's notion of data reduction, which signifies decreasing the sizable quantity of data into classified word-based material, such as groups, and this study is an example of that. Since the researcher is using the elements of the practice theory, which has already been classified, but it is the ensuing explanation of the collected data that decides what is and is not

pertinent (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012). Although this is not enough reason to be selective concerning the presented data since it merely reveals the discussion one wants to form (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

3.5.6   Conceptual and theoretical framework

Once the data has been gathered, the researcher can move to the fifth step of the process which is analysing the data just as it says, and how these responses which have been disclosed fit with the theoretical framework. From a methodological stance, this will shape the facts about the knowledge gap that the researcher was able to discover at the beginning of this research, and thus it will help the author in answering the research question. Bryman (2012) highlights the significance of maximizing the possibility in each of the aforesaid steps of the process by letting the researcher come back to a previous step if the researcher evaluates that the data generated was not enough. For instance, the researcher can decide to further gather data after the interviews have been concluded, if it did not generate the data required to answer the research question (Bryman, 2012).

3.5.7   Writing up finding/conclusion

Finally, when all the data has been gathered, and detailly and thematically analysed, the researcher will move to the last step in the process which are analysis, discussion, conclusion, and recommendations, managerial implications and, limitations and further research where all the information and the data produced by this research, can be put together as the real knowledge rather speculation and assumptions, which originally birthed the notion of this study (Bryman, 2012).

3.5.8   List of Respondents

This section will present the list of respondents from the selected cities in the coastal region of Cameroon in order to get the reader acquainted with the respondents whose responses will be analysed in the next chapter.

Respondents Number	Age	Selected Cities	Gender
Respondent 1	32 years	Douala	Male
Respondent 2	32 years	Limbe	Male
Respondent 3	30 years	Kribi	Male
Respondent 4	33 years	Kribi	Female
Respondent 5	30 years	Douala	Female
Respondent 6	30 years	Limbe	Female

Table 1: List of Respondents (Own Construct)

3.6 Limitations

Well, despite the choices I made to make the study as successful as it is, there were varieties of issues that prevented me from actually doing what I really wanted to do, and which set certain limitations, but then this will not substantially impact the findings. According to Bryman (2012), there are certain critics that set certain limitations to a study when employing the use of a qualitative study which makes it too subjective, limited generalizability, transparent, and difficult to replicate (Bryman, 2012).Also, an additional limitation will be added to previously listed critics which is the research bias.

First, the researcher targets this aged group so as to know more about the online buying of people at this age group which makes this research too subjective. Secondly, the small number of respondents will not present a very common picture from one point of view which probably the generality will be limited. Thirdly, the researcher tried as much as possible to be transparent by describing clearly the methodology and the analysis process of this research such as how the respondents were selected, how the interviews were conducted, and how the analysis was done. Furthermore, replicating the subjective meaning and experiences of the respondents buying decisions towards online or physical stores is very difficult because it entails a certain level of subjectivity. This is a dare in this study which the researcher is very much aware of, but the researcher strongly believes that the results of this research will provide rich information to businesses and academics. Lastly, the research bias is that maybe when they people reply to the questions the honesty is one issue and another is that whether

they remember everything that has happened in their lives in terms of their experience concerning the research subject.

In addition, from the part of the researcher, the 2019 pandemic being the fundamental factor of the outbreak of coronavirus, COVID-19 which played a great role in influencing the study method and the time schedule for collecting the data. Also, the moral cost of the study was too high for the researcher to meet since the researcher is a student and is kilometres away from the case study country.

But these are the conditions under which these limitations exist and there is no better choice, but I have all this in mind so that the research biased should be limited to the extent to which it is possible.

Chapter 4: Analysis

This chapter begins with explaining the way the interviews were conducted, and how the data collected will be thematically analysed. In order for the researcher to keep the anonymity of the interviewees from the reader their names will not be revealed but rather it will be coded as respondent 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. However, this chapter will thematically analysed the interviews findings using the conceptual framework as an instrument of evaluation within the pre-established themes and the data driven themes with respects to consumers buying decisions which is the main core of this research.

First of all, before beginning the process of analysis, it is important to remind the reader about the core of this chapter, which is seeking to understand factors that hinders the decisions of young adults from buying online.

Although the respective interview was unique, each respondent followed the same questions that were cautiously structured to contain parameters reflecting the practice theory. Therefore, this process started with preestablished three main themes. These themes are linked directly with the research literature review and the practice theory sections. These pre-established themes include Image or meanings, skills or competence, and materiality or technological aspects. In addition, two other themes such as consumption practices and trust which emanates from the data collected will be analysed in order to discover possible factors affecting the decision of young adults to practice online clothes buying in the coastal region of Cameroon.

4.1 Thematic Analysis of the interviews

This section as earlier mention will focus on describing and explaining the findings of the interviewed consumers in the selected towns in the coastal region of Cameroon, that is respondents 1 – 6 using thematic analysis.

4.1.1 Consumption Practice as an aspect

As mentioned above, consumption practice is an additional theme that emanated from the data collected during which the researcher was reviewing the responses of the respondents from the opening and closing questions structured in the interview guide. The internet

shopping evolution has been accompanied by the heavy demands of consumers and varied types of products. Purchasing online is very appealing in several aspects and is appreciated by numerous consumers in the coastal region of Cameroon even though practiced to a lesser extent according to this study in the country.

The respondents were asked about their regularity of purchasing online, respondents' responses range from monthly to yearly, with respondents 1, 2, and 3 adding to it saying *"it depends on the season too"*, *"it depends on my needs and wants or if I see something that I like"*, and *"it depends at times weekly"* respectively (Respondents 1, 2, and 3). This confirms the fact that it's appealing to many consumers but practice to a lesser extent in this study. This is because when compared to buying using physical stores, the interval of purchase is very short to online shopping with long interval, even though this is not measured since it is a qualitative study but rather base on assumption revealed from the collected data. That is their responses on the regularity of purchasing from the physical store ranges from weekly to monthly with respondent 4 adding to it saying *"I mostly buy my clothes from a physical store that is I buy clothes once a week, about five times a month and many times a year"* (Respondent 4) except for respondent 5 who buys monthly and yearly. When ask promptly about their last purchase of clothes, no matter the medium, almost all the respondents said that their last purchase of clothes happened online (Respondents 1, 2 3, 5, and 6). This might be intertwined with their responses on the issue that more of their shopping is done traditionally or in physical stores. But this might be in line with the study of Badiang that a more modern lifestyle is strengthening in Cameroon, with a rising middle-class Badiang (2016) although it is not the focus of this study. It is worth mentioning that respondent 4 who's last purchased was done in a physical environment (Respondent 4), implying that the respondent is more into the practice of buying clothes from the physical stores than online. Thus, confirming the respondents' frequency of purchase offline.

In conclusion, when asked which method of shopping was preferred between online and from a physical store at the closing question, respondents 1 and 5 preferred online shopping and went further saying *"the prices offered are lesser compared to that in the physical store"*, and *"For me, since I am busy, I prefer online shopping because I like browsing and window shopping, and it is less time consuming for me and they are efficient in their delivery"* respectively (Respondent 1; Respondent 5). This response of respondent 5 is in assertion to the findings suggested that buyers who spend more time on the internet are more likely to

purchased goods and services online in the future than buyers who spend lesser time on the internet (Ronald & Elizabeth Goldsmith's, 2002).

Respondents 2 and 3 prefer both methods and add by explaining *that "because online you can order anytime anywhere and it is easier and from the physical store you get what you see, touch and feel and then you take it home immediately"*, and *"because it depends on what I want, how I need it, and the time I want it"* respectively (Respondent 2; Respondent 3). This implies that some customers prefer both but consider purchasing more from the physical stores (Sarkar, 2019). Respondents 4 says *"I prefer physical stores even though I will always buy online"* (Respondent 4) and respondent 6 says *"I prefer shopping in the physical store because you buy what you see, feel and touch"* (Respondent 6). Their responses imply that despite the convenience, product varieties, and cheap prices associated with online shopping many of them still prefer purchasing clothes from the physical store.

In summary, this factor (consumption practices) has been found to be substantial for example limiting the decisions towards online shopping whereas this constraint toward online shopping has not been very substantial because people have found the way. For example, it is a constraint, but it has not been demonstrated on the conceptual framework as a factor that can either facilitate or impede the implementation of online shopping practices. This is because the data reveals that despite their frequency to purchase from the physical store some of them still buy online which is not the core of this study. This means it has a significant effect even though not very strong and, they are people who when deciding to purchase online do not see it as a restriction from buying online.

4.1.2 Image or meaning aspect

This is the core of the analysis chapter with respect to the problem formulation of this study. This is because when the consumers clearly understand the meaning or image of online shopping it makes it easier for them to either decide to practice it or not. That is consumers can practice shopping, but they hold different understandings that may be centered on their individual experiences and cultural beliefs. When respondents were prompted to describe their understanding when they hear the phrase -online shopping, their differed responses are as follows. Respondent 1 said *"Using my smartphone with internet connectivity to buy the low-cost product with wide varieties to select from online as compared to physical store"*, Respondent 2 continued by saying *"A websites that sell clothes, electronics, and furniture's, etc. That is a shop on my hands"*, Respondent 3 responded as the *"Ease in the purchasing*

and payment process", Respondent 4 described as *"You seat home, browse with your smartphone and use your bank account to place your order. That is, it is an easy and enjoyable process",* Respondent 5 said *"Purchasing product electronically without physical contact"*, and Respondent 6 concluded by responding *"Buying products that you see at the moment on pictures"* (Respondent 1; Respondent 2; Respondent 3; Respondent 4; Respondent 5; Respondent 6). This implies that all the respondents perceived online shopping as such; easy to use which is in line with the study conducted by Benedetto et al (2014) which suggested that perceived ease of use plays a vital role in obtaining buyers favour (Benedetto et al, 2014), convenience (Falode et al., 2016), and the use of smartphones confirming to the study of Noorshella Che Nawi et al (2019) which has been previously mentioned in the literature review section.

Subsequently, respondents were required to give their opinion on the availability of online shops where they lived. It was noticed that no two respondents within the same city had similar answers, instead, the data revealed that respondents who live in the city center irrespective of their cities had similar responses, and those who live few kilometers away from the city centers had similar answers even though they are from different cities. Those responses are as follows; Respondent 1, said there are few and many people are not familiar with it but he is since the year 2013 and went further to add that since Douala is the most vibrant city in the country he thinks few years to come there will be many online shops and he will personally buy from those shops. But his response is contradicted by respondent 5 who said there are many online shops where she lives pointing to the fact that she stays closer to the city center of Douala as compared to those who stay further away from the city, thus, agreeing with the response of respondent 1 who stays few kilometers away from the city.

In addition, Respondent 2 who stays a few minutes away from the city center in Limbe said there are no online shops in his area but that there is one called 'Jumia' he knows of which is not found in his area. He continues giving reasons that generally shopping online is not common practice in Cameroon since most people don't trust the online shops because the customers are uncertain, they will receive the items ordered and besides, there is no law protecting online shoppers. Also, most people are not patient to wait for their items ordered since it takes over two months, implying that at times you can make an order and forget about it. Respondent 6 who lives in the same city as respondent 2 said *"there are very few online shops where I live because I stay just closer to the city center"* (Respondent 6).

This is the same situation for respondents 3 and 4. Respondent 3 said *"Very few online shops"* (Respondent, 3), and respondent 4 insist on saying that *"As I said, I live in Kribi, there is no online shop I know of because most of my shopping is done from abroad and from Douala and it gets delivered in Kribi"* (Respondent 4). Their responses imply that little or no availability of online shops, lack of trust, no regulatory laws, and longer waiting time after purchased greatly hinder the practice of online shopping in that part of the nation. Thus, encouraging the wide practice of traditional shopping. This can be seen from their responses when prompted to talk about the availability of physical shops in their area. All six respondents clearly said that their availability is very high, almost in every corner of the streets. Respondents 1, 2, and 5 added that the stores are graded and most people are familiar with buying what they see, touch, try on and take it home immediately after payment, that the stores are graded with respect to various prices and quality from very costly to less costly which is affordable for everyone depending on their financial abilities, and that very small amount of capital is needed for its creation as compared to online stores respectively (Respondent 1; Respondent 2; Respondent 5).

Considering their take on the cost when shopping online and from the physical stores, respondents had varied takes. Respondent 1 said it is less costly if the items are shipped through ordinary mail but very expensive if it is express shipping, and respondent 5 claimed she does not incur any cost but that she has a problem sometimes because the product she ordered with the right size and paid very high for is not what she actually gets and cannot return it since the item is coming from abroad which is time-consuming. Time wasted and money is a cost which they can't see because they consider cost as being associated with monetary aspect. Respondents 1 and 5 see shopping from the physical store as very costly since you move to make a purchase and it takes time to measure the dresses to get your correct size but that you are satisfied since you are certain with the item. Whereas respondents 2, 3, 4, and 6 see online shopping as very expensive. This is because you begin the shopping process by paying for very fast internet connectivity, high transportation cost, high cost of the expedition, longer delivery time, high risk of not being satisfied after the product has been delivered and very high taxes levied by the government on the product.

These barriers made them see that shopping from the physical store entails little or no cost. For instance, you buy what you see, touch, and try it on, you bargain for the price and buy lesser than the original price that you forget you had to move and wasted time trying the product on to get the right size, and most importantly the stores are graded you are aware of

the price and quality thus making you very satisfied at the end of the shopping process. These difficulties are true as it has been highlighted by the very few studies which have been conducted in Cameroon on online shopping (Njomo., 2019; Mbayong, 2016), thus hindering the practice of online shopping in this study area.

Furthermore, it was noticed from the data that all the six respondents had encountered bad experiences when shopping online as compared to shopping from the physical store. They made mention of poor quality of the product after paying for a high price, longer delivery time than expected despite paying for fast delivery, and high risk of disappointments and dissatisfaction during and at the end of the process. It is interesting to see that almost all the respondents haven't any worst experience from shopping from the physical store except for respondent 4 who said the salesperson was not welcoming in responding to all the information she needed to know about the item she wanted to purchase. This can be considered that most of the consumers value social interaction experience offered in the physical stores more than the level of social interaction experience offered on the online store (Heijden & Verhagen, 2002).

For the researcher to understand the respondents better with the aspect concerning their shopping experience, they were required to give their perception if this experience has influenced their shopping decisions. It reveals that respondents 1, 3, and 4 said it has not really influenced their shopping decision. He said he has an open mind when it comes to shopping be it online or offline because you are not expected to always get what you want every time (Respondent, 1). Respondent 3 said *"Not really because it depends on what I want, and I know how easy to get it"* (Respondent, 3) and respondent 4 repeated the same explanation as respondent 1 but added that she still buys from the same shop where she encountered the bad experience with the salesperson if she meets another salesperson (Respondent, 4). Respondents 2, 5, and 6 gladly said these bad experiences greatly affect their shopping decisions as it makes them skeptical and take a long time deciding to practice shopping online. This makes them easily quite the practice of shopping online and engages more in offline shopping thus making it one of the reasons why online shopping is not practice in the coastal region of the country in accordance to this study. This makes the study claims of Chang, Wu, & Lai (2010) true for respondents 2, 5, and 6 that previous experience of an online consumer has a direct influence on online shopping intention (Chang, Wu, & Lai, 2010) but not true for respondents 1, 3 and 4 since it has little or nothing to do on their shopping decisions.

To crown the image or meaning aspect of the researcher with respect to this research, the respondents were required to give their views if they appreciated the customer service assistant offered online, and if they enjoy face-to-face communication when shopping from the physical store. Almost all the six respondents had a positive remark about the customer services rendered online by saying that they are friendly, welcoming, prompt, reliable, and always present but respondent 2 disagree by saying customers concerns is not properly handled by saying that when you complain you have an automatic reply with questions popping up if your problem has been solved whereas it is not. On the other hand, respondents 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 did not enjoy face-to-face communication in the physical stores. They said it depends on the shop attendant's behavior because some of them are friendly and welcoming at times and some are not. They insisted that it depends on individual behavior but respondents 3 said it is *"Very accommodating since it is one on one"* (Respondent, 3). This implies that there is importance on the relationship between staff and customer towards customer satisfaction as mention in past studies (Puccinelli et al., 2009).

Concluding on the findings of this aspect, the researcher discovers that this particular factor has been found to be quite substantial as it reveals a lot of reasons limiting the decisions of young adults from online shopping. This constraints towards online shopping has been very substantial because majority of the respondents could not find a way to handle this limitation which influence their online shopping decision. Although it was less substantial for two of the respondents because it did not influence their online shopping decision. For example, all the respondents are aware of the importance of online shopping, as well as the majority of answer carried inadequate availability of online shops, high takes on the cost, previous online shopping experiences, and customer concern is not properly handled which has been demonstrated on the conceptual framework as some of the factors which greatly impedes the implementation of online shopping. Observing this factor, it signifies that it has a very strong and significant effect, and there are others which are not so significant like one of the respondents' response concerning online customer service assistant. This implies that, the people who decide to purchase online consider these constraints as a restriction that limits them from performing the practice of shopping online.

4.1.3   Skills or Competence aspect

As earlier mentioned in the practice theory section, skills or competence is very vital for any practice to be properly carried out or effectuated. The practice of shopping online is an

activity that began a few years back and it requires specific skills or competence from people who are familiar with the technology involved in carrying out the activity. This theme is used by the researcher in this study to know if being skilled or competent has an influence on the decision of postgraduate students in the coastal region of the country to practice shopping online or not. Also, this was done by the researcher so that the respondents could elaborate more on their experiences with the online shopping systems which might help in obtaining deep insight into the study motive.

The researcher began by asking the respondent to describe their experiences with the online shopping system. All six respondents responded positively on their experiences despite saying some of the shopping systems are not user friendly or environmentally friendly because they are difficult to navigate. The respondents gave very interesting opinions about their experiences which is worth mentioning. Respondent 1, *"The products are well displayed for you to choose the item select your size and click payment and you get a notification when the item will be ship to you. Once the item is shipped you get another notification with the tracking number and when the item will be delivered to you. I really enjoy the whole process I say"* (Respondent, 1). Respondent 2 *"It depends on the online stores and how it is designed, because some are real and easy to use, and others are very difficult to navigate to get the correct information about the product you desire to buy"* (Respondent 2). Respondent 3 *"I am computer literate, so I can easily navigate the various web shops no matter how easy or difficult it may look with respect to the designs. I am confident about this because I always get what I order no matter how long"* (Respondent, 3). Respondent 4 *"I am a computer savvy person, so I don't have any difficulties navigating the various web stores. Besides I am very familiar with the various steps involve in the process"* (Respondent, 4). Respondent 5 *"I am computer literate, so it is very easy for me to navigate the online shops like Alibaba, Ali express, Kekou, etc"* (Respondent, 5). Respondent 6, *"I am familiar with the technology involve, and it depends on the web-store you used to purchase your products because some are very easy to use, and others are not"* (Respondent 6).

These claims are in line with previous studies (Kim & Ammeter, 2008; Wang & Hsiao, 2012) which have elaborated that you need to have certain skills to be able to shop online. Their experiences made the researcher ask further in order to be clear if it was easy for them to use. All six respondents confidently accepted that it is very easy for them to navigate the various online shops due to their familiarity with the technology involve and the various online stores

frequently used. Despite their ease of use, the researcher noticed that most of them still prefer to buy from a physical store which greatly hinders the practice of online shopping in that part of the country studied in this research.

Next, the respondents were asked how they decide on purchasing a piece of cloth. This question is left very open to see which platform is used occasionally by the customers to purchase clothes. This is to make it clear to the reader that the platform which is not repeatedly used means its practice is not common compared to the other. All six respondents responded saying they decide to shop online. However, the researcher is more interested in what makes them decide to go online, which will intend assist to bring to notice the motive the researcher tries to unravel in this study. It is observed that their decision to shop online is occasional. Why does the researcher say this? Because their answers reveal that they decide to use online to shop due to specific reasons; I use the online platform to purchase clothes when I have a ceremony especially wedding ceremony and when such ceremonies are few months ahead (Respondent, 1); attractive web stores designs with great pictures, product manufacturer, and supplier of the product (respondent 2); if I'm financially viable (Respondent 3); if I see something which catches my attention (Respondent, 4); and respondent 5 and 6, when I see an advertisement from other social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and sometimes during discount on the web stores (Respondent 5, Respondent 6), meaning that without these reasons they will not decide to buy online. This implies that their drives to shop online are not frequent, thus, it is not practiced since practices are routinized activities which the actors are certain and believe in rather than relying on assumptions according to the understanding of Shove, Pantzar & Watson (2012).

The skills or competence aspect was concluded with the respondents being asked to give their opinion concerning the information manufacturers shared online, and if this has an influence on their decision to buy from an online store. The respondents had almost similar opinions despite slightly different. Respondent 1 *"Not so good. That is the same product graded with different prices and qualities, thus causing a problem of choice because you are not sure if you go for the expensive one with great quality you will be satisfied when you received the item. So, I personally go for the moderate one"* (Respondent 1), *"Average because some online stores give a detailed and clear description about their products and others don't. I prefer to shop where all the information about the product I want to purchase is detailed and well described"* (Respondent, 2), *"Limited product information"* (Respondent 3), *"Product information is not well or clearly described"* (Respondent 4), *"Product information is*

average because what you see, and order is not exactly what you get. But there are some web stores which deliver exactly what you saw and order. So, it depends on the online shops" (Respondent 5), and *"I will say average even though it depends on the various web shops"* (Respondent, 6). This makes the respondents have doubts and become very skeptical when deciding to purchase clothes using the online platform, which in turn hinders the practice of online shopping of clothes by postgraduate in this study area. Also, it is noticed from their responses that despite the ease of use, abilities to navigate, know-how, and varieties of unique products, most of them still prefer to shop more from the physical store than online.

It has been reviewed base on the answers of the of the people delivering the responses that this factor is reveal to be very considerable for example all the respondents opinions concerning product information manufactures share online as limited which affect the consumers decisions towards shopping online whereas this restraint towards shopping online has not been very strongly built because some of the consumers still make a decision to buy online despite this limitation though confirming to evidence in the conceptual frame work. This factor is very significant because it reflects to one of the major limitations on the conceptual framework which should be greatly considered by consumers during making online purchasing decisions.

4.1.4 Materiality or Technological aspect

This aspect is very essential for the practice of shopping online in this study as it explains how important purchasing online requires the use of digital devices such as smartphone, laptops, computers, and iPad (Noorshella Che Nawi et al 2019), infrastructures, and more importantly, you should be capable to handle the technics involve in the whole process as has been mention in the practice theory. For the researcher to obtain insights from this aspect, the respondents were asked if bank accounts are accessible for all, because without an account online shopping is not possible since payment needs to be done for the process to be completed. All six respondents had similar answers by simply saying 'no' and gave varied reasons why it is not accessible such as lack of trust, it is very costly to open an account, a work contract is needed, and most people beliefs bank account is meant for the rich. The respondent also made mention of an alternative method of payment that functions almost like a bank account termed Mobile Money (MOMO). Mobile money is a service that enables customers to use cellular devices to gain access to financial services (Shrier et al., 2016), it does not require the use of smartphones and internet connectivity, and most importantly it is

very easy and not expensive to own a mobile money account. Moreover, mobile money is easily accessible as it is found in every corner of the streets as compared to the availability and accessibility of bank accounts which is very limited, and it takes a long time too.

In addition, the respondents were asked if there is a delivery address where they live. This question is very vital in this study since the process of online shopping is completed only when the product gets to the consumer. Interestingly, they had similar responses despite their various locations. Respondent 1 *"No, I don't have a home address as most of the houses in Cameroon are not numbered but I use the postal address like the post office"* (Respondent 1). Respondent 2 *"No, it is one of the big problems hindering the practice of online shopping because almost all the houses are not numbered. But I arranged with the supplier where to deliver like a popular spot like a shop where I live after making an agreement with the shop"* (Respondent, 2). Respondent 3 *"Not quite because of the poor level of urbanization and town planning"* (Respondent, 3). Respondent 4 *"No, because most of the houses are not numbered and especially in my area where I lived. So, I arranged with the online shop on how to get the item delivered. I can also use a postal address"* (Respondent, 4). Respondent 5 *"No, because where I live my house is not numbered but there are some other houses closer to me which is number, so I used that, or I go to their office and collect my item"* (Respondent 5). Respondent 6 *"No, but they have an office somewhere in the city for you to pick up your item"* (Respondent, 6). Their responses are understandable as to why most of them prefer to shop from the physical store rather than shopping online, thus adding to some of the reasons why young adults in the study area are not into the practice of online shopping. It is observed that the availability of payment methods and delivery options which are the core in the process of online shopping is inadequate, which acts as a barrier in the smooth practice of shopping online in this study area.

The finding concerning this factor shows that it is the main core to seeking for understanding as regards to the subject matter of this investigation. This implies that this materiality or technological factor has been revealed to be fully substantial for example little or insufficient availability and accessibility of bank account and delivery addresses limits the decisions towards online shopping. These constraints have been very substantial to a greater extend though some of the consumers still find a way despite the complications involved in carrying on the practice of shopping online. Since these constraints can either facilitates or deter the consumer decision from purchasing online, it signifies that it has a very strong and significant impact on consumer decision which should be taken into consideration.

4.1.5　Trust in shopping Practices

The thesis literature review has shown at length that trust is a very vital factor for consumers. As mention in the literature review section, Ruiz-Mafe et al. (2014) claimed that online trust is the main target for e-tailers wanting to form long-term relationships with consumers.

In this study context, it is revealed that trust concerning the information shared on the web store had a certain level of impact on the decisions of the respondents during the purchasing process. It was noticed that all six respondents brought to notice that most of the information on the web-store page does not reflect the characteristics of their product and this greatly affects their purchasing decision. This makes the consumers become skeptical in using the web store to buy products, therefore discouraging them from practicing shopping online. This is evident for most of the respondents to prefer shopping more from the physical store than online. Also, their claims are against the study of Mcknight, Choudhury, & Kamar (2002) on the concept of online trust.

Moreover, a study conducted in Cameroon on the concept of online buying, proves that there is a high level of uncertainty characterized by little or no supervision of online commerce and appeal bodies to manage the online consumers in the event of claims (Badiang, 2016). This exposes online shoppers to a lot of risk than physical stores due to the cybernetic shopping setting, which intends to make them want to take care of themselves by developing attitudes of not using the online platform to buy, rather prefer using the physical stores to buy. This is in conformity to the response of respondent 2.

With regards to this aspect, the researcher noticed that trust is found in every process concerning the concept of this study. Trust is very substantial in this investigation since it involves buying product on the internet. The data collected proves that trust is quite substantial, and the consumers find it very difficult to do away with it since the exchange process is virtual. This constraint easily affects the consumer's decision-making as they consider this to very important when buying online.

Conclusively, the information gained from the data proves that the difficulties such as lack of trust, inadequate payments methods, inadequate delivery methods and longer delivery time, poor product quality, inadequate information about the product characteristic, and high cost involve in the general process of online shopping outweighs the benefits such convenience, varieties of product, cheap prices of the product, ease of use, and shorter delivery time as claimed by the respondents clarify why most of the respondents prefer shopping from the

physical store more rather than online, thus deterring the practice of online shopping in the Coastal region of Cameroon.

In summary, the researcher found that the following factors were very common among all the respondents which influence their decision to either buy from an online store or physical store; store frequency, ease of use, availability and accessibility stores, product information, product quality, delivery time, availability and accessibility of bank accounts, product varieties, advertisement and promotion, payment methods, customer service, transportation cost, previous shopping experience, price, and inadequate delivery address. In addition, factors which were less common include, customers reviews, fast internet subscription, physical stores are graded, environmental influence (yearly seasons and COVID-19 pandemic). Lastly factors which were so specific include; special delivery option, mobile money payment method, and absence of house address.

The findings confirm to some of the factors mentioned in the literature section which influence consumer buying decision online and others does not. It was also discovered that there are some peculiar factors which greatly influence consumer decision to buy online in this study

In this research, it was generally observed that there are a variety of issues that have been mention in the literature but I have also found something which is quiet typical for my particular research and I believe that this can actually make a contribution towards the empirical aspects of the study in this way. Yes, they may not be universal, they may only relate to Cameroon, but Cameroon is a marketplace so it should be taken into consideration.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Now as information has been collected based on the literature and on the empirical research, it can explain the comparison of consumer decision making between online and traditional or physical clothes buying by young adults in the coastal region of Cameroon. Besides, the discussion will be established with the key findings from the previous themes within the three selected cities. This is to identify similarities and differences in consumer decision making between consumers closer to the city and consumers away from the city in the study country with respect to other contexts. This is to help the researcher get enough information to easily answer the research question.

5.1 Comparison of consumption Practice as an aspect

Concerning online and physical store consumption practices, it is observed that respondents (respondents 3, 5, 6) who live closer to the city and respondents (respondents 1, 2, 4) who live away from the city had similar purchasing behavior. It was noticed that five respondents frequently make purchases from the physical store than online except for respondent 5 who buys monthly online and buys monthly to yearly from the physical store. That is their purchasing frequency ranges from monthly to yearly online whereas the physical store is weekly to monthly, implying that the consumers regularly make purchases using the traditional method more than the online platform. Although almost all their last purchase was done online, except for respondent 4 whose last purchase was from a physical store. Also, convenience, product varieties, and cheap prices offer in the online stores does not really influence the decision of the consumers to buy online because some of them still prefer both (Respondent 2 and 3), some online (respondent 1 and 5), and some physical store (respondent 4 and 6). This reconfirms with what has been mention in the literature section that most consumers buy online but prefer shopping more from the physical store despite being aware that it is time-consuming (Sakar., 2019). Moreover, this finding is in assertion with a study conducted in Nigeria around a government residential area in Ibadan with young adults between 18 to 25 years of age on apparel shopping using either online or offline platforms to buy. The findings revealed despite having all the necessary facilities needed for successful online shopping majority of them still prefer to buy from the physical store (Falode et al., 2016)

5.2   Comparison of image or meaning aspect

After analyzing the data collected, the researcher unravels a pattern connected to image or meaning from the various responses of consumers around and consumers away from the city center. The researcher uncovers the understanding consumers attached to image and meaning regarding their shopping decisions online and from the physical store. The researcher will be highlighting the differences and similarities of the various consumers' understanding concerning this aspect. According to the respondents be it consumers who live closer to the city or away from the city, their opinion about shopping online is similar as they see it as easy, convenient, and enjoyable. With respect to the availability of online shops where they live, the respondents who live closer to the city area said there are few online shops (Respondent 3 and 6), respondent 5 many online shops. It was very interesting to see respondent 1 who stays away from the city said few online shops even though most people are not familiar with them. This is very understandable because he lives in Douala, the biggest city in the coastal region of Cameroon which is highly populated and endorses various economic activities. Whereas, respondents 2 and 4 said no online shop where they live since they live away from the city center in their respective city. In addition, all the respondents made it very clear that there is a very high availability of physical stores where they live which makes it easier for them to rely on them rather than going through the difficulty associated with the payment and delivery process in online shopping. This is obvious because the physical stores are found in every corner of the streets and are graded from low to high prices which make it affordable for everyone rather than the availability of few or no online stores. This is consistent with Reckwitz claims about practices, that materials or objects are basically and naturally requires in the production and reproduction of a practice (Reckwitz, 2002).

Moreover, their opinion on the cost when buying online is that online shopping is very costly when the respondents take into consideration subscribing for fast internet connectivity, longer delivery time, high taxes, dissatisfaction after purchase, and cost of transportation irrespective of where they live (Respondent 2,3,4, and 6). (reference and explanation) Whereas respondent 1 says less costly when delivery is through ordinary mail but very expensive through fast mail, and respondent 5 claims she does not incur any cost but is dissatisfied with the product and could not return the product (Respondent, 5). This implies that online shopping decision varies from consumer to consumer depending on their feelings, opinions, and personal experience. Respondents take on cost when buying from the physical store is

less costly because you are certain with what you are buying, you bargain for the prices from the original price, stores are graded from low to high quality, and they take the product home immediately after payment (Respondent 2,3,4, and 6). This is quite reasonable for them due to the vast availability and accessibility of a variety of physical stores in their area which are highly classified from low to high prices that they can easily buy from depending on their financial capabilities. Respondent 1 says costly during a certain period of the year and respondent 5 says it is time-consuming even though you are satisfied with the product.

Considering this to be true, a study conducted by Abiodun (2013) on the challenges faced in the retail industry on the adoption of online shopping in Lagos state Nigeria is limited accessibility and availability of the internet. With this limit, the cost of an internet subscription is high and for a customer to be able to buy online fast internet connectivity is required which is very expensive and the financial situation of the customer is very low to afford it (Abiodun ., 2013) Furthermore, both respondents closer and away from the city center have had some bad experiences with the online shopping systems due to limited product information, complications in the refund processes, longer delivery time than expected when paid for fast delivery, and poor quality of the product delivered but it did not influence their buying decision online (respondent 1,3, and 4). This is not the case with respondents 2, 5, and 6 because these experiences greatly influence their buying decision online (respondents 2, 5, and 6). Also, all six respondents claimed there wasn't any bad experience from the physical store which could influence their decisions negatively from using this platform for their shopping (respondent 1,2,3,4,5 and 6).

In a nutshell, consumers' opinions about customer service from the physical store and online are not deeply contrasting. This is because almost all the consumers from the various cities despite their location in the cities see customer service assistant online as welcoming, friendly, present 24/7 (Respondent, 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6) except for respondent 2 who says consumers worries are not properly handled (Respondent, 2). Also, face-to-face communication depends on the salesperson's behavior, since sometimes they are very welcoming and friendly and sometimes very rude but respondent 4 says very accommodating since its one on one. Nonetheless, respondents closer to and away from the city center highly appreciate online customer service. This study is in line with a study which was conducted by Beneke, Scheffer, and Du (2010) in South Africa on young adults about what drives them to engage in online shopping as well as what deter them from shopping online. The study reveals previous online shopping experience and product information greatly drives the

young adults to shop online as well as limited production information and previous negative experience will affect them from using the online platform to shop (Beneke, Scheffer and Du., 2010).

5.3   Comparison of skills or competencies as an aspect

On the aspect of skill or competencies, the researcher has collected interesting outcomes concerning the comparison of young adults within the cities in the coastal region of Cameroon. There are a lot of similarities existing among consumers answers than differences which make this aspect one of the backbones of the research answers because the consumers responses are pointing to the direction of the challenges encountered during making purchasing decisions online which thus hinders the practice of shopping online by young adults in the study area of this research. Also, consumers' responses were not based on the areas they live in but on their individual experiences.

Interestingly, all six respondents express their experience with online shopping as very easy because they are very familiar with the technicalities involved in navigating the online shopping system, meaning they are very aware and knowledgeable concerning the practice of shopping online. As an extension of this, the researcher decided to know how they make purchase decisions without referring to any of the platforms. The researcher was very thrilled with their responses because fortunately, all the respondents choose the online platform. This will make the researcher easily identify their motivations for choosing this platform. This was very easy as all the respondents made it clear that they are motivated by specific reasons to make decisions to buy online such as when they need a unique product when they take a look at the supplier and manufacturer of the product, adverts from other social media platform, reviews from consumers, when they have ceremonies to attend, promotion and discount from the online store on their product. These specificities made it very clear to the researcher that the unavailability of these factors they will not practice shopping online since they must be motivated before a successful frequent shopping online. This is in the assertion of the study conducted in Buea and Yaoundé in Cameroon on the motivations of consumers towards shopping online (Mbayong, 2016; Mark, 2019).

When the researcher compared the information collected on the amount of information shared online about the product, and later, how that affected their buying decision, it was observed that all the six respondents made it clear that product information is very limited which

makes it difficult for them to make the right choice during purchase. This, therefore, makes them very doubtful to decide to buy using the online store (Falode et al., 2016).

5.4 Comparison of the Materiality or technological aspect

The researcher uncovers here that the similarities are more, and the consumers deeply appreciate them in the same way. That is their individual experiences and where they lived did not actually bring forth differences even though there were slight differences that do not really call for concern, but it is worth mentioning. The respondents were asked, this question about the availability of bank accounts to know which method of payments they prefer to use. The researcher made use of the advantage of her originality from Cameroon because she was very much aware of the circumstances surrounding owing a bank account and most importantly the insufficient electronic banking systems in the study context. The author was not surprised by their responses that the availability and accessibility of bank accounts are limited according to all the respondents (Respondent 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6). This is in line with the few studies that have been conducted in Africa that one of the difficulties faced by consumers shopping online is the insufficient availability of payment methods (Beneke, Scheffer, and Du, 2010; Inegbedion et al., 2016; Abiodun, 2013; Njomo, 2019). Contrarily, a study conducted in South Africa by Beneke, Scheffer, and Du (2010) revealed that payment method was one of the fewer factors that affected purchase online rather they had key factors like the product category, product information, familiarity with the web store and previous online shopping experience that greatly influence consumer buying decisions.

In addition, all the consumers made it clear that there is an alternative means of payment called 'mobile money' which was greatly used by all consumers but only a single online store called 'kekou' accepted this method of shopping online. This posed as a limitation to the practice of shopping online because it is just this store that accepts this method of payment and if this store is not into an extensive advertisement, promotion and discount, and poor customer reviews they will not be engaged in the practice of shopping online since that which motivated them to decide to purchase online is not offered in that particular online store. This is in connection with a study conducted by Mark (2017) that heavy adverts through social media platform Facebook, What's app and Instagram especially in Cameroon will cause a slightly positive change in the online business in the country because most young adults rarely watch television or listen to the radio (Mark., 2017).

Lastly, the respondent asked, if they had a delivery address where they live. Their answers came as no surprise to the researcher since the author of this study is very much aware of the truth that almost all the houses are not numbered in the study context. All the respondents said no house address due to poor urbanization and town. The researcher was very surprised at respondent 5 response because the respondent claims she stays very close to the city center and enjoys shopping online because it is convenient and cheap, meanwhile she uses the address of the building nearer to her or she had to move to their delivery office in 'Akwa' which is not a walking distance. The respondents who stayed away from the city center claimed that whenever they make a purchase online, they use a popular spot or store around their area for their product to be delivered. This is typical for this study context, but it is not the case in Nigeria and South Africa (Inegbedion et al., 2016; Abiodun, 2013; Beneke, Scheffer and Du, 2010)

5.5   Comparison of trust in shopping practices as an aspect

The aspect of trust in shopping practices is the key issue which greatly influences consumer buying decision especially when the consumers are using the online store for purchases. This is because without trust the process of shopping online cannot be carried out since the consumer is mostly required to pay for the product before it is shipped without touching the product just on virtual images. The most noticeable similarity in the level of trust was that all the respondents did have a negative response concerning the product information provided online to be unreliable because what is offered does not reflect the product characteristics when you see and touch the product. This reconfirms the study of Njomo (2019). Also, online suppliers will offer low prices for a high-quality product, but they will charge a very high cost of transportation of the products. This makes the consumer feel that the suppliers are indirectly trying to get more money from them, which is not the case with consumers because they try as much as possible to save money during shopping.

Furthermore, the respondents did not really trust shopping using the online platform because there are no laws protecting consumers purchasing online in case of any difficulty. For example, respondent 6 said you are looser if any unforeseen circumstances happen to your product or you don't receive the product (respondent, 6). This is a very common difficulty amongst the few online shopping studies in Africa (Abiodun, 2013; Inegbedion et al., 2016, Njomo, 2019).

Judging from the responses of the consumers that live closer to the city center, they trust and believe that their products ordered will be delivered in their various delivery offices for pick up. But this is not the case with the consumers that live away from the city center because they are not sure their products ordered will be delivered since there are no delivery offices available in their area for them to easily pick up their products, except they have to travel to the city center to pick up their products.

In summary, trust concerning shopping, product information, delivery modes, financial and payment practices, has a significant impact on consumer decision when practicing online shopping.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

As it was clearly expressed in the problem formation section, this study set out to examine the factors that deter the practice of purchasing clothes online in the three selected cities within the coastal region of Cameroon from the perspectives of young adults leaving closer to the city center and those away from the city center. In order for the author to produce results of such comparison, the researcher decided to make use of thematic analysis which along, with the main aspects of the practice theory, created a set of preliminary themes that the researcher later used as key indicators of difference and similarities in shopping practices of the two groups of consumers. The themes include skills or competencies, image or meaning, and materiality or technology aspects in shopping practices.

After conducting the thematic analysis of 6 semi-structured interviews, two extra themes emanated from the respondents' responses such as consumption practices and trust practices. The researcher then admits these two themes as freestanding themes and reflected upon them subsequently using the iterative approach, which resulted in adding suitable literature in the literature section and assisted in designing the conceptual framework retrospectively. All the said themes represent the key factors that hinder consumer decisions from the practice of purchasing clothes online that the researcher seeks to recognize in this study first research question.

Research Question 1: What are the key factors that hinder a consumer's decision from buying clothes online?

The following chapter will explain the results of differences in shopping practices carried out by respondents from the three selected cities in the coastal region of Cameroon with reference to each theme the researcher pursued to investigate.

Firstly, the outcome concerning image or meaning in shopping practices will be presented. Starting with the subject of convenience, it was very clear that the respondents from the city center and respondents away from the city center within the three selected towns in the coastal region of Cameroon consider buying online as easy, time-saving, and convenient. However, when asking about the availability of online and physical stores where they lived, more than half of respondents away from the city said no availability of online shops. This is an obvious difference with the respondents closer to the city center say few online shops even though most people were not familiar with. But in the case of physical store availability, all

the consumers unanimously said there were many physical stores, almost in every corner of the streets which were graded from less costly to very costly.

This is very vital in this study because the researcher seeks to understand the deterring factors on the issue, so not having available online-store and even if few are available but most people are not familiar within your area, highly disapproved the opportunity for consumers to select the online platform. It should be taken into consideration that, not being able to purchase online does not signify that the consumer decides not to do so, is solely related to want, but an external factor that the consumers have to comply with, especially since all the respondents stated that purchasing from an online store is easy, time-saving and convenient while preferring to buy from the physical store more with just a few preferring the online store. This solely means that the little and no availability with limited familiarity is an obstacle for consumer's decision to engage in the practice of shopping online.

Price is indisputably a factor in any consumer decision-making concerning consumption, and it has also been recognized as essential information connected to this study, and which is highly associated to cost. From here, the author discovered that majority of the consumers away from the city center, and the majority of the consumers nearer to the city center experience a great difference in the price from the physical store and online store, but consumers away and nearer to the city centers of Limbe and Kribi added to their claims that prices offer for the product online are cheap but their cost of transportation is very high. This was very apparent to the researcher from the information collected in the interviews, that the price of either the product or the cost of transportation, was highly acknowledged as a deterring factor for consumer decision-making especially for consumers in Limbe and Kribi leaving many kilometers away from the city of Douala which has the largest international and seaport where the goods are delivered before being distributed to the Limbe and Kribi.

Furthermore, all the consumers stated that they have had some bad experiences when shopping online which is greatly connected to poor product quality, longer delivery time, complications in the refund, and product dissatisfaction which highly influence their decisions negatively to purchase clothes from an online store. To this, it should be added that online consumers are exposed to high risk as they are no laws in Cameroon protecting online shoppers, which in turn discourage potential consumers to practice online clothes purchasing. Lastly, under the image or meaning aspect, it was stated by the majority of the respondents that customer service assistant online is welcoming and friendly, but this was contrary to one

of the respondent's respond, that consumer consent is not properly handled based on his experience. In this study, this will not be considered a hindrance to consumer decision to buy online but should be taken into consideration for further research when using a larger sample size.

Regarding the results of the aspect of skills or competencies, the following will be explained. The researcher notices from the data collected that all the respondents had enough know-how to navigate the online shopping system easily but this is not the focus of this research as the data reveal does not consider this to be a problem against consumer decision-making towards shopping online. In addition, the researcher learned that all the respondents are motivated by specific reasons to buy online such as product manufacturer and supplier, during ceremonies, promotions, and discount from online stores, advertisement through other social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and What's app, web-store design and customers reviews. This implies that without these specificities to motivate them, young adults in the coastal part of Cameroon will not practice shopping online with respect to this research.

Continuing, with the skills or competence aspect, it was hugely discovered that product information shared online is a great challenge to consumers when deciding to buy clothes online. All the respondents from the three cities within the coastal region express their views as very limited product information which makes them have difficulties choosing the product, and that it makes them very skeptical to buy using the online store. This implies that without the right, information concerning the product they cannot buy because if they do and have a problem, they are the losers since they are no safety rules protecting online shoppers.

This paragraph will explain the results concerning the materiality of the technological aspect. In this aspect, the researcher focuses so much on the method of payments and delivery options. All the respondents acknowledge that owning a bank account was very difficult and costly, the availability and accessibility are very limited, and most people don't believe in banks, thus lack of having bank cards. It is for sure that without a bank card payment cannot be done online. Fortunately, an alternative method of payment term mobile money (MOMO) was brought to notice by all the respondents which are less costly, popularly used, and easily accessible since it is found on every corner of the streets. To add to this issue, most of the respondent said 'Kekou' online store is the only store which accepts this method of payment. This implies that with this limited means of payment, buying online cannot easily practice since it negatively affects potential online consumer's decision towards buying online. When

the respondents were asked if they had a delivery address, all the respondents made it clear that they did not own an address as most of the houses in Cameroon were not numbered. They could either use postal addresses or go to the delivery office or use a popular spot or store around their area. This implies that buying online is not convenient in this situation because the process of getting the items delivered is an issue since it is not delivered to the consumer door or any delivery address closer.

The results of consumption practices show that the frequency of consumers toward buying online ranges from monthly to yearly whereas from the physical store it ranges from weekly to monthly according to the respondent's answers. This implies that store frequency considered a hindrance to consumer decisions toward purchasing online. This is because the researcher assumes that the more the consumer visits the online shop the higher the probability for the consumer to make a purchase than when the consumers rarely visit base on the understanding of the data collected in this study.

Lastly, the result in the aspect of trust in shopping show that majority of the respondents both consumers closer and consumers away from the city center don't trust the online store with the information provided about the product, distrust regarding bank accounts and the delivery time. For any business to be successful, trust is the first key and most important aspect, especially when shopping online. Without bank accounts and bank cards, the practice of shopping online is not possible because payment needs to be effectuated before the product can be shipped to the consumer. Also, the process of delivery is not reliable due to the circumstances surrounding the process. For this reason, most consumers see this as a barrier to their online shopping practice, therefore making this aspect a hindrance to consumer decision towards the practice of buying clothes online.

Conclusively, the consumer's decision-making process towards online shopping varies from individual to individual irrespective of where they live, and the practice is limited to a certain extent with the availability of the proper connectivity and the exposure to online purchasing. The decision of the consumer also has similarities and differences based on their individual characteristics.

6.1   Recommendations

With in-depth findings and understanding from the interviews with young adult consumers towards the practice of traditional and online shopping within the three selected cities in the coastal region of Cameroon as well as other extensive literature on what constitute online

shopping, conditions and motivations, and consumer decision-making toward the practice of buying online, I can affirm that shopping online is not healthy in the coastal region of Cameroon. Amidst the fact that the government and the online retailers have been working hard to ameliorate online shopping in other to attract potential and successful online buyers such as improving on the internet infrastructure, electronic banking systems, etc a lot is still required to be improved and done to boost the online shopping business in Cameroon. Especially as it concerns boosting information awareness to consumers about online shopping, payment methods, and delivery systems. The data collected from the interviews reveal suggestions from the interviewed consumers to the government and sellers in other to improved consumers' decision-making towards buying online.

This section will be answering the second research questions;

Research Question 2: What are the recommendations needed to improve consumer decision towards buying clothes online?

The suggestions will be in two paragraphs, that is one paragraph for the government and the other for the online sellers or servers.

Beginning with the government, they should pay close attention to these aspects; Firstly, they should lower the taxes levied on the products when they get to Cameroon. This is because they charge very high taxes on the goods which can easily discourage consumers from purchasing for the first time through the online platform. Secondly, they should number the streets and houses because it greatly hinders the delivery of online shopping. Thirdly, they should create an empowerment platform to educate people shopping online or digital platforms. Furthermore, they should intervene by collaborating with other online stores like Alibaba, Ali expresses, etc to adopt mobile money as another method of payment into their system as kekou online store is using. Also, they should implement laws and standard control agencies guiding online shoppers. Lastly, the government should rent out some of their buildings to the online business company to be used as pickup points for their customers.

With respect to the online retailers, they should take note of the following issues; Firstly, their honesty is required about the product information, punctuality, and reliability especially in a growing online market like Cameroon. Secondly, they should carry out the extensive advertisement on their web stores product through other social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram because most Cameroonians especially the young adults

don't watch television. Thirdly, they should ensure a high level of security with respect to the payment process, and the protection of customer's personal data. Furthermore, they should sign a contract with big shops like Santa Lucia where they could deliver the items so that the customers can pick them up from there. Lastly, they should reduce the cost of transportation for the product.

6.2 Implications of the study

According to Liu and Guo (2008), online shopping is an essential business model in e-commerce. If online retailers need to pursue and keep customers, they must be aware of what motivates customers to make the decision to buy online (Lim and Dubinsky, 2004). Retailers need to ameliorate the online shopping experience in other to strengthen consumers' decisions towards shopping online. Since information is displayed through graphics and visuals in the virtual world, online retailers should make sure that the information presented on their web store should be direct, clear, precise, and captivating. The amount of information concerning the product and the product alone may determine customers' attitude to access the information detailly or switch to another web store.

As a result, the presentation of information is just as vital as its accessibility and depth. The quality and accessibility of the information lessen the imaginary risk consumers carry in their minds when making decisions to shop online. Consumers in the coastal region of Cameroon are always worried about whether they will be satisfied with the product they purchased online or not. This confusion can be reduced by putting information concerning product authenticity. The quality and quantity of information at the online store may reinforce the trust and support the consumers while purchasing online. The proposed conceptual framework in this study will benefit online retailers as it provides deeper insight into the decision-making of young adults in the coastal region of Cameroon practicing shopping online.

Additionally, this research is expected to provide insight to marketers associated with the concept of consumer decision towards buying clothes online. Understanding the concept of consumer decision making and the factors that deter them from buying clothes online can provide a broader viewpoint on shopping online that can be used to design strategies to increase sales in the coastal region of Cameroon. This research can be used as a source to create what consumers require from online marketers. Moreover, this study can be used as a

source in discussing the theory of marketing area, especially on consumer behavior towards making decisions to buy online.

The study is expected to improve the understanding of the academics connected with the concept of consumer decision making toward buying online. The uniqueness of this study gives a different point of view than previous research. This implies that the uniqueness can be known from the product category, study area, and the conceptual model that is being organized to the study setting in this context.

6.3   Limitation and future research of the study

This study does not talk about the outcome of the demographic variable of the respondents. Further research may be conducted to know more about the factors affecting consumer decisions towards the practice of online shopping by a specific gender, other products, and economic class. The findings of this study cannot be generalized for online shoppers across Cameroon and the world, as the sample was collected from a specific age group of respondents. A different group of respondents may change the outcomes.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

I am Theresia Ndangoh Lihlobnike, conducting a research on the **"Online and Traditional clothes shopping practices by young adults in the coastal region of Cameroon"** as part of the requirement for my master's degree in Economics and Business Administration/ International Marketing at Aalborg University, Denmark. This interview is strictly for academic purpose and all the responses will be kept confidential.

1. Please can you tell me how old you are, and where you live? **(Opening question)**

2. How often do you buy clothes online? **(Opening Question)**

2.1 How often do you buy clothes from a physical store? **(Opening Question)**

3. Can you please tell me about your last purchase of clothes? **(Opening Question)**

4. Can you tell me what comes to your mind when you hear of online shopping? **(Image Aspect)**

5. What is your opinion on availability of online shops where you live? **(Image Aspect)**

5.1 What is your opinion on availability of physical shops where you live? **(Image Aspect)**

6. What is your take on the cost when buying clothes from an online store? **(Image Aspect)**

6.1 What is your take on the cost when buying clothes from the physical store? **(Image Aspect)**

7. Can you tell me about your last worst experience when you purchase clothes online? **(Image Aspect)**

7.1 And in the physical store? **(Image Aspect)**

7.2 And if it has influenced your shopping decision? **(Image Aspect)**

8. In case of any difficulty, how do you like communication with the customer service assistant online? **(Image Aspect)**

8.1 And in case of any difficulty how do you like face-to-face communication with the customer service assistant in the physical store? **(Image Aspect)**

9. Can you describe your experience with the online shopping system? **(Skills Aspect)**

9.1 Is it simple for you to use online shopping systems? **(Skills Aspect)**

10 How do you decide on purchasing a particular piece of clothing? **(Skills Aspect)**

11.What is your opinion on the available information concerning the products manufacturers shared online? **(Skills Aspect)**

11.1 How is that affecting your buying decision? **(Skills Aspect)**

12. Do you think bank account are accessible for all? **(Technological Aspect)**

13. Is there a delivery address where you live? **(Technological Aspect)**

14. What advice will you suggest to the government and servers (sellers) as regards boosting the online shopping practices in the country? **(Recommendation Aspect)**

15. Having reflected on the options of buying clothes – online and in a physical store which of them do you prefer? **(Closing Question)**

Thank you, for your valuable time and assistance.

Interview Coded

1. Please can you tell me how old you are, and where you live?(Opening question)

#1: I am 32 years old and I live in Douala

#2: I am 32 years old and I lived in Limbe

#3: I am 30 years old and I live in Kribi

#4: I am 33 years old and I live in Kribi

#5: I am 30 years old and I live in Douala

#6: I am 30 years old and I live in Limbe

2. How often do you buy clothes online? (Opening Question)

#1: I buy monthly, and it depends on the season too

#2: I buy yearly but it depends on my needs and wants or if I see something that I like

#3: It depends at times weekly and monthly

#4: Once a month, and about ten or twelves times a year

#5: Monthly

#6: Monthly

2.1 How often do you buy clothes from a physical store? (Opening Question)

#1: I buy weekly and it depends on how my need arises

#2: I buy monthly depending on my needs and I mostly buy traditionally dresses too

#3: I buy weekly

#4: Most of my clothes are bought from a physical store that is I buy clothe once a week, about five times a month and many times a year.

#5: Monthly and yearly

#6: Weekly

3. Can you please tell me about your last purchase of clothes? (Opening Question)

#1: Last week online from eBay, a pair of jeans which is to be delivered by DHL. The item is presently in Cameroon, but I have not collected it yet, and I think it is easier than going to the physical store to buy.

#2: About a year ago online, and they were white t-shirts. It is very easy for me to get pure white t-shirts online due to its availability of varieties and they are less costly.

#3: Online, I saw the advert on the dress, I like it and I went ahead to purchased it.

#4: It was from a physical store. I bought two pairs of black and blue jeans

#5: I bought a gown from Kekou online shop and it was in Cameroon within fifteen working days and I went to their office in Akwa and collected the item. They are very effective in their online business because they keep to their words like if they say you will get your product within 15 working days you will.

#6: It was online, I bought a human hair extension and I had delay despites paying for express delivery due to the corona virus pandemic

4. Can you tell me what comes to your mind when you hear of online shopping? (Image Aspect)

#1: Using my smart phone with internet connectivity to buy low cost product with wide varieties to select from online as compared to physical store

#2: A websites that sells clothes, electronics, furniture's etc. That is a shop on my hands

#3: Ease in the purchasing and payment process

#4: You seat home, browse with your smart phone and use your bank account to place your order. That is, it is an easy and enjoyable process.

#5: Purchasing product electronically without physical contact

#6: Buying products that you see at the moment on pictures

5. What is your opinion on availability of online shops where you live? (Image Aspect)

#1: There are few and many people are not familiar with it but in my area, there are no online shops. That is, we are still trying to discover the benefit of online shopping but for me I am familiar with it since 2013. Also, Douala being the most vibrant cities in the country, I think in few years to come there will be availability of many online shops and me personally will be ordering clothes from the shops here in Douala.

#2: Not available where I live because in Cameroon in general, it is not common and we are not connected to most of these big websites like Ali express, Ali baba, and Amazon but we have just one that I know of Jumia. Also most people in Cameroon don't trust the online shops because they are not sure they will get what they order since there is no law in Cameroon which protects online customers, and too most people don't have patience because it takes over two months before you can get the goods you ordered. At times you can make an order and even forget about the product.

#3: Very few online shops

#4: Like I said, I live in Kribi, there are no online shop I know of because most of my shopping is done from abroad and from Douala and it gets delivered in Kribi.

#5: Many online shops are available where I live because I stay around the city centre as compared to those who stay further away from the city centre.

#6: There are very few online shops where I live because I stay just closer to the city centre.

5.1 What is your opinion on availability of physical shops where you live? (Image Aspect)

#1: There are many with various grade and most people are familiar with buying from a physical store since they get to see, touch and try the clothe on before paying for it and take home immediately as compared to online shopping.

#2: Many of them are available and the stores are graded with respect to product price and quality from less costly to very costly which is affordable for all depending on their financial situation.

#3: Too many physical stores

#4: Many physical stores are available like in every corner of the streets.

#5: There are many physical stores, that is high rate of availability because it does not entail more capital its creation as compared to online shops.

#6: Many physical stores

6. **What is your take on the cost when buying clothes from an online store? (Image Aspect)**

#1: It is less costly if the item is shipped through ordinary mail but if it is through fast mail it is too expensive.

#2: Prices are too good to be true because what you order and get does not reflect the picture of what you saw online. Delivery takes more time than expected. The whole process is kind of expensive because you begin by paying for fast internet connectivity to handle the whole process since your personal information and most importantly money is involved in the process.

#3: Too costly because at the end of the day you need to pay for delivery fee, and it takes longer time too

#4: Shopping online entails a lot of cost because you need to begin with subscribing for very fast internet connection, you need to have a bank account, the distance from Douala where we have the international airport and the biggest seaport in the country and the whole of CEMEC zone is about three hours, so you need to pay extra to get the item delivered when it gets to Douala with series of phone calls to communicate how to get the items delivered to me in Kribi. I will say, generally the process is very costly.

#5: I don't incurred any cost during my shopping process online but I sometimes have a problem with the product when delivered because the quality is poor as compared to what i

paid for and it is not my size which of course I cannot return due to long distance as the item is from abroad. They are not reliable at a point concerning satisfying their customers.

#6: The whole process is very expensive because you need to connect to very fast internet connection to place an order, high cost of transportation, taxes are too high when you need to collect the item when it gets to Cameroon, you pay high for good quality product but when you received the item it does not reflect the price you paid for. Also, if your item is lost you are the looser because you are not compensated.

6.1 What is your take on the cost when buying clothes from the physical store? (Image Aspect)

#1: Physical store are very costly during some certain period of the year. For example, around March to November it is less costly but from December it is too costly. In a nutshell, online shopping is less stressful because it is convenient since you get to sit get your smart phone and place an order but when you have purchase from a physical store you must move. But there is an exception if the delivery method is an express shipping method but if it is ordinary mail it is far less cheap than physical stores.

#2: The physical stores are graded from costly to less costly as I earlier said, so it just depend on your financial capability and what you need and the quality most times are good because you can see, touch and feel it before you pay for it. It takes lesser time since you get the product immediately you pay for it

#3: Convenient because you certain with what you are buying with respect to the quality

#4: It is less costly due to its proximity, availability and too the shops are graded with various prices and quality. That is, you get what you need with the amount of money you have. Therefore, the whole process is less costly when compared to shopping online in Kribi.

#5: Time consuming since you need to measure the dresses to get the correct size but most importantly is that you shop very happy and satisfied.

#6: Limited cost is incurred. For instance you can always bargain the price labelled on the product and pay lesser from the original price which has great quality, and which automatically makes you to forget you waisted time and transport cost (if you took transport) and if you did not use transport you gain more, and you take the product home immediately as compared to online shopping because the product prices are fixed you don't bargain to pay for it and you pay for delivery cost making the process costly

7. Can you tell me about your last worst experience when you purchase clothes online? (Image Aspect)

#1: My last worst experience in online shopping was in 2017 when i bought t-shirts and it took about two months because I requested for an ordinary shipment and when it arrived it wasn't my size and returning the item to the seller in Israel took me another month.

#2: I have not received what I bought four months ago, and my money has not been refunded. They don't keep their words and till date I have not received the item nor the money I paid for the item

#3: Last year, I bought a dress and when I received the item it had very poor quality

#4: A month ago because I wanted a special dress for a wedding ceremony. I received it one week after the ceremony and the quality of the dress was so poor not reflecting what I paid for, and I couldn't return the dress. All these got me so angry with the supplier.

#5: Last December, it was costly and when the product was delivered, I was not happy because the product did not reflect the information labelled on the item and the quality was very poor and it wasn't the size I ordered for, which of course I knew I was getting something with great quality. I regretted saying I could have gone to the physical store to buy the gown. I really felt disappointed since I could not wear the gown too.

#6: Worst experience was when I had a delay because of the corona virus pandemic

7.1 And in the physical store? (Image Aspect)

#1: And in the physical store I bought a dress in 2018 at night, when I got home I discovered it holes and when it took it back to the seller the next day he denied he wasn't the person who sold the dress to me.

#2: Confrontations from the shop sellers or owners sometimes. This is because we have this tradition to bargain the prices from the original prices labelled on the product in Cameroon.

#3: I have never had any worst experience

#4: The salesperson was not welcoming and friendly to respond to all the information i needed concerning a dress I wanted to buy, and I left the shop without purchasing any item from it

#5: No worst experience except for that fact that I bought some blouse from a physical store and I did not measure it and when I got home, I discovered it was not my size. But it was my fault.

#6: No worst experience so far.

7.2 And if it has influenced your shopping decision? (Image Aspect)

#1: Not really because I have it in mind that not everything you go to the store to buy has to be exactly the way you want because at times you loose and at times you gain. I still buy online and from the physical stores.

#2: Yes, it makes me sceptical to buy online especially if it is a new online store. I prefer to to buy where have been buying before. As for the physical store I don't go there except I see that the store has a different salesperson, and I unintentionally damage the image of the shop by sharing my negative experience I had from the shop with my friends and families.

#3: Not really because it depends on what I want, and I know how easy to get it.

#4: Not really because I still buy online especially if I see a product that I like and I know you can be lucky and unlucky in shopping sometimes be it in a physical store or an online store even though I have doubt before making purchase online. I still buy clothe from the same physical store when I meet a different salesperson or the owner of the store.

#5: Yes, I get discourage and sceptical to purchase from an online store. For instance, I recently order for a shoe with my correct size but after receiving the item I discovered it not

fit into my feet even though it has my correct shoe size. So, at times I prefer using the physical store to shop because you can easily return them but online it is so difficult for one to return the product.

#6: Yes, it has because I am so sceptical since I am not sure I will get the product delivered in time as promise. Also, it has made me to stop shopping online internationally, and I prefer to shop online within the country for now because of the pandemic or I go to the physical stores.

8. In case of any difficulty, how do you like communication with the customer service assistant online? (Image Aspect)

#1: Yes, they are friendly and welcoming and if your problem is not solved you can always bring in a third party like eBay and PayPal.

#2: No, they don't have customer concern because when you have problem and complain to them you received automatic reply with questions popping up if you this has solve your problem. Customers concerns are not properly handled.

#3: There is always a front desk which is very helpful

#4: They are friendly and welcoming and are always ready to talk to you on phone via what's App for more clarification.

#5: Customer service assistant is perfect. That is, it is very satisfactory, and you can talk to them on phone via WhatsApp especially if you are using kekou online shop to buy

#6: They are very polite and friendly and are ready to go extra mile to satisfy their customer. An example is the kekou web store.

8.1 And in case of any difficulty how do you like face-to-face communication with the customer service assistant in the physical store? (Image Aspect)

#1: It is a little bit complicated because it depends on the seller and their mood. Some may be friendly and welcoming while others will not. Also, if your problem is not resolved you cannot bring in a third party like the police because it will be more expenditure and time wasted.

#2: It depends because most times it is the owners of the shop, so you cannot complain to anyone.

#3: Very accommodating since it is one on one

#4: It depends on the salesperson or the shop owner because some of them are friendly and welcoming, and others are not.

#5: It depends on the individuals because some are welcoming and accommodating while others are very rude

#6: It depend on the salesperson you meet at the shop

9. Can you describe your experience with the online shopping system? (Skills Aspect)

#1: The products are well displayed for you to choose the item, select your size and click payment and you get a notification when the item will be ship to you. Once the item is shipped you get another notification with the tracking number and when the item will be delivered to you. I really enjoy the whole process i say.

#2: It depends on the online stores and how it is designed, because some are real and easy to use, and others are very difficult to navigate to get the correct information about the product you desire to buy.

#3: I am computer literate, so I can easily navigate the various web shops no matter how easy or difficult it may look with respect to the designs. I am confident about this because I always get what I order no matter how long.

#4: I am a computer savvy person, so I don't have any difficulties navigating the various web stores. Besides I am very familiar with the various steps involve in the process.

#5: I am a computer literate, so it is very easy for me to navigate the online shops like Alibaba, Ali express, kekou etc

#6: I am familiar with the technology involve, and it depends on the web store you used to purchase your products because some are very easy to use, and others are not.

9.1 Is it simple for you to use online shopping systems? (Skills Aspect)

#1: It is very simple for me to use because it is not complicated to get all the information about the product, I want to order

#2: Yes, it is simple because I am very familiar with the technicalities in it. Also, the availability of 4G network makes it easier and fast when compared to few years back

#3: For me it is very easier and convenient than other means of purchasing because I am very verse with the new technology involve in the whole process.

#4: Like I said, I am a computer savvy person, so it is very much easy for me to use

#5: Yes, it is very easy for me to use

#6: My familiarity with the technology involves and the web stores I often used makes it very easy for me to use.

10. How do you decide on purchasing a particular piece of clothing? (Skills Aspect)

#1: It depends on the ceremony at hand, for example if it is a wedding I will go for a pair of suit and shoes, and if it is not for any ceremony I will go for some simple. I can decide to get online depending on my needs and how close the ceremony is. If it is too close, I will go to the physical store but if the ceremony is like a month, two or three months away I will likely go online to get it because I will have varieties to select from and within these periods the product must have been in Cameroon.

#2: I go to an online store, look at the pictures, sizes, where it is manufactured and the supplier before I decide to buy the product.

#3: Whether online or from the physical stores, it depends if am financially viable.

#4: I browse the different shops and I see anything which catches my attention I order. And I can just decide to get a dress from the physical store.

#5: From advertisement I see online from social media sites like Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp and when some of the web shops have discount.

#6: From advertisement on other social media sites like Facebook and Instagram

11.What is your opinion on the available information concerning the products manufacturers shared online? (Skills Aspect)

#1: Not so good. That is same product graded with different prices and qualities, thus causing problem of choice because you are not sure if you go for the expensive one with great quality you will be satisfied when you received the item. So, I personally go for the moderate one

#2: Average because some online stores give detailed and clear description about their products and others don't. I prefer to shop where all the information about the product I want to purchased is detailed and well descripted

#3: Limited product information

#4: Product information is not well or clearly described

#5: Product information is average because what you see, and order is not exactly what you get. But there are some web stores which deliver exactly what you saw and order. So, it depends on the online shops.

#6: I will say average even though it depends on the various web shops

11.1 How is that affecting your buying decision? (Skills Aspect)

#1: It does not affect my buying decision, but I creates doubt in my mind when I buy

#2: Those with more details I will buy from them but those with less details I will not buy from them even if their items are very cheap or less costly.

#3: To a greater extend because when I don't have the right information, I find it very difficult to make the right choice

#4: It makes it difficult for me to make the right choice thus hindering my buying decision

#5: I get sceptical at times to order clothes online because I feel I might get disappointed

#6: A lot because it makes it difficult and takes more time for me to make the right choice. Also, I go to the review section and look at the various reviews before I decide to buy the product

12. Do you think bank account are accessible for all? (Technological Aspect)

#1: Not accessible for all because most people if Cameroon don't trust the banks because the see them as frauds and opening a bank account in Cameroon is very costly and you must be a civil servant or owned a business for you to be able to handle the expenses involved in

owning an account. But in Cameroon almost everyone owned a mobile money account which is found in every corner of the streets.

#2: No, because not owning a bank account in Cameroon is very expensive but in the past few years we have an alternative call Mobile Money which has almost the same function as bank account which almost everyone who owns a mobile phone have a Mobile Money account.

#3: No, because most people don't trust banks and it is very costly to own a bank account in Cameroon. But most people use local payment means like Mobile Money.

#4: Not accessible to all. It requires a job contract before opening an account, and it is very expensive because a lot of money is required to own an account

#5: No, because most people don't believe in banks. Also, since most of the online shops requires for visa cards or PayPal, and there is another payment method call Mobile Money which almost everyone in Cameroon who owns a mobile phone have.

#6: No, because how can you open an account when you don't have money, besides to open an account in Cameroon is very costly and no need to open an account when you don't have money to save in it.

13. Is there a delivery address where you live? (Technological Aspect)

#1: No, I don't have a home address as most of the houses in Cameroon are not numbered but I use the postal address like the post office

#2: No, it is one of the big problems hindering the practice of online shopping because almost all the houses are not numbered. But I arranged with the supplier where to deliver like a popular spot like a shop where I live after making arrangement with the shop

#3: Not quite because of poor level of urbanization and town planning.

#4: No, because most of the houses are not numbered and especially in my area where I lived. So, I arranged with the online shop on how to get the item delivered. I can also use a postal address

#5: No, because where I live my house is not numbered but there are some other houses closer to me which is number, so I used that, or I go to their office and collect my item

#6: No, but they have an office somewhere in the city for you to pick up your item.

14. What advice will you suggest to the government and servers (sellers) as regards boosting the online shopping practices in the country? (Recommendation Aspect)

#1: The government should work seriously on the taxes when the goods get to Cameroon because they are enormous which can easily discourage those purchasing for the first time online. As for the servers, honesty is required about the product information, punctuality and reliability is needed especially in a growing online market like Cameroon

#2: The government should try to allocate addresses on the houses and the servers should advertised their web shop more through Facebook, what's App because most Cameroonians don't watch television.

#3: The government should create an empowerment platform to educate people about the online shops or the digital platforms. Also, they should implement laws and standard control agency guiding the customers shopping online. The servers should ensure high level of security with respect to payment processes, and the protection of customers personal data.

#4: The government could rent some of their buildings to the sellers to be used as a pickup point for their customers. The sellers should sign contract with big shops like Santa Lucia where the items could be delivered, and the buyers could collect from there.

#5: The government should begin by numbering the streets and houses because it greatly hinders delivery when shopping online. For example, this was one of the reasons that made Jumia the first online store in the country to fail. The government should intervene by talking to the other online stores like Alibaba, Ali express to adopt using Mobile Money as another method of payment into their system as Kekou web store is using. As for the servers, they should be truthful with all the information the showcase about their product on their web stores

#6: The government should reduce the taxes levied on the product when it gets to Cameroon, and they should number the houses and streets to ease delivery process. Servers should do more advertisement about the image of their web store, product information clearly described, customer personal data kept private and reduction in transportation cost.

15. Having reflected on the options of buying clothes – online and in a physical store which of them do you prefer? (Closing Question)

#1: I prefer online shopping because the prices offered are lesser compared to that in the physical store

#2: I prefer both because online you can order anytime anywhere and it is easier and from the physical store you get what you see, touch and feel and then you take it home immediately.

#3: I prefer both because it depends on what I want, how I need it, and the time I want it.

#4: I prefer physical stores even though I will always buy online

#5: For me since I am busy, I prefer online shopping because I like browsing and window shopping, and it is less time consuming for me and they are efficient in their delivery.

#6: I prefer shopping in the physical store because you buy what you see, feel and touch.