



**ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER**

**Marketing**

**ONLINE SHOPPING BEHAVIOUR AMONG STUDENTS: A STUDY IN KODAGU DISTRICT OF KARNATAKA**

**KEY WORDS:** Online Shopping, Buying Behaviour of students

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**ABSTRACT**

Internet usage among the student community is on the high due to the affordable rates of smart phones and low internet tariff plans. This has led to the student community to use this mode for meeting their shopping needs. There are numerous benefits of online shopping as also associated risks. This study focuses on the factors that influence online shopping behaviour of students in Kodagu district of Karnataka. Data was collected from 110 undergraduate students. Factors such as ease in shopping, time saving, offers, discounts, variety are a few factors which influence students to purchase online. Apparels, electronic goods and books are the frequently purchased items online. Privacy issues are a major concern for them.

**INTRODUCTION**

Internet is a global phenomenon today used virtually for almost any purpose, be it for education, research, communication, trading, entertainment etc. It has connected the whole world digitally. One of the most popular usages today is for ecommerce activities. It has led to vendors reaching out to potential customers in more faster and effective ways. Online shopping is becoming a part of our lifestyle today due to the internet and smart phone penetration. Consumers who had limited their choices of products to purchase online have today widened their scope and are purchasing almost everything online thanks to the Covid-19 induced lockdowns. Online Shopping Behavior is the process by which consumers search, select, compare and purchase goods and services online that is, using the internet. Many advantages are cited to prefer this mode for shopping such as convenience, 24/7 shopping experience, time saving, low prices, easy search options, offers and discounts, easy shopping for branded products, and so on. The Indian E-commerce industry has been on an upward growth trajectory and is expected to surpass the US to become the second largest E-commerce market in the world by 2034. In 2020, there were approximately 150 million online shoppers annually, compared to about 135 million online shoppers in 2019 in India. India is currently placed 8<sup>th</sup> in the world in the global retail ecommerce table.

**Significance of the study**

Youth account for more than 60% of the online shoppers. The penetration of internet technology and smart phones has induced the section of youth -the teenage students to experience and try new technology and are hence more inclined towards online shopping. While a few pursue part-time jobs others depend on their *pocket* money for shopping purposes. But along with the convenience and shopping experiences offered by online platforms, there are also certain apprehensions with regard to quality of products as they cannot touch and feel them, high shipping costs, poor after sale service, return and refund issues, technology issues, use of credit card etc. This study attempts to understand the online purchasing behaviour of the under graduate students in Kodagu, a small picturesque district of Karnataka and also called as 'Coffee Bowl of India'.

**Review of Literature:**

Anuradha & Selavaraju (2021) in their study of online shopping behaviour of college students in Gudalur concluded that most of the students opined that they shopped on a need basis with a 24X7 shopping experience as the main motivating factor. The study found footwear to be the most shopped product by the students.

Parameswari et.al (2019) in a study in Coimbatore listed security in transactions, refund facilities and convenience as influential factors for online shopping decisions. The study

also revealed cosmetics and electronic products as the frequently purchased ones by students online while a similar study by Jerin Rose G (2018) in Kanyakumari listed convenience that is flexibility in shopping anytime, no travelling requirements and product variety as motivating factors. Cash on Delivery was the preferred payment option and quality of online products was listed as a problem.

Quality, timeliness, scope of checking products on the spot, return policies were the important considerations of student online shoppers identified by Pawan Kumar (2017) in his study of online in Ludhiana. Neha Gupta & Deepali Bhatnagar (2017) in a study on online shopping behaviour of students found that students shopping frequency is almost once in 15 days and they spend about Rs.500 to Rs.1000 in one shopping spree. Students look at price as well as quality and prefer to shop during the festive seasons as discounts are offered. The study also revealed that clothes are purchased the highest online. While listing the problems faced, the respondents in the study mentioned theft of credit card information and lack of security on online payments.

Jukariya and R. Singhvi (2018) in a study of factors affecting online buying behaviour of students highlighted the problems of security issues while transacting online; multiple payment options, personal privacy, product price and quality, the speed of access and after – sales service as factors that affecting their shopping behaviour. Agarwal (2013) in his study concluded that convenience and 24X7 shopping experience provided by the online stores as factors to shop online. A study by Jadhav and Khanna (2016) in Mumbai found availability of products and its variety, low price, promotions, comparison, convenience, and customer service, perceived ease of use, attitude, timeliness and trust as influencing factors for online shopping . A study by Jongeun Kim (2018) identified privacy, security and trust, time saving, ease of use, convenience, enjoyment provided by shopping, company reputation and tactility as factors which influenced online shopping behaviour of college student in US.

**Objectives of the study**

1. To understand the online purchase behaviour of the under-grad students.
2. To identify the encouraging and deterring factors in online purchase.

**Research Methodology**

The research design is descriptive in nature. Sample selection was judgmental in nature, as to collect data from students in graduation courses that is in the age group of 18 to 21 years and the sample size constituted 110 students. The study was conducted among students in Kodagu district of Karnataka State.

**Data Collection**

The survey was conducted using a self-administered questionnaire which was handed out to respondents for self-completion.

**RESULTS & DISCUSSION:**

The sample constituted 59% boy under- graduate students and 41% girls. All the students in the study belonged to the age group of 18- 21 years studying the Arts, Science, Commerce & Management fields.

**Table 1: Online Buying Behaviour of students**

Particulars	Total	%
<b>Purpose of Using Internet</b>		
Study	92	83.64
Communication	110	100
Games	52	47.27
Banking	45	40.91
shopping	103	93.64
Do not use	0	0
<b>Products Purchased Online</b>		
Electronic goods	67	65.05
Cosmetics	35	33.98
Clothes	103	100
Food	56	54.37
Books	55	53.40
Others	63	61.17
<b>Motivation to purchase online</b>		
Friends	97	94.17
Family	27	26.21
Myself	46	44.66
Media	79	76.70
<b>Frequency of Online Purchase</b>		
Very frequent	1	0.97
Quite frequent	59	57.28
Somewhat frequent	40	38.83
Quite rarely	3	2.91
<b>Check at physical store before online purchase</b>		
Always	19	18.45
sometimes	52	50.49
Never	35	33.98
<b>Comparing products across different online platforms before purchase</b>		
Always	8	7.77
Most of the time	46	44.66
Sometimes	48	46.60
Never	8	7.77
<b>Benefits of Online Purchase</b>		
Best offers	80	77.67
Discounts	89	86.41
Low EMI	23	22.33
Saves time	91	88.35
Free delivery	54	52.43
Variety	87	84.47
Low price as middlemen commission is reduced	78	75.73
<b>Challenges of online shopping</b>		
Privacy issues	76	73.79
High Shipping charges	54	52.43
Products are not the same as shown online	67	65.05
Quality issues	45	43.69
Return & Refund issues	43	41.75

Mode of Payment		
Only COD	63	61.17
Either online or COD	37	35.92
Only online	3	2.91
Online is always better		
yes	48	43.64
No	51	46.36
Not sure	11	10

All the students in the survey used internet for communication purpose, 83% used for study, assignment and research purpose, 47 % and 40 % for games and banking respectively and a huge 93 % for shopping. Hence online shopping is a popular mode among the student community. A vast majority (>90%) of the sample shopped online on a quite frequent to somewhat frequent basis.

Of the 93% of the sample who shop online, all of them purchase clothes, while 65% of them purchase electronic goods, more than 50% purchase food and also books and 33% cosmetics. Hence the apparel industry stands to gain from the online shopping spree of the student community.

94% of the online shoppers opined that friends were the motivators to shop online while media accounted for 76%. Most of the online shoppers among the student community are quite wary of online shopping and does sometimes (50% of the sample) check at offline physical stores before they purchase online while 33% of them do not do so.

44% of the online shoppers in the sample compare the products especially for their prices across various shopping apps before purchase and 46% of them do so sometimes. This shows that the student community are quite price conscious when shopping and this is quite understandable.

Majority of the online student shoppers in the sample (88%) opined that they prefer online mode as it saves time, 86% felt that discounts are attractive, 84% found the variety available across shopping apps for most category of products very appealing, offers on the shopping apps also attracted (77% ), 75% of them found low prices to be a tempting feature, 52% opined that online shopping was preferred because of free delivery , low EMIs on products bought on installments also was listed as one of the benefits of online shopping.

Online shopping is also not free from certain limitations and challenges. 73% of them felt that privacy issues are of concern while 65% felt that the products they received and those ordered are not the same; shipping rates are also high was opined by 52% and return and refund issues were listed by 41%.

61% of the sample of the online student shoppers used cash on delivery (COD) option to make their payments while 37% of them used online as well as COD option. This shows that the student communities are quite cautious in their financial transaction while purchasing online.

An interesting outcome of the study was that opinions were more or less equally divided on their attitude to online shopping ; 43% felt online shopping is always better while 46% felt the opposite.

**CONCLUSION**

Online shopping is a great fascination among the student community. Technology has led to creation of user friendly websites and online platforms and this has facilitated this mode of shopping to the extent that students log on to online shopping platforms on a daily basis if not for actual buying but for 'window shopping' as we term it for offline shopping. The convenience of 24/7 shopping, door delivery of products, the variety to choose from, attractive price ranges to suit their

budgets, offers and discounts etc. have made this mode highly popular. Though this mode of shopping is not free from certain apprehensions such as security or privacy issues, return and refund issues, the youngsters especially the teenage population are very eager to shop online and the growth potential is enormous.

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