
Digital Consumerism and Youth Buying Behaviour: Evidence from Puducherry

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ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of digital technologies and e-commerce platforms has significantly transformed consumer purchasing patterns across the world. Young consumers, in particular, have emerged as active participants in online shopping due to increased internet penetration, smartphone usage, digital payment systems, and social media influence. This study examines the factors influencing online shopping behaviour among young consumers in the Puducherry region. The research focuses on variables such as convenience, price perception, trust, website quality, promotional offers, social media influence, and digital payment systems. A descriptive research design was adopted for the study, and primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire from young online shoppers in Puducherry. The findings reveal that convenience, product availability, discounts, and ease of digital transactions are major determinants influencing online buying behaviour. The study also highlights the growing role of digital consumerism in shaping purchasing decisions among youth. The research provides valuable insights for e-commerce companies, marketers, and policymakers in understanding the behavioural patterns of young consumers in the digital era.

KEYWORDS: Digital Consumerism, Online Shopping Behaviour, Youth Consumers, E-Commerce, Consumer Behaviour, Puducherry, Digital Payments

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of digital technologies has revolutionized the global business environment and transformed traditional shopping practices into digital consumerism. Online shopping has become an integral part of modern consumer lifestyles, particularly among young consumers who are technologically aware and digitally connected. The increasing use of smartphones, internet services, social media platforms, and digital payment applications has accelerated the growth of e-commerce activities in India.

Digital consumerism refers to the behaviour of consumers who use digital platforms and technologies to search, evaluate, purchase, and review products and services. In recent years, India has witnessed tremendous growth in online shopping activities due to improved internet accessibility, attractive discounts, convenience, wider product availability, and secure payment systems. Young consumers are considered the most active segment in online purchasing because of their adaptability to technological advancements and exposure to digital marketing. Puducherry, being an urbanized and educationally progressive region, has experienced substantial growth in internet users and digital consumers. The changing lifestyle, increasing purchasing power, and technological awareness among youth have contributed to the expansion of online shopping practices in the region. E-commerce platforms such as Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra, Meesho, and Ajio have become popular among young consumers for purchasing clothing, electronics, cosmetics, food products, and lifestyle accessories.

The study aims to examine the factors influencing online shopping behaviour among young consumers in Puducherry and to understand how digital consumerism affects their buying decisions. The research attempts to provide insights into consumer preferences, attitudes, and behavioural patterns in the digital marketplace.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Consumer behaviour in the digital environment has become one of the most important research areas in marketing and e-commerce studies. Several researchers have examined the factors influencing online shopping behaviour among consumers.

Kotler and Keller (2016) stated that digital technologies have significantly influenced consumer decision-making processes and transformed the retail industry through online

platforms and digital communication.

Schiffman and Kanuk (2014) observed that convenience, accessibility, and time-saving features are among the major reasons for the growth of online shopping behaviour among young consumers.

Chaffey (2019) highlighted that digital marketing strategies, social media promotions, and online advertisements play an important role in influencing consumer purchase intentions.

According to Pavlou (2003), trust and security are essential determinants of online consumer behaviour. Consumers are more likely to purchase products online when they perceive the platform as secure and reliable.

A study by Kumar and Dange (2014) revealed that price discounts, promotional offers, and ease of product comparison positively influence online shopping decisions among youth.

Ranganathan and Ganapathy (2002) identified website design, information quality, privacy, and security as major factors affecting online purchasing behaviour.

Previous studies indicate that digital consumerism has reshaped purchasing patterns among young consumers. However, limited studies have focused specifically on the Puducherry region. Therefore, the present study attempts to fill this research gap.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The rapid expansion of e-commerce platforms and digital technologies has significantly changed consumer purchasing behaviour. Young consumers are increasingly relying on online platforms for shopping due to convenience, accessibility, and attractive promotional offers. However, factors such as trust, security concerns, product quality, delivery issues, and digital literacy continue to influence consumer attitudes towards online shopping.

Although online shopping has become popular in urban regions, the behavioural patterns and influencing factors among young consumers in Puducherry require detailed investigation. Understanding these factors is essential for e-commerce companies to improve customer satisfaction and develop effective marketing strategies.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study is conducted with the following objectives:

1. To examine the online shopping behaviour of young consumers in Puducherry.
2. To identify the factors influencing online purchase decisions among youth.
3. To analyse the impact of digital consumerism on consumer buying behaviour.
4. To study the role of digital payment systems in online shopping.
5. To provide suggestions for improving online consumer satisfaction.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The following hypotheses are framed for the study:

H0: There is no significant relationship between convenience and online shopping behaviour among young consumers.

H1: There is a significant relationship between convenience and online shopping behaviour among young consumers.

H0: Price discounts do not significantly influence online purchase decisions.

H1: Price discounts significantly influence online purchase decisions.

H0: Trust and security do not influence online shopping behaviour.

H1: Trust and security significantly influence online shopping behaviour.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive research design to analyse the online shopping behaviour of young consumers in Puducherry.

2. Sources of Data

The study is based on both primary and secondary data.

- **Primary Data**

Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed among young consumers who engage in online shopping.

- **Secondary Data**

Secondary data were collected from journals, books, research articles, websites, magazines, and e-commerce reports.

3. Area of the Study

The study was conducted in the Puducherry region.

4. Sampling Technique

Convenience sampling method was used for selecting respondents.

5. Sample Size

A sample size of 120 respondents was considered for the study.

6. Tools for Analysis

The collected data were analysed using:

- Percentage Analysis
- Chi-Square Test
- Simple Statistical Tools
- Tables and Charts

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Gender-wise Classification of Respondents

Gender	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Male	68	56.7
Female	52	43.3
Total	120	100

INTERPRETATION

The above table shows that 56.7% of respondents are male and 43.3% are female. It indicates that male respondents slightly dominate online shopping activities among youth in Puducherry.

Table 2: Frequency of Online Shopping

Frequency	Respondents	Percentage
Weekly	38	31.7
Monthly	54	45.0
Occasionally	28	23.3
Total	120	100

INTERPRETATION

The majority of respondents purchase products online monthly, indicating regular involvement in online shopping activities.

Table 3: Factors Influencing Online Shopping Behaviour

Factors	Respondents	Percentage
Convenience	34	28.3
Price Discounts	29	24.2
Product Variety	21	17.5
Easy Payment	19	15.8
Social Media Influence	17	14.2
Total	120	100

INTERPRETATION

Convenience is identified as the most influential factor affecting online shopping behaviour among young consumers.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The major findings of the study are as follows:

1. Most young consumers prefer online shopping due to convenience and time-saving benefits.
2. Price discounts and promotional offers significantly influence purchase decisions.
3. Digital payment systems such as UPI, mobile wallets, and net banking encourage online transactions.
4. Social media advertisements and influencer marketing impact youth purchasing behaviour.
5. Consumers prefer e-commerce platforms that provide easy return policies and secure payment systems.
6. Trust and security remain important concerns among online shoppers.
7. Young consumers frequently purchase fashion products, electronics, and lifestyle accessories online.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings, the following suggestions are offered:

1. E-commerce companies should enhance website security and consumer privacy protection.
2. Online platforms should provide transparent product information and customer reviews.
3. Businesses should focus on improving delivery services and return policies.
4. Digital literacy programmes can be conducted to educate consumers about safe online shopping practices.
5. Marketers should use ethical digital marketing strategies to build long-term consumer trust.
6. Personalized recommendations and customer engagement strategies can improve customer satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

Digital consumerism has significantly transformed the purchasing behaviour of young consumers in Puducherry. The study reveals that convenience, affordability, promotional offers, digital payment facilities, and product availability are the major factors influencing online shopping behaviour. Young consumers increasingly prefer digital platforms due to technological advancements and changing lifestyles.

The growth of e-commerce has created new opportunities for businesses to engage consumers through innovative digital marketing strategies. However, maintaining consumer trust, ensuring cybersecurity, and improving service quality remain essential for sustainable growth in the digital marketplace.

The study concludes that online shopping behaviour among youth in Puducherry is rapidly evolving, and digital consumerism will continue to influence future consumer trends. The findings of the study will be useful for academicians, marketers, researchers, and e-commerce companies in understanding the behavioural dynamics of young online consumers.

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