

ONLINE SHOPPING TRENDS AMONG STUDENTS OF SILIGURI, WEST BENGAL

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Abstract— Digital marketing plays a vital role in today's competitive online market, particularly in India where diverse consumer groups are differentiated by income, age, culture, and geographic location. Students, a growing demographic, are poised to become a substantial customer base driven by increasing internet penetration, digital literacy, and online shopping adoption. Understanding their online shopping habits, preferences, and pain points is crucial for businesses to effectively target and engage with this demographic. Factors influencing student purchasing decisions include demographic characteristics, psychographic factors, online shopping experiences, social media influence, and product features. By examining these factors, businesses can develop targeted digital marketing strategies, enhance online shopping experiences, improve product offerings and services, and foster brand loyalty and engagement, ultimately gaining a competitive edge in India's dynamic online market and tapping into the vast potential of the student consumer segment.

Keywords: Consumers, Marketing, Online Shopping, Psychographic

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's digital age, the world has transformed into a buyer's market, with the internet playing a pivotal role. India has emerged as a thriving platform for online shopping, with data analysis revealing a

steady growth in its popularity among Indians. The fascination with online shopping is increasingly becoming an integral part of daily life in India [1]. Our analysis reveals a significant positive correlation between education level and attitudes towards online shopping among students. This suggests that as education level increases, students' attitudes towards online shopping become more favourable. [1]. The 21st century has ushered in a new era, transforming the market into a buyer's economy where businesses must prioritize customer needs and wants to succeed. Gone are the days of seller dominance, replaced by a competitive landscape where companies vie for customers in virtual marketplaces. The internet has fuelled this shift, empowering buyers to compare products, prices, and services. To thrive, businesses must adopt customer-centric strategies, embracing technology to deliver personalized experiences, and continually adapting to evolving consumer behaviours and preferences. According to a 2012 report by comScore, India's online audience is remarkably young, with 75% of users falling within the 15-34 age bracket. As one of the youngest online populations globally, this demographic trend is expected to persist in the coming years, shaping the future of India's e-commerce landscape. [3]. A recent survey reveals that online shoppers in India are predominantly young, with 32% belonging to the 15-24 age group, primarily

comprising students from schools and colleges, and 35% falling within the 25-34 age bracket.[4]. Hence, This young demographics' online influence will only grow as they mature into the 25-34 age group, becoming a vital consumer segment. Today's students are tomorrow's primary online consumers, boasting familiarity with cutting-edge technology and a growing appetite for e-commerce. Their significance cannot be overstated, as they represent a vast and influential market segment. To effectively tap into this demographic, it's crucial to analyse their behaviour, considering factors such as academic background, family influence, social environment, cultural upbringing, and more. This study examines the online behaviour of Indian students, a pivotal demographic in the country's e-commerce landscape. The analysis considers diverse student profiles, factoring in variables such as academic background, family influence, social environment, cultural upbringing and more, to better understand their online shopping habits.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- (i) To analyse the various factors influencing the online shopping behaviour of the consumers towards electronic gadgets.
- (ii) To analyse the product purchase preference among students.
- (iii) To analyse the popular online shopping portal.
- (iv) To analyse the popular source of advertisement

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Research has shown that consumer buying behaviour is a complex phenomenon, influenced by a diverse array of factors, including demographic, psychological, social, cultural, and economic variables.[1, 2,

3 & 6). Factors such as age, gender, education, income, and others significantly influence consumer buying behaviour. Notably, age and education play a crucial role in shaping the online buying behaviours of students, with younger students and those with lower education levels exhibiting different purchasing patterns compared to older students and those with higher education levels, highlighting the need to understand these demographic variations to effectively target this consumer segment. [1, 2 & 3]. In addition to demographic factors, consumers' buying behaviour is significantly influenced by various other crucial factors, including personal privacy, multiple payment options, security, product price, quality, and website accessibility. This study collects data from a diverse student population, encompassing varied cultural backgrounds, age groups, education streams, and other demographic characteristics, to comprehensively understand the buying behaviour of this consumer segment. Khare and Rakesh investigated the antecedents of online shopping behaviour in India, finding that Indian students' intention to purchase online is significantly influenced by utilitarian value, attitude toward online shopping, availability of information, and hedonic values, highlighting the importance of these factors in shaping online shopping intentions among Indian students [5]. P. Usha Vidani found that male students in India are more inclined towards online shopping than females, with motivators including time-saving, affordable prices, attractive promotions, and convenient payment options. Both genders showed a preference for purchasing apparel, electronics, and books online, highlighting these categories' popularity among students. [7]

IV. DATA COLLECTION METHOD

Data is collected from KV Bengdubi, Suryasen College and Siliguri College where the students are coming from various states of India with variations in age, sex, religion, culture etc. The data collection format is prepared in MS EXCEL2007 for the data analysis, tabulation and preparation of charts.

V. RESULT ANALYSIS

Table 1. Analysis Of Product Purchase Preference %

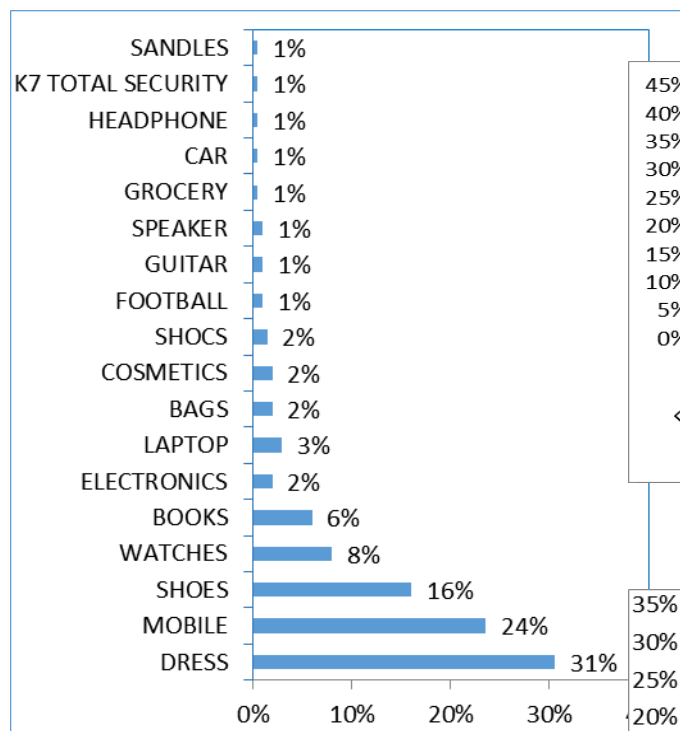


Table 2. Analysis Of Attractive offers/ Advantages Preference %

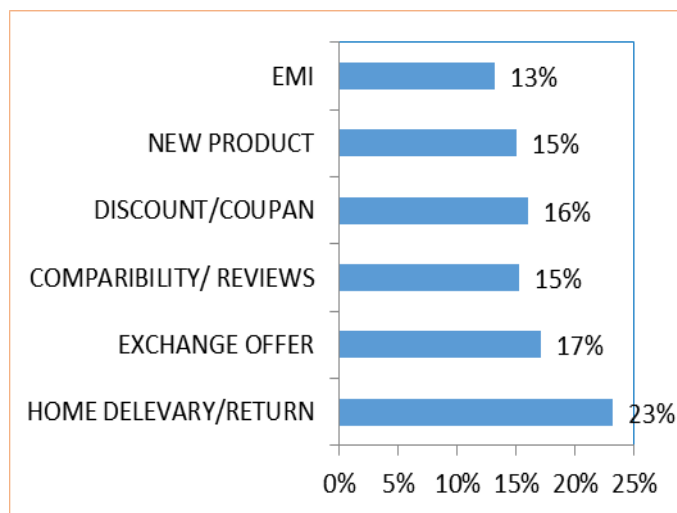


Table 3. Analysis of Favourite Online Portal

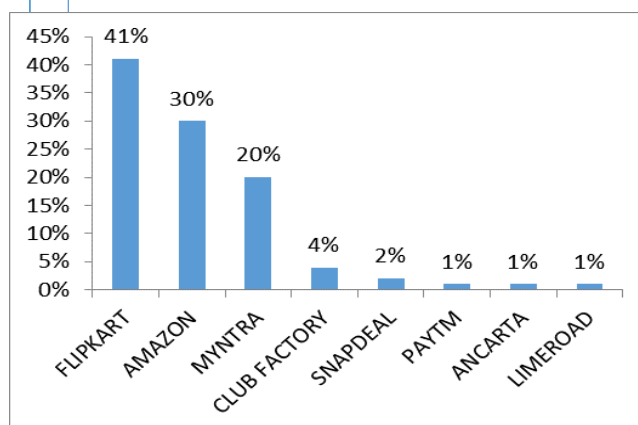


Table 4. Analysis of Source of Product Information

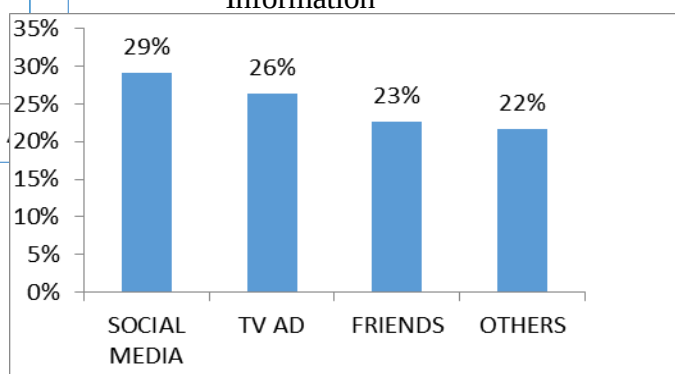


Table 5. Analysis of Preferred Festive season for shopping

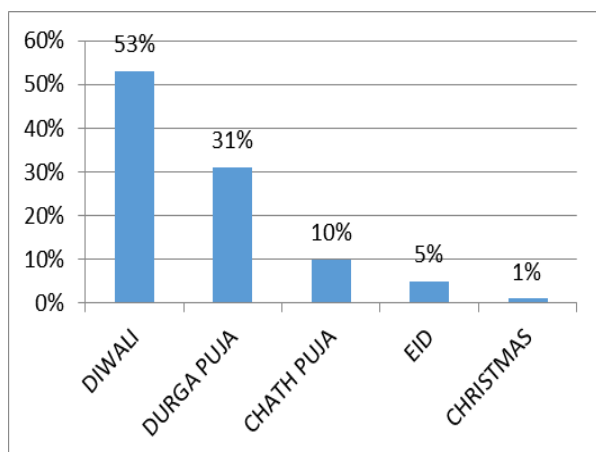
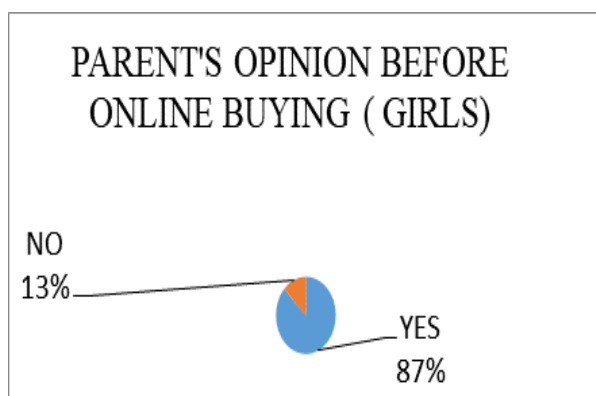
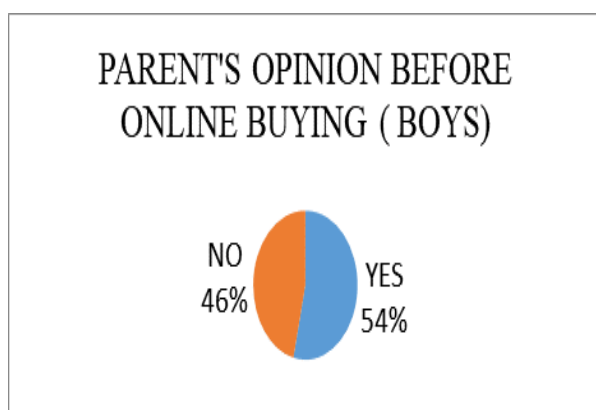


Table 6. Analysis of Parent's Opinion in Buying Decision



VI. RESULT INTERPRETATION

(i) Table 1 reveals that students have a strong affinity for mobiles and clothing, preferring these items over others. In contrast, cosmetics and glossy items, despite being daily essentials, are relatively less popular among students.

(ii) Students overwhelmingly favour home delivery, while comparability and product review features are equally valued, as shown in Table 2.

(iii) Table 3 reveals that 41% of students prefer Flipkart as their top online shopping platform, followed closely by Amazon as their second choice.

(iv) Table 4 shows that social media is the primary source of product information for students, while TV, friends, and other channels also play a significant role in influencing their purchasing decisions.

(v) Table 5 reveals a notable trend, where 53% of students prefer Diwali festival as their primary shopping occasion, indicating that this festive season significantly influences their purchasing decisions, likely driven by attractive discounts, promotions, and festive offers. This insight highlights the importance of tailoring marketing strategies to capitalize on festive demand, particularly among student demographics.

(vi) Table 6 reveals a significant gender difference in the influence of parental opinions on purchasing decisions. While 87% of female students consider their parents' opinions, only 54% of male students do so, indicating a notable disparity in the role of parental influence between genders.

VII. CONCLUSION

This quantitative and qualitative study examined factors influencing online buying behaviour among Indian students, revealing that social and cultural influences, reliability, and technological advancements drive their purchasing decisions. Key findings include Flipkart as the most preferred platform, dresses and mobiles as top products, and social media as the primary source of online sales information. Notably, only 6% of

students preferred buying books online, while factors like Diwali and Eid festivals significantly impact their shopping behaviour, highlighting the importance of understanding this demographics' unique preferences.

VIII. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study's primary limitation lies in its sample size, with data collected from only 100 respondents. Future research can enhance validity by increasing the sample size and conducting more in-depth analyses across diverse parameters, providing a broader understanding of online buying behaviour among Indian students.

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