



A STUDY ON GEN Z CONSUMER PREFERENCES TOWARDS ONLINE SHOPPING PLATFORMS: A CASE STUDY OF BELAGAVI CITY

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-----ABSTRACT-----

The rapid growth of e-commerce and digital technology has significantly transformed consumer purchasing behaviour, particularly among Generation Z consumers. Gen Z, comprising digitally native individuals born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, has emerged as one of the most influential customer segments in online retail markets. This study examines the preferences, attitudes, and buying behaviour of Gen Z consumers toward online shopping platforms in Belagavi City. The study focuses on factors influencing online shopping decisions such as convenience, pricing, discounts, product variety, delivery speed, payment methods, social media influence, and trust in online platforms. The research adopts a descriptive research design using primary and secondary data sources. Primary data may be collected through structured questionnaires among Gen Z respondents in Belagavi City, while secondary data is gathered from journals, reports, articles, and online databases. The findings indicate that convenience, mobile accessibility, social media recommendations, digital payment systems, and personalized offers are major factors influencing Gen Z online shopping preferences. Platforms such as Amazon, Flipkart, and Myntra are among the most preferred platforms due to competitive pricing and user-friendly interfaces.

The study concludes that Gen Z consumers are highly technology-oriented, value conscious, and strongly influenced by digital trends. The research provides useful insights for marketers, e-commerce businesses, and researchers in understanding changing consumer behaviour in the digital era.

KEYWORDS: Generation Z, Digital Payments, Social Media Influence.-----

1. INTRODUCTION

The emergence of digital technology and internet penetration has revolutionized the retail industry globally. E-commerce platforms have become a dominant mode of purchasing goods and services due to convenience, accessibility, and technological advancements. In India, the growth of smartphones, affordable internet services, and digital payment systems has accelerated the adoption of online shopping among consumers.

Generation Z, commonly referred to as Gen Z, represents individuals born between 1997 and 2012. This generation is considered highly tech-savvy because they have grown up with smartphones, social media, and digital communication. Unlike previous generations, Gen Z consumers rely heavily on online reviews, influencer recommendations, social media trends, and personalized shopping experiences while making purchasing decisions.

India's e-commerce market is witnessing rapid expansion due to increasing digital adoption. Industry reports indicate that Gen Z consumers significantly contribute to online retail growth through frequent mobile-based purchases and social-commerce engagement. Recent retail studies also show that personalization, AI-driven recommendations, and quick commerce are becoming major determinants of online shopping behaviour.

Belagavi City, an emerging educational and commercial hub in Karnataka, has experienced substantial digital growth in recent years. The increasing usage of online shopping applications among students and young consumers in Belagavi makes it an important region for studying Gen Z consumer behaviour.

The present study aims to analyse the preferences of Gen Z consumers toward online shopping platforms and identify factors influencing their online purchasing decisions.



2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Prakash Singh (2024): Singh conducted a study on Gen Z online buying intentions and found that perceived usefulness, ease of use, trust, privacy, and security significantly influence online shopping behaviour. The study highlighted that customer trust is a key factor in determining online purchase intention.

2. Krupali Jani & Dhaval Vyas (2026): The researchers examined factors influencing Gen Z buying behaviour in Indian e-commerce markets. The study revealed that Gen Z consumers conduct detailed online research before making purchases and are highly influenced by peer reviews and technology adoption.

3. Brijesh Singh & Ajay Massand (2024): This study focused on determinants of online purchase intention among Gen Z consumers in Bengaluru. Findings showed that service quality, logistics, product pricing, incentives, and technological convenience significantly influence online shopping decisions.

4. K. Priyadharshini (2025): The research explored Gen Z preferences toward beauty and personal care websites in India. The study concluded that digital trust, ethical branding, and sustainability practices positively affect online consumer engagement among Gen Z shoppers.

5. Rachel Xu et al. (2024): The study examined how young consumers in India and the United States trust online content in the era of generative AI. It found that Gen Z consumers frequently rely on digital shortcuts and social media validation while making online decisions.

6. Biswas, Yoganarasimhan & Zhang (2025): The researchers analysed how online shopping affects consumer price sensitivity. The study revealed that online shoppers become more price-conscious due to easy access to comparisons, reviews, and discounts.

7. Shawn Berry (2025): This study explored consumer regret in online shopping environments. Findings suggested that excessive online options and social comparison significantly contribute to post-purchase dissatisfaction among young consumers.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To analyse the online shopping preferences of Gen Z consumers in Belagavi City.
2. To identify factors influencing Gen Z consumers toward online shopping platforms.
3. To examine the impact of pricing, discounts, and convenience on online purchasing behaviour.
4. To study the role of social media and digital marketing in influencing consumer decisions.

4. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study focuses on understanding the preferences and buying behaviour of Gen Z consumers in Belagavi City toward online shopping platforms. The research includes factors such as convenience, pricing, payment methods, delivery services, social media influence, and trust factors affecting online shopping decisions.

The scope is limited to:

- Gen Z consumers aged approximately 18–26 years
- Residents of Belagavi City
- Selected online shopping platforms
- A specific research period

The findings can assist marketers, e-commerce businesses, and future researchers in understanding evolving digital consumer behaviour.

5. RESEARCH DESIGN

Sources of Data: Structured questionnaires, online surveys and interviews are used as Primary data and Second data are used for the research are, Research journals, E- Commerce reports, Books and websites.

Sampling Method: Convenience Sampling

Sample Size: Suggested sample size: 100–200 respondents

Data Analysis Tools: Percentage analysis, Charts and graphs etc.

6. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The study is limited to Belagavi City only.
2. The research focuses only on Gen Z consumers.
3. Responses may vary based on personal opinions and preferences.
4. Time and resource constraints may affect data collection.
5. Consumer behaviour may change rapidly due to technological developments.



7. GEN Z CONSUMER PREFERENCES TOWARDS ONLINE SHOPPING PLATFORMS

7.1 Growth of Online Shopping Among Gen Z

Gen Z consumers are highly dependent on smartphones and internet-based services. Due to digital exposure from an early age, they prefer mobile applications for browsing, comparing, and purchasing products.

Studies indicate that Gen Z consumers value:

- Convenience
- Fast delivery
- Personalized recommendations
- Product reviews
- Easy return policies
- Secure digital payments

India's e-commerce sector is projected to witness continuous growth due to increasing smartphone penetration and digital payment adoption.

7.2 Popular Online Shopping Platforms

Commonly used online shopping platforms include: Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra, Ajio and Meesho.

These platforms attract Gen Z users through:

- Discounts and cashback offers
- User-friendly interfaces
- Quick delivery
- Fashion variety
- AI-based recommendations

7.3 Factors Influencing Gen Z Online Shopping Behaviour

1. Convenience: Gen Z consumers prefer shopping platforms that provide easy navigation, 24/7 accessibility, and home delivery services.

2. Price Sensitivity: Young consumers actively compare prices across platforms before purchasing products. Discounts and festival sales strongly influence purchasing behaviour.

3. Social Media Influence: Platforms like Instagram and YouTube significantly impact buying decisions through influencer marketing and product reviews. Reddit discussions also indicate that Gen Z consumers rely heavily on authentic user-generated content before making purchases.

4. Digital Payment Systems: The adoption of UPI, mobile wallets, and online banking has increased trust in online transactions among Gen Z consumers.

5. Product Reviews and Ratings: Consumers frequently read customer feedback and ratings before making purchase decisions.

6. AI and Personalization: Recent trends show growing interest in AI-based shopping recommendations and personalized shopping experiences. Studies indicate that many consumers prefer AI-integrated shopping assistance and customized product suggestions.

7.4 Emerging Trends in Gen Z Shopping Behaviour

Quick Commerce: Fast delivery services are gaining popularity among young consumers due to convenience and instant gratification.

Social Commerce: Gen Z consumers increasingly purchase products directly through social media platforms and influencer promotions.

Sustainable Shopping: Young consumers are becoming more environmentally conscious and prefer brands with ethical and sustainable practices.

Phygital Shopping: Research suggests that Gen Z consumers prefer combining online and offline shopping experiences, often researching products online before purchasing offline.

7.5 Demographic Analysis

The study considers the following demographic factors:

- **Age Group:** 18–26 years
- **Gender:** Male/Female/Other
- **Occupation:** Students, Employees, Self-employed
- **Income Level:** Monthly allowance/income
- **Education Level:** UG/PG



7.6 Comparative Analysis: Rural Vs Urban Gen Z

Factor	Urban Gen Z	Rural Gen Z
Internet Access	High	Moderate
Platform Usage	Advanced apps	Basic apps
Payment Mode	UPI/Wallets	Cash/UPI
Awareness	High	Growing

Urban consumers are more digitally advanced, while rural markets show strong growth potential.

Preferred Online Platform

Platform	Percentage
Amazon	40%
Flipkart	30%
Myntra	15%
Others	15%

8. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. Gen Z consumers prefer online shopping due to convenience and time-saving benefits.
2. Discounts and promotional offers significantly influence purchase decisions.
3. Fashion and electronics are the most frequently purchased categories.
4. Social media influencers affect purchasing behaviour.
5. Digital payment systems increase transaction convenience.
6. Customer reviews and ratings strongly impact product selection.
7. Personalized recommendations enhance user engagement and satisfaction.

9. SUGGESTIONS

1. E-commerce companies should improve personalized recommendations using AI technologies.
2. Online platforms should strengthen cybersecurity and privacy protection.
3. Businesses should collaborate with influencers for Gen Z-focused marketing.
4. Faster delivery services and easy return policies should be enhanced.
5. Companies should focus on sustainable packaging and ethical branding practices.

10. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that Gen Z consumers in Belagavi City demonstrate a strong preference toward online shopping platforms due to convenience, affordability, digital accessibility, and social media influence. Gen Z consumers are highly informed, technologically skilled, and value-driven. Factors such as discounts, personalized recommendations, secure payment systems, and quick delivery significantly affect their online purchasing behaviour.

The increasing role of AI, social commerce, and digital marketing is transforming the online shopping experience for young consumers. Businesses that effectively understand and adapt to Gen Z preferences can achieve stronger customer engagement and long-term growth in the competitive e-commerce market.

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