Online shopping among college students in Kasaragod: pattern and preference

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Abstract
Online shopping is growing all over the world and is an easy solution for the people in the busy life. Recently there has been massive change in the way of customer’s shopping and online shopping saves crucial time of people. Youth contributes a considerable proportion in India and significantly larger share than global internet users. The increase of online shopping has become a trend for consumers. The study indicates that pattern and preference towards online is mainly due to reasons like cash on delivery, discounts and different type of quality products offered. Increasing use of internet, satisfactorily results in online shopping, rise in standard of living, influence of friendship and attractive offers had affected college students to prefer online shopping.

Keywords: Online shopping, College students, Pattern, Preference, Kasaragod.

Introduction
Increasing number of internet users in today’s world leads to great increase in online shopping websites all over the world. Number of people shopping online also increased considerably. Few years back, if people require purchasing anything, they would simply rush to a mall; and now the scenario is changing. Many people would simply start shopping by sitting inside their own house. Through online shopping, people can easily compare goods from multiple brands; and compare products from different retailers, which is not possible while purchasing in the nearby shops.

With the explosion of E-commerce, different purchase and selling pattern and preferences have emerged. These patterns have been measured and collected by numerous independent marketing, business, and even academic studies to understand, how consumers connect with the new adventure of E-commerce (Bodla Bs and Pinki Saini MS, 2017)). As the internet and online shopping is growing at a very fast in worldwide, research on the pattern and preference of online shopping among college students is quite relevant. Internet shopping is secure if one purchases things from trusted websites and is very careful about making online transactions (Lovely Joseph Pullokaran, 2018). Terms and conditions of online shopping, trust in internet shopping, pattern and preference of buying products, popularity of online shopping are really relevant at present. Therefore there is a need to study whether the pattern and preference of buying products in online shopping among college students is relevant and is attempted in the study.

More specifically, the main objectives are:
1. To review the pattern and preference of online shopping among college students,
2. To analyse the behavioural characteristics of online shoppers, and
3. To find out the website selection criteria and items used in online shopping among college students in Kasaragod district.

Methods and Materials
Arun Kumar, Siva Kumar and Abhirami Gunasekaran (2017) studied the factors affecting online shopping behaviour of consumers. Marzich Zendehdel, et.al (2015) and Bodla BS and Pinki Saini MS (2017) examined the radical changes in the international business environment in online shopping and electronic commerce. Sunitha CK and Edwin Gnanadhas (2014) and Muhammed Anisur Rahman, et.al (2018) analyzed the online behaviour towards liking and disliking factors. Aurelia Michaud Trevinal and Thomas Stenger (2012), Rami Al-dweeri, et.al (2017) studied the role of online satisfaction and e-trust as mediators in the relationship between electronic service quality and online loyalty. Lovely Joseph Pullokaran (2018) reviewed the attitude of consumer towards online shopping products Yi Jin Lim, et.al (2016) indicated that there is still a large reservoir of market potential for e-commerce. Amit Kumar Singh and Malsawmi Sailo (2013), Chayapa Kataetawaraks and Cheng Lu Wang (2011) and Vidya M and Selvamani P (2019) stated that consumer behaviour is a complex and challenging field to analyze the markets as preferences vary over a period of time. Anish Thomas (2013) also stated that internet has developed into a new distribution channel and online transactions rapidly increased.

The study is based on primary data collected through questionnaires, surveys and interviews from 125 college students from the five arts and science government, aided and unaided colleges of the Vellarkkundu taluk of Kasaragod district.

Results and Discussion
Online shopping is growing all corners of the world. It is a process whereby consumers directly buy goods and services from a seller without intermediary through internet. This shopping is popular for a variety of reasons and more consumers become increasingly familiar with internet and its benefits. Online shopping is becoming popular and getting preference among a group of consumers seeking better value proposition regarding information, convenience, cost and choice. It is revealed that, India’s retail e-commerce CAGR is
projected to reach 23 percent from 2016 to 2021 (Lovely Joseph Pullokkaran, 2018). The system of online shopping is widely popular since 1990 globally (Table 1).

Table 1: Timeline of online shopping

| Year | Description |
|------|-------------|
| 1969 | CompuServe, the first major American e-commerce company, is founded. |
| 1979 | Electronic shopping is invented by Michael Aldrich. |
| 1982 | The Boston Computer Exchange, a prominent bulletin board system-based (BBS) marketplace for selling used computers, launches. This is one of the first, if not the first, ever platforms for e-commerce. |
| 1982 | Minitel, a pre-Internet Video tex online service, launches. This service could only be used in France. |
| 1984 | Electronic Mall by CompuServe, a popular online marketplace, launches. It offered pictures of products in full color. |
| 1986 | The United States (US) National Science Foundation (NSF) limits use of the National Science Foundation Network (NSFNET) for academic purposes only. |
| 1990 | The first ever web browser called World Wide Web is released by Tim Berners-Lee. Millions who have access to the internet can now browse e-commerce platforms with greater ease. |
| 1992 | Book Stacks Unlimited, an online marketplace for selling books, launches. Initially, it launched on BBS, then moved to the internet in 1994, in the form of [www.books.com](http://www.books.com). |
| 1994 | Netscape launches Netscape Navigator, a very prominent web browser. |
| 1994 | Ipswitch IMail Server became the first software to be sold online and then be available for immediate download. |
| 1995 | The NSF lifts its ban of internet commerce on NSFNET. |
| 1995 | eBay.com, also an extremely prominent online marketplace, launches. Initially, eBay.com was called AuctionWeb. |
| 1995 | DoubleClick, a prominent and influential advertising launches. This one of the first services to serve ads on the internet. |
| 1995 | Amazon.com, an extremely prominent online marketplace, is launched by Jeff Bezos. |
| 1996 | India MART, a prominent Indian online marketplace, launches. |
| 1996 | ECPlaza, a prominent Korean online marketplace, launches. |
| 1997 | Netflix, an extremely popular subscription video on demand service, launches. Netflix also offers a DVD delivery service. Netflix only began offering online video streaming in 2007. |
| 1998 | PayPal, a very prominent online payment system, launches. |
| 1998 | CompuServe is acquired by AOL. |
| 1999 | Zappos, a popular online marketplace for shoes and other apparel, launches. |
| 1999 | Tradera, an online marketplace similar to eBay.com in function, launches. |
| 1999 | Amazon patents its 1-Click service, which allows users to make faster purchases. |
| 1999 | Alibaba.com, a very prominent Chinese online marketplace, launches. |
| 2000 | Walmart launches its website, allowing customers to shop online. |
| 2000 | StubHub, a very popular online marketplace for event tickets, launches. |
| 2000 | Google launches Ad Words, an advertising service that allows users to show an advertisement in Google search results that is related to the viewer's search. |
| 2001 | Skrill (formerly known as Moneybookers.com), a prominent online payment platform, launches. |
| 2001 | Newegg, a very prominent online marketplace for technology, launches. |
| 2001 | Costco launches its own business-to-business online shopping system. |
| 2002 | Safeway Inc. launches an online delivery service, allowing customers to shop online. |
| 2002 | eBay.com acquires PayPal for $1.5 billion in stocks. |
| 2002 | Bossgoo, a prominent business-to-business online marketplace, launches. |
| 2003 | Valve launches Steam, the most popular Digital rights management and gaming platform in the world. |
| 2003 | Google launches Ad Sense, allowing users to promote their goods on the web based on the product's relevance to the viewer of the advertisement. |
| 2005 | Amazon launches its Amazon Prime service, which allows users to expedite shipping on any purchases for a flat annual fee. |
| 2006 | Tradera is acquired by eBay.com for approximately $50 million. |
| 2006 | Shopify, a prominent storefront service, launches. |
| 2007 | StubHub is acquired by eBay.com. |
| 2007 | Hulu, a popular subscription video on demand service, launches. Hulu is composed of various media organizations. |
| 2007 | Flipkart, a popular Indian online marketplace, launches. |
| 2007 | Facebook launches its Facebook Beacon service to display more relevant information to users by collecting data on their web browsing outside of Facebook. With this, Facebook can also promote products based on whatever is relevant. |
| 2007 | Amazon Fresh, a very prominent online food ordering service, launches in Seattle. It has since spread to dozens of cities across the US. |
| 2008 | PayPal Credit (formerly known as Bill Me Later), is acquired by eBay.com. |
| 2008 | Magento, a popular online storefront service, launches. |
| 2008 | Google acquires Double Click for $3.1 billion in cash. |
| 2008 | GOG.com, a prominent online gaming marketplace that offers DRM-free games, launches. |
The rapidly increasing popularity of online shopping is truly a global phenomenon (figure 1). It is estimated that 1.8 billion people worldwide purchase goods online and global e-retail sales amounted to 2.8 billion U.S. dollars and projections show a growth up to 4.8 trillion U.S. dollars by 2021 (Vidya M and Selvamani P, 2019).

The Indian e-commerce market is expected to grow to US $200 billion by 2026 from US $38.5 billion as on 2017. The digital transformation in the country expected to increase India’s total internet user base to 829 million by 2021 from 636.73 million in 2019. India’s E-commerce revenue is expected to jump from US $39 billion in 2017 to US $120 billion in 2020, growing at an annual rate of 51 percent (Vidya M and Selvamani P, 2019). Since 2014, Government of India has announced various initiatives like Digital India; Make in India. In India, electronics is currently the biggest contributor to online retail sales with a share of 48 percent, followed closely by apparel at 29 per cent (Figure 2).

Online shoppers commonly use a credit card to make payments, however some system enable users use alternative means, such as, billing to mobile phones and landlines, cash on delivery, cheque, debit card, direct debit, electronic money of various types, gift cards, postal money order, wire transfer and the like.

In recent years, a numbers of students also used online shopping regularly. Male students make more online purchases and spend more money on online than female students. Online shoppers commonly use a credit/debit card or cash on delivery in order to make payments in the study area. College students commonly used payment methods like, Credit Cards, Mobile Payments, Bank Transfers, E-wallets, Prepaid Cards and Direct Deposit. Once payment has been accepted, the goods are delivered in the different ways like shipping, in-store pick-up, digital distribution, will call and COBO (in Care Of Box Office). Customers regularly used

| Year | Event |
|------|-------|
| 2016 | Walmart announces it will be acquiring Jet.com for $3 billion. |
| 2014 | Singles' Day sales on Alibaba sites reach US$9.3 billion. |
| 2015 | Single's Day sales on Alibaba sites reach US$14.3 billion. |
| 2014 | Google Wallet, a prominent online payment system similar to PayPal, launches. |
| 2011 | Magento is acquired by eBay.com. |
| 2010 | HBO Go, a popular subscription video on demand service that offers streaming of exclusively HBO content, launches. |
| 2009 | Google Express (formerly known as Google Shopping Express), a service similar to Amazon Fresh and Instacart launches in several cities across the US, starting with San Francisco. |
| 2014 | Apple Pay, a prominent payment system in the form of a mobile app that mimics a credit or debit card, launches. |
| 2013 | Facebook begins letting users sponsor posts, which helps give their posts or products more publicity among their friends, followers, and those to whom the post is relevant. |
| 2013 | China becomes the largest e-commerce market in the world. |
| 2012 | Facebook Beacon is shut down due to privacy concerns. |
| 2011 | Google Wallet, a prominent online payment system similar to PayPal, launches. |
| 2009 | Amazon acquires Zappos.com for $1.2 billion. |
| 2009 | BitCoin, a very prominent crypto currency launches, and changes how consumers can pay for online purchases or even in restaurants. |
| 2009 | Big Commerce, another popular online storefront service, launches. |
websites like, flipkart.com, amazon.in, snapdeal, myntra.com, clubfactory.com, jabong.com, homeshop18, infibeam.com, shopclues.com, paytm.com, futurebazar.com, yebhi.com, limeroad.com, pepperfry.com, and ebay.com.

Table 2: Preference, purchasing level and reason for online shopping in the study area

| Preference | Percentage |
|------------|------------|
| Online     | 89.6       |
| Offline    | 10.4       |
| Total      | 100.0      |

| Purchasing level | Percentage |
|------------------|------------|
| Number of Times per Year |          |
| Below 3          | 45.6       |
| 3 – 6            | 28.0       |
| 6 – 9            | 15.2       |
| 9 Above          | 11.2       |
| Total            | 100.0      |

| Reason for online shopping | Percentage |
|---------------------------|------------|
| Choice /variety           | 56.0       |
| Convenience               | 9.6        |
| Easy to compare           | 7.2        |
| Discount                  | 29.6       |
| Deals                     | 17.6       |
| Total                     | 100        |

Source: Primary data

Online buying pattern refers to the typical way in which consumer buy goods or available services. The pattern of online shopping determine registration, re-engagement, personal dashboard, saving, favorites, ratings and reviews. Table 2 shows the preference, purchasing level and reason for online shopping in the study area. Majority of students preferred online shopping (89.6 percent.) Most of the students are purchasing one to three times in online (45.6 percent). It also shows that 36 percent students prefer online because of choice or variety; 29.6 percent due to discount and 17.6 percent on account of the deals.

Table 3: Frequency of purchasing and device used by buyers in the study area

| Frequency of purchasing | Device used for purchasing | Percentage |
|------------------------|----------------------------|------------|
| Frequency              | Percentage                 | Electronic Device | Percentage |
| Everyday               | 0                          | Smart phone   | 73.6       |
| Weekly                 | 14.4                       | Desktop       | 9.6        |
| Monthly                | 23.2                       | Laptop        | 15.2       |
| Festival season        | 62.4                       | I Pad         | 1.6        |
| Total                  | 100.0                      | Total         | 100.0      |

Source: Primary data

Table 3 shows the frequency of purchasing and electronic device used. 62.4 percent students purchases during festival seasons, 23.2 percent monthly and remaining 14.4 percent weekly. 73.6 percent used smart phone for their purchase, 15.2 percent are using laptop and 9.6 percent used desktop.

Table 4: Approximate amount used for a single online purchase in the study area

| Spending Amount for single online purchase (in Rs.) | Percentage |
|----------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Less than 1000                                     | 44.8       |
| 1001 – 3000                                        | 12.8       |
| 3001 – 5000                                        | 5.6        |
| 5001 – 10000                                       | 17.6       |
| More than 10000                                    | 19.2       |
| Total                                              | 100.0      |

Source: Primary data

Majority of the students (44.8 percent) are paying less than Rs 1000 for a single online purchase. 19.2 percent are spending more than Rs 10000, 17.6 percent between Rs 5000 to 10000 and 12.8 percent in between 1000 to 3000 rupees (Table 4). Table 5 shows websites used for online shopping; 31.2 percent used flipkart, 16.8 percent used amazon, 11.2 percent snapdeal, 9.6 percent myntra and 7.2 percent used club factory.

Table 5: Websites used for online shopping in the study area

| Websites            | Percentage |
|---------------------|------------|
| Flipkart.com        | 31.2       |
| Amazon.in           | 16.8       |
| Snapdeal.com        | 11.2       |
| Myntra.com          | 9.6        |
| Jabong.com          | 6.4        |
| Pepperfry.com       | 5.6        |
| Shopclues.com       | 1.6        |
| Infibeam            | 4.8        |
| Yebhi.com           | 3.2        |
| Clubfactory.com     | 7.2        |
| Ebay.com            | 2.4        |
| Total               | 100.0      |

Source: Primary data

Table 6 shows the preference of shopping of commodities through internet and retail store. Majority (86.4 percent) are buying electronic gadgets through internet and through retail store furniture.

Table 6: Preferred commodities purchased through online in the study area

| Items                | Through internet (in Percent) | Through retail store (in percent) |
|----------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Groceries            | 13.6                         | 86.4                             |
| Cosmetics            | 47.2                         | 52.8                             |
| Books/CDs            | 70.4                         | 29.6                             |
| Clothes              | 45.6                         | 54.4                             |
| Furniture            | 5.6                          | 94.4                             |
| Electronic gadgets   | 86.4                         | 13.6                             |
| Toys                 | 33.6                         | 66.4                             |
| Cinema Tickets       | 78.4                         | 21.6                             |
| Railway ticket/Bus ticket | 59.2                  | 40.8                             |

Source: Primary data
Fig. 3 Shows the methods used for comparing products online; majority of students (30.4 percent) used Google, 23.2 percent through friends influence and 16 percent through online ads. Majority of students (24.8 percent) purchased after adding the product through their favourite list, 20.8 percent purchased based on saving and 18.4 percent purchased pattern is re-engagement (Fig. 4).

![Preferred methods used for comparing products online in the study area.](image)

Table 7: Problems faced in online shopping in the study area

| Problems           | Percentage |
|--------------------|------------|
| Delay in delivery  | 78.4       |
| Cheap quality of product | 21.6   |
| Product damage     | 25.6       |
| Non-delivery       | 55.2       |
| Source: Primary data |            |

Table 7 shows the problems of online shopping; 78.4 percent are of the opinion is delay in delivery, 55.2 percent problem is non-delivery, 25.6 percent is product damage and 21.6 percent mentioned about cheap quality of the product.

Flipkart is the most used online shopping site. Most of the students purchased two or three times frequently in one year and cheaper price is the main motivation for shopping electronic products online.

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Conflicts of Interest
None.

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