

International Journal of Agriculture Extension and Social Development

Volume 7; SP-Issue 3; March 2024; Page No. 212-216

Received: 18-01-2024
Accepted: 20-02-2024

Indexed Journal
Peer Reviewed Journal

Consumer buying behavior among college students

¹Rupanagudi Beena Fareq, ²Mikhil Manik Shivakar and ³Renuka Salunke

¹Ph.D., Scholar, Department of Textiles and Apparel Designing, College of Community Science, University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, Karnataka, India

²M.Sc. Scholar, Department of Resource Management and Consumer Science, College of Community Science, University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, Karnataka, India

³Professor, Department of Resource Management and Consumer Science, College of Community Science, University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, Karnataka, India

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33545/26180723.2024.v7.i3Sc.483>

Corresponding Author: Rupanagudi Beena Fareq

Abstract

Consumer behavior is the action and decisions that people or households make when they choose, buy, use, and dispose of a product or service. Many psychological, sociological, and cultural elements play a role in how consumers engage with the market. Consumer buying behavior of college students is a fascinating area to explore as college students often exhibit unique buying behaviors due to their transitional phase from adolescence to adulthood, where they balance newfound independence with financial constraints. In the present study a sample of 60 students (both boys and girls) were selected randomly from College of Community Science, UAS, Dharwad, Karnataka. Survey design was opted and structured questionnaire was developed by the researchers to analyze the consumer buying behavior among college students. The research findings indicated that consumers exhibited a discerning approach to purchasing and prior to making a buying decision, a significant number of students engaged in information gathering about products, utilizing both online sources and advices from friends. The prevalence of online purchasing is noteworthy, however, challenges arose during the buying process because of the dissatisfaction with the absence of personalized recommendations in their online shopping experiences.

Keywords: Consumer behavior, consumer, buying behavior

Introduction

The customer is king in any firm. The primary responsibility of every marketer is to comprehend the needs and desires of their target audience. Customer satisfaction is determined by what the customers think. Another way to describe consumer behavior is as the actions of consumers who are directly involved in obtaining, utilizing, and discarding goods and services, as well as the decision-making processes that lead up to and influence these actions. Only to satisfy the wants of the consumer are the items produced. Thus, one of the pillars upon which future marketing will be built is the analysis of consumer behavior.

The rapid advancement of technology, globalization, and shifting market dynamics in the early 2000s presented a number of challenges for consumer behavior, most prominent among them the information overload that resulted from the proliferation of online platforms. because of the wealth of options and information at their disposal, consumers frequently found it difficult to sift through massive amounts of data in order to make well-informed decisions. In addition, the digital landscape raised concerns about privacy and security, as consumers grew wary of disclosing personal information online due to data breaches and privacy violations, which affected their confidence in online transactions and affected their purchasing behavior.

Eventually, the growth of global markets presented challenges related to cultural diversity to resonate with diverse audiences worldwide. The four most important factors that affected consumers buying behavior are personal factors, economic factors, psychological factors and social factors (Sheikh, 2020) ^[4], and the main influential factors affecting consumer buying behavior are: value, price, reliance, frequent advertising, sales promotions, imitations, brand image, prestige, freshness and habits. Goodwill, friendly staff, nearness and particular product availability at the store have diverse mean from the rest (Srivastava and Ali, 2013) ^[5]. A significant and crucial factor influencing consumer purchasing behavior and, in shaping a store's reputation is its layout. Because they have a major effect on in- store movement designs, the retail experience, consumer behavior, and operational productivity, well-designed store layouts are essential (Tlapana, 2021) ^[6].

Consumer buying behavior among college students is a fascinating area to explore as college students often exhibit unique buying behaviors due to their transitional phase from adolescence to adulthood, where they balance newfound independence with financial constraints. Factors influencing their buying behavior may include- Peer Influence, Budget Constraints, Brand Consciousness, Technology and Online

Shopping, Value for Money, Social Responsibility, Influence of Marketing, Need for Convenience and other factors, including social, psychological, and economic influences. Understanding this behavior involves analyzing how students make purchasing decisions, what influences their choices, and how they perceive and interact with brands and products that helps businesses tailor their marketing strategies to appeal to this demographic. Additionally, colleges and universities often serve as ideal testing grounds for new products and marketing campaigns due to the concentrated population of young consumers

Objectives

1. To enumerate the profile of the college students
2. To study the buying behavior of college students

Materials and Methods

Exploratory research design was used to conduct the study. A total of 60 students from colleges of Community Science, University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad (Karnataka) were selected as the sample for the research. Random sampling technique was used for the selection of sample. A self-structured questionnaire was developed to assess purchasing behavior of college students. Demographic

information on age, gender, education, monthly income, expenditure per month and information on consumer behavior was collected. For the collected data, frequency and percentage distribution was calculated and analyzed according to the objectives of the study.

Results

Section 1 General profile and Economic information of the students

It is evident from fig 1a, that majority of the students (66.7%) were in the age group of 18- 20 years followed by 23.33 percent of students were above 20 years of age and 10 percent of students were below 18 years. In this study, 55 percent of students were female and 45 percent were male (fig 1b). With respect to the money in hand, majority of the students (53.33%) had around 5000 rupees per month followed by 25.00 percent and 21.77 percent students had between 5000-8000 rupees and above 8000 rupees respectively (fig 1c). From fig. 1d, it could be observed that 68.90 percent of the students stated their expenditure per month was below 4000 rupees followed 26.10 percent between 4000-6000 rupees and only 5.00 percent of the students spent above 6000 rupees per month.

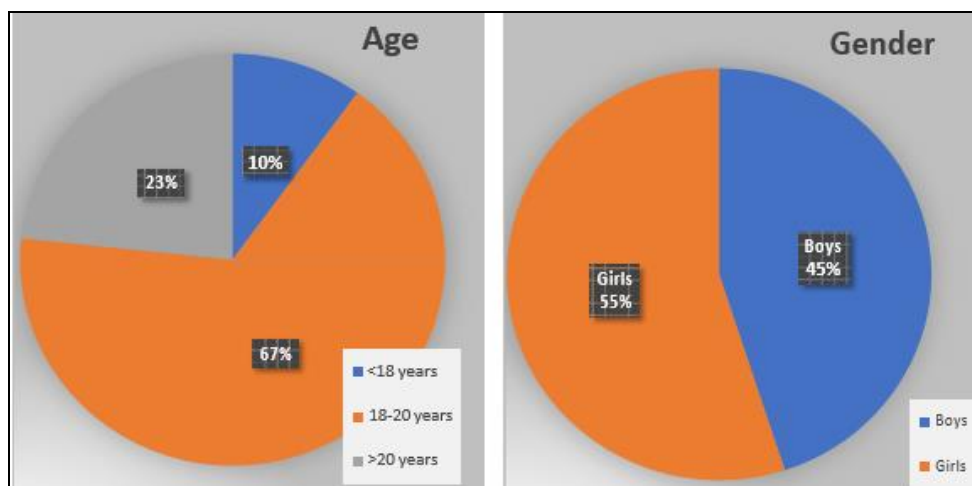


Fig 1a: Percentage distribution of students based on age **Fig 1b:** Percentage distribution of students based on gender

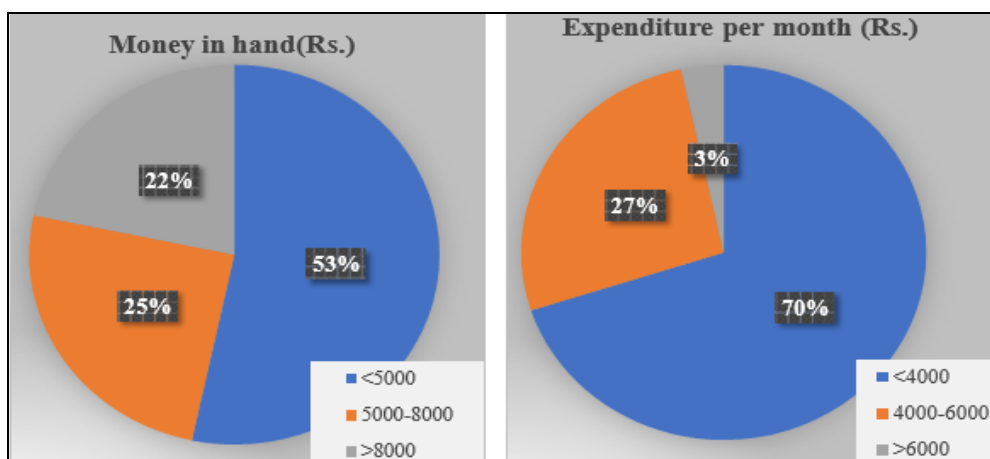


Fig 1c: Percentage distribution of students based on money in hand **Fig 1d:** Percentage distribution of students based on expenditure per month

Fig 1: General profile and Economic information of the students

Section 2 Buying behavior of college students

It is clear from table 1, that students when asked about the aspects they look for in a product during purchase, about 44.30 percent have of the students had considered price as prime aspect, followed by 27.90 percent considered brand. Majority of the students (66.7%) preferred wholesale markets to purchase their goods and every student had checked MRP before purchasing any of the product. It was observed that due to the personal product experience, 68.9 percent of students preferred offline shopping over internet shopping.

According to the data in table 1, 58.33 percent of the students experienced food adulteration, while 62.20 percent complained to the shopkeeper about their adulterated food

products and 58.3 percent students reported that the person they had complained to personally attended to their complaint. Regarding the best platform for buying, 29.50 percent of the students said that Amazon was the greatest option and 42.60 percent of the students made their purchases based on their needs.

About 44.30 percent of the students had occasionally made impulse purchase, and it was observed that, 32.80 percent chose price as prime factor while choosing between 2 products with similar features, 39.30 percent and 37.7 percent of the students purchase decision had been moderately and strongly influenced by social media respectively. 52.50 percent of the students had tried new products based on the friend's recommendation.

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of the college students based on their buying behavior

(N=60)

Consumes behaviour	Frequency	percentage
What do you look for in a product during purchase?	a. Price	27
	b. Brand name	17
	c. Consumer service	8
	d. Variety available	8
	Total	60
Mode of purchase you prefer-	a. Online	30
	b. Offline	30
	Total	60
Where do you prefer to purchase goods	a) Super markets	19
	b) Wholesale market	40
	c) Shopping malls	-
	d) General stores	1
	e) Any other	-
Do you check M.R.P. before purchasing products?	Total	60
	a) Yes	60
	b) No	-
You prefer offline buying over online buying most because	Total	60
	a) Product Experience	42
	b) Personalised attention	16
	c) Easy returns	2
	d) Others	-
Have you ever come across adulteration in any of the food stuff?	Total	60
	a) Yes	35
	b) No	25
If yes, to whom did you complain:	Total	60
	a) Shopkeeper	38
	b) Main supplier	10
	c) Internet consumer forum	10
	d) Elsewhere (please specify)	2
Was your complaint to the supplier/shopkeeper attended by them to your satisfaction?	Total	60
	a) Yes	35
	b) No	25
When do you feel to purchase goods	Total	60
	a. According to need	26
	b. According to season	11
	c. According to occasion	9
	d. According to sales & offers	9
	e. During new collection/trends	5
	f. Other	-
Which platform do you feel provides the best overall shopping experience?	Total	60
	a) Amazon	18
	b) Ajio	14
	e) Flipkart	16
	f) Meesho	10
	g) Others	2

	Total	60	100.00
Which of the following best describes your approach to impulse buying?	a) I rarely purchases. make impulse	11	18.00
	b) I occasionally make impulse purchases	27	44.30
	c) I often make impulse purchase	14	23.00
	d) I always make impulse purchases.	8	14.70
	Total	60	100.00
When choosing between two products with similar features, which factor is most important to you?	a) Design/appearance	16	26.20
	b) Price	20	32.80
	c) Brand loyalty	17	27.90
	d) Product reviews	7	13.10
	Total	60	100.00
What role does social media play in Influencing your purchase decisions?	a) Strong influence	23	37.70
	b) Moderate influence	24	39.30
	c) Slight influence	12	19.70
	d) No influence	1	3.30
	Total	60	100.00
How likely are you to try a new product based on a friend's recommendation?	a) Very likely	8	13.10
	b) Somewhat likely	32	52.50
	c) Neutral	13	21.30
	d) Unlikely	7	13.10
	Total	60	100.00
Which type of advertising do you find most effective in prompting you to buy a product?	a) TV commercials	8	13.10
	b) Online banner ads	17	27.90
	c) Social media	27	44.30
	d) Influencer recommendations	8	14.70
	Total	60	100.00
How important is sustainability and eco-friendliness, in your purchasing decisions?	a) Extremely important	15	24.60
	b) Somewhat important	31	50.80
	c) Neutral	9	14.80
	d) Not important at all	5	9.80
	Total	60	100.00
How often do you abandon an online shopping cart before completing the purchase?	a) Very often	16	26.20
	b) Occasionally	20	32.80
	c) Rarely	18	29.50
	d) Never	6	11.50
	Total	60	100.00
What drives you to switch from one brand to another for a product you regularly use	a) Better quality/ price	21	34.40
	b) Innovative features	19	31.10
	c) Peer recommendations	12	19.70
	d) Others	8	14.80
	Total	60	100.00
Who purchases your goods?	a) Self	29	47.70
	b) Family members	27	42.40
	c) Friends	2	6.60
	d) Others	2	3.30
	Total	60	100.00
Money spent mostly on	a) Electronic gadgets	10	16.40
	b) Food products	16	26.20
	c) Accessories	10	16.40
	d) Clothing	18	30.50
	e) Stationary	6	10.50
	f) Others (please specify)	-	-
	Total	60	100.00

According to the data in table 1, 44.3 percent of the students had felt social media as the most effective type of advertisement that prompted them to make a purchase, whereas 32.80 percent of the students had occasionally abandoned their online shopping cart before completing the purchase. About 34.40 percent of the students had switched to other brands because of the better quality or price of the products they usually used.

The data in table 1, revealed that about 47.70 percent of the students had purchased goods by their own, and 30.50 percent of the students spent their money mostly on clothing

followed by 26.20 percent on food products, 16.40 percent each on electronic gadgets and accessories and 10.50 percent spent their money on stationary.

Discussion

Majority of the students (44.30%) considered price as prime while making a purchase, the reason for this behavior could be that, as the respondents of this study were college students with no income other than the pocket money they get from their parents which is limited. A study conducted by Marlisa *et al.* (2021) ^[3] reported similar results, in which

they mentioned that students had economic literacy, and the amount of pocket money had a positive and significant effect on the self-control of students.

It could be observed that 68.90 percent of students preferred offline buying over online buying because of the product experience (table 1). Kaur and Kaur (2018) ^[2] in their study focused online and offline consumer groups in terms of demographic, technology use, availability and attitude of the consumer, the results revealed that consumers preferred offline shopping at the purchasing stage.

According to the table 1 data, majority of the students (66.70%) preferred wholesale markets to purchase their goods. The reason could be that students were conscious about their limited pocket money and tended to spend less money on goods that lead to prefer places/markets where they get appreciable offers on the products they needed, to save their income which is highly possible in wholesale markets.

According to the data in table 1, 42.60 percent of the students purchased goods according to their need and preferred amazon platform for their shopping and opined social media had mostly influenced them to purchase products, 32.80 percent of the students mentioned that they had occasionally abandoned their online shopping cart before completing the purchase, About 34.40 percent of the students had switched to other brands because of the better quality or price of the products they regularly used. Similar results were found in a study by Amdan and Zanna (2021) ^[1], the results of the study stated that social media influenced consumer satisfaction in the stages of information search and alternative evaluation, with satisfaction getting amplified as the consumer moves along the process towards the final purchase decision and post-purchase evaluation.

With regards to purchase of goods, about 47.70 percent of the students had purchased goods by their own, while 30.50 percent of the students mostly spent their money on clothing, reason could be that, as the respondents of this study were college students who prefers to buy according to their choices. This could be because, with regards to purchasing clothes, college students in present scenario considers their own choice as they have individual goals, motivation and general educational orientations.

Conclusion

The research findings indicated that consumers exhibit a discerning approach to purchasing. Prior to making a buying decision, a significant number of students engaged in information gathering about products, utilizing both online and offline sources like advices from friends. The prevalence of offline purchasing is noteworthy, with a preference for this mode among the majority. However, challenges arose during the buying process, as revealed by 39.3 percent of students who expressed dissatisfaction with the absence of personalized recommendations in their online shopping experiences. Additionally, the impact of product reviews and ratings on the decision-making process is evident.

References

1. Amdan L, Zanna R. Evaluation of Socio-Cultural Factors Influencing Consumer Buying Behaviour of Clothes in Borno State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Basic & Applied Sciences*. 2021;1(3):519-529.
2. Kaur S, Kaur V. Comparative study on online vs. offline shopping. *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts*. 2018;6(1):1460- 1470.
3. Marlisa A, Mahkdalena C, Gimin S, Artia M. The effect of economic literature and the amount of pocket money on student's consumption behavior through self-control. *Journal of Educational Sciences*. 2021;5(3):559-568.
4. Sheikh Q. Factor Affecting Consumer Buying Behavior: A Conceptual Study, *International journal for scientific research & development*. 2020;8(2):2321-0613.
5. Srivastava T, Ali M. How Store Location and Pricing Structure Affect Shopping Behavior. P. *Journal of consumer economics*. 2013;2(212):221-9595.
6. Tlapana T. The Impact of Store Layout on Consumer Buying Behaviour: A Case of Convenience Stores from a Selected Township in Kwazulu Natal. *International Review of Management and Marketing*. 2021;11(5):1-6.