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Transformation of Gen Z Buying Behaviour in the Digital Age

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Abstract: This study examined the how digital technologies and online platforms have transformed the buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers and identify the key factors influencing the purchasing decisions of Generation Z consumers in the digital age. This study is descriptive and analytical based on survey method. Primary data are collected from a sample of 120 Gen Z consumers with the help of a structured questionnaire and secondary data are collected from published articles, journals, reports, books and websites. The study reveals that most of the respondents are used mobile apps and social media are frequently used for shopping related information. The study highlight respondents are prefer online shopping over traditional in-store shopping and also agreed that mobile shopping apps make purchasing more convenient. Price is the most influencing factor for purchase decision, followed by convenience of shopping and social media influences.

Keywords*: buying behaviour, Generation Z, social media*

Introduction

The rapid advancement of digital technology has, sort of, completely shifted consumer behaviour around the world, especially for Generation Z (Gen Z), the group born roughly between the late 1990s and the early 2010s. They were also the first generation to grow up in a fully digitally linked environment. So, from a very early age they've been around smartphones, social media sites, online shopping options, and instant access to information, like basically always. When it comes to Gen Z shopping behaviour in India, it's strongly driven by their digital fluency and their need for personalization, not just convenience. This cohort stays very active on platforms like Instagram and YouTube, plus these newer channels that are influencer driven, and that influence often changes what they actually choose to purchase.

The emergence of e-commerce, social commerce, influencer marketing, artificial intelligence-driven recommendations, and mobile payment systems has revolutionized the traditional consumer decision-making process. Unlike earlier generations that relied heavily on television advertisements, print media, and in-store experiences, Gen Z consumers frequently turn to social media platforms, online reviews, peer recommendations, and digital influencers when evaluating products and making purchase decisions. Their

buying behaviour is characterized by a preference for convenience, personalization, authenticity, and seamless digital experiences. This article explores how digital technologies and online platforms have transformed the buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers and identify the key factors influencing the purchasing decisions of Generation Z consumers in the digital age

Review of Literature

Indrajeet Singh, Shweta Nagar and Anjali Singh (2025) have conducted a study on exploring financial behaviour among Millennials and Gen Z in India. The study reveals that both generations are greatly influenced by the digital revolution, with high usership of mobile wallets, investment applications, and online banking sites such as Paytm, Groww, and Zerodha. Impulsive buying behaviour and brand loyalty are shaped mainly by social media, peer networks, and advertisements.

Nikita Singh and Dr. Shambhu Nath Singh (2025) have conducted a comparative study on the buying behaviour of Generation Z and Millennials. The study revealed that no statistically significant differences between the two generations across the examined factors, although descriptive statistics suggested marginal tendencies, such as Gen Z showing slightly higher price sensitivity and responsiveness to discounts. The study suggested that while subtle variations exist, both generations demonstrate broadly similar buying behaviours in the digital marketplace.

Dr. Ambika Mundra (2024) has examined the differences in buying behaviour between two prominent generational cohorts in India. The study find out that Gen Z is strongly influenced by social media and online trends, whereas Millennials demonstrate higher brand loyalty and price sensitivity. Both generations respond positively to discounts and offers, though Gen Z shows a marked preference for online shopping compared to Millennials. The study provides insights into how generational differences shape shopping behaviour, helping retailers and marketers design targeted strategies for enhanced engagement and sales.

Cheenepalli Hemanth Reddy, Ayush Kumar Singh and Rimple Sharma (2024) in their article titled on" Impact of Social media marketing on Gen Z buying behaviour". This study find out that the factors affecting the purchase decisions of Generation Z and the subsequent amount of satisfaction by analysing the intricate linkages between social media marketing and customers' behaviour. The study reveals that social media has a big influence on how Generation Z decides what to buy. Young people are heavily involved on social media, where they come across content and ads that affect their purchasing decisions.

Research Problem

The digital age has transformed the buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers by changing the sources of information they trust, the channels through which they make purchases, and the factors that influence their decisions. However, the extent to which digital platforms, social media influencers, online reviews, personalization technologies, and social commerce affect Gen Z purchasing behaviour remains inadequately understood. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the key digital factors driving the transformation of Gen Z buying behaviour and their impact on consumer decision-making**.**

Objectives of the Study

- To examine how digital technologies and online platforms have transformed the buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers
- To identify the key factors influencing the purchasing decisions of Generation Z consumers in the digital age
- To examine the extent of social media and online review influence on consumer decisions.

Hypothesis

- There is no significant difference in buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers with regard to gender wise.
- There is no significant difference in buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers with regard to age

Research Methodology

This study is both descriptive and analytical based on survey method. Primary data are collected from a sample of 120 Gen Z consumers with the help of a structured questionnaire and secondary data collected from published articles, journals, reports, books and websites. The data which were collected from the respondents were analysed by using mean, standard deviation, independent sample t test and one way ANOVA. It covers Malappuram district in Kerala. The study examines how digital technologies and online platforms have transformed the buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers and identify the key factors influencing the purchasing decisions of Generation Z consumers in the digital age.

Analysis and Results

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The profile of the sample respondents explaining demographic features is presented in the following table:

Table 1

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Variable	Classifications	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	72	60
	Female	48	40
	Total	**120**	**100**
Age	18-20 years	22	18
	21-23 years	39	33
	24-26 years	28	23
	Above 26 years	31	26
	Total	**120**	**100**
	Higher secondary	36	30

Education	Degree	45	38
	Postgraduate	24	20
	Professional	15	12
	Total	**120**	**100**
Occupation	Government employee	22	18
	Private employee	32	27
	Professional	15	13
	Self employed	31	26
	Student	20	16
	Total	**120**	**100**
Monthly Income	Below 25000	34	28
	25000-50000	48	40
	50000-75000	20	17
	Above 75000	18	15
	Total	**120**	**100**

Source: Survey data

Above table shows that 60 percentage of the respondents are male, while 40 percentage are female. This indicates a male dominant sample, though the difference is not extremely large. The age profile reveals that the largest share of respondents belongs to the 21-23 age group at 33 percentage followed by above 26 at 26 percentage. The educational qualification shows that graduates from the largest group at 38 percentage followed by higher secondary at 30 percentage. Most of the respondents are private employees (27) and self-employed (26). Monthly income shows that most of them are earn in between 25000-50000(40%) and least of the income earn in above 75000.

Table 2

Most frequently used digital platforms for shopping-related information

Digital platforms	Frequency	Percentage
Social media	100	83
E-commerce website	85	71
Brand Website	65	54
Search engine	62	52
Mobile apps	120	100

120 respondents are used mobile apps frequently used for shopping related information and 100 respondents are used social media for shopping. The study reveals that most of the respondents are frequently used all digital platforms for shopping-related information.

Table 3

Buying Behaviour in the Digital Age

Buying Behavior	Mean	Std. Deviation
I prefer online shopping over traditional in-store shopping	4.25	.811
Find out new products through social media platforms.	3.99	1.016
Online reviews and ratings affect my purchase decisions	4.08	.861
Influencer recommendations impact my buying choices	4.04	.876
Mobile shopping apps make purchasing more convenient	4.25	.852
Discounts and promotional offers encourage me to shop online	3.83	.812
Fast delivery options influence my choice of online retailer	3.80	.675
Digital payment methods make online shopping easier	4.12	.938

Table 3 reveals the buying behaviour of Gen Z consumers in the digital age. It shows that respondents are prefer online shopping over traditional in-store shopping which mean score is 4.25 and standard deviation is. 811.They also highly agreed that mobile shopping apps make purchasing more convenient (Mean score 4.25 and standard deviation.852) and digital payment methods make online shopping easier (Mean score 4.12 and standard deviation .938).

For the purpose of comparing the buying behaviour with regard to gender, the following hypotheses are formulated:

- There is no significant relationship in buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers

with regard to gender wise

The Independent sample t-test was used for testing the hypothesis and the result is presented in following table.

Table 4

Gender wise Comparison in buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers

Gender	N	Mean	S.D	t value	p value
Male	72	3.1576	1.02832	2.528	.012*
Female	48	2.9221	.84447		

Source: Survey data

* Significant at 0.05 levels

It is understood from the above table, t value and p-value of buying behaviour are 2.528 and .012. Hence there is a significant difference in the buying behaviour among male and female respondents. The null hypothesis, there is no significant difference in buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers with regard to gender wise was rejected at 5 percent level of significance. The mean score of awareness among the male is 3.1576 with

standard deviation 1.02832, which is more than female respondents' awareness mean score 2.9221 with standard deviation.84447.

To understand the age wise difference in buying behaviour, One Way ANOVA test was used and following hypotheses have been formulated to test whether this difference is statistically significant or not

- There is no significant relationship in buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers with regard to age

Table 5

Age wise Comparison in buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers

Age	N	Mean	S.D	F value	p value
18-20 years	22	2.7755	.62736	3.498	.001*
21-23 years	39	2.9286	1.28138		
24-26 years	28	3.2619	.95939		
Above 26 years	31	3.8393	.94395		

Source: Survey data

* Significant at 0.05 levels

It is also seen that there is significant difference in the buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers with regard to age. The result of ANOVA test shows that F value (3.498) and p value (.001) of buying behaviour is significant at 5 percent level. The mean score of buying behaviour on the bases of age shows that the mean score of above 26 years (3.9382) and 24-26 years (3.8393) which are higher than the other age group. It indicates that the respondents of higher age group are highly agreed in digital consumption.

Table 6

Factors which influence of Purchase Decision

Factors	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Price	4.46	.738	**1**
Product quality	3.85	.772	**6**
Brand Reputation	3.82	.706	**7**
Online Reviews	3.94	.802	**5**
Social Media Influencers	4.12	.857	**3**
Discounts and offers	4.09	.777	**4**
Convenience of Shopping	4.25	.842	**2**

From the above table it is clear that price (Mean score 4.46, Rank 1) is the most influencing factor for purchase decision, followed by convenience of shopping (Mean score 4.25, Rank 2) and social media influences (Mean score 4.12, Rank 3) are the other factors which influence the purchase decision.

Table 7

Social Media Influence on Consumer Decisions

Social Media Influence	Mean	Std. Deviation
Social media helps me find out new products and brands.	4.24	.995
Advertisements on social media influence my purchase decisions.	3.83	.910
Product recommendations from influencers affect my buying behavior	4.06	.861
Social media content increases my awareness of product features and benefits	3.80	.675
I trust product information shared by influencers on social media.	3.79	1.013
Social media platforms encourage impulse purchases	4.08	.861

From the above table it is clear that social media helps discover new products and brands(Mean score 4.24 and standard deviation.995), social media platforms encourage impulse purchases (Mean score 4.08 and standard deviation.861) and Product recommendations from influencers affect my buying behaviour(Mean score 4.06 and standard deviation.861).According to the respondents the study reveals that the social medial highly influence the purchase decision in the digital age.

Table 8

Online reviews Influence on Consumer Decisions

Online reviews Influence	Mean	Std. Deviation
I read online reviews before purchasing a product	4.24	.995
Positive reviews will help likelihood of purchasing a product	4.08	.855
Negative reviews discourage me from purchasing a product	3.83	.812
I consider online reviews more trustworthy than advertisements	3.74	.560
Customer ratings influence my product selection	3.82	.706
A large number of reviews increases my confidence in a product	3.80	.632

Above table shows that online reviews influence on consumer decisions. Mean value indicates that respondents are highly agreed that read online reviews before purchasing a product(Mean score 4.24 and standard deviation.995) and positive reviews increase likelihood of purchasing a product(Mean score 4.08 and standard deviation.855).Respondents are also agreed that negative reviews discourage me from purchasing a product (Mean score 3.83 and standard deviation.812) and customer ratings influence product selection(Mean score 3.82 and standard deviation.706).

Conclusion

The study on the transformation of Gen Z buying behaviour in the Digital Age provide valuable insight on how digital technologies and online platforms have transformed the buying behaviour of Generation Z consumers and identify the key factors influencing the purchasing decisions of Generation Z consumers in the digital age. GenZ consumers prefer online shopping over traditional in-store shopping. They also highly agreed that mobile shopping apps make purchasing more convenient and digital payment methods make online shopping easier. Price is the most influencing factor for purchase decision, followed by convenience of shopping and social media influences are the other factors which influence the purchase decision.

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