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Research Article

Awareness and Usage of Digital Payment Gateway Among College Students in Kerala

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Abstract

This study focuses on the awareness and usage of digital payment gateways among college students. With the rapid growth of technology and smartphones, digital payment systems such as Google Pay, Phone Pe, Paytm, and online banking have become common among students. The study aims to understand students' awareness level, frequency of usage, preferred payment methods, benefits, and problems faced while using digital payment gateways. The research also examines factors influencing the adoption of digital payments, including convenience, security, internet availability, and cashback offer. The study concludes that digital payment gateways are widely accepted among college students due to their speed, ease of use, and accessibility.

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KEYWORDS: Digital payment gateway, UPI, Online banking, Cashless transactions, E-wallets.

1. INTRODUCTION

Today's world is moving quickly towards using digital payment methods, especially digital wallets that offer coupons and discounts. Mobile payment (E-payment) systems have become popular, allowing people to pay for things using their mobile phones anytime and anywhere. E-payment or electronic payment is any digital financial payment transaction involving currency transfer between two or more parties. The rapid growth of digital technology has transformed the way people manage money and carry out financial transactions. Digital payment systems such as mobile wallets, UPI, debit/credit cards, and online banking have become an essential part of everyday life. Among all age groups, youth are the most active adopters of digital payment methods due to their familiarity with smartphones, internet access, and technological skills. Young people today prefer digital payments because they are fast, convenient, and cashless, allowing them to make transactions anytime and anywhere. From shopping and bill payments to food delivery and peer-to-peer transfers, digital platforms have simplified financial activities. Governments and financial institutions also promote digital payments to build a cashless economy, improve transparency, and reduce the risks linked with handling physical cash. However, despite its advantages, digital payment usage among youth also raises concerns such as security risks, privacy issues, overspending habits, and lack of financial awareness. Understanding how young people use digital payment systems, their level of trust, challenges faced, and the impact on their spending behaviour is therefore important.

This study aims to examine the adoption, usage patterns, benefits, and challenges of digital payment systems among youth. The findings will help in understanding youth financial behaviour and in developing strategies to promote safe and responsible digital payment practices.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The advancement of digital technology has significantly transformed financial transactions, particularly among young individuals. Digital payment gateways such as Google Pay, Phone Pe, and Paytm are widely used by college students for various purposes including money transfer, fee payment, and online shopping. However, there is limited information regarding the level of awareness, understanding of security features, and frequency of usage of these digital payment gateways among students. Therefore, this study seeks to examine and evaluate the awareness and usage of digital payment gateways among college students.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

According to the Government of India the digital payment will increase the employment, reduces risk related to cash like corruption, robbery and carrying or storage of large amount of cash and made all transactions to be done cashless or digitalized which helps the people to transfer the money with security and safety at high speed. The impact of this policy is a step towards the modernization and globalization by making the economy cashless. Therefore, it is essential that the youth, the future

generation must know digital payment methods to make this programme successful. Further, rural India lags behind urban area in digital payment. In this study, "A study on the Awareness and Usage of Digital Payment Gateway among Youth in college students", a special attention has been given to rural youth and study has been made on their perception level towards digital payment.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study aims at getting a view about effectiveness of digital payment system among youth in college students. The primary data was collected by conducting a survey among youth in college students.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Deshpande and Dhoka (2025) conducted an analytical study on the use of UPI payment gateways among postgraduate students in PCMC. Using a mixed-method approach with surveys and interviews, the study found high awareness and adoption of UPI due to convenience, security, and accessibility. Google Pay and PhonePe were the most preferred platforms. The research also highlighted concerns regarding security and technical issues, while emphasizing that students intend to continue using UPI for future financial transactions.

M. Deepa (2021), in the study titled "A Study on Consumer Awareness and Satisfaction towards Online Digital Payment – With Special Reference to Pollachi Taluk," examined the level of consumer awareness and satisfaction towards digital payment services. The study was conducted among 100 respondents in Pollachi Taluk using convenience sampling method. Percentage analysis and weighted average ranking methods were used for data analysis. The study found that most respondents were aware of digital payment methods and regularly used services such as debit cards, PhonePe, Paytm, and net banking. The research also revealed that consumers were generally satisfied with digital payment services, especially regarding convenience and ease of transactions. The study concluded that the growth of smartphones and internet penetration has significantly increased the adoption of digital payments among consumers.

Rashmi and Anusha (2025) studied the awareness and usage intention of UPI payment gateways among undergraduate students of Mangalore University. Using a quantitative approach and data collected from 398 students through structured questionnaires, the study found that convenience, peer influence, security perception, and habitual usage significantly affect UPI adoption. The research also revealed that students frequently use UPI for mobile recharges, college fees, and online shopping, indicating the growing integration of digital payments into students' daily financial activities.

Ruban and Sahila (2023) conducted a study on users' opinion and awareness toward UPI digital payment gateways in Tiruvallur District. Using data collected from 155 respondents through structured questionnaires and SPSS analysis, the study found that younger users widely prefer Google Pay and internet banking because of convenience and time-saving benefits. The research also highlighted the importance of awareness, security

measures, and improving transaction reliability in digital payment systems.

Zehra et al. (2024) examined consumer preferences and behaviour toward digital payment gateways in India, focusing on factors influencing consumer choices and satisfaction. The study used a structured survey of 1,000 respondents across India and applied statistical tools such as ANOVA, chi-square tests, and correlation analysis. The findings revealed that convenience, security trust, and cashback rewards significantly influence consumer adoption and recommendations of digital payment platforms like PhonePe, Google Pay, and Paytm. The study further highlighted that user-friendly interfaces, secure transaction systems, and attractive reward schemes enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty. However, issues such as digital literacy and security concerns continue to hinder wider adoption of digital payment systems in India.

RESEARCH GAP

Although many studies have examined digital payment adoption, satisfaction, and UPI usage, limited research has focused specifically on the awareness and extent of usage of various digital payment methods among youth. Most previous studies were conducted in specific regions or among selected student groups, with less emphasis on the perceived benefits and convenience of digital payments. Therefore, the present study aims to fill this gap by analyzing awareness, usage patterns, and perceived convenience of digital payment systems among youth.

3. OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the level of awareness of digital payment systems among youth.
2. To identify the various digital payment methods commonly used by youth.
3. To analyze the extent of usage of digital payment systems among youth.
4. To assess the benefits and convenience perceived by youth in using digital payments.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design

Kannur district has been taken as the whole unit of data collection. Descriptive research is used in this study.

Population

The total number of items or things in a particular equity is known as population. Here the population is infinite that means the population cannot be measured. Population include college students in Kannur District.

Sample size

Sample size is the number of persons chosen for data collection. Here 100 samples are selected for the study.

Sampling technique

For data collection convenience sampling technique was used. Convenience sampling is one in which a sample is obtained by selecting such units of the universe which may be conveniently located and contacted.

Tools for data collection

In order to achieve the objective's, structured questionnaire is used for collecting primary data from the respondents.

Tools for data analysis

Primary data were processed and analysed manually for preparing the report. Tabular forms of statements have been used for the presentation of data. For the analysis of data percentage, bar diagram, pie diagram and chart are used.

Period of the study

The duration of the study was the month of April 2026

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

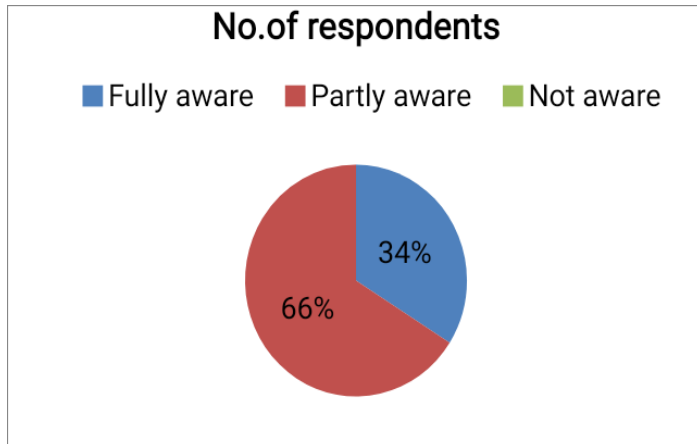
This chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of data collected for the study on digital payment systems among youth. The collected data were classified, tabulated, and analyzed using suitable statistical tools in order to achieve the objectives of the study. The analysis focuses on the level of awareness, commonly used digital payment methods, extent of usage, and the benefits and convenience perceived by youth while using digital payment systems. The findings are presented systematically through tables, charts, and interpretations for a better understanding of the study results. Percentage analysis was used to analyse the demographic profile of the respondents and pie charts were also used.

Table 1: Demographic Variables

VARIABLE	CATEGORY	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
AGE	Below 20	50	50%
	20-25	44	44%
	25-30	6	6%
GENDER	Male	28	28%
	Female	72	72%
EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	SSLC	0	0
	Plus, Two	38	38%
	Under graduation	32	32%
	Post-graduation	30	30%
COURSE OF STUDY	UG	80	80%
	PG	12	12%
	Professional course	8	8%
	Diploma	0	0%

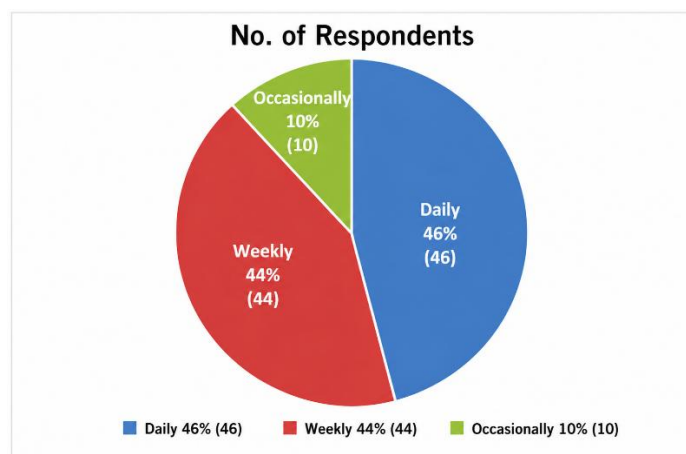
Table shows that 50% respondents are in the age group of below 20, 44% of respondents are in the age group of 20-25, 6% of respondents are in the age group of 25-30. t 28% of respondents were male and 72% of respondents are female. This graph indicates that majority of respondents are female. 38% have completed plus two, 32% are graduates and 30% are under graduates. 80% are pursuing UG (Degree), 12% are PG, and 8% are in professional courses, while none are from diploma.

AWARENESS ABOUT FUNCTIONALITY OF DIGITAL PAYMENT



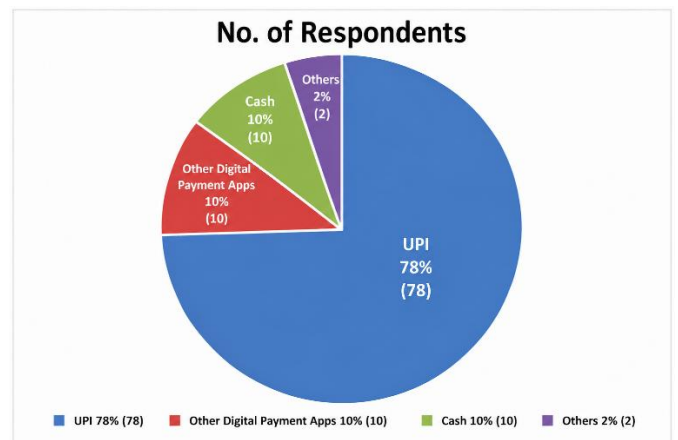
The pie chart shows that 34% out of the 100 respondents are fully aware of the functionality of digital payment, 66% are partly aware, and no one belongs to the not aware category.

FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF DIGITAL PAYMENT



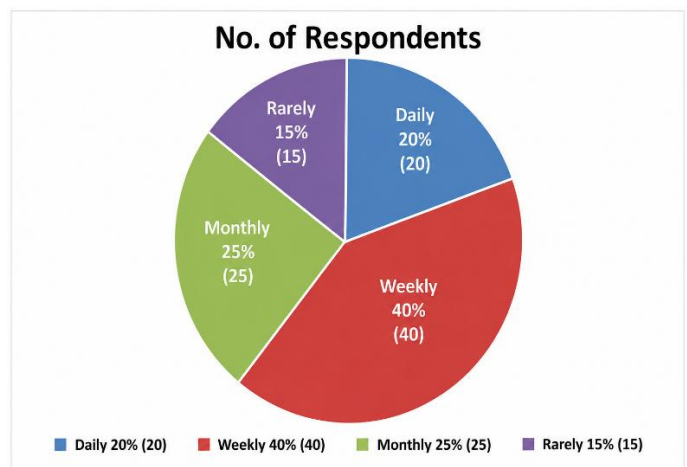
Pie chart shows that 46% of the respondents use digital payment modes on a daily, 44% use on a weekly basis and 10% use on a monthly basis.

PREFERRED DIGITAL PAYMENT MODE



The pie chart shows that 78% of students use UPI as a preferred digital payment mode, 10% use a credit card, 5% use a debit card, 2% use an E-Wallet.

BENEFITS OF USING DIGITAL PAYMENT



The pie chart shows that 40% get cashback occasionally, 26% get it rarely, 20% of respondents get cash back always, and 14% get never.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study reveals that most respondents belong to the age group of below 20 years, and around 72% of them are female students. A large proportion of the respondents possess educational qualifications ranging from Plus Two to undergraduate level, and many of them are pursuing undergraduate degree courses. About 62% of the respondents are partially aware of the functionality of digital payment systems. UPI is the most preferred mode of digital payment, followed by debit cards, e-wallets, and credit cards. The study also indicates that the frequency of digital payment usage among students is comparatively high, with most respondents using digital payment services on a daily or weekly basis.

Around 40% of the respondents rarely receive cashback offers while using mobile wallets.

SUGGESTIONS

The study suggests that youth should improve their knowledge regarding various digital payment methods by reading articles and exploring information through the internet. More advertisements and awareness programmes should be conducted to increase the popularity and acceptance of digital payment systems among consumers. Proper guidance and training regarding the usage of digital payments should also be provided to customers. In addition, strong security measures must be ensured to protect online transactions and build customer confidence. Digital payment service providers should give importance to customer feedback and complaints for improving their services. The quality and efficiency of digital payment services should be enhanced to provide better customer satisfaction. Furthermore, more digital payment facilities and modes should be introduced and expanded across India to encourage wider usage among the public.

6. CONCLUSION

It is clear from the findings that youth are aware of digital payment modes and have also used at least one of the digital payment modes. Youth prefer digital payment mostly for money transfer. Most of the youth are enjoying digital payment facility. It is believed that digital payment has promoted easy payment. People can pay from their houses, offices, colleges etc. And they accept digital payment due to its ease of use and satisfaction. People do prefer debit card and credit card instead of cash cheques. Digital payment should be widely available across the country and security issues and connectivity issues must be resolved.

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Saleena A. P. holds an M.A. in Economics from Government College Kodenchery. Her academic interests include economic development, public policy, social welfare, and contemporary economic issues. She is actively engaged in academic learning and research activities related to economics and societal development.