



A Study on the E-Commerce Platforms and Their Impact on Rural Micro and Small Enterprises With Special Reference to Coimbatore District

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Abstract. This study examines the impact of e-commerce platforms on rural micro and small enterprises in Coimbatore district. The growth of digital technology has enabled rural entrepreneurs to access wider markets through platforms like Amazon, Flipkart, and Meesho. Data was collected from 90 respondents, including business owners, artisans, and traders, using structured questionnaires. The analysis was conducted using percentage methods and chi-square tests. Findings show that e-commerce helps increase sales, expand market reach, and improve income levels. However, challenges such as lack of digital literacy, logistics issues, and limited awareness persist. These barriers restrict the full utilization of online platforms. The study suggests enhancing digital training and improving infrastructure. This would help rural entrepreneurs benefit more effectively from e-commerce opportunities.

Keywords: E-commerce, Rural Enterprises, Micro and Small Businesses, Digital Platforms, Coimbatore District

I. Introduction of the Study

In recent years, e-commerce has transformed the way businesses operate across the world. Online platforms allow businesses to sell products and services through the internet, reaching customers beyond geographical boundaries. For micro and small enterprises in rural areas, e-commerce platforms offer new opportunities to expand their market and increase profitability. India has witnessed significant growth in e-commerce due to the expansion of internet connectivity, smartphone usage, and digital payment systems. Platforms such as Amazon, Flipkart, and Meesho have enabled even small businesses to participate in the digital economy. These platforms provide features such as online storefronts, payment systems, logistics support, and marketing tools that help businesses grow. Coimbatore district, known for its industrial and entrepreneurial environment, also has a large number of rural micro and small enterprises engaged in activities such as handicrafts, textiles, food products, and agricultural goods. Many of these businesses are gradually adopting e-commerce platforms to sell their products online.

Objectives of the Study

- To assess the awareness and adoption of e-commerce platforms among rural entrepreneurs in Coimbatore district.
- To evaluate the impact of e-commerce platforms on the sales performance and income of rural micro and small enterprises.
- To identify the benefits and challenges of e-commerce adoption and suggest measures to improve its usage among rural businesses.



II. Statement of the Problem

Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to understand the impact of e-commerce platforms on rural micro and small enterprises

Data Collection

Primary Data

Primary data was collected through structured questionnaires distributed to rural entrepreneurs, small traders, and business owners in Coimbatore district. The questionnaire included questions related to awareness, usage, benefits, and challenges of e-commerce platforms.

Secondary Data

Secondary data was collected from research articles, government reports, journals, websites, and publications related to e-commerce and rural entrepreneurship.

Sample Size

A total of 90 respondents from rural micro and small enterprises in Coimbatore district were selected for the study.

Sampling Technique

Convenience sampling method was used for selecting respondents.

Tools for Analysis

Percentage Analysis

Overview of the Study

This study focuses on the impact of e-commerce platforms on rural micro and small enterprises in the Coimbatore district. It examines how digital platforms have enabled rural entrepreneurs to reach wider markets beyond their local areas. The study highlights the role of e-commerce in increasing sales, improving customer access, and enhancing business visibility. It also discusses how online platforms help reduce dependency on middlemen, leading to better profit margins. However, the research identifies key challenges such as lack of digital literacy, poor internet connectivity, and limited awareness among rural business owners. It further explores issues related to logistics, delivery systems, and trust in online transactions. The study analyzes the economic benefits, including increased income and employment opportunities in rural regions. It also considers the role of government initiatives and digital support programs in promoting e-commerce adoption. Additionally, the research evaluates how technology adoption influences business sustainability and growth.

III. Review of Literature

- Laudon and Traver (2023) studied the growth of e-commerce and its impact on small businesses. The study found that digital platforms provide opportunities for small enterprises to expand their customer base and improve business performance.



- Kumar and Singh (2024) examined the adoption of e-commerce among rural entrepreneurs in India. The study concluded that while e-commerce provides significant opportunities, lack of digital literacy and infrastructure remains a major barrier.
- Sharma and Gupta (2024) analyzed the role of digital platforms in supporting micro enterprises. The research highlighted that online marketplaces help businesses reduce marketing costs and improve visibility.
- Ramanathan (2023) conducted a study on the impact of online platforms on rural handicraft businesses. The study revealed that artisans using e-commerce platforms experienced increased income and better market access.
- Patel and Mehta (2025) studied the challenges faced by small businesses in adopting e-commerce. The study identified issues such as logistics management, trust in online payments, and lack of technical skills

IV. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1-Awareness of E-commerce Platforms among Rural Entrepreneurs

Awareness Level	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Fully Aware	28	31%
Partially Aware	32	36%
Slightly Aware	20	22%
Not Aware	10	11%
Total	90	100%

Interpretation

The table shows that 31% of respondents are fully aware of e-commerce platforms, while 36% are partially aware. About 22% are slightly aware and 11% are not aware of e-commerce platforms. This indicates that awareness about e-commerce is moderate among rural entrepreneurs in Coimbatore district.

Table 2-Usage of E-commerce Platforms by Rural Enterprises

Usage Level	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Regularly Using	25	28%
Occasionally Using	30	33%
Planning to Use	20	22%
Not Using	15	17%
Total	90	100%

Interpretation

The table indicates that 28% of respondents regularly use e-commerce platforms, while 33% use them occasionally. Around 22% plan to start using them in the future, and 17% do not use them at all. This shows that many rural enterprises are gradually adopting e-commerce platforms for business activities.



Table 3-Impact of E-commerce Platforms on Business Sales

Impact Level	Number of Respondents	Percentage
High Impact	30	33%
Moderate Impact	28	31%
Low Impact	20	22%
No Impact	12	14%
Total	90	100%

Interpretation

The table reveals that 33% of respondents believe e-commerce platforms have a high impact on their sales, while 31% feel there is a moderate impact. About 22% report low impact and 14% believe there is no impact. This shows that e-commerce platforms play an important role in improving business sales for many rural enterprises.

Findings

- Many rural entrepreneurs in Coimbatore district are aware of e-commerce platforms but only a portion actively use them for business.
- E-commerce platforms help small enterprises expand their market reach beyond local areas.
- Businesses using online platforms reported an increase in sales and customer base.
- Lack of digital knowledge and technical skills is a major challenge for rural entrepreneurs.
- Logistics issues such as delivery delays and shipping costs affect the adoption of e-commerce platforms.

Suggestions

- Government and educational institutions should conduct digital training programs for rural entrepreneurs.
- E-commerce platforms should provide simplified onboarding processes for small businesses.
- Logistics and delivery services should be improved in rural areas.
- Awareness programs about online marketing and digital payments should be organized.
- Rural entrepreneurs should be encouraged to use social media platforms along with e-commerce websites for product promotion

V. Conclusion

E-commerce platforms have created new opportunities for rural micro and small enterprises to grow and compete in the digital marketplace. By using online platforms, rural businesses can expand their reach, increase sales, and improve their overall business performance. The study conducted in Coimbatore district shows that while e-commerce adoption is gradually increasing among rural entrepreneurs, several challenges still remain. Limited digital literacy, logistical difficulties, and lack of awareness prevent many businesses from fully utilizing online platforms. With proper support from the government, digital platforms, and educational institutions, rural enterprises can successfully adopt e-commerce technologies and contribute significantly to economic development. Strengthening digital infrastructure and providing training programs will help rural entrepreneurs participate more effectively in the digital economy.



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