

## BARRIERS AFFECTING E-COMMERCE UPTAKE AMONG STUDENTS: A CASE OF SCHOOL OF BUSINESS STUDENTS OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

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### ABSTRACT

*The COVID-19 pandemic has created a positive shift in e-commerce development since the measures that were put in place to prevent its spread like lockdown, social distancing, limited physical human interaction left no option to many but to embrace e-commerce. However, this shift is still a big challenge to many developing countries. This study investigates the barriers of e-commerce uptake among Makerere University students in the Schools of Business. Across-sectional survey research design was used, and 796 students participated in the survey. Semi-structured questionnaires were administered, and logistic regression analysis method was used.*

*Results show a positive relationship between poor internet connections and uptake of e-commerce ( $p < 0.05$ ). People are ignorant about e-commerce has a positive relationship in the uptake of e-commerce since our  $p < 0.05$ . Again, students that mentioned that poor internet connections affect the uptake of e-commerce were more likely to take up e-commerce compared to those who said that poor internet connection was not a challenge ( $OR=1.6$ ,  $CI=1.14-2.26$ ). On people being ignorant about e-commerce, students who mentioned it as a barrier are less likely to take up e-commerce compared to other students who did not see it as a barrier ( $OR=0.63$ ,  $CI=0.44-0.90$ ). On high cost of internet, students that mentioned it as a barrier are less likely to take up e-commerce compared to those who did not see it as a barrier ( $OR=0.83$ ,  $CI=0.58-1.17$ ) the same applies to e-commerce being expensive with ( $OR=0.83$ ,  $CI=0.58-1.20$ ). Also, student who mentioned lack of access to gadget like phones and computers as barrier are more likely to take up e-commerce compared to those that did not mention it as a challenge ( $OR=1.13$ ,  $CI=0.81-1.58$ ). Students that mentioned that taxes involved such as OTT are a hindrance to e-commerce uptake were more likely to take up e-commerce compared to those that did not see it a challenge ( $OR=1.2$ ,  $CI=0.65-1.84$ ).*

*Poor internet connections, people being ignorant about e-commerce, high internet costs were the most barriers that affected uptake of e-commerce among School of Business students of Makerere University. The study recommends that the government can support students to reduce on barriers of e-commerce by subsidizing the costs of internet as well as promoting e-commerce campaigns at national level to improve awareness in both rural and urban communities.*

**Keywords:** E-commerce, Barriers, Uptake, University students

### 1. INTRODUCTION

According to UCC report, (2017), internet penetration increased from 43.8% (2016) to 45.4% reaching an estimated population of 17.1 million people in Uganda. The report further shows that mobile internet subscriptions grew to 14.5%. Despite the fact e-commerce is increasing steadily in Uganda, the quality of internet is still very low in rural areas and its accessibility in these areas is wanting compared to urban areas. The Ugandan age group for internet spenders is between 30-40 years and B2C e-commerce model is mainly used on mobile devices and different social media platforms.