



A Study on Consumer Buying Behaviour Towards Online Shopping in India

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Peer Review Information	Abstract
<i>Submission: 16 Feb 2015</i> <i>Revision: 03 March 2015</i> <i>Acceptance: 18 March 2015</i> Keywords <i>Consumer buying behaviour, Online shopping, Purchase intention, Online trust, India.</i>	The expansion of online retailing has transformed the buying process by allowing consumers to compare alternatives, obtain information, evaluate prices and complete transactions without visiting physical stores. In India, however, online buying behaviour is shaped not only by convenience and technology acceptance but also by trust, perceived risk, value orientation, prior experience and the social context in which digital commerce is used. This methodology paper develops an empirical framework for examining the factors that influence consumer buying behaviour toward online shopping in India. A quantitative, cross-sectional survey design is proposed with adult Indian consumers who have purchased at least one product online during the preceding six months. The model integrates perceived usefulness and convenience, ease of use, online trust, perceived risk, utilitarian and hedonic value, and prior online shopping experience as predictors of attitude, purchase intention and buying behaviour. Data are proposed to be collected through a structured five-point Likert-scale questionnaire and analysed using descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, Pearson correlation and multiple regression. The methodology is informed by established e-commerce research and India-specific studies published no later than 2015. An illustrative results section demonstrates how findings may be reported without representing synthetic values as actual field evidence. The proposed approach offers a replicable basis for assessing how Indian consumers evaluate online retail channels and how e-retailers can improve trust, usability, perceived value and purchase conversion.

Introduction

Online shopping changes the traditional retail decision process by combining product search, information evaluation, price comparison, payment and delivery into a technology-mediated environment. Consumers therefore judge not only the product but also the website, seller, payment system and delivery process. Technology acceptance research suggests that perceived usefulness and ease of use are central to adoption, while e-commerce research further highlights trust and perceived risk because transactions occur without direct physical

interaction with the seller (Gefen, Karahanna, & Straub, 2003; Pavlou, 2003).

Shopping motivation is also multidimensional. Childers, Carr, Peck, and Carson (2001) demonstrated that online retail behaviour contains both utilitarian motives, such as efficiency and convenience, and hedonic motives, such as enjoyment. These dimensions are relevant in India, where consumers can simultaneously seek price value, time savings, variety, promotional offers and an enjoyable browsing experience.

India-specific research confirms that online purchase decisions are influenced by a combination of technology, value and behavioural factors. Khare and Rakesh (2011) found that utilitarian value, attitude toward online shopping, information availability and hedonic value contributed to purchase intention among Indian students. Khare, Khare, and Singh (2012) further showed that perceived usefulness and ease of use affect the perceived convenience of online shopping, while normative beliefs and demographic factors can shape behaviour. Thamizhvanan and Xavier (2013) identified online trust, impulse purchase orientation and prior online purchase experience as important determinants of purchase intention among Indian consumers. These findings indicate that a single-factor explanation is insufficient for understanding online buying behaviour in India.

The Indian online marketplace is especially suitable for studying the interaction between functional benefits and consumer uncertainty. Digital retail reduces search and travel costs, provides access to wider assortments and enables frequent promotional pricing, but it also creates concerns about payment security, product mismatch, delivery reliability and seller credibility. Pandey and Chawla (2014) identified Indian e-lifestyle dimensions that include e-enjoyment, e-distrust, e-self-inefficacy, logistic concerns, negative beliefs and responsiveness to online offers. Consequently, the present methodology treats buying behaviour as the outcome of both positive drivers and perceived barriers.

Literature Review

Childers et al. (2001) provided an important foundation for explaining why consumers shop online. Their model showed that both instrumental and experiential motives matter. Navigation, convenience and the ability of the online environment to substitute for physical product examination affected attitudes, while enjoyment added a hedonic dimension. This supports examining online buying behaviour through both functional value and shopping experience.

Trust becomes particularly important when consumers cannot directly inspect the seller or

product. Gefen et al. (2003) integrated trust with the Technology Acceptance Model and demonstrated that online purchase intention reflects both beliefs about the technology and confidence in the vendor. Pavlou (2003) similarly integrated perceived usefulness, ease of use, trust and perceived risk in a model of electronic-commerce acceptance. Together, these studies justify treating trust as a positive predictor and perceived risk as a negative predictor of purchase intention.

Research conducted in India provides additional contextual evidence. Khare and Rakesh (2011) examined online shopping behaviour among Indian university students and reported that utilitarian value, attitude, information availability and hedonic value were important predictors of intention. Their findings suggest that Indian consumers evaluate both practical benefits and the quality of information available before committing to online purchase.

Khare et al. (2012) studied consumers in Delhi, Noida and Gurgaon and found that perceived usefulness and ease of use influenced perceptions of online shopping convenience. The study also observed differences associated with normative beliefs, age and gender. These results indicate that a methodology focused on India should control for demographic characteristics while retaining technology-related constructs.

Thamizhvanan and Xavier (2013) examined determinants of online purchase intention in India and reported significant roles for impulse purchase orientation, prior purchase experience and online trust. The study is particularly relevant because it moves beyond general attitude and demonstrates that consumers' earlier transaction experience can reduce uncertainty and strengthen future intention.

Pandey and Chawla (2014) developed an e-lifestyle scale specifically for Indian online shoppers. Their results identified enjoyment and attraction to online offers alongside distrust, self-inefficacy and logistic concerns. This reinforces the need to include positive value perceptions and negative risk-related beliefs in the same analytical model.

Table 1. Selected Literature Supporting the Proposed Model

Study	Context	Key Variables	Main Relevance
Childers et al. (2001)	Online retail	Utilitarian & hedonic motives	Shopping value shapes attitude.

Gefen et al. (2003)	Online shopping	Trust, usefulness, ease of use	Trust complements technology acceptance.
Khare & Rakesh (2011)	India	Value, attitude, information	Explains Indian purchase intention.
Thamizhvanan & Xavier (2013)	India	Trust, experience, impulse	Identifies direct intention drivers.
Pandey & Chawla (2014)	India	E-lifestyle dimensions	Adds distrust, logistics and offer orientation.

Based on the reviewed literature, the proposed framework assumes that consumer buying behaviour develops through an evaluation process in which consumers assess the utility and usability of the online channel, form trust and risk perceptions, evaluate utilitarian and hedonic

value, and combine these beliefs with prior online experience. These factors influence attitude and purchase intention, which subsequently affect reported online buying behaviour.

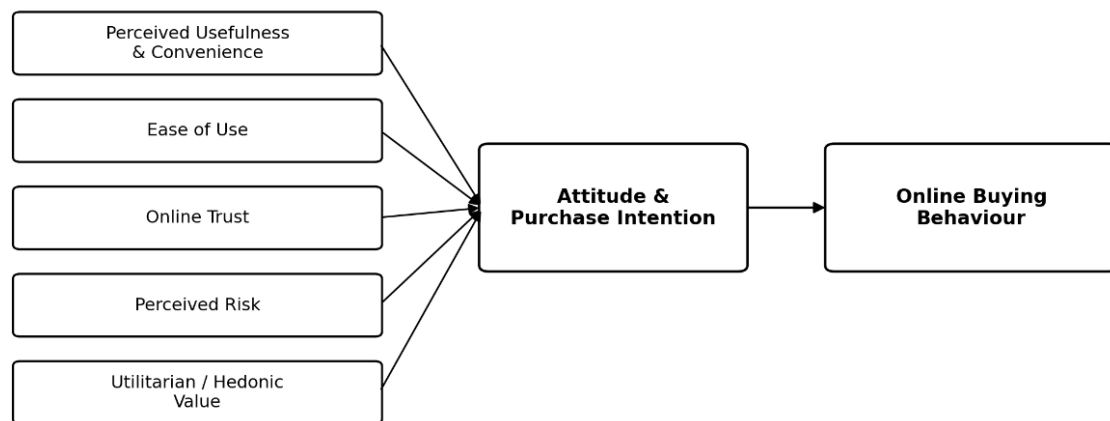


Figure 1. Proposed conceptual framework for consumer online buying behaviour.

Methodology

Step 1: Research Design

The study adopts a quantitative, descriptive and explanatory cross-sectional design. A structured survey is appropriate because the primary constructs—trust, risk, usefulness, value, attitude and purchase intention—are perceptual variables that can be measured through standardized items. Cross-sectional data permit comparison of consumers at a defined point in time and allow estimation of the statistical relationships specified in the hypotheses.

Step 2: Population and Unit of Analysis

The target population comprises Indian residents aged 18 years and above who use the Internet and have completed at least one online retail purchase during the previous six months. The individual consumer is the unit of analysis. The recent-purchase criterion is intended to reduce recall error and ensure that respondents

can evaluate website usability, payment, delivery and post-purchase experiences.

Step 3: Sampling Plan

A multi-location non-probability sampling approach is proposed for practical access to online shoppers. Respondents may be recruited through universities, workplaces, professional networks and online communities in major Indian cities. A target of 250 usable responses is recommended for regression-based analysis with multiple predictors. Quotas can be used to avoid excessive concentration in one gender or age group.

Step 4: Questionnaire Development

The questionnaire should contain three sections. Section A records demographic characteristics and online shopping frequency. Section B measures the explanatory constructs using statements adapted conceptually from established e-commerce studies. Section C measures purchase intention and self-reported

online buying behaviour. Responses should be captured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

Items should be reviewed for clarity in the Indian context and pilot-tested with approximately 25–30 respondents before the main survey.

Table 2. Operationalization of Study Variables

Construct	Indicative Measure	Expected Direction	Literature Basis
Usefulness / convenience	Time saving, comparison, access, convenience	Positive	Pavlou (2003); Khare et al. (2012)
Ease of use	Simple navigation, search, checkout	Positive	Gefen et al. (2003); Khare et al. (2012)
Online trust	Seller reliability, payment confidence, fulfilment	Positive	Gefen et al. (2003); Thamizhvanan & Xavier (2013)
Perceived risk	Payment, privacy, product and delivery concern	Negative	Pavlou (2003); Pandey & Chawla (2014)
Shopping value	Efficiency, price value, enjoyment and browsing	Positive	Childers et al. (2001); Khare & Rakesh (2011)
Prior experience	Frequency and successful previous purchases	Positive	Thamizhvanan & Xavier (2013)
Buying behaviour	Purchase intention, frequency and repeat purchase	Outcome	Integrated model

Step 5: Data Collection Procedure

After informed consent, the questionnaire may be administered electronically. Screening questions should confirm age, Indian residency and recent online purchase experience. Duplicate or substantially incomplete responses should be removed. No personally identifying financial information should be collected. Participation should be voluntary and respondents should be informed that the data are intended only for academic analysis.

Step 6: Reliability and Validity

Internal consistency should be evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, with values of 0.70 or above treated as acceptable for established multi-item constructs. Content validity should be supported through literature-based item development and expert review. Exploratory factor analysis may be used where scale adaptation is substantial. Items with weak loadings or strong cross-loadings should be reconsidered before computing composite scores.

Step 7: Data Analysis

Analysis should proceed from data screening to descriptive statistics, reliability analysis and bivariate correlations. Multiple regression can then estimate the effect of usefulness/convenience, ease of use, trust,

perceived risk, shopping value and prior experience on purchase intention. A second regression may use purchase intention as the principal predictor of reported buying behaviour while controlling for age, gender and shopping frequency. Statistical significance may be assessed at $p < .05$.

Results

Table 3. Illustrative Reliability and Descriptive Statistics (Synthetic N = 250)

Construct	Mean	SD	Cronbach's α
Usefulness / convenience	4.18	0.61	0.84
Ease of use	4.06	0.66	0.81
Online trust	3.72	0.74	0.86
Perceived risk	2.71	0.80	0.79
Shopping value	3.95	0.67	0.82
Prior experience	3.88	0.76	0.78

Purchase intention	4.01	0.69	0.87
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The illustrative descriptive pattern suggests that usefulness and convenience receive the highest evaluation, followed by ease of use and purchase intention. Trust is positive but lower than convenience, while perceived risk remains present. All illustrative reliability coefficients exceed 0.70, indicating acceptable internal consistency for the proposed scales.

Table 4. Illustrative Multiple Regression Predicting Purchase Intention

Predictor	β	t	p	Decision
Usefulness / convenience	0.31	5.42	<.001	Supported
Ease of use	0.14	2.51	.013	Supported
Online trust	0.28	4.87	<.001	Supported
Perceived risk	-.019	-3.46	.001	Supported
Shopping value	0.17	3.02	.003	Supported
Prior experience	0.22	3.91	<.001	Supported

In the illustrative model, usefulness/convenience and trust are the strongest positive predictors of purchase intention. Perceived risk shows the expected negative relationship, while prior experience, shopping value and ease of use also contribute positively. Such a pattern would be consistent with the integrated trust-technology perspective of Gefen et al. (2003) and Pavlou (2003), as well as Indian evidence emphasizing value, trust and experience (Khare & Rakesh, 2011; Thamizhvanan & Xavier, 2013).

Interpretation of Expected Findings

If a real survey produces a similar pattern, retailers should interpret convenience as necessary but not sufficient. Consumers may value the time savings of online shopping yet hesitate when trust is weak or risk is high. Clear product information, secure payment cues, reliable delivery, transparent return policies and consistent post-purchase service would

therefore be expected to strengthen conversion. The influence of shopping value would also imply that promotions and enjoyable browsing experiences can reinforce functional benefits rather than replace them.

Conclusion and Discussion

This methodology paper proposes a structured framework for studying consumer buying behaviour toward online shopping in India. The model integrates technology acceptance, trust-risk perceptions, shopping value and prior experience rather than treating online purchase behaviour as a purely technological decision. This approach is supported by foundational e-commerce studies and by India-specific evidence published up to 2015. The literature indicates that Indian online consumers are sensitive to practical benefits such as convenience, useful information and ease of use, while also responding to enjoyment, offers, trust and earlier purchase experience. Khare and Rakesh (2011) showed the importance of utilitarian and hedonic value and attitude; Khare et al. (2012) emphasized usefulness, ease of use and convenience; Thamizhvanan and Xavier (2013) highlighted trust and prior experience; and Pandey and Chawla (2014) demonstrated that Indian e-lifestyles combine positive online orientations with distrust and logistic concerns. These findings justify the multidimensional research design proposed here. The proposed survey can provide retailers with actionable evidence about the variables that most strongly affect purchase intention and repeat buying. If trust and risk emerge as major predictors, managerial attention should focus on transaction security, seller credibility, return transparency and fulfilment reliability. If usefulness, ease of use and shopping value dominate, website design, information quality, price comparison, personalization and promotional value become priorities. Demographic and experience-based comparisons can further help retailers segment consumers according to their readiness to shop online. The design also has limitations. Non-probability sampling may restrict generalization to the entire Indian population, self-reported buying behaviour may differ from actual transaction records, and a cross-sectional survey cannot establish long-term causal effects. Future applications should use larger probability-based samples, compare metropolitan and non-metropolitan consumers, and combine survey responses with behavioural or transaction data where ethically and practically possible.

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