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## THE DETERMINANTS OF CONSUMERS' ONLINE SHOPPING BEHAVIOUR: AN EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Online Shopping, Trust, Convenience, Privacy, Consumer Buying Behaviour	The study focuses on the effect of four primary characteristics derived from the literature, including trust, product variety, convenience, and privacy, so as to identify how customer purchasing behavior reflects online shopping trends. The researcher used quantitative research approach to documents responses of respondents. Students attending Thal university & Sargodha university are mostly those engaged in business programme at respective institutions, such as the Department of Business Administration and Noon Business school was accessed to collect the data through questioner. The researchers use structural equational model to test hypothesis of current research, analyze the results and reach the desired conclusion and thus recommending some suggestions. According to the findings of statistical analysis of data, customers trust, product variety, convenience and privacy has statistically significant relationship with the online consumer behaviour. This conclusion is vital for the marketers to facilitate the usage of online shopping platforms in order to save more time and attract more people to buy items online.
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### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, rise in popularity of online shopping has been attributed to the fact that people all over the world are always attempting to improve their standards of lives (Mir, 2023; Saini, Kumar, Mishra, Kar & Bansal, 2023). In order to boost their family income, they spend most significant amount of time away from their families at work. They opt to buy items online to save time and effort compared to visiting a physical shop. Internet use has significant influence on people's daily lives than it did in the past (Ahmed, 2020). Online shopping is increasingly becoming the preferred method for making all types of the purchases, regardless of where the buyer is located—at home, at workplace, or even in a different country. This is especially true in

developed countries, where almost every store has its own website from which clients may make online purchases (Alzoubi, Alshurideh, Kurdi, Alhyasat & Ghazal, 2022). Thus. The one possible explanation for rapid growth of internet buying is that it is both more cost-effective and more time-efficient than traditional shopping (Chawla & Kumar, 2022). Some shoppers were wary of making the switch from traditional to online purchasing out of these concern that their private information may be compromised, that they might not get the exact thing they ordered, that the product might not be of the quality they expected (Alzoubi et al., 2022). In this connection, these reservations have gradually faded as more people learn about the advantages of shopping online.

People shop online for many reasons, including the ease of not having to leave house to make a purchase, simplicity of comparing prices across several vendors to find the best deal, the desire to avoid the pressure of making a purchase decision in front of a live person, the desire to avoid hassle of driving in heavy traffic, and so on (Chandra, 2021). Consumers have access to more information and more possibilities to compare items and pricing when they purchase online, as well as larger product variety, more convenience, and an easier time discovering the things they seek online. There is the school of thought that contends that internet shopping may provide a higher level of gratification to today's customers since it is convenient and quicker (Iskandar & Nasution, 2019). When a customer is engaged in the online communication and comes across a banner advertising or an online promotion, it has the potential to capture their attention and pique their interest in the particular items that are being advertised. A potential buyer could look for more information to assist them in making their decision before making a purchase. If there is insufficient information, they will look for it via other online channels, like accessing websites, online catalogues, as well as search engines (Chang & Meyerhoefer, 2021). However, the process of conversion has proven to be more challenging in Pakistan. People, as a general, don't even believe what has been offered in front of them, so it is rather hard to anticipate that they would purchase anything online and be happy with what they received in return for their money.

On the other hand, young people in Pakistan have far more open minds than their elders and have slowly started to warm up to idea of online shopping, even if it's simply for ordering meals (Ghouri et al., 2021). Since we as a country and as individuals have fallen prey to such a large number of cons, both on internet and on our mobile devices, it is only natural that we would view any action that takes place online with a modicum of skepticism. Researchers have come to conclusion as a result of this current trend that the youth's age alone is not the only element that is prompting them to gravitate towards internet buying (Qalati et al., 2021). In Pakistan, one of the markets with the most rapid expansion is online shopping, which also contributes significantly to the growth of the information technology sector. Other variables are also at play in this phenomenon. Results of this research are what are hoped to shed light on these aspects (Bhatti et al., 2020). Aim is to investigate reasons why people are willing to adjust consumer buying behaviours in order to purchase online. Researchers are interested in determining the factors that inspire customers to make this transition in purchasing behaviour. It will be able to point out areas that should be prioritized by websites that provide online shopping in order to make the transition less difficult and more secure for consumers. Fundamental purpose of this research is to explore consumer purchasing behaviour and changes in online buying influenced by trust, convenience, product variety and privacy among business institutions in the Pakistani context.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Consumer behaviour may be defined as the study of "individuals, groups, or organisations and the procedures they use to choose, obtain, and dispose of items, services, experiences, or ideas to meet wants and implications that these processes have on consumer and society" (Loxton et al., 2020). In this connection, each person's shopping habits are unique since they are based on their own personal preferences. The consumers' preferences are determined by their shopping behaviours, which in turn are influenced by a variety of the psychological and the social factors (Mesatania, 2022). According to Rondoni et al. (2020), the rise of e-commerce has outpaced that of the overall Internet users. It seems that more and more people are becoming used to the idea of buying things on Internet. Although advances in internet technology have contributed to a rise in the number of the consumers, many individuals are still reluctant to do their grocery shopping online owing to security and privacy concerns. As online franchises and shops evolve, however, online shopping remains a market force (Pourfakhimi et al., 2020). "The idea of trust and privacy may be described as readiness of one party to be susceptible to the acts of another party based on the expectation that the other would execute a certain action vital to the trustor, regardless of capacity to monitor or control that other party in diverse situation (Alzaidi & Agag, 2022)."

The research that was conducted by Ferreira (2015) was one of earliest and most widely read studies on topic of trust in online commerce. The authors believed that the primary predictors of trust were a person's intention to take a risk and their perception of trustee's characteristics. The level of confidence that consumers have in safety of using their credit cards and providing their personal information while shopping online has significant impact on the extent to which customers are prepared to make the purchases from online retailers (Whysall, 2000). There are still a significant number of people who aren't ready to make transition to doing their shopping online, despite fact that there are lot of others who are prepared to do so. Carrying well-known brands on one's website is a simple and effective method for the business that operates online to allay fears of its clients about the potential for financial loss. In addition to this, it is a smart move to establish your own brand to identity, similar to how Amazon does it. According to Pan and Zinkhan (2006), concerns over an individual's right to privacy have a significant negative impact on the confidence that a customer has in online store. Therefore, increasing the amount of brand's items one has while simultaneously selling those things might help increase brand's trustworthiness (Faqih, 2022). Consequently, the customer's ultimate choice of whether or not to make the desired purchase is also significantly impacted by the brand name (Lim & Dubinsky, 2004).

Although convenience is one of most important reasons why people choose to shop online, the majority of previous studies have either treated convenience as a predictor variable that affects outcome variables like customer service for customer satisfaction, or as one of aspects about service quality online, likewise accuracy (Jayawardhena et al., 2007). This is despite the fact that convenience is one of the most important reasons. During their research on consumer features and online buying, Donthu and Garcia (1999) observed that consumers who shop online tend to priorities convenience and variety. This was one of the findings of their study. According to Wang and Emurian (2005), convenience is one of the most influential criteria when it comes to the inclination to purchase online. Thus, in contrast to conventional stores, you may do your shopping online whenever the mood strikes you. Online retailers are available 24/7. Not only are customers looking for things, but they are also interested in purchasing services over the internet. There are several websites available online that give online customer care 24 hours a

day, seven days a week. This enables users to seek help, support, or ask questions at any time, even beyond normal business hours, which is a very convenient service for those clients (Chen et al., 2022). A product factor may refer to any quality of item or service that is being offered for purchase.

Products that are purchased online are almost always the same as those that may be bought in traditional shops made of brick and mortar. Customers choose where they will make purchases depending on criteria such as which establishment provides a better price relative to the quality of the goods being purchased. Other considerations include the extent to which the product may be personalized, its overall worth and methods of promotion (Torkzadeh & Dhillon, 2002). Numerous studies, including those conducted (Loxton et al., 2020; Pourfakhimi et al., 2020), have found that the availability of wide selection of products is one of most important factors in customers' reports of being satisfied with online shopping experiences. According to Bhatti and Alymenko (2017) research, one of the things that contributes the most to the success of online commerce is security. According to Pan and Zinkhan (2006), concerns over individual's right to privacy have a significant negative impact on the confidence that a customer has in an online store. According to the findings of a number of studies, primary obstacle that stands in the way of growth of online shopping is consumer concerns over their privacy (Chawla & Kumar, 2022). When a customer engages in online shopping, the level of security and privacy that is provided to them, and level of risk associated with the exchange of information, has a direct impact on the consumer's level of trust and, as result, quality of their shopping experience (Hossain et al., 2022).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to carry out this study, the researchers used a method known as quantitative research. Students at the Thal University and Sargodha university mostly those enrolled in the business programmed such as, Department of Business Administration and Noon Business school. The respondents were each given printed version of one of 220 questionnaires. All of respondents were either working toward their bachelor's, master's, or they were postgraduate students. At the beginning of the questionnaire, a clear introduction and a set of instructions were provided. Additional information and direction were provided whenever it was appropriate to do so. In addition to that, there was an expert who commented on each of the potential responses that were provided. This was done to guarantee that each response had a solid grasp of the grading system and questions. Procedures were standardized as far as was humanly practicable, and every respondent filled out questionnaires on their own. 220 of the totals of 250 questionnaires that were sent out were received back with their responses and were used in study's analysis. The researcher used structural equational modeling to test the hypothesis of the study. The researchers used descriptive analysis for basis data analysis through SPSS software. Further, the researchers used structural equational model for testing the hypothesis of the study. The researcher analyzes the data reliability and reliability over appropriate tests through PLS SEM. Moreover, researchers concludes the findings through testing relationship between observed variables. Lastly, researchers incorporate all the ethical responsibilities during conducting this research.

## RESULTS OF STUDY

### Validity and Reliability

The researcher used Cronbach's Alpha, rho\_A and Composite Reliability to access reliability of study. While convergent validity (with AVE) was used to assess measurement model's construct

validity, factor loadings were used to evaluate the model's reliability. Both of these evaluations were performed with intention of determining whether or not model was accurate. According to information shown in Table 3, values of factor loadings for both of variables are higher than threshold value of 0.6. (Afthanorhan, 2013).

**Table 1**  
*Convergent Validity and Reliability for Knowledge Sharing*

	Cronbach Alpha	RHO_A	CR	AVE
Consumer Buying Behavior	0.849	0.899	0.877	0.502
Convenience	0.81	0.865	0.839	0.504
Privacy	0.814	0.831	0.856	0.533
Product Variety	0.715	0.737	0.809	0.561
Trust	0.809	0.823	0.868	0.571

Table 2 presents the findings pertaining to discriminant validity. It is recommended that the HTMT not use correlations between factors that are higher than 0.90. The findings of HTMT varied from 0.125 to 0.811, which is below the threshold that serves as the cutoff. This can be shown in Table 2. The results of applying the cross-loadings criteria fell within a range that went from 0.26 to 0.76. The high degree of discriminant validity of questionnaire is shown in these results.

**Table 2**  
*Discriminant Validity of Constructs*

	CBB	Convenience	Privacy	PV	Trust
Consumer Buying Behavior					
Convenience	0.76				
Privacy	0.428	0.367			
Product Variety	0.644	0.404	0.457		
Trust	0.384	0.728	0.26	0.325	

### Testing of Hypothesis

Table 3 illustrates the values of path coefficients, standard errors, t-statistics, and p-values for convenience, Privacy, Product Variety, and trust as an independent variable and consumer buying behaviour as a dependent variable. According to the findings of the statistical analysis of the data, customers trust, product variety, convenience and privacy has statistically significant relationship with online consumer behaviour. The results of the study indicated that all the null hypothesis are rejected as the p values of all observed variables has under the threshold i.e., 0.05.

**Table 3**  
*Structural Equational Modeling*

	OS	SM	SD	TS	PV
Convenience -> Consumer Buying Behavior	0.15	0.143	0.013	11.909	0
Privacy -> Consumer Buying Behavior	0.021	0.026	0.007	3.027	0.029
Product Variety -> Consumer Buying Behavior	0.137	0.151	0.014	9.592	0
Trust -> Consumer Buying Behavior	0.634	0.534	0.009	3.909	0.011

## **DISCUSSION**

The findings of current research indicated that convenience has significantly and positively associated with consumer buying behaviour. The findings of current research are in line with previous research as most of researcher's point out that online shopping behaviour of customers are significantly affected by shopping convenience (Inthong et al., 2022). Findings of current research indicated that strict privacy policies have significantly and positively associated with consumer buying behaviour. The findings of current research are in line with previous research as most of researcher's point out that online shopping behaviour of customers are significantly affected by strict privacy policies to prevent any fraudulent activities (Hong et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2022). Accordingly, when it came to customers of younger age, the trust factor seemed to be most powerful factor in influencing purchase behaviour of customers who did their shopping online.

It was likely that customers would make future purchases on the website since they trusted the brand and had faith in it. Thus, contrary to the prevalent perception, it did not seem that the protection of personal information affected the behaviour of the consumers (Jaspers & Pearson, 2022). Therefore, findings of current research indicated that product variety has significantly and positively associated with consumer buying behaviour. Findings of current research are in line with previous research as most of researcher's point out that online shopping behaviour of customers are significantly affected by multiple product varieties which significantly attract the customers to purchase online (Alhaimer, 2022). Findings of research indicated that customer trust has significantly and positively associated with consumer buying behaviour. Findings of research are in line with previous research as most of researcher's point out that online shopping behaviour of customers are significantly affected by consumer trust (Moon et al., 2021; Nofrialdi, 2021).

## **CONCLUSION**

This study investigates factors that influence customer behaviour regarding online purchasing and the relationship between those aspects. This phenomenon of using the internet to purchase goods, services while being seated in one's own house is known as "online shopping. Researcher used quantitative research approach to documents responses of respondents. Students joining Thal university and Sargodha university are those engaged in business programme at their respective institutions, like Department of Business Administration and Noon Business school was accessed to collect data through questioner. Sample size of the study includes 220 business departments students. The researcher used purposive sampling technique to collect responses from respondents. The researchers use structural equational model to test the hypothesis of current research. According to findings of the statistical analysis of the data, customers trust, product variety, convenience and privacy all variables are statistically significant relationship with the online consumer behaviour. This study must be conducted so that the researchers may have a comprehensive knowledge of aspects that impact consumers' online buying behaviour. This study is limited to two university students. The future research may target other university students to test the relationship of the observed variables. The findings of current research is provided strategic implications for the multiple brands to follow appropriate online strategies for capturing maximum customers. Moreover, the researchers recommended that customers may use the findings of the current research to take more appropriate decisions regarding the online shopping.



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