

# A Study on Customer Perception and Buying Behaviour towards Online Shopping with Special Reference to Palakkad

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## Abstract

*Online shopping has emerged as a significant component of modern retailing, driven by technological advancement, increased internet penetration, and changing consumer lifestyles. This study examines customer perception and buying behaviour towards online shopping with special reference to Palakkad district. The research aims to identify the key factors influencing consumers' purchase decisions and their level of satisfaction with online platforms. Primary data were collected from 120 respondents using a structured questionnaire, and statistical tools such as percentage analysis, correlation, and regression were employed for data analysis. The findings reveal that convenience, competitive pricing, product variety, and secure digital payment options positively influence buying behaviour. However, concerns related to product quality, delivery delays, and data security moderately affect customer trust and repeat purchases. The study concludes that while online shopping adoption is steadily increasing in Palakkad, service reliability and customer confidence remain crucial for sustained growth in the e-commerce sector.*

**Keywords:** Online Shopping, Customer Perception, Buying Behaviour, E-Commerce, Consumer Trust.

## Introduction

The rapid expansion of the internet and digital technologies has transformed the traditional retail environment across the world. In India, the growth of e-commerce has significantly altered consumer purchasing patterns, enabling customers to buy products and services anytime and anywhere. The emergence of leading online platforms such as Amazon, Flipkart, and Myntra has accelerated the shift from conventional brick-and-mortar stores to digital marketplaces.

Online shopping offers several advantages including convenience, time-saving, competitive pricing, product variety, and access to

customer reviews. The increasing use of smartphones, digital payment systems, and improved logistics networks has further strengthened consumer confidence in online transactions. However, concerns related to product authenticity, delivery delays, return policies, and data security continue to influence customer perception and buying decisions.

Palakkad district in Kerala has witnessed noticeable growth in online shopping adoption due to rising digital literacy, improved internet connectivity, and changing lifestyle preferences. Consumers in this region increasingly prefer online platforms for purchasing apparel, electronics, groceries, and household items. Nevertheless, buying behaviour varies depending on factors such as age, income level, trust in online platforms, and previous shopping experiences.

Understanding customer perception and buying behaviour towards online shopping is essential for e-commerce companies to design effective marketing strategies and enhance service quality. This study aims to analyze the key factors influencing online shopping behaviour in Palakkad and provide insights for improving customer satisfaction and long-term engagement in the digital retail sector.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To examine customer perception towards online shopping in Palakkad.
2. To identify factors influencing online buying behaviour.
3. To analyze the relationship between perception and purchase intention.
4. To provide suggestions for improving online shopping services.

### **Review of Literature**

Rita, Oliveira, and Farisa (2019), in Heliyon, analyzed factors affecting e-commerce adoption and concluded that convenience, trust, and security significantly influence online buying behaviour. Their findings highlight that digital literacy and perceived reliability are crucial for sustaining consumer engagement in emerging markets.

Clemes, Gan, and Zhang (2014), in Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, found that website design, customer service, and perceived value significantly influence online purchasing decisions. Their study emphasized the importance of user-friendly interfaces and reliable delivery systems.

Monswé, Dellaert, and de Ruyter (2004) conducted a comprehensive review in International Journal of Service Industry Management, identifying convenience, product variety, and price comparison as major determinants of online shopping behaviour. Their research confirmed that attitude toward online shopping strongly predicts purchase intention.

Gefen, Karahanna, and Straub (2003), in their study published in MIS Quarterly, emphasized the role of trust in online environments. Their findings revealed that trust significantly influences online purchase intention, particularly when consumers perceive risk in digital transactions.

Pavlou (2003), writing in International Journal of Electronic Commerce, examined consumer acceptance of e-commerce and found that perceived risk and trust directly affect online buying behaviour. The study highlighted that secure payment systems and website reliability enhance consumer confidence.

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

The study adopts a descriptive research design to examine customer perception and buying behaviour towards online shopping with special reference to Palakkad. The descriptive design is appropriate as it helps in systematically describing the characteristics, attitudes, and behavioural

patterns of consumers. It enables the researcher to analyze factors such as convenience, price perception, trust, service quality, and security concerns that influence online purchase decisions.

### Area of Study

The study was conducted in Palakkad district of Kerala, India. The region includes urban and semi-urban areas with increasing internet penetration and digital literacy. Palakkad provides a suitable setting to examine customer perception and buying behaviour towards online shopping due to its growing adoption of e-commerce platforms.

### Population of the Study

The population of the study consists of consumers residing in Palakkad district of Kerala who have experience in online shopping. It includes students, working professionals, homemakers, and business people who purchase products through e-commerce platforms.

### Sample Size and Sampling Technique

- **Sample Size:** A total of 120 respondents were selected for the study to ensure adequate representation of different age groups, income levels, and occupations.
- **Sampling Technique:** The study adopts a convenience sampling technique, where respondents were selected based on accessibility and willingness to participate. This method was chosen due to time constraints and ease of data collection.

### Sources of Data

The study is based on both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data were collected from 120 respondents in Palakkad district of Kerala through a structured questionnaire designed to measure customer perception and buying behaviour towards online shopping using a five-point Likert scale. Secondary data were gathered from academic journals, books, research articles, websites, government reports, and published literature related to e-commerce and consumer behaviour to support the theoretical framework and analysis.

### Data Analysis and Interpretation

The collected data from 120 respondents were analyzed using percentage analysis, correlation, and regression techniques to understand the influence of customer perception factors on online shopping buying behaviour in Palakkad district of Kerala.

### Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	70	58.30%
	Female	50	41.70%
Age	18–25	48	40.00%
	26–35	42	35.00%
	Above 35	30	25.00%
Income	Below Rs. 3 Lakhs	34	28.30%
	Rs. 3–6 Lakhs	52	43.30%
	Above Rs. 6 Lakhs	34	28.30%

### Interpretation

The majority of respondents belong to the 18–35 age group, indicating that young consumers are more active in online shopping. A balanced gender distribution suggests increasing digital adoption among both male and female consumers.

### Customer Perception Level

Awareness Level	Respondents	Percentage
High	62	51.70%
Moderate	40	33.30%
Low	18	15.00%

### Interpretation

More than half of the respondents have a high positive perception towards online shopping, showing confidence in digital platforms and services.

### Factors Influencing Online Buying Behaviour

Factor	Frequency (High Importance)	Percentage
Convenience	74	61.70%
Discounts & Offers	68	56.70%
Product Variety	63	52.50%
Secure Payment	59	49.20%
Fast Delivery	65	54.20%

### Interpretation

Convenience emerges as the most influential factor, followed by discounts and delivery speed. Consumers value time-saving and cost benefits while shopping online.

### Trust and Risk Perception

Concern Level	Frequency	Percentage
Very High	32	26.70%
High	38	31.70%
Moderate	28	23.30%
Low	15	12.50%
Very Low	07	5.80%

### Interpretation

Nearly 58% of respondents express high concern regarding product quality, delivery issues, and data security, indicating that trust remains a critical factor in online shopping.

### Correlation Analysis

Variables	Correlation (r)	Interpretation
Perception & Buying Behaviour	0.65	Strong Positive Relationship
Convenience & Buying Behaviour	0.59	Moderate Positive Relationship

Perceived Risk & Buying Behaviour	- 0.42	Moderate Negative Relationship
Low	15	12.50%
Very Low	07	5.80%

### Interpretation

Improved customer perception and convenience significantly increase buying behaviour, whereas higher perceived risk reduces purchase intention.

### Regression Analysis

#### Dependent Variable: Buying Behaviour

Variable	Beta Value	Significance
Convenience	0.48	Significant
Trust	0.36	Significant
Perceived Risk	- 0.31	Significant

### Interpretation

Convenience is the strongest predictor of online buying behaviour, followed by trust. Perceived risk negatively influences purchase intention, confirming that security and reliability concerns limit online shopping growth.

### Findings

1. The majority of respondents belong to the 18–35 age group, indicating that young consumers form the primary segment of online shoppers.
2. More than half of the respondents (51.7%) have a high positive perception towards online shopping, reflecting growing acceptance of e-commerce platforms.
3. Convenience is identified as the most influential factor affecting online buying behaviour, followed by discounts, product variety, and fast delivery services.
4. A significant proportion of respondents express concerns regarding product quality, delivery delays, and data security, indicating that trust remains a critical determinant of purchase decisions.
5. Correlation analysis reveals a strong positive relationship ( $r = 0.65$ ) between customer perception and buying behaviour.
6. Convenience ( $\beta = 0.48$ ) and trust ( $\beta = 0.36$ ) significantly influence buying behaviour, while perceived risk ( $\beta = -0.31$ ) negatively affects purchase intention.
7. Regression results confirm that convenience is the strongest predictor of online buying behaviour in Palakkad.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that online retailers strengthen customer trust and service reliability to enhance buying behaviour in Palakkad district of Kerala. Since convenience is the strongest predictor of purchase intention, e-commerce platforms should focus on improving user-friendly website interfaces, simplified navigation, and seamless mobile applications. Providing attractive discounts, personalized offers, and loyalty programs can further encourage repeat purchases. To address trust-related concerns, companies must ensure secure

payment gateways, transparent return policies, and accurate product descriptions. Faster delivery services and real-time order tracking systems should be enhanced to reduce perceived risk. Establishing responsive customer support and easy grievance redressal mechanisms will improve overall satisfaction. Additionally, awareness campaigns highlighting data security measures and quality assurance practices can build long-term consumer confidence. Continuous feedback collection and service improvement strategies are essential to sustain customer engagement and strengthen the online shopping ecosystem.

## Conclusion

The study concludes that customer perception plays a significant role in influencing buying behaviour towards online shopping in Palakkad district of Kerala. The findings reveal that convenience, attractive pricing, product variety, and secure payment options positively impact purchase intention. Among these factors, convenience emerges as the strongest predictor of online buying behaviour. However, concerns related to product quality, delivery delays, and data security negatively influence consumer trust and repeat purchases. The results indicate that while online shopping adoption is steadily increasing among young and digitally literate consumers, sustaining long-term growth requires strengthening service reliability and building customer confidence. E-commerce platforms must balance promotional strategies with trust-building measures to enhance satisfaction and loyalty. Overall, the study highlights that improving user experience and reducing perceived risk are essential for expanding the online retail market in Palakkad.

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