

KEY FACTORS AFFECTING ONLINE SHOPPING ATTITUDE AND INTENTION: A CASE STUDY OF CONSUMERS IN VIETNAM

Lu Phi Nga

Faculty of Postgraduate Studies, Lac Hong University (LHU), Vietnam

Phan Thanh Tam

Faculty of Postgraduate Studies, Lac Hong University (LHU), Vietnam

ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 outbreak has altered consumer purchasing patterns and behavior worldwide. Online shopping services have grown rapidly in Vietnam in recent years, owing to the coronavirus's highly contagious nature and the convenience of online buying and delivery. For that reason, the authors carried out a study to determine online shopping intention, which aims to discover which factors affect intentions. Then, managerial implications are proposed to help businesses develop appropriate business strategies in the new, post-COVID period. The data was collected from 700 consumers buying online products. Five critical factors affecting online shopping intention were identified: perceived usefulness, ease of use, confidence, safety level, and customer service. The research paper applied structural equation modeling to study individual customers' intentions to purchase online shopping products by adding the customer service element to the research model and using a customer-oriented approach to find out users' intentions to purchase products on online platforms.

Keywords: behavior; consumer; online shopping; intention; Vietnam

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the proportion of internet users in Vietnam who purchase online has climbed to 88%, up from 77% in 2019. According to research, the average growth rate of Vietnam's e-commerce between 2020 and 2025 would be 29% per year. Online shopping, often known as online commerce or e-commerce, is a relatively recent commercial trend. Because of the advantages and benefits of the online system, an increasing number of enterprises and individuals have been utilizing technology to carry out their buying and selling needs and habits. E-commerce is employed in all sorts of enterprises and is

required for firms to compete on a global scale. As such, e-commerce has become a common and extensive business in Vietnam. Lazada, Shopee, Tiki, Sendo, Shopee, and other brands have grown tremendously within the Vietnamese e-commerce sector. Shopee is one of the most well-known brands among customers, with approximately 63.7 million visitors in the first quarter of 2021, reigning supreme in terms of website traffic for the 11th consecutive quarter.

Other e-commerce enterprises have rapidly stepped in, innovating to keep up with trends and generating value to attract and retain customers on intelligent platforms and

applications. The Internet has improved the buying experience for consumers; as a result, people are becoming more aware of more items, have more options, and can easily compare product pricing to make the best choices to get the greatest quality at the best price. Consumers have been impacted by digital society in areas ranging from employment, education, and leisure to buying behaviors connected with internet-related technology activities (Al-Hattami, 2021; Allam et al., 2023). This study aims to identify the elements that influence customers' online purchase intentions. The research was carried out from January 2023 to May 2023. The authors performed the study to analyze customers' online purchase intentions, consequently offering policy implications for online retailers in the field of e-commerce, from which to design acceptable and successful digital business strategies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Online Shopping Intention (OSI)

Online shopping is a self-service technology; people can check information about different policies on the network at any time. Buying products online is how businesses distribute products without face-to-face contact between the buyer and the company's representative (Kim et al., 2012; Al-Hattami, 2021). The method of purchasing through an online channel is when a customer purchases a product through an online feedback page or product app. Accordingly, customers actively purchase online products through the support of the internet via smart devices, such as computers and smartphones. Online shopping is a business innovation involving electronic and immaterial interactions that help maintain business relationships by sharing information and knowledge. It is widely applied through the internet to incorporate new methods of communication, business transactions, market structures, education, and work. Online shopping includes various issues related to shopping behavior and online shopping intention (Chen & Demirci, 2019; Lee et al., 2020). Research on factors affecting consumers' online shopping attitudes and intentions shows that five factors impact online shopping attitudes: perceived usefulness, ease of use, confidence, safety level, and customer service. Thus, online shopping intention is the consumer's choice to buy a

product through an online channel. Consumers will now accept and sign up online instead of buying products through traditional intermediaries, including agents or direct channels (Davis, 1989).

Online Shopping Attitude (OSA)

Previously, customers' shopping behavior was usually done in the traditional way wherein customers would buy directly at supermarkets, markets, and shops from points of sale. The characteristic of this traditional channel is that there is direct contact between the seller and the buyer to explain the terms and benefits of the product. With the need to go through another individual to convey the content and duration of the product, however, there is always a risk of asymmetric information, creating product deviations. Besides, not all buyers have time to go directly to the physical locations to buy and sell products (Chen & Demirci, 2019; Davis, 1989; Koch et al., 2020). Because of that, implementing online shopping intentions can help solve the weaknesses of the traditional form of buying. In terms of buying products online, consumers' beliefs, attitudes, and intentions play a vital role in buying products. Additionally, the characteristic of the online distribution channel is the use of technology in describing and delivering product offerings, from introducing product content to providing fee schedules and receiving feedback.

Perceived usefulness (USE)

According to the TAM model (Davis, 1989), the important factors of perceived utility and ease of use are related to technology acceptance attitudes, directly influencing user behavior. The voluntary intention to utilize technology determines a person's level of technology adoption. In turn, intent is decided by a person's attitude toward technology and sense of its use. Consumers' thoughts on the usage of technology shape their attitudes. Perceived utility and ease of use are strong predictors and drivers of behavioral intention linked to information technology usage across all TAM research (Alalwan et al., 2018; Kang & Namkung, 2019; Wang et al., 2018). Thus, the authors offer hypotheses H1 and H3 as follows:

H1: Usefulness positively affects online shopping attitude.

H3: Usefulness positively affects online shopping intention.

Perceived ease of use (EAS)

Perceived ease of use is the degree to which users expect to use the system quickly. It can be described as the degree to which customers believe they can profit from ease of control, simplicity of use, and flexibility in the use of technology (Davis, 1989; Natarajan et al., 2018). Furthermore, if consumers perceive a high degree of comfort, they are more likely to adopt high technology than high utility (Shukla et al., 2021). Online commerce's perceived ease of use implies convenience and abundant information. According to most research, the major reasons people purchase online are convenience and time savings because discovering items and services via the internet is significantly faster and less expensive (Kripesh et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2018). Using search engines on the internet can rapidly locate acceptable products and services, but conventional shopping confronts numerous obstacles, such as taking a long time and costing a lot of money. Thus, the authors offer hypotheses H2 and H4:

H2: The perceived ease of use positively affects online shopping attitude.

H4: The perceived ease of use positively affects online shopping intention.

Confidence (CON)

The user's subjective probability that using an application system will increase work performance and time-saving effectiveness, thereby improving individual work performance, reflects their belief in the system. This performance also applies to increasing the efficiency of online shopping. Customer confidence creates an opportunity to attract information-seeking and novelty buyers worldwide (Trivedi & Yadav, 2018). Research shows that online commerce creates attraction, convenience, and usefulness that strongly impact shopping behavior. Research findings have also found factors such as benefits, confidence, and usefulness of online information, along with experiences, to be the most influential base motivational factors that work towards determining consumers' online search and shopping habits. Trust immediately becomes an important issue in online shopping in building

customer relationships and establishing an Internet sales infrastructure. Consumers may face challenges and potential risks when purchasing products or services online using an internet platform from an unfamiliar virtual store compared to when they can experience the product in person. Therefore, online trust is important in helping buyers reduce perceptions of risk, uncertainty, or insecurity (Kim et al., 2012). Trust has a powerful impact on online shopping attitudes and intentions. Thus, the authors offer hypotheses H5 and H7:

H5: Confidence or trust positively affects online shopping intention.

H7: Confidence or trust positively affects online shopping intention.

Safety Level (SAF)

Online shopping helps consumers reduce stress in life and work and feel more secure when choosing a reputable supplier. Consumers feel happier, more socially engaged, and safer while online shopping. Customers sometimes appreciate shopping for entertainment purposes rather than serving routine needs. Many consumers shop for well-being and enjoyment (Trivedi & Yadav, 2018). At the same time, consumers can create social connections with other consumers, even with suppliers. Products sold online usually come with detailed descriptions. At the same time, the online shopping system also supports customers by saving customer information and shopping history. As a result, customers can save more time and associated costs than they might when using traditional purchasing methods (Brewer & Sebby, 2021). Online shopping also helps consumers with convenience and security when choosing reputable websites. Thus, the authors offer hypotheses H8:

H8: Safety Level positively affects online shopping intention.

Customer Service (CUS)

Online businesses want consumers to enjoy the best benefits. Therefore, tools like coupons and accompanying incentives when buying products or customer care services are used by businesses to add value and better meet the needs of consumers. Online consumers can find these offers through the company's sales website, e-commerce exchanges' sales pages, or

suppliers' social networks. Through internet-connected electronic devices, online consumers can shop anytime and anywhere, all while receiving favorable business promotions (Wang et al., 2018). Because shopping is not restricted in terms of geographical space and time, consumers can quickly and easily connect with merchants and service support anytime. According to previous studies, the product may be bought from anywhere on the earth by simply touching through a few prompts on any gadget with an internet connection (Casalegno et al., 2022). This is one of the most notable advantages of internet buying. Thus, the authors offer hypotheses H9:

H9: Customer service positively affects online shopping intention.

The link between online shopping attitude and intention

The studies mentioned above all demonstrate a relationship between attitude and behavioral intention. The more positive the customer's attitude, the more likely the customer will generate intention. Therefore, the proposed research hypothesis is that attitude leads to

behavior, and behavioral intention is positively correlated (Wei et al., 2018; Chen & Aklirikou, 2020). In other words, in a particular situation, consumption attitude will strongly influence consumption intention, leading to actual consumption (buying). This is an accepted and widely used research model when studying consumers' purchase intentions. Research results show that attitude strongly impacts online shopping intention, which is influenced in the same direction by factors such as ease of use and perceived benefits to customers (Lee et al., 2020). Research on the relationship between attitudes and ideas determines behavior in different areas, such as online shopping. Thus, the authors offer hypothesis H6:

Hypothesis H6: Online shopping attitude positively affects online shopping intention.

Figure 1 depicts critical attitudes and online buying intentions, with essential elements such as (1) perceived utility, (2) ease of use, (3) confidence, (4) safety level, and (5) customer service.

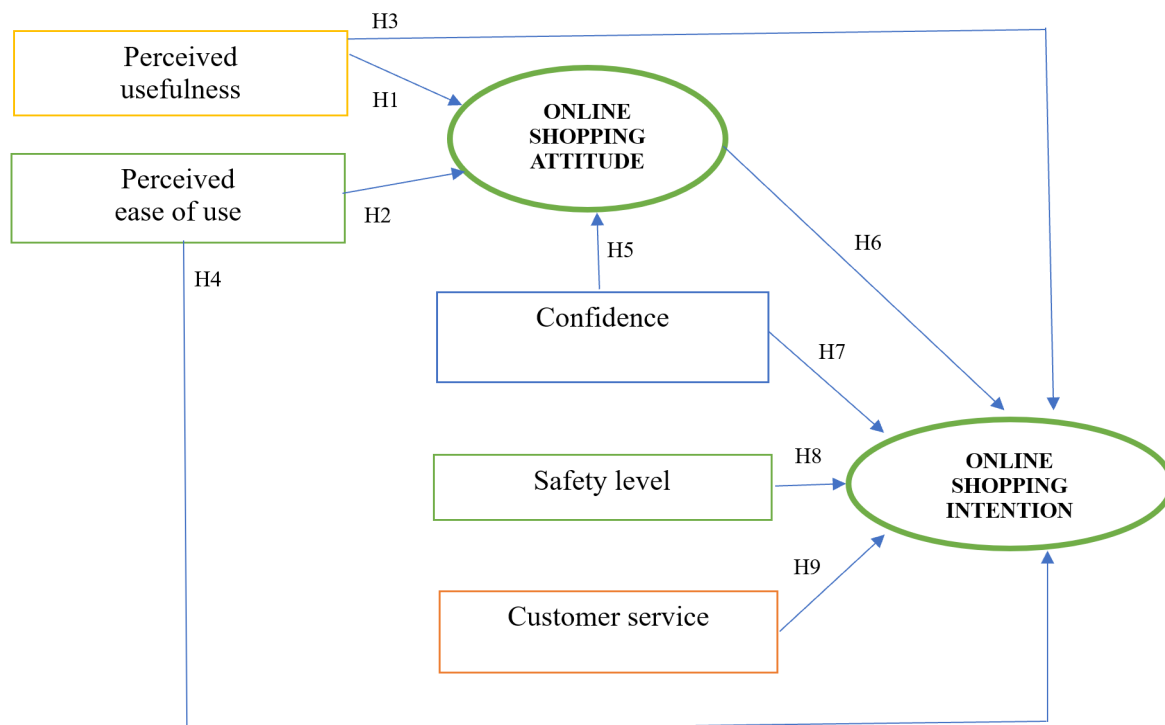


Figure 1. A research model for critical factors affecting online shopping intention

Source: Authors proposed the model

Thus, the proposed paper's research model includes five independent and two dependent variables. Besides the factors of perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use (Davis, 1989), accessing product safety/warning information is also more complicated than traditional shopping methods, especially when consumers view products through devices with small screens, such as smartphones. Sometimes, consumers skip online shopping terms and conditions and customer care services because the screen is too small, even though this section includes essential, significant content related to product exchange and return, delivery, and warranty. From consumers' practices in Vietnam, the authors added three critical factors—confidence (trust), safety level, and customer service—in this study.

METHODOLOGY

The study used qualitative and quantitative research methods with a large enough sample size to ensure sufficient reliability.

Qualitative research: The qualitative study aims to test, screen, and evaluate the link between the variables in the theoretical model as defined in the preceding sections. Furthermore, this qualitative investigation aims to calibrate and develop the scales inherited from past studies. Because Vietnam has differences in culture, language, and level of economic development, these scales must be adjusted to suit the research context. Through convenience sampling, the authors conducted 11 in-depth interviews with managers of 11 online retailers and 700 consumers with online buying experience. The authors conducted online interviews with interviewees. The interviews were performed by direct phone interview. The number of interviews done under the condition that no new elements were discovered was reduced. In-depth interviews with the set material demonstrate the model's study scale applicability.

Quantitative research: The author's team carried out preliminary and formal research phases (both with convenient sampling forms) to acquire quantitative research data. The sample size for the study is determined by various parameters, including the processing technique for Cronbach's alpha is more than 0.7, as determined by EFA; SEM - structural equation model, etc.; and measured the model's fit with

$GFI \geq 0.900$, $TLI \geq 0.900$, $CFI \geq 0.900$, and $RMSEA < 0.1$ (Hair et al., 2010). The larger sample size would be better, but achieving that level is costly and time-consuming, given the relatively small research timeframe. Therefore, researchers have determined the necessary sample size using empirical formulas for each treatment method, including exploratory factor analysis (EFA). The estimated sample sizes for this study is as follows: the minimum sample size is 5 times the total number of variables observed (Hair et al., 2010); the sample size for the factor analysis research is $n = 5 * m$, where m is the number of questions in the article. The question type is a Likert-type scale inquiry with 5 levels ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree.

For multivariate regression analysis, the minimum sample size to be acquired is $N 50 + 8 m$ for multiple correlation and $N 104 + m$ for single correlation, where m is the number of independent variables (Hair et al., 2010). It is important to note that m denotes the number of independent elements, not the number of independent questions. As a result, the sample size must be $5 * 25 = 125$ for EFA analysis and at least $50 + 8 * 6 = 98$ for multiple regression with 25 observed variables. Therefore, the study was conducted with 700 survey samples in 5 provinces and cities of Vietnam. The five provinces/ regions selected with the most significant number of online buyers are Can Tho City, Ho Chi Minh City, Dong Nai Province, Binh Duong Province, and Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province. The authors used both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Through the convenient sampling method (non-probability), the collected data is processed with the support of SPSS software. Regarding the variables of the scale, the questionnaire is designed with a 5-level Likert scale, with 1 being completely disagree to 5 being completely agree, to evaluate the level of customer agreement. The authors distributed 700 survey questionnaires and collected 685 valid questionnaires; after checking and eliminating invalid questionnaires, the sample size used to analyze and process data was 685 questionnaires, and the survey timeframe was realistically from February to April 2023.

For the formal quantitative research phase, the complete scale was included in the formal study for CFA confirmatory factor analysis. The authors conducted a quantitative proper survey of 685

individual customers. The author used the SEM linear structural analysis method to test the suitability of the theoretical model and the research hypotheses. Quantitative research was performed using SPSS software version 20.0 for preliminary assessment of the scale via exploratory factor analysis (EFA); at the same time, AMOS software version 20.0 was used to continue analyzing the confirmatory factor (CFA), testing the fit of the model and the research hypotheses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Current status of online shopping in Vietnam

The study analyzed the development of Vietnamese consumers' online shopping activities. The benefits and risks of online shopping are explored, and some safety measures are proposed to improve the quality of consumers' online shopping. Recognizing the benefits and risks of online shopping activities contributes to the development of e-commerce activities, especially in the Vietnamese e-commerce market; despite this recognition, however, there are still many difficulties, specifically as follows:

(1) According to the Vietnam E-commerce Report 2022, devices used for online shopping are diverse. The primary device consumers use to shop is mobile (accounting for 88% in 2021). Mobile devices are compact, convenient, and easy for many consumers. Many consumers also use laptops or desktop computers to shop online, with 80% in 2021. When participating in online shopping, consumers prefer websites/e-commerce exchanges, such as Shopee, Lazada, and Tiki as sales channels (74% in 2020 and 78% in 2021). These online trading platforms are becoming more and more complete, providing consumers with increasingly comprehensive shopping services. Social networks and forums, such as Facebook and Zalo, are also becoming more favorable e-commerce platforms, accounting for 33% of consumers in 2020 and 42% in 2021. Mobile applications are also quite popular among consumers, increasing use by 47% in 2021.

(2) Online shopping payment forms are also increasingly expanding. Consumers' preferred payment form is still COD 73%, 2021. In addition to COD, use of documents like domestic ATM cards (27% in 2021), debit/credit cards (24% in 2021), and e-wallets (37% in 2021) also increased

rapidly. The e-wallet as a payment tool has significantly increased its user rate over the years thanks to its benefits and convenience. Thanks to the development of e-commerce activities, many businesses and business models have changed from traditional business to partly or totally e-commerce business.

(3) According to the research on e-commerce activities in 2022, Vietnam has a high proportion of e-consumers compared to other Southeast Asian countries, such as Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore. The number of people who purchase online was second in the region, accounting for 49% in 2021, behind Singapore, which accounted for 53%. Vietnam's online retail sector is active and exciting, with significant growth potential in future years.

(4) E-commerce operations are becoming increasingly popular, and Vietnam is often regarded as the country with the world's fastest e-commerce boom, with a 35% yearly rise. The establishment and active process of several e-commerce exchanges, including Tiki, Shopee, Lazada, and Sendo, shows how Vietnam's internet retail business is thriving and gaining popularity among consumers. Currently, almost 44 million Vietnamese consumers engage in internet purchasing.

Testing critical factors attitude and online shopping intention

Table 1. Testing of Cronbach's alpha for critical factors attitude and online shopping intention

Code	Items	Cronbach's alpha	Mean
Perceived usefulness (USE)		0.911	2.9967
USE1	Online shopping can (will) help me complete my shopping quickly	0.861	3.0263
USE2	Online shopping makes complaints and responses faster and easier	0.879	2.9869
USE3	Online shopping helps customers realize product coverage	0.899	2.9635
USE4	Online shopping is very convenient to compare products with each other	0.898	3.0102
Perceived ease of use (EAS)		0.942	3.0511
EAS1	shop online is easy for me by using the Internet	0.925	3.0102
EAS2	I believe online shopping (will be) easy for me	0.936	3.0307
EAS3	I feel confident when shopping online	0.927	3.0861
EAS4	Using the Internet to shop online (will) not require much physical or mental effort for me	0.906	3.0774
Confidence (CON)		0.857	3.3989
CON1	Overall, I can trust online shopping	0.805	3.3854
CON2	Online shopping is known to be reliable	0.820	3.5095
CON3	I believe that companies selling online are honest and ensure the interests of customers	0.844	3.3343
CON4	I believe online shopping is the trend of the future	0.802	3.3664
Safety level (SAF)		0.935	3.0263
SAF1	Using online shopping is completely within my control	0.916	2.9752
SAF2	I can shop online by myself	0.919	3.0102
SAF3	I can shop online fluently	0.916	3.0686
SAF4	I can do online shopping safely, confidentially,	0.909	3.0511
Customer service (SER)		0.907	3.2701
SER1	The seller often answers customer questions and Resolve customer complaints fastest	0.901	3.2832
SER2	Regularly interact with customers by Email support, phone, etc...	0.811	3.3051
SER3	Support to check goods	0.885	3.2219
Online shopping attitude (ATT)		0.921	3.2871
ATT1	Online shopping is a good choice	0.907	3.2876
ATT2	I love the idea of online shopping	0.850	3.3270
ATT3	Online shopping for contract information management is a good idea	0.899	3.2467
Online shopping intention (INT)		0.810	2.3805
INT1	I will shop online in the future	0.726	2.3270
INT2	I have strong intentions about online shopping in the future	0.745	2.4482
INT3	I love shopping online	0.748	2.3664

Source: own calculations in SPSS 20.0.

The Cronbach's alpha for essential components of attitude and online purchasing intention is shown in Table 1. This measure is more than 0.7 in all situations, with an average close to 3.0. Consumers purchase items and services directly from a seller at a certain time via the Internet without the need for an intermediary. Online shopping is a process in which products and services are advertised with accompanying images and displayed remotely electronically. When a product or service is chosen, the online payment will complete the transaction automatically. From the beginning of the

outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 until today, there has been a significant shift from conventional sales models to online sales models in Vietnam, with the number of customers participating in shopping rapidly expanding in turn. As a result, examining consumer online buying behavioral trends will help businesses better understand their customer's shopping habits and behaviors, from which policies and strategies to encourage consumer online shopping behavior can be developed.

Table 2. Testing critical factors attitude and online shopping intention

Relationships			Standardized Estimate	S.E	C.R	P	SE-Bias	Hypothesis	Result
ATT	<---	USE	0.568	0.037	14.866	***	0.001	H1	Accepted
ATT	<---	EAS	0.099	0.029	2.976	0.003	0.004	H2	Accepted
ATT	<---	CON	0.172	0.035	4.895	***	0.005	H5	Accepted
INT	<---	USE	0.288	0.027	5.863	***	0.002	H3	Accepted
INT	<---	EAS	0.127	0.018	3.384	***	0.003	H4	Accepted
INT	<---	CON	0.130	0.022	3.372	***	0.002	H7	Accepted
INT	<---	SAF	0.100	0.021	2.672	0.008	0.004	H8	Accepted
INT	<---	SER	0.078	0.024	2.663	0.008	0.003	H9	Accepted
INT	<---	ATT	0.330	0.028	6.593	***	0.002	H6	Accepted

Note *** denote statistical significances at 1%,

Source: Authors collected and processed from SPSS 20.0, Amos

Table 2 indicates the significant threshold of 0.01 for the critical components of attitude and online shopping intention. Additional internet purchasing channels, such as TikTok Shop, have emerged in the Vietnamese market, drawing even more customers than when Shopee, Lazada, Sendo, and Tiki were the only options. As a result, Vietnam is regarded as having one of the fastest e-commerce growth rates. Moreover, the research results have good reference value in solving one of the outstanding problems of Vietnam's online shopping market in the context of 4.0 technology development. The research results also help online businesses create a more comprehensive view of consumers' online shopping behavior, thereby developing better business policies for potential markets.

The above results also show that conducting an in-depth survey of managers and customers who regularly shop online comprehensively assesses the current situation of online shopping in Vietnam, which has seen a lot of changes in just

a few years, especially after the adverse effects of the COVID-19 epidemic waves. Previously, only a small portion of young consumers regularly shopped online. Furthermore, Vietnamese people still do not place high trust in products they cannot directly inspect before purchasing, showing how traditional shopping habits are deeply ingrained in consumers' subconscious minds; therefore, changing established habits and shopping behaviors is very difficult for the majority. In the face of market and social fluctuations, however, this form of shopping is chosen as a solution for its countless utilities. If, in the past, people only shopped online for familiar consumer products, such as clothes and fashion accessories, shopping for items such as furniture, electronics, and food also increased rapidly according to a survey conducted this year.

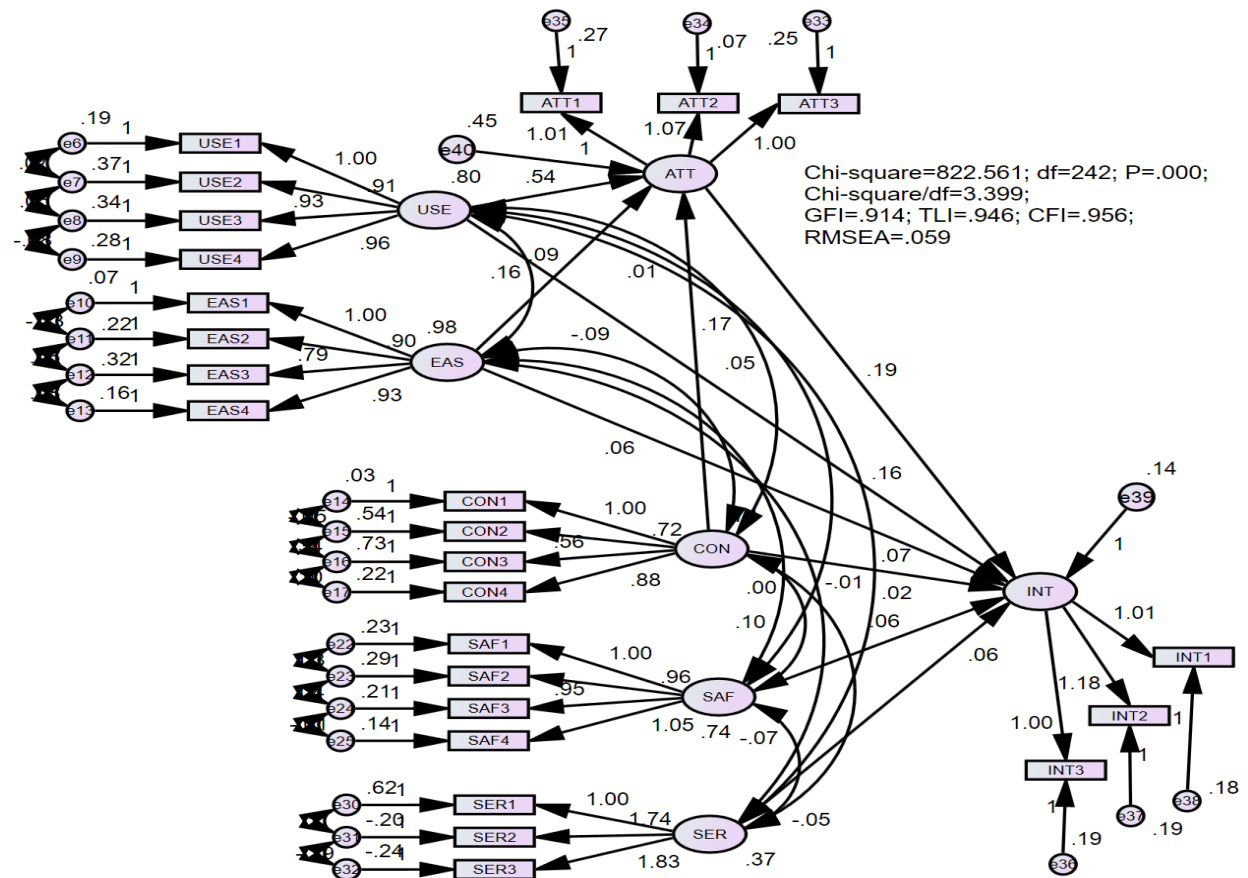


Figure 2. Testing SEM for factors of attitude and online shopping intention

Source: Authors collected and processed from SPSS 20.0, Amos

Figure 2 depicts the significance threshold 0.01 for assessing the essential components of attitude and online purchasing intention. The following statistical metrics measure the model's fit: GFI = 0.914 (>0.900), TLI = 0.946 (>0.900), CFI = 0.956 (> 0.900), and RMSEA = 0.059 (<0.1).

According to the data presented above, internet shopping in Vietnam is on the rise, offering opportunities for the e-commerce industry and young people to showcase their abilities and innovations, but also begging the question of whether e-commerce can always be viewed as an industry with deep development patterns and employment opportunities. Businesses are constantly seeking personnel familiar with e-commerce platforms who can plan sales and deliver the company's products closer to users, so students might be compelled to consider e-commerce as a field of study.

Customers frequently select the best online purchasing platform available to them, often picking authentic online businesses, especially

when purchasing on e-commerce exchanges, with the assurance that product dangers and risks will be prevented, and the merchandise can be returned. If customers buy products on a website, they can check to see if the website is registered with the Ministry of Industry and Trade. Customers can also be informed of the payment, shipping, return, and complaint policies when shopping. One of the steps to help clients acquire satisfying and quality items is to consult with relatives and friends and read product reviews.

Furthermore, customers should carefully evaluate the quantity of food items they and their families will eat so they do not overbuy, which can result in waste. Before placing an order, consumers can prioritize purchasing items and services that meet fundamental demands while thoroughly analyzing their financial status, leading to money savings and balanced budgets.

Research results from regulatory agencies show about 60 million online consumers in

Vietnam. Online business is increasingly active in Vietnam, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, which is associated with consumer connection because of the benefits of easy access, simplicity, convenience, and savings, leading to a timesaving, low-cost, diverse experience. After 2 decades of the Internet entering Vietnam, e-commerce is developing quickly and is present in almost every person's daily life. Vietnam's retail e-commerce market in 2022 is estimated at 16.4 billion USD, accounting for 7.5% of the country's consumer goods and services sales. Accordingly, Vietnam is ranked by eMarketer in the top 5 countries with the world's leading e-commerce growth rate, with a growth rate of 20% per year. Today's famous e-commerce sites in Vietnam include Shopee, Lazada, Tiki, Amazon, Sendo, Thegioididong, Dien May Xanh, and FPT, just to name a few.

The COVID-19 pandemic is also one extreme factor that has strongly impacted consumption trends in Vietnam, changing the mindset of businesses and consumers while creating a substantial benefit for consumers in the booming online business environment. As such, during the post-COVID-19 recovery period, e-commerce is one of the pioneering fields of the digital economy, creating a driving force for socio-economic development. Today, consumers can just sit at home and surf the web with a smartphone, iPad, or laptop, and the computer can find the desired item, make the order, pay for it, and have it delivered directly to the buyer's residence. Compared to traditional shopping activities at a brick-and-mortar store, online shopping saves time and is much more convenient. Available items are incredibly diverse, from agricultural products and processed foods to industrial and consumer goods. Delivery can be done instantly via the internet for digitized products such as movies, music, books, and software.

Not only that, but consumers can also freely compare products, brands, prices, and quality, all while directly communicating with sellers to better understand the products they intend to buy. Multimedia channels have become almost indispensable reference sources for consumers before they purchase a product or service. Besides the domestic market, cooperation programs for cross-border e-commerce with primary international e-commerce platforms help consumers access goods and services

globally. Along with the rapid development of information and communication technology, online shopping platforms help remove barriers of time and space, connecting suppliers of goods and services to serve people's consumption needs accurately, quickly, and efficiently.

In other words, the most convenient aspect of e-commerce is allowing customers to shop anywhere, anytime, for anything, worldwide. The online auction model is an example, allowing users to buy and sell on auction floors simultaneously, finding and collecting the items they are interested in regardless of their territory. Besides business, online shopping occurs through websites, applications, and social networking, allowing customers to follow trends almost in real-time. According to the report "Repota 2022: Optimizing marketing strategies and tools for growth" released by Appota Technology Group, 62.6% of Vietnamese consumers use social networks to find brand information and products.

Since the boom of e-commerce, many legal problems regarding online business have arisen on social networking platforms, making it is necessary to have a specific and transparent legal system to guide and handle the current inadequacies. For example, there is still no good solution for tackling the problem of intellectual property violations, such as selling fake and counterfeit goods and violating laws by advertising products different than those delivered, which will continue to affect consumers.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In Vietnam, online shopping is a young business with a promising future. Over more than two years, the COVID-19 pandemic has shifted the bulk of customers' purchase preferences from direct to online. This is one of the driving forces behind the explosive expansion of Vietnam's e-commerce industry in recent years. The results of the SEM analysis revealed the following five factors: perceived usefulness, ease of use, confidence (trust), safety level, and customer service, which accepted the hypotheses with a significant level of 0.01. The novelty of this study is the introduction of customer service factors. Online shopping limits consumers' ability to evaluate products because they cannot learn about the product directly before purchasing online, unlike traditional

shopping, where consumers can instantly see, hold, and evaluate the product. When shopping online, consumers can only see product images via network-connected devices – often with the risk of the image not being the same as the actual product. As such, customer service is a vital factor that strongly impacts online shopping behavior and attitudes in Vietnam. Despite high competition, the Vietnamese e-commerce sector still offers many opportunities for small and medium organizations and new businesses.

The empirical findings are clearly presented and discussed. The first implication concerns the increased utility of online buying services, both economically and informationally, making variety in the number and quality of items offered necessary. Online platforms can entice customers by creating apps and sales websites that are fast, simple, easy to use, and have easily locatable product information and price comparison. Moreover, retailers can send emails and text messages directly to customers to tell them about new items, promotions, and other incentives. Second, businesses must guarantee that every client can readily access help and guidance, as well as the capacity to respond to customers' consulting inquiries as quickly as feasible at all times. After the sale, a mechanism for receiving objective feedback should be created to help develop better customer service. Third, assisting customers in lowering their risk perception while purchasing online is vital. Establishing a policy that requires clients to check inventories before items are paid for could help to eliminate the danger of paying in advance and not receiving goods that arrive not as promised.

As suggested by the empirical findings of this study, companies should dive deeper into their investigation of Vietnam's e-commerce market to develop appropriate strategies and keep up with new developments, as recommended below: (1) A strategy for product diversification, wherein retailers vary their product portfolios by including as many brands as feasible; (2) Gearing the pricing approach for items and services toward meeting the customer's demand for preferred treatment, rather than for inexpensive goods; (3) Developing marketing communication strategies for the seller, such as arranging promotions, lowering the number of household items to promote purchasing activity, offering discount vouchers to current consumers

in exchange for referring new customers, or reminding customers of potentially recurring purchases through email marketing or e-newsletters; (4) Improving the customer service process by thoroughly explaining the details of the items while also providing information to the customer care staff so that they can respond to phone calls as fast as possible; on the customer's end, packaging should be structured so that customers can readily open and inspect the items as soon as they receive them, so if the product is not as expected, they may return it at no cost; in terms of delivery time, home items that are needed right away should be prioritized, helping the website make a good impression on clients and restricting the length of time before a customer decides not to accept the item; finally, (5) merchants must consider specific solutions to ensure complete website development, such as optimizing the website for searching for purchasing information and streamlining the shopping experience. Ordering items, developing content, managing the website, and creating a little "social network" for website visitors are some ways this can be achieved. Sellers might also consider implementing solutions to clarify their policies and obligations clearer, such as direct returning and shipping policies, quality commitments, and specific branding.

The research results highlight the ease of online shopping, focusing on safety in promoting consumers' online shopping intentions, but also provides management implications to improve and enhance the quality of online shopping services, all while increasing online shopping intentions for businesses and individuals doing business online. Regardless, the study has many other factors that were not included in the model, and the survey sample is still tiny compared to the total. Therefore, future studies should consist of many other factors, such as COVID-19, in their research models and increase the survey sample size.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Phan Thanh Tam, email: tampt@lhu.edu.vn
(Corresponding author)

Lu Phi Nga is a Doctor of Philosophy in Banking and Finance and Dean of the Faculty of Postgraduate Studies at Lac Hong University (LHU), Vietnam. She participates in teaching some topics related to finance and banking. Besides, her research area involves financial analysis, financial management, behavior, and banking technology.

Phan Thanh Tam is a Doctor of Philosophy in Banking and Finance, Business Administration, Faculty of Postgraduate Studies Lecturer at Lac Hong University (LHU), Vietnam. He participates in teaching some topics related to finance and banking, business management, and economics. Besides, the research area involves behavior analysis, financial management, business, and green banking.