



Prifysgol Cymru

Y Drindod Dewi Sant

University of Wales

Trinity Saint David

Student Name: Anicha Taslim Kana

Student ID: 2434291

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*The Impact of Cross-Border E-Commerce Platform Trust on
Purchase Intention Among Emerging Market Consumers*

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Research Aim and Objectives.....	3
3. Research Questions.....	4
4. Literature Review.....	4
5. Methodology	7
5.1 Research Design.....	7
5.2 Quantitative Research Approach	7
5.3 Qualitative Research Approach	8
5.4 Integration of Findings.....	9
5.5 Ethical Considerations	9
6. Study Limitation	10
7. Expected Contributions.....	10
8. Timeline	10
References.....	11
Appendices.....	14
Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire	14
Appendix B: Interview Questions.....	16

1. Introduction

E-commerce on a global level is the fastest developing branch of online commerce, with consumers in developing economies having the global market provide them with a wide range of international products that traditional retail outlets could have easily reached. This has been driven by increasing internet penetration, the introduction of mobile commerce, and the development of digital payment networks. Nonetheless, regardless of this growth, consumer unwillingness is still a major obstacle to acquiring behaviour across boundaries because of the increased perceived risk and uncertainty.

Platform trust in cross-border e-commerce has several dimensions, including perceived qualities of a platform, transparency of information, credibility of sellers, and trustworthiness of technology. Platform features such as ratings, reviews, and payment security, as well as interface functionality, are highly ranked among consumers when it comes to judging a trusted platform. With a high level of trust, consumers are likely to feel a lesser risk and will show a greater desire to indulge in cross-border buying behaviour. However, contextual factors such as the differences in culture, institutional distance, and the social influence mechanisms also moderated the relationship between trust and purchase intention. These will either boost or reduce the confidence of the consumer in foreign platforms, which is based on how familiar and trustworthy the platform is to the consumer.

Considering that the role of trust in purchase intention is becoming relevant in the context of the emerging economies in the scenario of cross-border digital commerce is important not only to the academic domain, but also to practice to ascertain the role of trust in purchase intent. This study will therefore be oriented towards exploring the role of platform trust on consumer purchase intention within the emerging market environment, with particular attention to the ingredients which determine trust and behavioural reactions.

2. Research Aim and Objectives

Aim

This study will concentrate on the investigation of e-commerce platform trust across borders and its influence on consumer buying intention in emerging markets.

Objectives

- To explore the major aspects that will determine consumer trust in the e-commerce platforms across borders.
- To test the relationship between consumer trust in the platform and purchase intention among new consumers in the market.
- To analyse the way positions of trust will develop based on the perceived risk, platform quality, and cultural differences.
- To identify consumer attitude and behavioural patterns with trust towards online shopping across borders.

3. Research Questions

- What are the major aspects that will determine consumer trust in e-commerce platforms across borders?
- How is the relationship between consumer trust in the platform and purchase intention among new consumers in the market?
- What are the ways positions of trust will develop based on the perceived risk, platform quality, and cultural differences?
- What consumer attitudes and behavioural patterns influence trust towards online shopping across borders?

4. Literature Review

According to Camacho et al. (2026), transnational e-commerce has become a significant contributor to the expansion of retail everywhere in the globe, particularly among the emerging economies, where internet infrastructure and the availability of international products are quickly emerging. In previous research, the results have always concurred that trust is an intervening variable between platform-affecting attributes, perceived risk, and eventual purchase intention.

Trust as the Core Determinant of Purchase Intention

Trust in the context of cross-border e-commerce has continuously been witnessed as the general trigger of purchase intention. According to Mou et al. (2020), the perceptions of valence of trust related to online sites play a significant role in influencing repurchase intentions of international shoppers. Tikhomirova et al. (2021) indicate that trustfulness is a key factor that

determines the intent to buy in diverse e-commerce contexts, and more so those whose origins differ. Liu et al. (2025) have indicated that the trust paradox assists in explaining consumer re-buys in spite of the perceived risk due to a strong perception of trust. Wang et al. (2023) argue that purchase intention is directly dependent on consumer perception, and the mediating factor towards this effect is trust. Yuwen, Guanxing and Qiongwei (2022) note that the multi-dimensional variable of trust assessment in the cross-border site directly affects the purchase behaviour.

Systems Quality and Techno Underpinnings of Trust

A big antecedent of trust in e-commerce across borders is said to be platform quality. Han et al. (2023) assert that cross-border African markets heavily depend on the quality of the platform to establish consumer purchase intention. Chuang and Chuang (2023) conclude that involvement of experienced utility and system performance increases purchase intention with the development of trust. Cao (2023) asserts that big data analytics enhances personalisation in platforms and consumer confidence by enhancing the quality of decisions. Shuai, Li and Zhang (2023) assert that platform ecosystem-related trust directly depends on the efficiency of the chains in the e-commerce business. Qin et al. (2022) argue that the systems of e-commerce are founded on the developed principles of reliability and transparency that directly contribute to the trust of the consumer.

Organisational culture and distance

There is a shared opinion that cultural as well as institutional disparities weaken or hinder trust when doing e-commerce across borders. Huang (2022) suggests the idea that cultural differences predetermine to a large extent how trust is built in the context of socialised e-commerce. Tikhomirova et al. (2021) indicated that culture interacts with trustworthiness in influencing purchase intention on platforms of different origins. According to Jian, Lv and Wan (2023), Belt and Road countries have varying purchase motivations depending on the institutional distance. According to Sun and Qu (2025), institutional uncertainty is removed by the governance of platforms, and the trust among sellers is improved. According to Joseph (2023), when it comes to developing markets like India, the regulatory settings and payment systems have a significant effect on the creation of trust.

Impact of Social influence and online communication

Digital interaction and social media platforms are said to promote trust in cross-border e-commerce to a massive level. Guo et al. (2021) hypothesise that the intention to purchase based on the characteristics of the live streaming will increase the perceived authenticity and reduce the psychological distance. Evans, Bratton and McKee (2021) explain that social media marketing increases trust following interactions with customers and influence by colleagues. Kingsnorth (2025) notes that the marketing strategies that employ the internet platforms are more integrated and make consumers trust them more. Mahoney and Tang (2024) claim that strategic communication matters in social media since it makes the processes more transparent and believable. According to Lipschultz (2023), to maintain digital trust, ethical communication and data transparency are crucial.

Consumer behaviour and Trust due to psychological reasons

The relationship might be mediated by consumer psychology with trust and purchase intention. Mou et al. (2020) conducted a study to ascertain the importance of positive trust perception on cross-border e-commerce repurchase intention in cross-border e-commerce. Liu et al. (2025) claim that there is a perceptual reduction in the perception of risk among mobile commerce settings due to emotional assurance on the basis of trust. Caplovitz (2025) states that trust indications are particularly more susceptible to consumers who are low-income, as they are more vulnerable financially. Sheth, Parvatiyar and Uslay (2024) claim that the marketing theory shifts towards making trust one of the primary behavioural constructs that can affect engagement and loyalty. According to Quintus et al. (2024), trust is more effective in emerging markets as institutional protection is low.

Ecosystem and Strategy Implications of E-Commerce across Borders

The general e-commerce system is reported to define the extent of trust in the buying motivation. Chen et al. (2025) found that platforms through which e-commerce is transmitted across international borders can be accessed to enhance global competitiveness as a result of market intelligence, but this is only possible when trust is built. Shuai et al. (2023) also found that the e-commerce industry sequence requires a connection of appreciation between the channels, logistics, and merchants. Qin et al. (2022) argue that the organised e-commerce principles ensure sterility and transparency in transactions online. Qin et al. (2025) note that the continuity in cross-border systems can be improved through technological integration and also increases cross-border trust. Johnson and Simpson (2022) and Hoque and Bashaw (2020)

agree that the purchase intention of a consumer is directly influenced by platform trust and quality under the circumstances of new markets.

Overall, the research literature indicates that the most important medium that describes the attributes of the e-commerce platform across borders to consumer purchase intention is trust, and in this case, in emerging markets. Kim and Prince (2025) say it depends on the quality of the platform, the cultural and institutional distance, the social impact of the digital setting, and psychological risk perception. Trust not only reduces the feeling of uncertainty, but also enhances engagement, satisfaction, and continuance behaviour. Singh and Diamond (2020) reviewed sources that hypothesise that it is necessary to increase trust in the situation of technological innovation, types of governance, and culturally innovative solutions to encourage purchase intent among the consumers involved in the emergent market, in the case of cross-border e-commerce.

5. Methodology

5.1 Research Design

The proposed research study will use a mixed research methodology to find answers to the questions of trust in e-commerce sites and cross-border influences on consumer buying intention in new markets. The convergent parallel design will be adopted, in which quantitative and qualitative data will be collected simultaneously, analysed separately, and then merged. This design will be suitable in that it will allow the study to test whether there are indeed measurable relationships that are warranted statistically, but also delve into what the consumer's reasons and motives for behaviour are. The conglomeration will enhance the general validity and explanatory power of results.

5.2 Quantitative Research Approach

Research Strategy

The quantitative element will involve a cross-sectional survey design to test the correlations among the important variables, such as platform trust, purchase intention, perceived risk, platform quality, and cultural distance. By doing so, the research will be in a position to generate generalisable results, that is, having a relatively large sample size of consumers who are participants in the cross-border e-commerce of the emerging markets, taking an active part in the process.

Data Collection Method

Primary data will be collected with the assistance of a structured online questionnaire. The scale will contain validated measure items in terms of the literature on e-commerce trust and consumer behaviour at hand. The responses will be recorded based on a five-point Likert scale, i.e., strongly disagree to strongly agree. The survey will be implemented through online consumer forums, social media, and universal networks to access the respondents who have had previous cross-border shopping experiences.

Sampling and Sample size

Only the respondents with experience from cross-border e-business websites will be taken into account using an intention sampling approach. This will ensure that the data collected is accurate and has relevance. The target sample will consist of a rough number of 100 respondents since they will be sufficient in performing correlation, regression analysis, and structural equation modelling analysis.

Data Analysis

Excel will be used to analyse quantitative data. Descriptive statistics will be used to gain an overview of the demographic characteristics. Cronbach's alpha will be used to determine reliability, and convergent and discriminant validity will be used to test validity. The inferential analysis of the relationships between trust, perceived risk, platform quality, cultural distance, and purchase intention will be analysed through regression analysis or structural equation modelling.

5.3 Qualitative Research Approach

Research Strategy

The qualitative bit will adopt an interpretivist method in investigating consumer subjective perception and experience of trusting the cross-border e-commerce contexts. This shall enable the research to obtain contextual, psychological, and behavioural factors that are not entirely quantifiable based on quantitative data.

Data Collection Method

Semi-structured interviews with the sampled survey respondents will be used to collect primary data as they will answer the follow-up interviews. The interviews will explore consumer experiences across the cross-border platforms, how trust is built, the perception of risks, as well as the impacts of the perception on the formation of purchase decisions. The interviews will be held online to be convenient and accessible.

Sample Size and Sampling

The qualitative stage will again be carried out under purposive sampling. A sample size of about 20 to 50 respondents will be used to ensure there will be enough depth of insight, and it is manageable. The participants will be selected in such a way that they will be diversified in terms of age, gender, and frequency of online shopping.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data will be analysed using thematic analysis. Interpretation of the transcripts of the interviews will be done in a systematised way in order to identify recurrence. The codes will then be grouped into general themes such as formation of trust, perceived risk, credibility of the platform and cultural influence. This will facilitate the unravelling of how trust is developed by consumers and its impact on consumer purchasing intentions.

5.4 Integration of Findings

The interpretation phase will be the combination of interpretations of both quantitative and qualitative results. The statistical outcomes will provide position arguments of cross-relations between variables, and the qualitative information will provide arguments why interrelations take place. This triangulation would be required to gain a more in-depth understanding of the role of trust in relation to cross-border e-commerce purchase intention.

5.5 Ethical Considerations

Additional ethical approval to collect the data will not be necessary. All the participants will be informed by telling them about their right to withdraw at any stage. Anonymisation of data will be used to guarantee confidentiality, and data will be stored in a safe place. This experiment will ensure that all the information can be used purely for academic interest, and no personal identifiers will be collected.

6. Study Limitation

Several possible limitations will be considered in the study. First, self-reported information may lead to biases in response. Second, the focus on the selected emerging economies may limit the ability to achieve the universality of the findings for all developing economies. Third, a qualitative interview might be limited by time and resources available. Notwithstanding, the mixed methods approach will increase validity and the wealth of findings.

7. Expected Contributions

In this study, there will be an application in both the theory and the practice. Theoretically, it will broaden the knowledge on trust as a main construct in cross-border e-commerce behaviour in the emerging markets. In practice, it will provide platform developers, marketers, and policymakers with information on how to strengthen the mechanism of trust to attract consumer purchase intention. It will also give recommendations on how to improve the structures of platforms, communication strategies, and governance structures in an endeavor to reduce the perceived risk in international online trade.

8. Timeline

Research Activity	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Literature review				
Proposal & ethics approval				
Survey design & pilot				
Data collection (survey)				
Quantitative analysis				
Interviews				
Qualitative analysis				
Integration of findings				
Dissertation writing				
Final submission				

Figure 1: Gantt Chart Showing the timeline of the research (Self-made)

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Appendices

Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire

Instructions

You can choose the answers below to find out how much you agree with the statement using your experience of using cross-border e-commerce platforms (e.g., Amazon Global, AliExpress, eBay, Temu). No correct or incorrect answers.

Answers to each question:

A = Strongly Disagree

B = Disagree

C = Agree

D = Strongly Agree

Questions

I depend on cross-border e-commerce websites for online shopping.

A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐

I am not afraid to do online payments, which are being carried out on cross-border websites.

A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐

Vital personal data remains secure when I am on such sites.

A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐

The sellers on cross-border sites tend to be trustworthy.

A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐

Cross-border product descriptions are correct.

A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐

No hassle when it comes to cross-border e-commerce platforms.

A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐

The sites offer convenient and informative product details.

A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐

These platforms are easy to use with their design and interface.

A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐

The cross-border platforms are customer-responsive in terms of customer service.

A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐

These platforms have good delivery and tracking systems.

A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐

I am concerned with the quality of the products that I get.

A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐

I am also fearful of committing fraud by making payments online to international merchants.

A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐

I hesitate when purchasing the goods of foreigners.

A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐

Personally, I would shop at cross-border e-commerce stores in future.

A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐

I will regularly continue to use cross-border e-commerce solutions.

A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐

Appendix B: Interview Questions

1. What is your trust in e-commerce sites across borders?
2. What do you like or dislike about an online global shopping site?
3. How did any experience either make you more or less trusting?
4. How about a recent cross-border purchase?
5. What were the reasons you did or did not make the purchase?
6. What is the essence of trust in making online purchases with foreign sellers?
7. What do you consider are the risks of cross-border online shopping?
8. What impact would these risks have on your buying decisions?
9. Did you ever pass on buying because of the possibility of risking it?
10. What influences your trust level with the platform based on its features (reviews, ratings, design)?
11. Are you influenced by advertisements or social media (in terms of trust)? How?
12. Are there any differences in your trust due to language or other cultural reasons?
13. Do you have less trust in foreign platforms as compared to local platforms? Why?
14. What would you like the cross-border e-commerce platforms to do to earn more of your confidence?