

Chapter 67

B2C E-Commerce Acceptance Models Based on Consumers' Attitudes and Beliefs: Integrating Alternative Frameworks

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INTRODUCTION

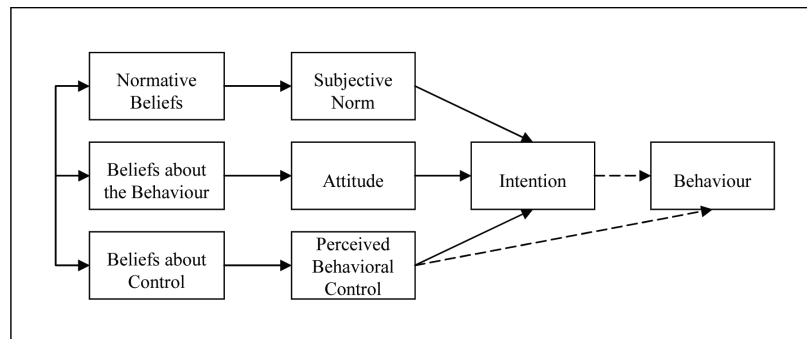
The novelty and dynamism of Internet and e-commerce have led to the revision of the classic paradigm of consumer behaviour and to the continuous study of individuals' conduct in virtual environments. In this context, the literature on Internet has placed special attention on the development and testing of theoretical models aimed to describe and explain e-commerce acceptance by final consumers. In this sense, two theoretical frameworks stand out as the most relevant and widely used approaches in e-commerce adoption literature: the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Schifter & Ajzen, 1985; Ajzen, 1991) and the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989; Davis et al., 1989). Both models are

based on traditional theory of consumer behaviour and focus on individuals' attitudes and beliefs about e-commerce and virtual transactions. However, TPB and TAM differ in the variety of explanatory variables they include and in the identification of beliefs considered as determinants of individuals' attitudes towards a behaviour or technology.

Taking into account the theoretical basement shared by both models, Taylor & Todd (1995) propose the Decomposed Theory of Planned Behaviour which integrates the TAM and TPB, enjoying the strengths of both frameworks. Thus, the DTPB provides greater insight into the factors that influence behaviour or technology acceptance (Taylor & Todd, 1995; Rodríguez-del-Bosque & Herrero, 2005). Nevertheless, the relative trade off of the deeper understanding of IT usage provided by the Decomposed Theory of Planned Behaviour is the

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Figure 1. Theory of planned behavior



increased complexity and decreased parsimony of the model.

Given the widespread use of the TPB, the TAM and the DTPB in literature about IS and e-commerce adoption, this paper intends to describe their main principles and to examine their weaknesses and strengths for the research of e-commerce acceptance. Additionally, discussion about the integration and development of these models to study Internet shopping behaviour are presented. Finally, future research directions on this topic are proposed.

BACKGROUND: B2C E-COMMERCE ACCEPTANCE MODELS BASED ON CONSUMERS' ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS

The Theory of Planned Behaviour, the Technology Acceptance Model and the Decomposed Theory of Planned Behaviour are described next. In addition, the most important studies carried out in the field of e-commerce which are based on these theoretical frameworks are analysed.

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (Schifter & Ajzen, 1985) focuses on those conducts in which the individual is influenced to a certain extent

by the availability of certain requirements and resources. The TPB considers intention as the best predictor of behaviour, as it expresses the effort that individuals are willing to make to develop a particular action (Ajzen, 1991). Likewise, the model identifies three types of determinants and explanatory variables of the intention of behaviour: attitude towards behaviour, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control (Figure 1).

The *attitude* towards behaviour refers to the overall disposition, favourable or unfavourable, towards the development of this conduct and it is the result of the individuals' beliefs with respect to the behaviour and its consequences. On the other hand, the *subjective norm* reflects the effect that other people's opinion—family or friends, among others—has on the consumer's behaviour. Finally, *perceived behavioural control* represents the individual's perceptions with regard to the presence or the absence of the necessary resources and opportunities to develop the conduct.

The Theory of Planned Behaviour has been extensively used and supported in research on the Internet and e-commerce (see Rodríguez-del-Bosque & Herrero, 2005). Particularly, this theoretical model has been taken as a reference to examine the acceptance of the Internet as a shopping channel (Limayem et al., 2000; Keen et al., 2002; Bosnjak et al., 2006; Herrero & Rodríguez-del-Bosque, 2008), the adoption of shopping through mobile telephone systems

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