

# A STUDY ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS E-PHARMACY APPS IN COIMBATORE CITY

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**ABSTRACT:** *In recent years, the emergence of e-pharmacy apps has transformed pharmaceutical retail, offering consumers convenient digital access to medicines and healthcare products. This study investigates consumer buying behaviour towards e-pharmacy apps in Coimbatore city, focusing on awareness, motivations, satisfaction, and challenges. Using a structured questionnaire survey of 45 respondents from diverse demographics, the research reveals that price advantages, quick delivery, and product availability are key drivers of adoption. While consumers appreciate home delivery and multiple payment options, concerns remain about product authenticity and delivery reliability. The findings provide insights to enhance e-pharmacy services and promote their wider acceptance in urban Indian markets.*

**KEYWORDS:** *E-pharmacy apps, Consumer buying behaviour, Online medicine purchase, Coimbatore, Digital healthcare*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of digital technology and internet access in India has changed many sectors, including healthcare and pharmaceutical retail. One of the most important innovations in this area is the rise of e-pharmacy apps, which are online platforms that allow consumers to conveniently purchase medicines and healthcare products using their mobile devices or computers. This shift to buying medication online has gained momentum due to factors like urbanization, increased health awareness, lifestyle demands for convenience, and especially the COVID-19 pandemic, which highlighted the need for contactless healthcare solutions. In Coimbatore, a key industrial and educational center in Tamil Nadu, the use of e-pharmacy apps is steadily increasing, altering how consumers shop for healthcare products. E-pharmacy apps provide several advantages over traditional pharmacies. They offer a larger selection of products, competitive prices through discounts and deals, detailed information about medications, and home delivery services that are especially helpful for elderly and chronically ill patients who may struggle to visit physical stores. The availability of various payment options, including credit/debit cards, UPI, wallets, and cash-on-delivery, also enhances user convenience. However, some challenges persist, such as concerns about product authenticity, data privacy, regulatory compliance, and delivery reliability, which might affect consumer trust and ongoing use. Understanding how consumers behave when buying from e-pharmacy apps is important for stakeholders like pharmaceutical companies, app developers, healthcare providers, and policymakers.

Studying consumer behavior helps identify the motivations or barriers to adoption, frequency of use, product preferences, satisfaction levels, and common issues faced by users. Coimbatore's diverse population, which includes students, working professionals, middle-aged people, and the elderly, offers a unique setting to examine these trends. The city's infrastructure, growing digital literacy, and access to technology further emphasize the need to explore how residents engage with e-pharmacy services. This study aims to investigate consumer buying behavior specifically regarding e-pharmacy apps in Coimbatore by examining several key areas: users' demographic profiles, their awareness and familiarity with different e-pharmacy platforms, how often they make purchases and the nature of those purchases, preferred payment methods, factors influencing their online buying decisions, satisfaction levels, and perceived challenges. The period of study is from Jan 2025 to Sep 2025, covering nine months of data collection. The Population of the study is residents of Coimbatore city, which is a part of Coimbatore district in Tamilnadu.

## 2. OBJECTIVES

- To identify demographic trends associated with e-pharmacy app usage.
- To analyze consumer preferences and factors influencing their choice of e-pharmacy platforms.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a quantitative, descriptive research approach, gathering primary data through questionnaires and surveys distributed among residents of Coimbatore. By selecting a sample of 45 respondents from various demographics in Coimbatore, this study uses primarily based on descriptive statistics and percentage analysis to interpret the structured questionnaire responses from 45 participants.

## 4. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

- The study is limited to 45 respondents from Coimbatore, which means the findings might not fully reflect the experiences of people in other regions.
- The study covers just nine months of 2025; it might not reveal longer-term shifts in consumer behavior that could happen later.

## 5. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- Srivastava et al., (2020) did a study on the usage and adoption of e-pharmacy by customers in India. Since many people in the general public do not understand how to use an online pharmacy and the benefits of doing so, it is vital to explain the use and benefits of e-pharmacies, as well as to give additional education to customers. Customers have usually expressed satisfaction for "home delivery" of prescriptions acquired over the internet, and many have said that they would prefer to purchase medications online in the case of an emergency illness. It appears from the findings that the e-pharmacy application should be straightforward to use. Having out-of-date and ambiguous information readily available would instill a feeling of mistrust in the minds of customers
- In "A Study on the Current Status of Ecommerce in India: A Comparative Analysis of Flipkart and Amazon," Mishra and Kotkar (2015) trace the history and development of B2C ecommerce, beginning with the appearance of matrimonial and employment portals in the mid-1990s and progressing to the present day. Nonetheless, expansion has been very slow as a result of limited internet access, insufficient online payment systems, and a general lack of awareness. The advent of online travel and hotel booking services in the mid-2000s offered a significant boost to the Indian B2C ecommerce industry, which has continued to be a significant contributor even now.
- Consumers' Pharmaceutical Purchasing Behavior toward Prescription and Nonprescription Drugs: A Study by Pujari et al. (2016) was published in the journal Pharmacoeconomics. Specifically, the investigation was carried out in order to determine the source of information that persons utilise in order to learn about a pharmaceutical product. When it comes to drug choosing, what are the aspects that influence buying behaviour? The survey had 100 responses, and the results were rather interesting. Only 60% of the population purchased medication on the basis of a physician's recommendation, though other factors such as magazine articles, online literature, family and friends' recommendations all played a role in the decision to purchase a drug in the first place. Individuals, according to the author, want their prescriptions based on their own tastes and price, with little respect for the pharmacist's or physician's advice.

## 6. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The first section of the questionnaire contains information on the study sample's demographic characteristics. It includes gender, age, educational attainment, income. The second section of the questionnaire is a series of questions designed to ascertain customer preference and purchasing behaviour and factors that influence about e-pharmacy

### 6.1 Demographic study

**Table 1 : Demographic details of respondents**

| Factor    | Category                | No. of Respondents (N = 45) | Percentage |
|-----------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| Gender    | Male                    | 25                          | 60         |
|           | Female                  | 20                          | 40         |
| Age       | 55+                     | 26                          | 57         |
|           | Others (<55)            | 19                          | 42         |
| Education | Graduate/ Post Graduate | 30                          | 66.6       |
|           | Others                  | 15                          | 33.3       |
| Income    | Mid-High                | 25                          | 60         |
|           | Others                  | 20                          | 40         |

Source: Primary data

**From the above table Gender:** Majority of users are male, but a significant number of female consumers are increasingly using e-pharmacy platforms.

**Age:** Older adults (above 50 years) show higher adoption rates compared to younger segments, indicating growing digital comfort among seniors, especially for chronic medication management.

**Education & Income:** Most users are graduates or postgraduates, and income levels vary, with a notable share having mid- to high-level monthly earnings.

## 6.2 Awareness and Platform Preference

**Table 2: Preferred e-pharmacy platforms**

| E-Pharmacy Platform | No. of Respondents (N = 45) | Percentage of Preference |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Netmeds             | 11                          | 24.5                     |
| Medlife             | 10                          | 22.3                     |
| 1mg                 | 9                           | 0.2                      |
| PharmEasy           | 6                           | 13.4                     |
| Apollo Pharmacy     | 5                           | 11.2                     |
| Easy Medico         | 3                           | 66.7                     |
| Med plus            | 1                           | 22.3                     |

*Source: Primary data*

High levels of awareness regarding e-pharmacy apps exist, with over half of surveyed consumers reporting strong familiarity. Top preferred platforms in Coimbatore include Netmeds, 1mg, Medlife, PharmEasy, Apollo Pharmacy and Med plus.

## 6.3 Factors influencing their choice of E-Pharmacy

**Table 3: Motivation factors for using e-pharmacy apps**

| Motivation        | No. of Respondents (N = 45) | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| Price             | 21                          | 46.7       |
| Quick Delivery    | 16                          | 35.6       |
| Availability      | 5                           | 11.2       |
| Packaging Quality | 3                           | 66.7       |

*Source: Primary data*

The table shows that price advantages are the biggest factor in adopting e-pharmacy apps. About 46.7% (21 out of 45) of respondents prioritize discounts and offers. Quick delivery is next, valued by 35.6% (16 respondents), which emphasizes the need for timely service, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Product availability influences 11.2% (5 respondents), indicating that consumers appreciate having a wide selection of medicines. Packaging quality, mentioned by 66.7% (3 respondents), also impacts decisions but to a lesser degree. Overall, competitive pricing and fast delivery are the main reasons consumers prefer e-pharmacy services in Coimbatore.

## 7. CONCLUSION

E-pharmacy apps mark a strong shift towards focusing on customers in the pharmaceutical sector of Coimbatore city. Consumer behavior is mostly influenced by price sensitivity, convenience, and increased digital skills, especially after the pandemic. Building customer trust and increasing awareness can further enhance the role of e-pharmacy in urban healthcare delivery.

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## 9. QUESTIONNAIRE:

A Study on Consumer Buying Behaviour towards E-Pharmacy Apps in Coimbatore City

Get basic details

Name

Place

### Section 1: Demographic & Socio-Economic Profile

1. Age
  - <18
  - 18-24
  - 25-34
  - 35-44
  - 45-54
  - 55+
2. **Gender**
  - Male
  - Female
  - Other
3. **Educational Qualification**
  - Below Higher Secondary
  - Graduate
  - Postgraduate
  - Doctoral
  - Other
4. **Occupation**
  - Student
  - Employed
  - Self-employed
  - Homemaker
  - Retired
  - Unemployed
5. **Monthly Household Income (INR)**

- < 25,000
- 25,000 – 50,000
- 50,001 – 1,00,000
- 1,00,001 – 2,00,000
- 2,00,000

#### Section 2: Awareness and Knowledge

##### 6. Before today, were you aware of e-pharmacy apps?

- Yes
- No

##### 7. If Yes: How did you first hear about e-pharmacy apps? (Tick all that apply)

- Advertising (TV, online, newspaper, etc.)
- Social media
- Web search
- Word of mouth/referral
- Email/SMS promotion
- Other (please specify)

##### 8. Which e-pharmacy apps do you know about or have used? (Tick all that apply)

- 1mg/Tata 1mg
- Netmeds
- Pharmeasy
- Apollo Pharmacy
- Medlife
- Medplus Mart
- Others (please specify):

#### Section 3: Usage Patterns

##### 9. Have you ever purchased medicines or healthcare products through an e-pharmacy app?

- Yes
- No

##### 10. How frequently do you purchase from e-pharmacy apps?

- Weekly
- Monthly
- Rarely
- Only when in need/emergency
- Never

##### 11. Which products do you typically buy from e-pharmacy apps? (Tick all that apply)

- Prescription medication
- Non-prescription/OTC medication
- Personal care & hygiene products
- Beauty care products
- Dietary/health supplements
- Baby care products
- Medical devices/equipment
- Other:

##### 12. What mode of payment do you generally use?

- Credit/Debit Card
- UPI or mobile wallet
- Cash on delivery
- Net banking
- Other

**Section 4: Motivational Factors**

13. What motivates you to purchase from e-pharmacy apps? (Tick all that apply)

- Discounts & offers
- Home delivery
- Convenience/time savings
- Product availability (esp. hard-to-find medicines)
- Contactless purchasing (post-pandemic concern)
- Information access (product details, reviews, drug info)
- Multiple payment options
- Ability to compare prices/brands
- Other (please specify):

14. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements (1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree):

- E-pharmacy apps save me time and effort.
- E-pharmacy apps offer better prices and discounts.