International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)
ISSN: 2278-0181
Vol. 14, Issue 11, CONFLUENCE - 2026

Behavioural Determinants of Digital Banking Adoption: Examining the Mediating Effect of Perceived Trust

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Abstract: The fast expansion of digital financial services has altered the banking business by offering customers convenient, accessible, and efficient ways to make financial transactions. However, the acceptance of digital banking is determined not just by technological convenience, but also by client behaviour and faith in digital financial systems. This study investigates the behavioural determinants of digital banking adoption, concentrating on the impact of Use Behaviour, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence, and Security Behaviour on Intention to Use digital banking services, with Perceived Trust serving as a mediating variable. The study uses a quantitative research approach, with primary data obtained via a structured questionnaire distributed to digital banking users across India. There were around 300 answers, but only 264 were valid. The acquired data was evaluated using SPSS, which included descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, and multiple regression analysis. The reported findings show that Effort Expectancy and Security Behaviour have a favourable influence on intention to adopt digital banking, however Social Influence has no statistically significant direct effect. The findings give valuable insights for banks and financial service providers looking to boost client confidence and encourage continued use of digital banking services.

Keywords: Digital Banking, Use Behaviour, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence, Security Behaviour, Perceived Trust, Intention to Use.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Digital finance, including internet banking, mobile payments, and fintech solutions, has gained popularity since COVID-19 due to its convenience and accessibility. The pandemic has accelerated the adoption of contactless payments and digital transactions, hence minimising physical contact. Improved security and real-time processing have increased trust in digital financial services(Chinnasamy et al., 2024). The global digital payments market refers to electronic money transfers through digital channels and platforms. Payment options include mobile payments, internet transfers, e-wallets, digital currencies, and electronic payment systems(Putrevu & Mertzanis, 2024). Payment innovation led to new offerings, raising public awareness of the benefits of digital payments. Adoption of digital payments is heavily influenced by consumer considerations and information technology availability(Susanto et al., 2022). The adoption of new technology and the digital transformation of corporate operations has made the channels that supply financial and banking products and services more reliable and user-friendly(Al-Qudah et al., 2024). Customers can now perform a wide range of operations, including

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mobile payments (m-payment), which are purchases of products and services using proximity payments at the point of sale. Mobile services provide users advantages such as flexibility, mobility, and efficiency, making it easier to live a stress-free lifestyle(Sahi et al., 2021). Creating a secure environment that fosters user confidence is crucial for digital banking to achieve its full potential. This is especially essential as internet financial transactions are generally perceived as more risky than traditional banking methods(Abdalla, 2025). The growth of the digital banking market produces more competition. Conventional banking has transformed business paradigms, leading to the establishment of many digital banks. In recent years, advances in information technology and ubiquitous internet use have revolutionised service delivery systems. Banks use internet-based platforms to integrate e-commerce services, cut costs, improve financial products and operational systems, and increase overall efficiency of banking operations and processes(Lalitha et al., 2026). Digital banks must convince citizens of the benefits and utility of using their services(Kurniasari, n.d.). Digital banking is the automated distribution of new and classic banking products and services directly to customers using electronic and interactive communication channels. E-banking is not a new topic; many studies have been conducted on it, utilising various ideas. For example, The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM 1, 2, and 3), Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT 1, and 2), and a self-designed model utilised by the majority of researchers(Taha & Hamakhan, 2020). Adoption of digital banking is made possible by broad developments in information and communication technology, provided that challenges such as limited availability, low quality wireless products, and inadequate technological infrastructure are addressed. This study, however, varies from the previous studies in that it expands the spectrum of factors that may influence customers' use of digital banking services(Jouda et al., 2020). This is accomplished by incorporating the essential variable "Trust" into the Decomposed Theory of Planned Behavior. Adopting this conceptual model will add to the literature on digital banking, as there has been no previous study similar to this model to investigate the factors that influence the adoption of digital banking services. Understanding what motivates users to accept digital banking can help commercial banks establish strategic strategies and make educated decisions when deploying mobile banking services in different circumstances. Based on this, the research is undertaken. To investigate the mediating effect of perceived trust in the relationship between behavioral determinants and intention to use digital banking services.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

2.1 Intention to use digital banking:

The theory of reasoned action emphasises the distinction between behavioural intention and actual behaviour. It recognises that people may wish to act but fail to do so or choose another course of action. The TPB expands on this concept, emphasising the importance of behavioural intention in affecting actual behaviour. Similarly, Fred Davis's TAM emphasises the importance of behavioural intention as a prelude to behaviour. When behavioural intention is considered, both models outperform the Theory of Reasoned Action in terms of predicting behaviour usage(Dendrinos & Spais, 2023). Consistent with most technology acceptance models drawing from psychological theories, which argue that individual behaviour is predictable and influenced by individual intentions [83], both the initial UTAUT and UTAUT2 support the belief and assertion that behavioural intention has substantial influence on technology use(Apau et al., 2025).

2.2 Hypotheses Development: Impacting Factors on Digital Banking Adoption

2.2.1 ***Perceived Trust:*** Perceived trust is described as a customer's mental state in which he or she is willing to accept perceived vulnerability because of the behaviour of another individual or organization. It is vital to highlight that perceived trust will only increase if the client believes that positive outcomes will be consistent in the future(Biswas et al., 2023). (Mukherjee & Nath, 2003) said trust occurs "when one party has confidence in an exchange partner's reliability and integrity". According to

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(van Esterik-Plasmeijer & van Raaij, 2017) Consumer trust in banking is based on consumer experience and is dependent on banks' capacity to behave reliably, follow rules and regulations, perform efficiently, and serve the public good.

2.2.2 ***Use Behaviour:*** A higher level of intention to embrace the system increases the likelihood of that intention being translated into behaviour. Furthermore, in terms of the adoption of mobile banking, various studies have proven a strong favourable influence of UB on the IU(R. Kumar et al., 2023). The actual manner in which clients use digital banking platforms to execute financial and non-financial activities is referred to as their use behaviour. It reflects clients' actual use of digital banking services such as mobile banking apps, internet banking, Unified Payments Interface (UPI), online cash transfers, balance enquiries, bill payments, digital account management, and other technology-enabled banking solutions.

H1: Use Behaviour (UB) has significant influence on Intention to use digital banking services.

H2: Perceived trust acts as mediator between Use Behaviour (UB) and Intention to Use digital banking services.

2.2.3 ***Effort Expectancy:*** Customers profit significantly from fintech applications. These benefits or gains typically reflect the utility received from these applications. The amount to which potential customers believe these advances will benefit their daily lives determines their perspective and intention to use them. Many experts feel that effort expectancy is closely related to intention and adoption behaviour(Tariq et al., 2024). In simple terms, people will be hesitant to accept and use a technology that needs a significant amount of effort(A. Kumar et al., n.d.). In contrast, compatibility explains how well a specific technology is regarded to be consistent and in line with the user's preexisting values, beliefs, and behaviours.

H3: Effort Expectancy (EE) has significant influence on Intention to use digital banking services.

H4: Perceived trust acts as mediator between Effort Expectancy (EE) and Intention to Use digital banking services.

2.2.4 ***Social Influence****:* External social pressures, such as the opinions of friends, relatives, coworkers, superiors, or social groups, can influence an individual's perception and behaviour(Kaur & Arora, 2021) . The digital era is another significant issue to consider here. We live in the age of social media. These digital channels have a tremendous impact on our daily decisions. Customers' decisions are heavily influenced by social media influencers. Family, friends, coworkers, and acquaintances are all sources of favourable and negative recommendations regarding new and developing digital apps that may encourage or discourage consumers from adopting and using them in their daily lives(Tariq et al., 2024) .

H5: Social Influence (SI) has significant influence on Intention to use digital banking services.

H6: Perceived trust acts as mediator between Social Influence (SI) and Intention to Use digital banking services.

2.2.5 ***Security Behaviour:*** Data breaches that could lead to data leakage, such as theft by cyber thieves and hackers, have made security a serious issue for mobile banking users. Perceived security is described as the "degree of belief in a technology or system to transmit sensitive information without breach or leakage"(Apau et al., 2025). Perceived security is the top priority in mobile and internet banking services. Trust has an impact on user attitude and perceived risk regarding Digitla banking apps, but not on intention to use them(Apaua & Lallie, 2022) .

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International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)
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H7: Security Behaviour (SB) has significant influence on Intention to use digital banking services.
H8: Perceived trust acts as mediator between Security Behaviour (SB) and Intention to Usedigital banking services.

Model

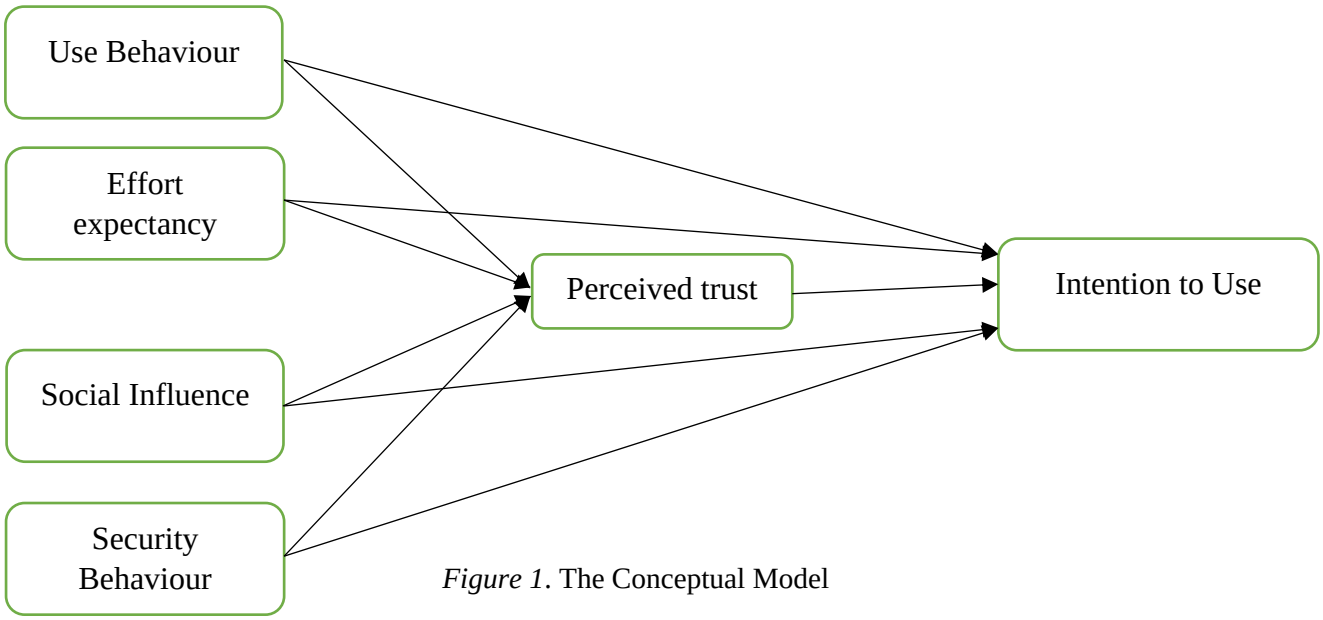


Figure 1. The Conceptual Model

Source: Created by Authors

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Method:

Scholars strongly advise collecting data from a range of samples to ensure response variability and establish the generalisability of findings. Thus, data for this study were collected from a diverse group of digital banking consumers. The study included both descriptive and quantitative research methods. A cross-sectional survey of Indian adults who utilise digital banking services. A screening question ensured that respondents had used any digital banking service (e.g., mobile banking app, UPI/wallet, investing app) within the previous three months. Given the lack of a comprehensive sampling frame of active users, a purposive strategy with quota monitoring (age, gender, region/urban/rural) was employed. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, with informed consent acquired before to participation. Descriptive research reveals facts, whereas quantitative research generates statistics such as frequencies and averages. The study included both primary and secondary data. A standardised questionnaire was used to gather the basic facts for this study. The survey was distributed to approximately 300 respondents, and the researcher obtained 264 (93%) authentic responses from respondents throughout India.

Secondary data is gathered from a variety of journals, periodicals, newspapers, and websites. Convenience sampling was used throughout the research phase.

3.2 Measures:

For this study, the investigator used a questionnaire, which is an organised set of questions. This study took a survey-based technique. The survey form is divided into two sections: the first section comprises demographic questions, and the second section contains 17 questions that are answered on a five-point Likert scale, with "5" representing "strongly agree" and "1" representing "strongly disagree".

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Table 1: *Measurement Items*

Factors	Item code	Statements	Source
Use behav-iour (UB)	UB 1	I pay for purchases using digital payment systems frequently	(Aljaradat & Shukla, 2026)
	UB 2	I use digital payment systems to manage my accounts	
	UB 3	I use digital payment systems to do transactions	
Effort Expectancy (EE)	EE 1	Digital payment systems are simple to learn	(Dendrinos & Spais, 2023)
	EE 2	My interaction with digital payment systems is clear and understandable	
	EE 3	I have the knowledge necessary to use digital payment systems	
Social Influence (SI)	SI 1	The use of digital payment systems is valued by my family and friends circle	(Kaur & Arora, 2021)
	SI 2	I find digital payment systems trendy and a status symbol in my society	
	SI 3	The people around me influence me to use digital payment systems	
Security Behaviour (SB)	SB 1	I do security check before downloading the App	(Aljaradat & Shukla, 2026)
	SB 2	I believe login process of these wallets is secure.	
	SB 3	I ensure web link to be secure before entering my details to a website.	
Perceived trust (PT)	PT 1	I believe digital payment systems are secure and trustworthy	(Biswas et al., 2023)
	PT 2	I trust the security mechanism of Cashless payments.	
	PT 3	Digital payment always provides accurate financial services .	
Intention to use (IU)	IU 1	I am using and will keep using cashless modes of payment.	(Singh & Srivastava, 2018)
	IU 2	I intend to increase my use of the cashless modes in the future.	
	IU 3	I recommend/ encourage my friends or relatives to use cashless modes.	

3.3 Data Analysis

This research used quantitative analysis to accomplish the objectives that data analysis was showed using SPSS software and descriptive statics were analyzed to summarize the evidence about the respondents regression was implemented to discover the relationship between Cyber Security Awareness, Facilitating Condition, Personal Innovativeness, Access to Finance, and

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International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)
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Adoption of digital banking. The mediating variable of Bank Trust between independent variable and Adoption of digital banking.

4 Results

4.1 Statics of the Demographic Characteristics

Table 2. *Profile of respondents (n = 264)*

Variable	Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	147	55.7
	Female	117	44.3
Age	Below 20	65	24.6
	20-30	123	46.6
	31-40	42	15.9
	41-50	25	9.5
	Above 50	09	3.4
Qualification	SSLC	05	1.9
	PUC	31	11.7
	UG	156	59.1
	PG	62	23.5
	Ph.D	10	3.8

Table 2 summarizes the demographic features of the 264 respondents. In this study, 147 respondents were male (55.7%), and 117 were female (44.3%). This study originate that 123 (46.6%) respondents are between age of 20-30 years, and 156 (59.1%) have completed their undergraduate studies.

4.2 Evaluating Reliability

Table 3. *Reliability Analysis*

Scale	**Cronbach's alpha**	**Items**	**Corrected Item – Total Correlation**
UB	0.771	UB01	1.000
		UB02	0.505
		UB03	0.583
EE	0.845	EE01	1.000
		EE02	0.651
		EE03	0.615
SI	0.821	SI01	1.000
		SI02	0.626
		SI03	0.585
SB	0.884	SB01	1.000
		SB02	0.777
		SB03	0.698
PT	0.870	PT01	1.000
		PT02	0.723
		PT03	0.678
IU	0.878	IU01	1.000
		IU02	0.717
		IU03	0.670

This study employs Cronbach's Alpha (CA) analysis to establish the reliability of the valid variables for the scales: Use Behaviour, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence, Security Behaviour, Perceived Trust and Intention to Use. Cronbach's alpha provides a bottom bound on dependability (r). Cronbach's alpha cutoffs of 0.7 or 0.75 are commonly employed to assess test reliability (A. Christmanna, 2005). The acceptable scale is identified when the experiential variables have a

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International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)
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corrected element total correlation value of 0.3 or more. The results reported in Table 2 show that all scales have achieved dependability.

4.3 Multiple Regression Analysis: Direct effects

Table 4: *Model of Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.797[a]	.635	.630	0.46065	1.861

Table 4 illustrates the model's level of explanation, with an adjusted R^2 value of 0.635, indicating that 63.5% of Intention to use (IU) is explained with the impact of four independent variables: Use Behaviour (UB), Effort Expectancy (EE), Social Influence (SI), Security Behaviour (SB).

4.4 Multiple Regression Analysis: Mediating effect of Perceived Trust

Table 5: *Model of Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.807[a]	.652	.645	0.45098	1.838

Table 5 illustrates the model's level of explanation after mediating effect of Perceived Trust, with an adjusted R2 value of 0.652, indicating that 65.2% of Intention to use digital banking services is explained with the impact of four independent variables: Use Behaviour (UB), Effort Expectancy (EE), Social Influence (SI), Security Behaviour (SB) through the mediating variable of Perceived Trust (PT). By comparing the Table 4 and Table 5 its showing that through the mediating effect between independent variable and dependent variable the R2 value is getting increase. It shows that mediating variable of perceived trust giving more influence towards Intention to use digital banking services.

4.5 Table 6: *Regression Model Summary and hypothesis test result: Direct effect*

Independent Variable	Standardized Coefficients β	t	Sig.	Hypothesis result
Use Behaviour (UB)	0.050	0.928	0.000	H1 Accepted
Effort Expectancy (EE)	0.410	5.911	0.000	H3 Accepted
Social Influence (SI)	-0.032	-0.590	0.556	H5 Not Accepted
Security Behaviour (SB)	0.413	5.859	0.035	H7Accepted

Table 6 shows standardised estimates of Use Behaviour ($\beta = 0.050$; p-value < 0.001), Effort Expectancy ($\beta = 0.410$; p- value < 0.001), Security Behaviour ($\beta = 0.413$; p- value < 0.001) have significant influence towards adoption of digital banking services at the 0.1% significance level but the Social Influence ($\beta = -0.032$; p- value > 0.001) have less significant towards Intention to Use digital banking services. Therefore all the alternative hypothesis got accepted except H5.

4.6 Table 7: *Regression Model Summary and hypothesis test result: Mediating effect of Bank Trust*

Independent Variable	Standardized Coefficients β	t	Sig.	Hypothesis result
Perceived Trust (BT)	0.183	3.498	0.000	-
Use Behaviour (UB)	0.041	0.785	0.000	H2 Accepted

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International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)
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Effort Expectancy (EE)	0.397	5.837	0.000	H4 Accepted
Social Influence (SI)	0.101	1.760	0.008	H6 Accepted
Security Behaviour (SB)	0.358	5.060	0.000	H8Accepted

Table 7 shows standardised coefficient β value after the mediating variable effect of Perceived Trust: User Behaviour (β = 0.041; p-value < 0.001), Effort Expectancy (β = 0.397; p- value < 0.001), Social Influence (β = 0.101; p- value > 0.001), Security Behaviour (β = 0.358; p- value < 0.001) have significant influence towards Intention to use digital banking services at the 0.1% significance level. Therefore all the alternative hypothesis got accepted and null hypothesis got rejected. The above table shows that after having mediating effect the between independent variable and dependent variable the β is going in decrease value, which indicates the mediating variable giving influence towards dependent variable to intention to use digital banking.

5. **Conclusion and Suggestions:** The current study investigates the behavioural determinants of digital banking adoption by looking at the impact of Use Behaviour, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence, and Security Behaviour on Intention to Use digital banking services, with Perceived Trust acting as a mediating variable. The findings emphasise the significance of technological convenience, security practices, and customer trust in driving the uptake of digital banking services. The direct-effect regression model has an adjusted R^2 value of 0.630, indicating that the specified behavioural factors account for 63.0% of the variation in intention to use digital banking. The model with perceived trust has an updated R^2 value of 0.645, indicating an increase in its explanatory power. According to the given findings, the independent variables Effort Expectancy and Security Behaviour have positive and statistically significant correlations with intention to use. This suggests that users may be more ready to adopt digital banking provided the services are simple to use, comprehend, and supported by suitable security measures. The data also imply that perceived trust may be an important factor in determining customers' propensity to use digital banking. Overall, the study adds to our understanding of digital banking adoption by combining behavioural characteristics and perceived trust. It has practical consequences for banks to provide user-friendly platforms, promote safe digital transaction procedures, boost consumer confidence, and deliver effective customer education. Banks may build a more supportive digital banking environment by resolving usability and security concerns, resulting in increased customer acceptance and continued use of digital financial services.

6. **Limitations and Future Research:** Despite its contributions, the current study has some limitations that must be noted when interpreting the results. Although the sample gives useful insights about digital banking users, a bigger sample size could strengthen the study and provide a more complete knowledge of client behaviour. A cross-sectional survey is used in the study to collect data at a certain time point. As a result, it is unable to determine how customers' opinions, trust, security procedures, and intent to utilise digital banking evolve over time. Future studies may collect data from a bigger and more representative sample of digital banking users in India's many states, cities, semi-urban areas, and rural regions. Researchers can utilise bootstrapped indirect-effect analysis or structural equation modelling to determine whether the postulated indirect links are statistically significant and to estimate the magnitude of the mediation effects.

Declaration:

All authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)
ISSN: 2278-0181
Vol. 14, Issue 11, CONFLUENCE - 2026

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