A Comparative Study of Thai Young Consumers' Perceptions of Cross-Border and Domestic E-commerce Based on the TAM–TPB Model

Haoran Sun* and Suttisak Jantavongso

Master of Science Program in International Digital Business (International Program)
Rangsit University, Pathum Thani, Thailand
*Corresponding author, E-mail: s952081056@gmail.com

Abstract

Thailand's rapid expansion of e-commerce has led consumers to engage with both cross-border e-commerce (CEC) and domestic e-commerce (DEC) platforms. This study employs an integrated Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)–Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) framework to examine Thai consumers' perceptions and preferences, considering price perception, product quality, service and after-sales experience, trust, logistics performance, payment convenience, and social influence. A structured online questionnaire was administered to 85 Thai consumers with prior experience using both CEC and domestic platforms. Paired-samples t-tests were conducted to compare perceptions across platforms. Results indicate that CEC significantly outperforms DEC across all evaluated dimensions (all $p<.01$), with moderate-to-large effect sizes (Cohen's $d = 0.37–0.74$), particularly for trust, price perception, and overall evaluation. Thai consumers' future purchase intentions also favor CEC. These findings highlight the importance of integrated service quality, trust formation, and technological performance in shaping platform preference. The study provides insights for e-commerce operators and policymakers to enhance consumer trust and service competitiveness in Thailand's digital market.

Keywords: *Cross-Border E-Commerce, DEC, Consumer Perception, Trust, Service Quality, TAM, TPB, Purchase Intention*

1. Introduction

Thailand's e-commerce sector has undergone rapid expansion, driven by digital transformation initiatives and the rise of mobile-first consumers. With platforms such as Shopee, Lazada, and TikTok Shop, Thai consumers increasingly engage in both cross-border e-commerce (CEC) and domestic e-commerce (DEC). DEC refers to platforms operating within Thailand that provide locally produced goods and localized services. While CEC offers access to a wide variety of global brands at competitive prices, concerns remain regarding shipping delays, customs costs, and product authenticity. In contrast, DEC provides faster delivery, greater consumer trust, and localized after-sales service, aligning with Thai cultural preferences for reliability and personal interaction. This dual growth highlights Thailand's digital competitiveness in Southeast Asia and underscores the importance of understanding consumer motivations across both e-commerce contexts (Khwanngern et al., 2020).

Previous research has examined various aspects of cross-border and domestic e-commerce consumer behavior. For example, Witek-Hajduk and Grudecka (2024) identified trust and perceived service quality as key predictors of cross-border purchase intentions, emphasizing the roles of payment security and legal protection. Theocharis et al. (2025) found that shop location significantly moderates the effects of marketing and social influence on Generation Z's online purchase behavior. In Thailand, Madhavan et al. (2025) applied a Fuzzy DEMATEL approach to show that technological capability, cost, and cultural adaptation drive CEC adoption among Thai MSMEs. Together, these studies suggest that both structural factors (e.g., logistics, legal systems) and psychological factors (e.g., trust, social influence) shape consumer decision-making in e-commerce.

Despite these insights, several gaps remain. Most studies examine either CEC or DEC in isolation, with few directly comparing Thai consumers' perceptions of both platform types. Chen et al. (2023) noted that CEC research remains fragmented, lacking a unified framework integrating cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions. Pang et al. (2025) highlighted the influence of brand image and perceived value on purchasing behavior in Thailand's CEC market, but demographic moderators such as income and age remain underexplored. Punpukdee (2023) emphasized the need for comparative analyses of traditional and digital consumption behaviors to understand evolving shopping preferences. These gaps indicate a need for a comprehensive comparative model that examines how Thai consumers balance price, trust, logistics, and perceived quality across CEC and DEC platforms.

To address these gaps, this study proposes an integrated Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)–Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) framework to explain Thai consumers' purchase intentions toward CEC and DEC. TAM accounts for users' technology acceptance through perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU), while TPB emphasizes attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control as determinants of behavioral intention. In this study, perceived price, service quality, trust, logistics performance, payment convenience, and social influence are incorporated as external variables shaping PU, PEOU, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. PU and PEOU are hypothesized to influence consumers' attitudes toward e-commerce platforms, which in turn affect purchase intention. Social influence contributes to subjective norms, while trust and logistics performance are expected to enhance perceived behavioral control.

Based on this framework, the following exploratory hypotheses are formulated:

H1: Significant differences exist between CEC and DEC in perceived price, product quality, service and after-sales experience, trust, logistics performance, payment convenience, and social influence.

H2: Consumers' attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and purchase intention differ significantly between CEC and DEC platforms.

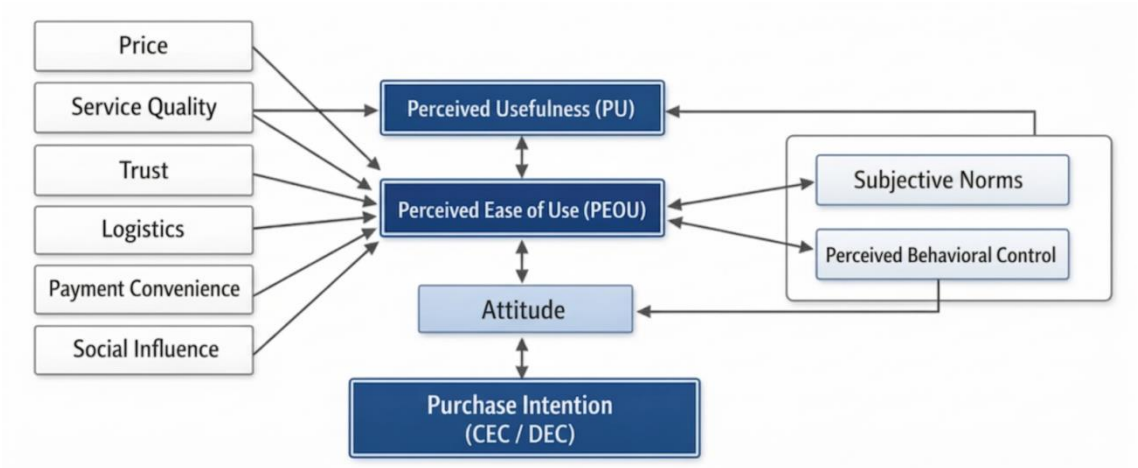

Figure 1 Conceptual framework

2. Objectives

This study has two main objectives:

(1) To examine whether Thai consumers perceive significant differences between CEC and DEC in price perception, product quality, service and after-sales experience, trust, logistics performance, payment convenience, and social influence.

(2) To examine whether Thai consumers' subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and purchase intention differ significantly between CEC and DEC.

As attitude was not directly measured in this study, related behavioral intentions and overall platform preference were employed as proxies for consumer attitudes.

To ensure coherence between the study objectives, hypotheses, and empirical analysis, the results are organized in direct correspondence with the proposed research objectives and exploratory hypotheses. Specifically, paired-samples t-tests are employed to examine perceptual and behavioral differences between CEC and DEC across key evaluative dimensions, including price perception, product quality, service and after-sales experience, trust, logistics performance, payment convenience, social influence, and behavioral intention. The findings reported in Section 4 directly address Objectives 1 and 2 and provide empirical support for Hypotheses H1 and H2, thereby offering a structured and transparent linkage between the study's conceptual framework, analytical approach, and reported outcomes.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a quantitative research design using a structured questionnaire to compare Thai consumers' preferences between CEC and DEC. DEC refers to platforms operating within Thailand that provide locally produced goods and localized services. The questionnaire measures perceptions across price, product quality, service and after-sales experience, trust, logistics performance, payment convenience, social influence, and demographic characteristics. To identify differences in attribute evaluations and preference patterns, descriptive statistics and paired-samples t-tests were employed. The paired-samples design is appropriate for this study because the same participants evaluated both CEC and domestic platforms, allowing for direct comparison of perceptions and preferences within individuals. This design is particularly suitable for exploratory comparative research in a relatively small sample.

Table 1 Demographic Breakdown

Demographic Variable	Sample (n = 85)
Age Group	
18-24 years	20.7% (17)
25-34 years	31.7% (26)
35-44 years	25.6% (21)
45-54 years	15.9% (13)
55+ years	6.1% (5)
Income Level (Annual Income)	
Below 200,000 THB	15.9% (13)
200,000 - 500,000 THB	41.5% (34)
500,001 - 1,000,000 THB	25.6% (21)
Above 1,000,000 THB	9.8% (8)
Prefer not to disclose	11.0% (9)
Geographical Location	
Urban Areas (Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Khon Kaen)	62.2% (51)
Non-Urban Areas (Surrounding provinces)	41.5% (34)
Gender	

Male	28% (24)
Female	72% (42)
Education Level	
High School or Below	11.0% (9)
Some College or an associate degree	25.6% (21)
Bachelor's Degree	46.3% (38)
Master's Degree or Higher	20.7% (17)

3.2 Population

This study employed convenience sampling using an online questionnaire distributed through social media and personal networks. Respondents were screened to ensure prior experience with both CEC and DEC platforms. A total of 85 valid responses were retained for analysis. Sample size justification: Although 85 participants represent a relatively small sample, preliminary power analysis for paired-samples t-tests indicates that detecting a medium effect size (Cohen's d = 0.5) at α = 0.05 with 80% power requires approximately 34–35 participants. Therefore, the current sample is considered adequate for exploratory comparative analysis, while acknowledging limitations for subgroup analyses. Sample characteristics and limitations: The sample primarily comprised respondents aged 25–44 years, with most reporting annual incomes between 200,000 and 500,000 THB. The majority resided in urban areas, and female respondents were overrepresented (72%), which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Given the use of convenience sampling via social media, self-selection bias is possible. Most participants held at least a bachelor's degree (see Table 1).

3.3 Research Instruments

Data were collected using a structured survey questionnaire developed based on the study's integrated conceptual framework and relevant prior e-commerce literature. Measurement items were adapted from established scales in online consumer behavior, service quality, and trust research, with wording modified to fit the Thai context and to enable direct comparison between CEC and DEC.

The questionnaire measured Thai consumers' perceptions across key constructs, including price perception, product quality, service and after-sales experience, trust, logistics performance, payment convenience, and social influence, as well as overall preference and purchase intention. All perceptual items were assessed using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Parallel items were constructed for CEC and DEC (e.g., "CEC/DEC offers competitive prices" and "I feel safe making purchases on CEC/DEC") to ensure consistency and facilitate paired comparison. The instrument also included items capturing demographic characteristics and e-commerce usage experience.

Content validity was assessed using the Index of Item–Objective Congruence (IOC) through expert review by three specialists in e-commerce, consumer behavior, and quantitative research. Minor wording revisions were made in response to expert feedback. All items achieved IOC values above the acceptable threshold of .50, with mean IOC values ranging from .89 to 1 across constructs.

Internal consistency reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha (α), with values≥ .70 considered acceptable. Reliability coefficients for each construct are reported in Table 2. All constructs exceeded this threshold, indicating satisfactory internal consistency and supporting the instrument's suitability for an exploratory comparative analysis of CEC and DEC.

Table 2 Measurement Constructs and Reliability

Construct	Sample Questionnaire Items	No. of Item	Cronbach's α
Price Perception	"CEC/DEC offers competitive prices."	4	.85
Product Quality	"Products meet my quality expectations."	3	.80
Service & After-sales	"Customer service is satisfactory."	3	.78
Trust	"I feel safe making purchases on this platform."	3	.82
Logistics Performance	"Delivery time is acceptable."	3	.81
Payment Convenience	"Payment options are convenient and secure."	3	.77
Social Influence	"Friends or influencers affect my purchase decisions."	3	.79
Overall Preference	"I prefer CEC/DEC for shopping."	2	.83
Purchase Intention	"I am likely to purchase from CEC/DEC in the future."	2	.84

3.4 Data Collection

Data were collected through an online survey administered to Thai consumers between December 1 and December 30, 2025. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained electronically. Eligibility screening ensured prior use of both CEC and DEC platforms. After data cleaning, 85 valid responses were retained. The study received ethical approval from Rangsit University, and all data were collected anonymously for academic purposes only. The sample overrepresents females (72%) and was obtained via convenience sampling through social media, which may introduce self-selection bias and limit the generalizability of the findings. Given the exploratory nature of the study, results are intended to provide preliminary insights rather than to be generalized to the entire Thai population.

3.5 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 26.00. Descriptive statistics were first computed to summarize respondent demographics and overall patterns of the study variables. To compare consumers' evaluations of CEC and DEC, paired-samples t-tests were conducted, as the same respondents evaluated both platform types. This approach allows for direct within-subject comparisons and is appropriate for the exploratory paired-sample design. In addition to statistical significance (two-tailed tests, $\alpha = 0.05$), Cohen's d was calculated to assess effect sizes, providing a measure of practical significance for the differences between CEC and DEC perceptions. Effect sizes were interpreted according to conventional thresholds (small: $d = 0.2$, medium: $d = 0.5$, large: $d = 0.8$). These analyses provide sufficient statistical rigor for exploratory comparative insights while acknowledging the limitations of a relatively small sample and the overrepresentation of certain demographic groups.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results of the Study

4.1.1) Commerce Experience

As shown in Table 3, respondents demonstrated high engagement with online shopping, indicating frequent use of online platforms (Mean = 4.21, SD = 0.85). Most participants also reported prior experience with both cross-border e-commerce (CEC) and domestic e-commerce (DEC) platforms (Mean = 4.13, SD = 0.95). Here, the mean refers to the average response on a 5-point Likert scale, calculated per item. These results confirm that the sample is appropriate for the paired-samples comparative analysis of CEC and DEC perceptions.

Table 3 Commerce Experience of Respondents (n = 85)

No. of item	Item	Mean (M)	SD
1	I frequently shop online.	4.21	.85
2	I have experience using both CEC and DEC platforms.	4.13	.95

4.1.2) Perception of CEC

As presented in Table 4, respondents reported generally favorable perceptions of CEC across all evaluated dimensions. Among functional attributes, payment convenience (M = 11.718, SD = 2.343, CV = 0.200) and logistics performance (M = 12.059, SD = 2.441, CV = 0.202) received relatively high evaluations, indicating strong confidence in payment security and delivery reliability. Product quality was rated positively (M = 12.106, SD = 2.345, CV = 0.194), suggesting that CEC platforms largely meet consumers' quality expectations.

Trust- and service-related dimensions were similarly rated above the midpoint, with trust (M = 11.376, SD = 2.365, CV = .208) and service and after-sales experience (M = 11.294, SD = 2.815, CV = .249) reflecting generally positive but slightly more variable perceptions among respondents. Price perception (M = 11.706, SD = 2.424, CV = .207) also demonstrated moderate-to-high agreement, indicating that CEC is viewed as offering reasonable value for money.

In contrast, social influence showed greater dispersion (CV = .200), suggesting greater variability in the extent to which respondents rely on social cues when engaging with CEC platforms. Overall, these findings indicate that Thai consumers' evaluations of CEC are driven primarily by functional and trust-related attributes, such as payment convenience, logistics performance, product quality, and platform credibility, rather than by social influence.

Table 4 Perception of Cross-Border E-Commerce (n = 85)

Dimension	Max	Min	Mean	SD	CV
Perception of CEC	20	4	16.224	3.364	.207
Price Perception	15	3	11.706	2.424	.207
Product Quality	15	3	12.106	2.345	.194
Service & After-Sales	15	3	11.294	2.815	.249
Trust	15	3	11.376	2.365	.208
Logistics	15	4	12.059	2.441	.202
Payment Convenience	15	3	11.718	2.343	.200
Social Influence	15	4	12.047	2.405	.200

4.1.3) Perception of DEC

As shown in Table 5, respondents reported generally moderate perceptions of DEC across most evaluated dimensions, with mean scores indicating lower overall evaluations and greater variability than those for CEC. Price perception (M = 9.741, SD = 3.570, CV = 0.366) received relatively closer attention, suggesting that cost considerations remain salient when engaging with DEC platforms. Product quality was rated at a moderate level (M = 11.047, SD = 2.857, CV = 0.259), indicating mixed assessments of locally produced products.

Service and trust dimensions exhibited comparatively lower mean scores and higher dispersion, with service and after-sales experience (M = 9.729, SD = 3.489, CV = .359) and trust (M = 9.259, SD = 3.314, CV = .358) reflecting substantial variability in user experience and confidence toward DEC platforms. Logistics performance was rated moderately positively (M = 11.459, SD = 3.061, CV = .267), whereas payment

convenience was rated at a mid-range level (M = 10.518, SD = 2.967, CV = .282), suggesting room for improvement in transaction efficiency.

Social influence also demonstrated moderate agreement (M = 10.859, SD = 2.795, CV = .257), indicating that respondents' reliance on social cues when using DEC platforms varies considerably. Overall, these findings suggest that Thai consumers' perceptions of DEC exhibit greater heterogeneity across dimensions, with price awareness remaining prominent. At the same time, service quality, trust, and transactional convenience appear to be evaluated less consistently.

Table 5 Perception of DEC (n = 85)

Dimension	Max	Min	Mean	SD	CV
Perception of DEC	20	4	14.506	4.261	.294
Price Perception	15	3	9.741	3.57	.366
Product Quality	15	3	11.047	2.857	.259
Service & After-Sales	15	3	9.729	3.489	.359
Trust	15	3	9.259	3.314	.358
Logistics	15	3	11.459	3.061	.267
Payment Convenience	15	3	10.518	2.967	.282
Social Influence	15	3	10.859	2.795	.257

4.1.4) Overall Preference & Purchase Intention

As shown in Table 6, respondents expressed a stronger preference for CEC when purchasing international goods (M = 4.08, SD = .95) compared to DEC for everyday products (M = 3.44, SD = 1.12). Similarly, future purchase intention was higher for CEC (M = 4.05, SD = .99) than for DEC (M = 3.32, SD = 1.14). These results indicate that although CEC is perceived as more attractive for international purchases, DEC is associated with relatively lower preference and repurchase intention, highlighting a divergence in platform positioning across consumption contexts.

Table 6 Overall Preference and Purchase Intention (n = 85)

Dimension	Item	Mean (M)	SD
Overall Preference & Purchase Intention	I prefer CEC for international goods.	4.08	.95
	I prefer DEC for everyday products.	3.44	1.12
	I am likely to purchase from CEC in the future.	4.05	.99
	I am likely to purchase from DEC in the future.	3.32	1.14

4.1.5) Comparing CEC and DEC

Paired-samples t-tests were conducted to compare participants' evaluations of CEC and DEC, as the same respondents assessed both platform types (Table 7 and Figure 2). The results reveal a significant overall difference between the two e-commerce models, with CEC receiving higher total scores than DEC ($t = -6.66$, $p < .01$), accompanied by a medium-to-large effect size ($d = 0.723$).

At the dimensional level, CEC significantly outperformed DEC across all evaluated attributes, including overall perception, price perception, product quality, service and after-sales experience, trust, logistics performance, payment convenience, and social influence (all $p < .01$). Effect sizes ranged from moderate to large ($d = 0.374$–$.735$), indicating meaningful practical differences between the two platforms. Notably, the most significant effects were observed for trust ($d = .735$), price perception ($d = .726$), and

overall perception (d = .710), suggesting that these dimensions contribute most strongly to the observed overall disparity. Comparatively minor but still significant differences were found for logistics performance (d = .374) and payment convenience (d = .500).

Overall, these findings demonstrate a consistent pattern in which CEC is rated more favorably than DEC across both global assessments and specific functional dimensions, highlighting CEC's broad advantages in platform performance, service experience, transactional reliability, and consumer trust.

Table 7 Comparison of CEC and DEC using Paired-Samples T-Tests

Variable	Group	n	M	SD	t	Cohen's d
Total	DEC	85	87.118	24.955	-6.66***	.723
	CEC	85	98.529	19.574		
Perception of DEC	DEC	85	14.506	4.261	-6.549***	.71
	CEC	85	16.224	3.364		
Price Perception	DEC	85	9.741	3.57	-6.695***	.726
	CEC	85	11.706	2.424		
Product Quality	DEC	85	11.047	2.857	-6.223***	.675
	CEC	85	12.106	2.345		
Service & After-Sales	DEC	85	9.729	3.489	-6.297***	.683
	CEC	85	11.294	2.815		
Trust	DEC	85	9.259	3.314	-6.779***	.735
	CEC	85	11.376	2.365		
Logistics	DEC	85	11.459	3.061	-3.446***	.374
	CEC	85	12.059	2.441		
Payment Convenience	DEC	85	10.518	2.967	-4.611***	.5
	CEC	85	11.718	2.343		
Social Influence	DEC	85	10.859	2.795	-5.502***	.597
	CEC	85	12.047	2.405		

Note: Paired-samples t-tests were conducted. *** p < .01.

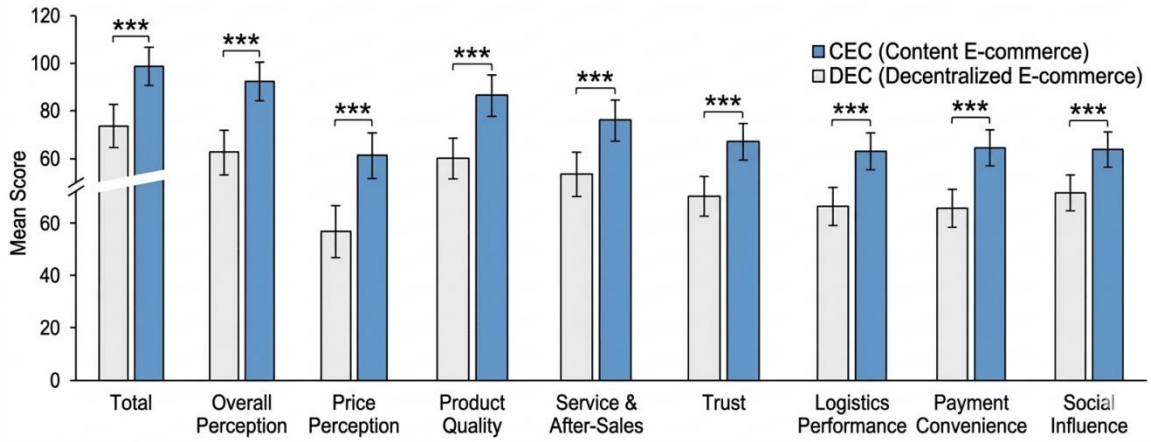

Figure 2 Comparison of Mean Evaluation Scores for Content vs. Decentralized E-commerce across Specific Categories

4.2 Discussion

This study empirically compares Thai consumers' perceptions of CEC and DEC, revealing significant and consistent differences across all evaluated dimensions across all evaluated dimensions. CEC received higher ratings than DEC, with the largest differences observed in trust, price perception, and overall platform evaluation. This suggests that consumers perceive CEC as offering superior functional performance, transactional reliability, and experiential quality compared to domestic e-commerce platforms.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings reinforce the central role of the "perceived value–trust–behavioral intention" pathway. Prior research suggests that system quality, information quality, and service quality in cross-border e-commerce enhance purchase intention indirectly by increasing perceived value (Han et al., 2023). Extending this view, the present study demonstrates that CEC platforms are perceived to deliver more substantial value across both functional and experiential dimensions, thereby strengthening trust and overall platform evaluation. By directly comparing CEC and DEC within a unified TAM–TPB framework, this research advances CEC literature beyond isolated platform analysis. It provides empirical evidence that the combined effects of technological performance, service experience, and social influence shape trust formation.

The results also contribute to existing e-commerce trust models by highlighting the growing importance of integrated service ecosystems. While traditional research emphasizes price advantage and product quality as core drivers of competitiveness (Liu, 2024), the present findings suggest that in Thailand's increasingly mature digital market, after-sales experience, logistics reliability, payment convenience, and platform credibility jointly determine consumer preference. This supports Liu et al.'s (2021) argument that sustainable CEC development depends on building a "service-based trust chain" rather than relying solely on technological optimization. Overall, the findings indicate a shift toward a service-dominant trust mechanism, in which experiential quality and perceived reliability outweigh isolated transactional benefits in shaping consumer loyalty.

From a managerial perspective, CEC platforms seeking long-term competitiveness in Thailand should continue to strengthen localized service provision, Thai-language customer support, transparent dispute-resolution mechanisms, and partnerships with domestic logistics providers to consolidate consumer trust further. For DEC operators, the results highlight the need to enhance platform functionality, service responsiveness, and transactional convenience to narrow the perceived performance gap relative to CEC platforms. At the policy level, strengthening consumer protection frameworks and logistics infrastructure

may facilitate a more balanced competition between cross-border and domestic platforms while promoting the sustainable development of digital commerce. Future research may extend this work through longitudinal designs to examine trust dynamics over time, experimental methods to explore cognitive trust mechanisms, and a deeper investigation of social influence pathways, thereby refining e-commerce trust models and informing digital trade strategies in Southeast Asia.

Despite the contributions of this study, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the sample exhibits a gender imbalance, with 72% female respondents, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to the broader population of Thai consumers. Second, the sample is geographically concentrated, primarily in Bangkok and surrounding urban areas, potentially introducing regional bias and reducing the representativeness of consumers from other provinces. Third, this study employed a cross-sectional research design, capturing perceptions at a single point in time, which constrains the ability to infer causal relationships or examine changes in consumer attitudes and behaviors over time. Future research could address these limitations by employing longitudinal or experimental designs, expanding geographic coverage, and ensuring more balanced demographic representation to enhance the robustness and external validity of the findings.

5. Conclusion

This study provides a comparative examination of Thai consumers' perceptions of CEC and DEC within a rapidly maturing digital market. Drawing on a quantitative survey and paired-samples comparisons, the findings demonstrate that Thai consumers clearly differentiate between the two e-commerce models across multiple evaluative dimensions. CEC consistently outperforms DEC in overall perception, price perception, product quality, service, and after-sales experience, trust, logistics performance, payment convenience, and social influence, indicating CEC's comprehensive advantages in both functional and experiential aspects.

These results suggest that Thailand's e-commerce market has entered a stage in which integrated service ecosystems and trust-based mechanisms play a decisive role in shaping platform preference and purchase intention. Beyond price competitiveness and product availability, consumers increasingly prioritize transactional reliability, after-sales support, logistics efficiency, and platform credibility. From a theoretical perspective, the findings reinforce and extend existing models of e-commerce adoption by highlighting the combined effects of perceived value, service quality, and trust formation in mature digital markets, particularly within culturally embedded consumption contexts.

From a practical standpoint, the study offers actionable implications for both platform operators and policymakers. Cross-border e-commerce platforms seeking long-term competitiveness in Thailand should continue to strengthen localized customer service, Thai-language support, transparent dispute-resolution mechanisms, and partnerships with domestic logistics providers to further consolidate consumer trust and platform loyalty. For DEC platforms, the results highlight the need to enhance platform functionality, service responsiveness, and transactional convenience to narrow the perceived performance gap with CEC platforms. At the policy level, the findings underscore the importance of improving consumer protection regulations, standardizing return and refund procedures, and supporting digital logistics infrastructure to foster trust and promote balanced competition between cross-border and domestic platforms.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, data were collected via convenience sampling through an online survey, which limits generalizability to the broader Thai population. Second, the relatively small sample size constrains statistical power and the ability to conduct subgroup analyses.

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