



A Study on Order Fulfillment Process and Customer Experience in E-Commerce Enterprise

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Abstract – Order fulfillment has become a central determinant of customer satisfaction in the e-commerce industry, as customers increasingly judge an online retailer not by its product catalogue alone but by how accurately, safely, and quickly their orders are processed and delivered. This study examines the order fulfillment process and its relationship with customer experience within the e-commerce operations of a retail and lifestyle-products organization. Using a descriptive research design, primary data were collected from 62 employees engaged in order processing, inventory management, warehousing, logistics, and customer support functions through a structured questionnaire. The study evaluates perceptions of packaging quality, inventory management, order tracking, warehouse operations, order accuracy, inter-departmental communication, complaint handling, technological support, dispatch timeliness, and delivery performance. The findings indicate that while packaging quality, order accuracy, and departmental communication are rated highly, inventory management and stock visibility emerge as the areas most in need of improvement. Fast delivery is identified as the single most influential factor shaping customer satisfaction, followed by customer service and product quality. The study concludes with practical recommendations, including the adoption of advanced inventory management systems, real-time order tracking, and stronger logistics coordination, to strengthen operational efficiency and enhance customer experience in competitive e-commerce environments.

Keywords – Order fulfillment; customer experience; e-commerce; inventory management; logistics; warehouse operations; customer satisfaction.

I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of e-commerce has transformed the way businesses operate and the way customers purchase products and services. With the increasing use of the internet, smartphones, and digital payment systems, online shopping has become an essential part of modern consumer behaviour. Customers today expect a seamless shopping experience that includes easy product selection, secure payment options, accurate order processing, timely delivery, and efficient customer support. As a result, organizations are focusing on improving their operational processes to meet customer expectations and remain competitive in the market.

Order fulfillment is one of the most important functions in the e-commerce industry. It refers to the complete process of receiving, processing, packing, shipping, and delivering customer orders. The order fulfillment process begins when a customer places an order through an online platform and ends when the product is successfully delivered. This process involves several interlinked activities, including inventory management, warehouse operations, order processing, packaging, dispatch, transportation, and delivery tracking.

An efficient order fulfillment process is essential for ensuring customer satisfaction and operational success. Customers expect their orders to be delivered accurately, safely, and within the promised time frame. Any delay,

incorrect shipment, damaged product, or lack of communication can negatively affect customer satisfaction and damage the reputation of the organization. Businesses therefore continuously work to improve their order fulfillment systems through technology, automation, and effective supply chain management practices.

Customer experience refers to the overall perception and satisfaction of customers based on their interactions with a company throughout the purchasing journey. In e-commerce, customer experience is shaped by factors such as website usability, product availability, pricing, order accuracy, delivery speed, packaging quality, and after-sales service. A positive customer experience not only increases satisfaction but also encourages repeat purchases, customer loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth promotion.

The relationship between order fulfillment and customer experience is closely interconnected. A well-managed order fulfillment process ensures that customers receive the right products at the right time and in good condition, which directly strengthens organizational reputation. Conversely, inefficiencies in order fulfillment can lead to complaints, returns, cancellations, and loss of business opportunities. This study therefore examines the order fulfillment process within the e-commerce operations of a retail organization and evaluates its contribution to customer experience, drawing on the perceptions of employees directly engaged in order processing, warehousing, logistics, and customer support.



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Background of the Study

The organization on which this study is based is a retail enterprise that combines physical retail outlets with a growing e-commerce business, offering lifestyle and everyday consumer products to customers across a wide geographic base. Its e-commerce department is responsible for online listings, inventory updates, order processing, packaging, shipping coordination, payment verification, and customer support, working closely with warehouse and logistics teams to ensure timely delivery. As is common in growing e-commerce operations, the increasing volume of online orders has placed pressure on inventory accuracy, warehouse capacity, and coordination across departments, making a systematic evaluation of the fulfillment process both timely and relevant.

Importance of the Study

An efficient order fulfillment process has become one of the most important factors influencing customer satisfaction and business success in the highly competitive e-commerce market. As order volumes grow, it becomes essential for organizations to manage inventory, warehousing, packaging, dispatch, and logistics efficiently, since any delay or error in these activities can affect customer satisfaction and reputation. This study is undertaken to understand the order fulfillment process followed by the case organization and to evaluate its impact on customer experience. It also helps identify the strengths and challenges of the existing system and offers suggestions for improving operational efficiency and customer satisfaction, while providing practical knowledge that connects academic concepts of supply chain management with real business practice.

Statement of the Problem

The e-commerce industry is highly competitive, and customer satisfaction depends largely on the efficiency of the order fulfillment process. Delays in order processing, inventory inaccuracies, packaging issues, delivery delays, and ineffective communication with customers can negatively affect the overall shopping experience. Even where an organization has established a functioning e-commerce system, continuous evaluation of the order fulfillment process is necessary to identify operational challenges and opportunities for improvement. This study focuses on analysing the existing order fulfillment process and understanding its impact on customer satisfaction and business performance.

Objectives of the Study

Primary Objective: To study the order fulfillment process and its impact on customer experience in the e-commerce operations of the case organization.

Secondary Objectives:

1. To understand the order processing system followed by the organization.
2. To study inventory management practices in the e-commerce department.
3. To examine the packaging and dispatch process.

4. To analyse the role of logistics in timely product delivery.
5. To identify factors affecting customer satisfaction.
6. To provide suitable suggestions for improving operational efficiency.

Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is limited to the e-commerce operations of the case organization. It focuses on understanding the complete order fulfillment process, including order processing, inventory management, warehousing, packaging, dispatch, and delivery, and examines how these activities influence customer satisfaction and overall business performance. The study identifies the strengths of the existing system and recommends practical measures for improving operational efficiency and customer experience; the findings may also serve as a reference for future research in e-commerce operations, logistics, and supply chain management.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of literature is an important part of any research study, as it helps the researcher understand previous work, identify research gaps, and build a theoretical foundation for the present study. In the field of e-commerce, several researchers have examined the impact of order fulfillment, logistics, inventory management, and customer satisfaction on organizational performance; the following studies provide the theoretical grounding for the present research. Subburaj et al. (2026) examined the effect of digital marketing strategies on consumer purchasing behaviour in the Indian home appliance market. The study highlighted targeted campaigns, influencer marketing, online demonstrations, product comparisons, and customer reviews as important factors influencing purchase decisions. It concluded that digital marketing and digital-first initiatives significantly improve consumer engagement, conversion, and purchase decisions.

Subburaj (2025) conducted an empirical study on factors influencing consumers' online purchasing behaviour and the challenges faced while shopping through e-commerce platforms. The study found that convenience, product availability, technological advancement, and customer satisfaction encourage online shopping, while trust, security, and delivery issues remain major concerns. The findings emphasized that understanding consumer preferences helps online retailers improve marketing strategies, service quality, and customer satisfaction.

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Subburaj, Valarmathi, and Anitha (2026) examined the impact of social media on consumer spending habits in online shopping using data from 114 respondents. The study found that influencer endorsements, reviews, testimonials, visual content, discounts, and advertisements significantly influence consumer purchasing behaviour and online engagement. The authors recommended platform-specific digital strategies, influencer marketing,



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personalized promotions, and customer reviews to improve consumer engagement and sales.

Heuwinkel (2022) examined the influence of warehousing and order fulfillment on customer satisfaction in B2C e-commerce and found that efficient warehouse processes—receiving, storage, order picking, and distribution—play a significant role in improving customer satisfaction, with accurate processing, effective inventory management, transparent tracking, and timely delivery enhancing the customer experience.

Vakulenko, Figueirinhas, Hellström, and Pålsson (2024) analysed roughly 100 million online reviews using text mining and identified twelve fulfillment touchpoints grouped into delivery, packaging, and returns. Positive experiences in delivery speed, on-time delivery, and packaging quality significantly improved ratings, while damaged packaging, incorrect deliveries, and poor return policies reduced satisfaction; negative experiences were found to weigh more heavily on perception than positive ones.

Ramanathan (2010) studied the relationship between order fulfillment performance and customer satisfaction, finding that product availability, delivery reliability, order accuracy, and service quality significantly influence satisfaction and repeat purchase behaviour, and that timely, accurate order processing builds customer trust and loyalty.

Le, Bui, and Ngo (2026), using structural equation modelling on data from 314 online shoppers, found that order accuracy, timely delivery, product condition, and effective handling of discrepancies significantly influence satisfaction and repurchase intention, with satisfaction partially mediating the relationship between fulfillment performance and repurchase behaviour.

Srinivasan, Anderson, and Ponnnavolu (2002) identified trust, convenience, website performance, order fulfillment, and satisfaction as key determinants of behavioural intention in online shopping, concluding that efficient fulfillment is essential for building long-term customer relationships.

Ricker and Kalakota (1999) emphasised that generating online orders alone is not sufficient for e-commerce success; integrated fulfillment activities—processing, inventory management, picking, packing, shipping, and delivery—are equally important, as accurate and timely fulfillment reduces logistics costs and strengthens customer loyalty.

Rapanen (2012) highlighted that efficient order processing, inventory management, warehousing, and timely delivery are essential to customer satisfaction, and that coordination between fulfillment stages improves operational performance and enhances the customer experience.

Mahmood (2016), based on a survey of 50 respondents in an online retail context, found that website design, ease of use, transaction security, product quality, and reliability significantly affect customer satisfaction, and that efficient service delivery encourages continued online purchasing.

Ngai and Gunasekaran (2004) proposed an intelligent B2C e-commerce system for re-engineering the e-order fulfillment process, emphasising the integration of information technology, supply chain management, and customer relationship management to reduce processing time, improve order accuracy, and increase customer satisfaction.

Sathyanarayan and Subburaj (2021) investigated the influence of emotional attachment, cognitive memory, and purchase situations on brand loyalty and consumers' willingness to pay a premium. The study found a significant positive relationship between emotional attachment and brand loyalty, while purchase situations partially mediated these relationships. The study concluded that strengthening emotional connections with consumers can enhance brand loyalty and develop long-term customer relationships.

Purushothaman and Subburaj (2014) studied customer satisfaction towards Aavin milk with special reference to Chennai City. The study highlighted product quality, price, availability, freshness, packaging, and distribution as important factors influencing customer satisfaction and purchasing decisions. The findings emphasized the importance of understanding customer expectations and continuously improving product and service quality to build customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Darboe (2022), using customer diaries and in-depth interviews, found that delivery performance plays a crucial role in shaping overall satisfaction, and that customers value clear communication regarding delivery status, experiencing dissatisfaction when they feel a lack of control over the fulfillment process.

Thirumalai and Sinha (2005) examined customization of the online purchase process, finding that features such as real-time order tracking, delivery customization, and timely updates significantly improve satisfaction and strengthen customer relationships.

Strzębicki (2025) analysed logistics service provider websites and identified fast shipping, seamless IT integration, flexible cooperation, error-free processing, personalised packaging, and multiple delivery options as the fulfillment attributes most valued by customers.

Camilleri (2022), based on data from 430 online shoppers, found that effective order fulfillment significantly enhances satisfaction, loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth, with consumers valuing accurate deliveries and reliable after-sales support.



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Gajewska, Zimon, Kaczor, and Madzík (2019), applying the SERVQUAL method, found reliability, security, and service assurance to be the most important determinants of satisfaction, with efficient fulfillment and dependable service performance strengthening customer trust.

Chen, Liu, Tan, Pang, and Duan (2025) examined fulfillment services in social livestreaming commerce and found that efficient order receipt, pick-and-pack operations, inventory visibility, and timely delivery significantly influence perceptions of service quality and customer loyalty.

Nguyen (2019) highlighted that technological advancements—secure payment systems, flexible return policies, and user-friendly platforms—have improved the reliability, convenience, and security of e-commerce, strengthening customer trust and satisfaction.

Giao (2020), surveying 200 online shoppers on an e-commerce platform, found that trust, customer service, website design, and safety positively influence satisfaction, with trust emerging as the most significant factor.

Wandoko, Haryanto, and Panggati (2023) found that e-trust and e-satisfaction have a significant positive impact on customer e-loyalty, driven by information quality and reduced financial risk perception.

Zwaan (2024) examined the relationship between order processing efficiency and customs clearance operations, finding that coordination among supply chain stakeholders reduces delays and improves the cross-border movement of goods.

Casaló, Flavián, and Guinalíu (2011) found that trust is among the most important factors affecting online purchase decisions, as it reduces perceived risk and increases confidence in transactions, and that secure services and reliable distribution help build customer trust.

Summary of the Literature

The literature reviewed indicates that order fulfillment, logistics management, inventory control, and supply chain coordination are major factors influencing customer satisfaction in e-commerce. Studies consistently show that efficient order processing, timely delivery, inventory accuracy, and technology adoption improve customer experience and organizational performance, and that negative fulfillment experiences weigh more heavily on customer perception than positive ones. These studies provide the theoretical foundation for the empirical analysis undertaken in this study.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology provides a systematic framework for collecting, organizing, analysing, and interpreting data to achieve the objectives of the study. The present study adopted a descriptive research design to examine e-

commerce order fulfilment, inventory management, warehouse operations, packaging, dispatch, logistics, and customer service activities. Data were collected from 62 employees working in e-commerce, warehouse, logistics, inventory, and customer support functions using a convenience sampling technique.

A structured questionnaire containing close-ended, dichotomous, five-point Likert-scale, frequency-based, and multiple-choice questions was used for primary data collection. Primary data were also supported through informal discussions and direct observation of fulfillment activities. Secondary data were collected from books, journals, research theses, and reliable online sources related to e-commerce, logistics, and supply chain management. The collected data were systematically analysed and interpreted to identify operational strengths, challenges, customer-service issues, and areas requiring improvement.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This section presents the results of the survey of 62 employees (N = 62 throughout). Related items using the same response scale are grouped into single tables for conciseness; percentages are calculated on the full sample.

Sample Profile

Profile Variable	Category	Respondents	%
Work experience	Less than 1 year	16	25.81
	1–3 years	22	35.48
	3–5 years	9	14.52
	More than 5 years	15	24.19
Department	E-Commerce	20	32.26
Profile Variable	Category	Respondents	%
	Warehouse	9	14.52
	Logistics	11	17.74
	Inventory	11	17.74
	Customer Support	11	17.74

Source: Primary data (N = 62)

The majority of respondents (35.48%) had 1–3 years of experience, and respondents were fairly well distributed across functions, with the largest share (32.26%) from the e-commerce department itself and roughly equal representation from logistics, inventory, and customer support (17.74% each). This spread provides a cross-functional, reasonably experienced view of fulfillment operations. Separately, 88.71% of respondents reported being familiar with the organization's order fulfillment process, against 11.29% who were not — indicating a high overall level of process awareness.

Ratings of Core Fulfillment Functions (Excellent–Poor Scale)

Function	Excellent %	Good %	Average %	Poor %
Packaging quality	59.68	27.42	8.06	4.84
Inventory	30.64	45.16	17.74	6.46



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management				
Order tracking system	48.39	29.03	20.97	1.61
Warehouse operations	33.88	37.09	22.58	6.44
Accuracy of customer orders	56.45	24.19	14.52	4.84

Source: Primary data (N = 62)

Packaging quality and order accuracy received the strongest ratings, with 59.68% and 56.45% of respondents respectively rating them Excellent. Inventory management received the weakest profile of this group — only 30.64% Excellent against 45.16% Good and a combined 24.20% Average/Poor — foreshadowing its later identification as the top improvement priority. Order tracking and warehouse operations were rated favourably overall, with a combined Excellent-or-Good share above 65% in both cases.

Agreement with Statements on Operational Support (Likert Scale)

Statement	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %
Inventory availability is properly maintained	29.03	25.81	33.87	9.68	1.61
Communication between departments is effective	43.54	41.93	11.29	1.61	1.61
Customer complaints are handled effectively	45.16	30.64	19.35	3.25	1.61
Technology improves operational efficiency	38.70	22.59	30.65	6.45	1.61
Warehouse has sufficient storage facilities	22.58	53.22	17.74	0.00	6.45

Source: Primary data (N = 62)

Inter-departmental communication and complaint handling drew the strongest agreement (combined Strongly Agree/Agree shares of 85.47% and 75.80% respectively), reflecting well-coordinated support functions. Inventory availability drew the weakest agreement of this group, with the largest single response (33.87%) being Neutral rather than any agreement category — again pointing to inventory-related uncertainty. Views on technology were more divided, with a substantial Neutral share (30.65%) alongside majority agreement.

Frequency Ratings of Dispatch and Delivery Activities (Always–Never Scale)

Activity	Always %	Often %	Sometimes %	Never %
Products packed safely before dispatch	64.51	20.97	11.30	3.22
Customer orders dispatched on time	20.97	56.45	20.97	1.61
Customers receive products on time	41.94	32.25	19.36	6.45

Product quality maintained during delivery	53.22	33.88	11.29	1.61
Returns/replacements handled efficiently	54.84	25.81	14.52	4.83

Source: Primary data (N = 62)

Safe packing before dispatch (64.51% Always) and efficient handling of returns and replacements (54.84% Always) were rated most consistently positive. Dispatch timeliness showed the most variability, with the largest response being Often (56.45%) rather than Always, suggesting some inconsistency in meeting dispatch schedules even though on-time customer delivery and delivery-stage product quality were both rated favourably overall.

Priority Areas and Drivers of Customer Satisfaction

Area Needing Most Improvement	%	Factor with Greatest Impact on Satisfaction	%
Order Processing	17.74	Fast Delivery	27.42
Inventory Management	43.55	Customer Service	24.19
Packaging	9.68	Product Quality	20.97
Logistics	11.29	Packaging	14.52
Customer Service	17.74	Product Availability	12.90

Source: Primary data (N = 62)

Inventory management was clearly identified as the area most requiring improvement (43.55%) — nearly two-and-a-half times the next-highest category — corroborating the more mixed ratings observed for inventory management and availability above. On the demand side, fast delivery was rated the most influential factor in customer satisfaction (27.42%), followed by customer service (24.19%) and product quality (20.97%), consistent with the literature reviewed, which similarly identifies delivery speed as a leading driver of e-commerce satisfaction.

V. FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

Key Findings

1. The majority of respondents (35.48%) have 1–3 years of work experience, indicating adequate familiarity with order fulfillment operations.
2. Respondents were drawn fairly evenly across the e-commerce, warehouse, logistics, inventory, and customer support functions, providing a well-rounded, cross-functional perspective.
3. A large majority of employees (88.71%) are familiar with the order fulfillment process, reflecting a high level of process awareness.
4. Packaging quality is rated highly, with the large majority of respondents rating it Excellent or Good.
5. Inventory management is viewed positively overall but shows comparatively more mixed ratings than other functions, pointing to scope for improvement.
6. The order tracking system is perceived as effective and supportive of smooth fulfillment operations.



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7. Warehouse operations are generally rated as satisfactory, supporting efficient order processing.
8. Order accuracy is maintained at a high level, reducing order-related issues and supporting customer satisfaction.
9. Perceptions of inventory availability are mixed, with the largest share of respondents Neutral, indicating a need for better stock visibility and control.
10. Communication between departments is rated as effective, supporting coordination among teams.
11. Customer complaints are perceived to be handled effectively, contributing to positive customer relationships.
12. Technology is seen as playing a significant, though not yet uniformly strong, role in improving operational efficiency.
13. Warehouse storage facilities are considered sufficient to support current business operations.
14. Products are reported to be packed safely before dispatch in the large majority of cases, reducing transit damage risk.
15. Customer orders are generally dispatched on time, though with some inconsistency.
16. Most customers are perceived to receive their products within the expected delivery period.
17. Product quality is maintained effectively during delivery in most cases.
18. Customer returns and replacement requests are perceived to be handled efficiently.
19. Inventory management is identified as the single area requiring the greatest improvement.
20. Fast delivery is considered the most important factor influencing customer satisfaction, followed by customer service and product quality.

Suggestions

1. Implement advanced inventory management software to improve inventory visibility and stock accuracy.
2. Conduct regular inventory audits to reduce stock discrepancies and shortages.
3. Strengthen warehouse management practices to improve storage utilisation and operational efficiency.
4. Enhance coordination between inventory, warehouse, logistics, and customer service departments.
5. Upgrade order tracking systems to provide real-time tracking information to customers.
6. Increase the use of automation technologies in order processing and inventory management.
7. Provide regular training programmes for employees involved in order fulfillment operations.
8. Improve demand forecasting techniques to ensure better product availability.
9. Collaborate closely with logistics partners to reduce delivery delays and improve service reliability.
10. Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) for monitoring order processing, dispatch, delivery, and customer service performance.
11. Continue maintaining high packaging standards to minimise product damage during transportation.
12. Strengthen customer complaint-handling mechanisms to ensure faster resolution of issues.

13. Regularly collect customer feedback to identify operational gaps and improvement opportunities.
14. Prioritise improvements in delivery speed, given that fast delivery is the leading factor influencing customer satisfaction.
15. Conduct periodic reviews of the order fulfillment process to ensure continuous improvement and an enhanced customer experience.

Discussion

Taken together, the findings suggest a fulfillment system that performs strongly in the customer-facing and execution-oriented stages of the process — packaging, order accuracy, dispatch, delivery, and complaint handling — while showing comparatively greater room for improvement in the upstream, planning-oriented stage of inventory management. This pattern is consistent with the literature reviewed: Heuwinkel (2022) and Ngai and Gunasekaran (2004) both emphasise that upstream warehouse and inventory processes are foundational to downstream service quality, so weaknesses at this stage can constrain performance elsewhere even when execution-stage indicators appear strong. Similarly, the prominence of fast delivery as the leading driver of satisfaction echoes Vakulenko et al. (2024) and Ramanathan (2010), both of which found delivery speed and reliability to be dominant touchpoints in shaping customer perception. The comparatively strong ratings for inter-departmental communication and complaint handling suggest that the organizational and service-recovery dimensions of fulfillment are functioning well, providing a solid foundation on which targeted improvements to inventory visibility and stock accuracy could yield disproportionate gains in overall customer experience.

IV. CONCLUSION

E-commerce has become an integral part of modern business operations, and organizations are continuously refining their processes to meet rising customer expectations. This study examined the order fulfillment process and its relationship with customer experience within the e-commerce operations of a retail organization, drawing on the perceptions of 62 employees across order processing, inventory management, warehousing, logistics, and customer support functions.

The findings show that order processing, packaging, dispatch, delivery, and complaint handling are all functioning at a generally high standard, and that communication across departments effectively supports coordinated operations. At the same time, inventory management and stock availability emerge as the clearest areas for improvement, and fast delivery stands out as the single most influential factor shaping customer satisfaction. These results reinforce the conclusion, consistent across the literature reviewed, that order fulfillment and customer experience are closely interconnected: strengthening the upstream planning functions of inventory and stock control, alongside continued investment in delivery speed and



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reliability, is likely to yield the greatest improvement in overall customer satisfaction.

The study also illustrates the practical relevance of academic supply chain and logistics concepts to real-world e-commerce operations, and it is hoped that the recommendations offered — particularly around inventory management systems, real-time tracking, and performance monitoring — will be of practical value to organizations seeking to strengthen their order fulfillment processes and enhance customer experience in an increasingly competitive e-commerce environment.

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