



How Consumers in Pakistan are Embracing Security Measures in the Era of **Digital Payments**

Insights from Visa's Stay Secure Study 2025



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Executive Summary



Online scams are prevalent around the world, prompting consumers to be on alert for phishing attempts and other schemes that put their financial stability at risk amid growing adoption of digital payments.

To better understand consumer awareness and behaviors around fraud, **Wakefield Research, on behalf of Visa, has conducted a survey of 5,800 adults across the CEMEA region (17 markets in Africa, Eastern Europe and the Middle East). Included in this survey was Pakistan (500 consumers). This is the 5th edition of the study in Pakistan, with the last one conducted in 2023.**

This year's Visa Stay Secure Study reveals that 98% of consumers in Pakistan have taken cautionary measures around digital payments, such as ignoring requests via email and other means asking them to transfer money on someone else's behalf and setting up text messages to notify them of transactions.

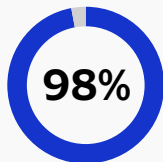
Only 45% of Pakistani consumers consider themselves knowledgeable when it comes to recognizing fraud and scams. This is cause for concern as online scams grow in sophistication and frequency. Fraud education is crucial given the growing adoption of digital payments across the region – 69% of consumers anticipate using digital payments more in the coming 12 months, with employed Pakistani consumers leading the charge. Nearly three-quarters (74%) of working consumers expect to use digital payments more over the next 12 months.

When it comes to falling victim to fraud, the research shows that consumers are most likely to respond to potential scam emails that warn of a security risk, such as a stolen password or data breach (39%) or a notice that their credit card has been blocked (32%). They are also vulnerable to the allure of a financial opportunity, such as a good deal (33%). When this question was asked in 2023, 53% were likely to click on a financial opportunity, indicating that industry efforts to educate consumers about scams could be yielding dividends. However, those likely to act on messages commonly used by scammers, including by clicking on a link or responding to the sender, has not changed since 2023, staying at 91%.

In Pakistan, consumers have embraced digital payments, and the research shows there is high trust, with 82% confirming they mostly or completely trust digital payments.

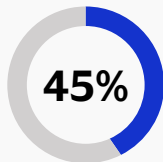
This report outlines the survey's key findings across seven key themes in Pakistan.

Key Findings



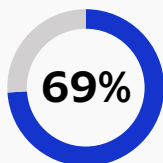
98%

have taken **precautions** to **secure payments**



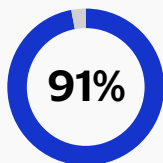
45%

consider themselves **knowledgeable** when it comes to recognizing **fraud and scams**



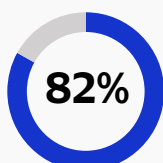
69%

anticipate using **digital payments** more in the coming **12 months**



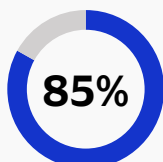
91%

are likely to act on **messages commonly** used by scammers, including **clicking on a link or responding to the sender**



82%

mostly or completely **trust digital payments**



85%

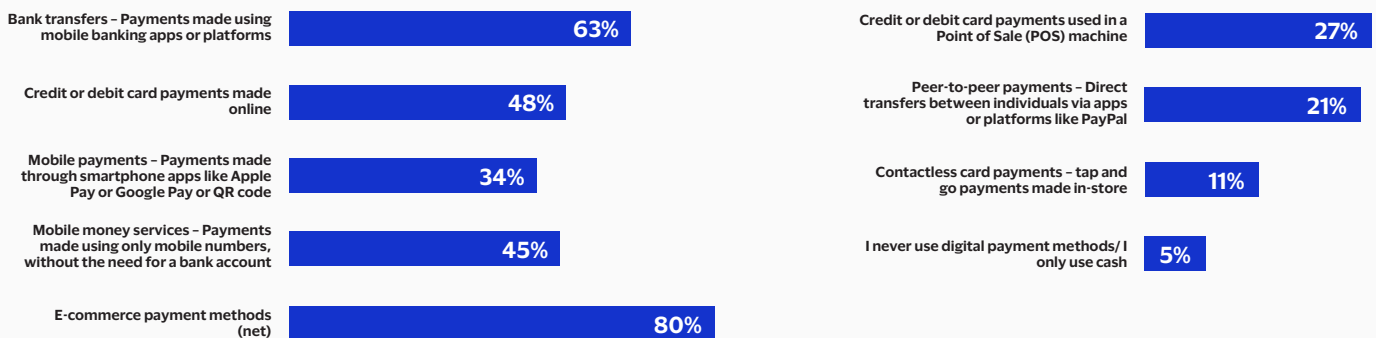
feel more secure making online payments when they're required to enter a texted code or click on a link from the vendor to confirm their identities

Falling for Scams: Once Bitten, Twice Shy



Reliance on digital payments is on the rise around the world as the adoption of these payments – whether through e-commerce platforms or in-store – continues to rapidly grow. **As we look ahead, the future of payments is increasingly digital, with 69% of Pakistani consumers anticipating that they will use digital payments more in the coming 12 months.**

Q: What digital payment methods do you use?



Unfortunately, digital payment scams are also prevalent and often successful. More than half of consumers in Pakistan (55%) have previously fallen for a scam, compared with 52% in 2023. In fact, an unfortunate 20% have been victims on multiple occasions.

The impact of these scams is significant for consumer confidence and loyalty in Pakistan, with more than half (53%) believing that experiencing fraud or an unauthorized transaction would reduce their trust in digital payments. Yet, it is noteworthy that among those who have been a past victim of a scam, 84% mostly or completely trust digital payments, more than the level of trust of those who have never fallen for fraud (80%).

82%

mostly or completely trust **digital payments**

84%

of **scam victims still trust digital payments** - more than those who've never been scammed (80%)



Spotlight:

Friends, Family Seen as More Susceptible to Scams

While Pakistani consumers have some degree of confidence in their own ability to spot fraud, they worry more about those closest to them.

Almost all (93%) believe their friends or family would fall for a potential scam, especially if it's a text message asking them to verify account information (56%). When the same question was asked in 2023, 58%* said they believed their friends or family would fall for a potential scam.

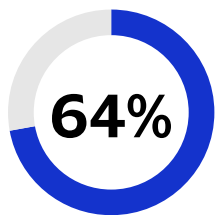
In Pakistan, 80% believe that Gen X (44-59 years old) digital payment users are most likely to get scammed online. Meanwhile, 96% of Boomers (60-78 years old) admit they are likely to act on suspicious communication, higher than Gen X (92%), Millennials (90%), and Gen Z (90%). Boomers would most likely be fooled by a message about a financial opportunity such as a good deal or way to earn money (46%).

Q: Who is most likely to fall victim to online scams?



On the Lookout for Bad Actors and Fraudsters

Pakistani consumers are very much on guard for suspicious communications via email or text message that could be traps set by scammers intent on stealing some of their hard-earned cash.



The biggest red flag that a message is coming from a fraudster is a request to reset a password or account information because of a potential data breach, with 64% ranking that communication among the top three most suspicious communications they receive.

The good news: awareness that this type of message is a scam is improving. When this question was asked in 2023, 62% ranked it among their top three.

Beyond password resets and data breaches, Pakistani consumers also exhibit high suspicion towards notifications of a reward, coupon, or gift card, with 58% ranking it among their top three most suspicious digital communications. Similarly, notices regarding problems with an order, subscription, or account are a significant red flag for half (50%) of consumers.

Q: How much has news about cyber fraud (e.g., data breaches, email scams, phishing, etc.) impacted your use of digital payments?

Asked among those who use digital payment methods

Significantly reduced my use

16%

Somewhat reduced my use

40%

Has not impacted my use

44%

And for a majority (56%), news of cyber fraud – such as data breaches and email scams – have led them to reduce their use of digital payments. This further underlines the critical need for not only consistent awareness and education initiatives to empower consumers to protect themselves, but also the importance of communicating the evolving security measures adopted across the digital payments landscape.



Taking Precautions to Secure Payments

Amid so much risk, it's best to take precautions. **Nearly all consumers (98%) have acted cautiously, refraining from sharing their card or account credentials (48%) and not responding to emails asking them to transfer money on someone else's behalf (52%).** Many have proactively adopted measures to secure payments, such as setting up text message alerts (52%) to notify them of account transactions.

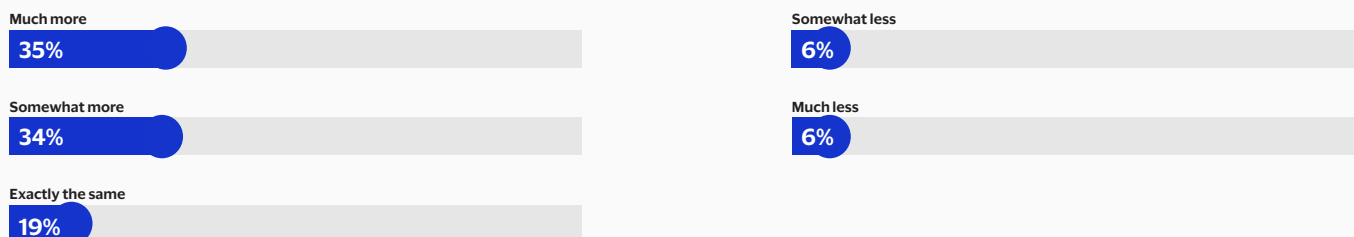


Monitoring bank and credit card statements for suspicious activity (52%) is also a popular strategy.

Digital Payments Increasingly Gain Traction

Consumers have embraced digital payments in Pakistan, **where a notable 69% anticipate using digital payments more in the coming 12 months.** They use a variety of methods, the most common of which is bank transfers via a mobile banking application or platform (63%), which has made their lives easier.

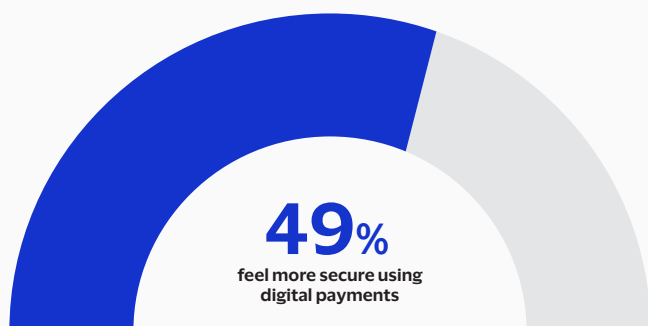
Q: Looking ahead, do you expect that you will use digital payments more, less, or exactly the same in the next 12 months?



There's a clear preference among the types of digital payments that Pakistani consumers are gravitating towards. The vast majority (80%) report using e-commerce payment methods such as credit or debit card payments online (48%) and mobile money services, without the need for a bank account (45%).

Growth in digital payments comes with many benefits. **Consumers in Pakistan view these types of payments as quicker and simpler than other methods (62%) and appreciate that they allow them to make payments anytime, anywhere (66%).**

Q: How have digital payments impacted your daily life?



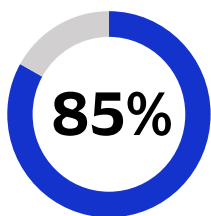
Importantly, **58% believe digital payments** make it **easier to send money** to friends and family.

Remittances from abroad are a major source of income in Pakistan, and a lifeline to needy families, reinforcing the need for secure payments.

Building Trust in Digital Payments



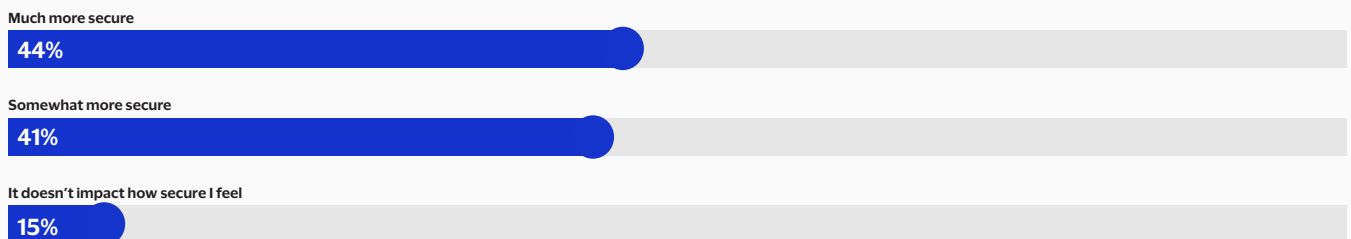
As digital payments grow in use and popularity, there are steps that retailers, banks and payments processors can take to promote even greater trust. This includes requiring shoppers to enter a code they receive via text message or to click on a link to confirm a purchase or attach a security badge, symbol, or other icon to digital transactions.



In Pakistan, consumers who use digital payments feel markedly more secure (85%) making online payments when they're required to enter a texted code or click on a link from the vendor to confirm their identities.

Consumers are also reassured when they see security badges, symbols, or icons from trusted companies while shopping online (37%).

Q: When making online payments, how much more secure do you feel when you're required to enter a texted code or click on a link from the vendor to confirm your identity?





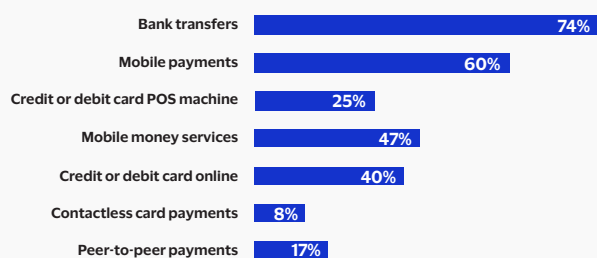
Spotlight:

Consumers Take Comfort in Digital Payments

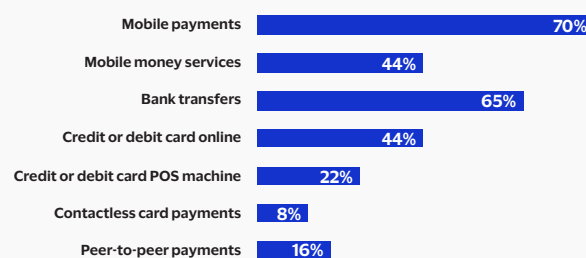


In Pakistan, **65% consider bank transfers to be one of the easiest digital payment methods**, as well as being among the safest and most secure, **with trust running high among 74% of consumers.**

Q: Which digital payment methods are the safest and most secure?



Q: Which digital payment methods are the easiest to use?



Online credit and debit card payments are popular among nearly half of all consumers (44%) due to their ease of use. Additionally, mobile money services are equally popular for ease of use (44%), as well as for perceived safety and security factors (47%).

Conclusion

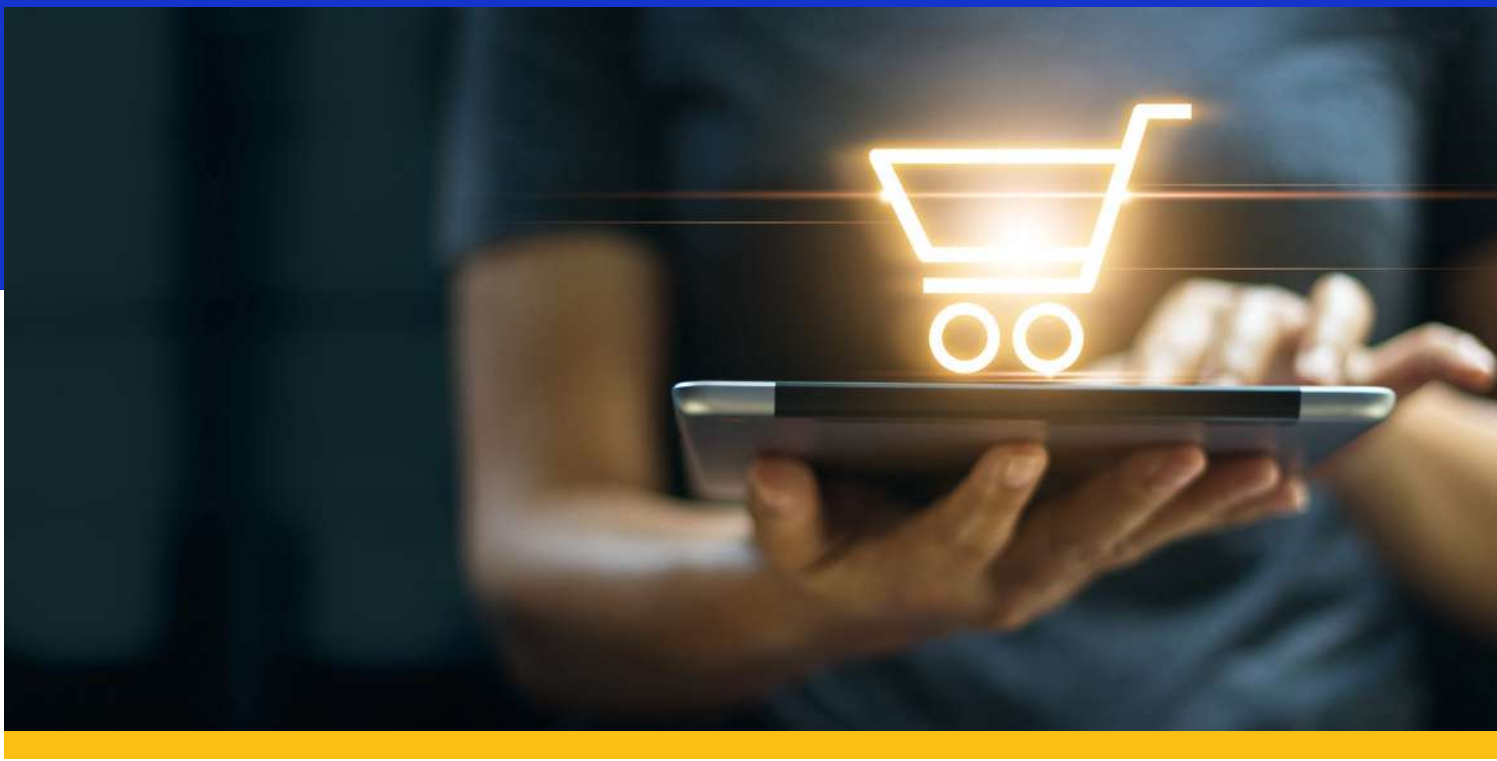


Consumers in Pakistan have embraced digital payments to make their lives easier and anticipate using these payments even more in the future. This deepening comfort with digital payments, however, is being shadowed by a proliferation of scams as fraudsters target a growing pool of money. Additionally, the rise in fraud is fueled by the sophistication of new threats, such as AI-driven attacks, including deep fakes and social engineering. Fortunately, consumers are increasingly savvy when it comes to identifying and disregarding phishing attempts.

Even though most consider themselves knowledgeable of the many ways that fraudsters try to steal their money, more than half of Pakistani consumers (55%) have previously fallen for a scam. This includes 20% who have fallen victim on multiple occasions. The prevalence and prowess of scams has prompted consumers to take measures to protect themselves when transacting online.

The vast majority of adults (82%) mostly or completely trust digital payments for making transactions, so there is a significant opportunity to deepen that trust and bridge the gap for those who remain skeptical. Trust is hard earned and easily lost, which is why consumers need to be equipped with knowledge and tools to avoid falling prey to a scam.

There are also many practices that retailers and financial institutions can adopt to safeguard purchases and build trust. This can be accomplished, for instance, by requiring two-step authentication methods such as text confirmations for purchases.



Methodology Statement

* The 2024 Visa Stay Secure III Survey was conducted by Wakefield Research among 5,800 adults ages 18+ in 17 markets: Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Serbia, South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Morocco, Pakistan, Jordan, UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, KSA, Bahrain and Oman, between December 4th and December 15th, 2024, using an email invitation and an online survey. Quotas were set for 300 respondents per market, except in Egypt (600), Pakistan (500), and Nigeria (500). Data has been weighted.

The 2023 survey was conducted among the same audience in 17 countries but included Tunisia rather than Jordan.

