

A study on the Influence of eWOM: Investigation of Consumer Trust, Information Adoption, and Buying Behavior

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ABSTRACT

The digital ecosystem in India has undergone drastic alterations so much that the dissemination of knowledge is being shaken up in favor of social media. All this while, rapid rise and rise in internet and smartphone penetration have passed Indian consumers through a torrent of information, whether credible or other forms, and misinformation and disinformation. Going forth, eWOM has become a key driver in molding consumers' perceptions, leading to the difficulty in the distinction between marketer-driven narratives and user-generated opinions. This project intends to shed light on key determinants of information adoption and their resultant effect on purchase intentions of Indian consumers. A conceptual framework is developed to examine the connectivity between information quality, information usefulness, perceived risk, and argument quality—all in order to influence online buying decisions. This wide country with a mixed bag of consumers called India has chosen the SEM for crunching responses given by people with past online shopping experience. Results have shown that the mediators of trust inclination and information adoption work sequentially to establish the link between these information-related issues and the consumers' purchase intentions. This study is particularly meaningful in India's evolving digital economy, where trust has remained a major factor influencing e-commerce adoption. The study thus provides some strategic and practical implications, which will help the business in streamlining its digital marketing strategies to suit the specific trust-creating and selling decision-making processes of Indian consumers.

Keywords: Information Adoption, Social Media, E-wom, Trust, Online Buying, Purchase Intentions

INTRODUCTION

The marketing digital transformation has greatly influenced consumer behavior in India, causing very fast changes toward online shopping. With increasing smartphone penetration, internet access through affordable data plans, and the adoption of digital payment methods such as UPI, Indian consumers are relying more on digital platforms for their purchase decisions. The e-commerce sector in India has grown exponentially, with several large players such as Amazon India, Flipkart, Meesho, and Nykaa serving diverse consumer segments across urban and rural India. This transition has also facilitated the growth of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) into a weapon of marketing, allowing brands to reach their broad and diverse audiences effectively. In contrast to traditional advertising, that of eWOM is cheaper and is likely to draw consumers' attention because it appeals to ordinary

people's skillful representation as opposed to huge advertisement campaigns (Babic et al., 2016).

eWOM started with consumer reviews on shopping sites, discussion forums, and sites like MouthShut, Flipkart reviews, and Quora, where anyone could put in their opinion and share their experiences over the internet. Nevertheless, empirical research has shown that social media is the most effective eWOM platform (Evgeniy, 2019). In India, applications such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube are vital to shaping what consumers think on various products. Moreover, platforms centered on regional content, such as ShareChat and Moj, have gained traction among users of vernacular languages, thereby making eWOM even more potent over various linguistic and cultural demographic settings. Since social media-based eWOM comes primarily from consumers, it is perceived to be more real and credible than traditional marketing sources. In India, consumers

often rely on influencers' suggestions, chats with friends, and product reviews to make buying decisions. The latest growing trend involves enlisting video eWOM, including unboxing videos and product demonstrations shown on YouTube and Instagram Reels. This technique is more engaging and persuasive for potential buyers. Yet with the growing influence of firm-generated promotional content on these very same platforms, organic eWOM is slowly fading into the background. Companies are now vigorously using influencer marketing, sponsored posts, and paid ads to persuade consumers nowadays and drive impulse buying (Rao, 2019).

There are several challenges attached to eWOM in India, even though it has several advantages. Major among them is fake reviews and misinformation; many brands manipulate reviews by posting fake positive reviews to enhance credibility and deleting or downplaying negative reviews. Another challenge is the rising prominence of sponsored content, which often taints the line of distinction between honest recommendations and paid promotions. Consumers might have difficulty in differentiating organic content from promotional content, thereby creating a trust deficit for both. Furthermore, in an intensely diverse linguistic and cultural environment, eWOM strategies must vary according to regional preferences, languages, and various socio-economic backgrounds to create an effective trust base. Further, trust in online transactions is ranked low, especially among predominantly rural and first-time digital buyers, who are often skeptical of online shopping due to issues pertaining to fraud, quality of the products, and return policies.

In prior research, the indirect influences of firm-generated and user-generated online word-of-mouth (eWOM) have been analyzed, yet a critical gap remains in the understanding of what factors underlying eWOM build consumer trust, leading to their acceptance of information and actual purchase behavior (Zhang, 2019). Given the diverse and rapidly growing Indian e-commerce market, this research attempts to analyze the changing role of eWOM by identifying its key dimensions and how it engenders trust in consumers. This study is based on

the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which incorporates attitudinal influences, subjective norms, intentions, and behavioral outcomes. Based on this theoretical framework, six research hypotheses are developed to examine the role of trust formation in information adoption and purchase intentions. This will create an in-depth understanding of how Indian consumers process and respond to eWOM content, so respective businesses can further fine-tune their digital marketing strategies.

India's digital economy is thriving right now and is providing very significant chances for brands, marketers, and many e-commerce platforms to take full advantage of eWOM. In fact, this study looks at the importance of trust inclination in the adoption of information which will definitely prove helpful to companies enhancing their digital marketing strategies. Thus, a brand should focus on genuineness in marketing communications wherein their content is relevantly authentic, transparent, or trustworthy. Further, differentiating regional eWOM strategies will not limit consumer engagement to metro cities given the diverse language and cultural nuances of the population. Also, using micro-influencers and niche content creators who have themselves represented a subject will yield better returns than those realized by top celebrity endorsements. eWOM credibility will be enhanced significantly through technological interventions. An AI tool, for instance, could be capable of identifying fake reviews and misinformation; furthermore, it enhances the reliability of consumer feedback. Other trust-building methods like secure payment options and flexible return policies, with very good customer service can help build the user's confidence especially in first-time shoppers. Hence, in tackling all these problems and optimizing their eWOM strategies, organizations can increase consumer engagement and trust and, thereby, conversion rate in the highly competitive digital market of India.

Considering the projected growth of the Indian e-commerce market to ten times its current size, the impacts of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on digital consumer behavior need to be explored. The study offers with exhaustive analysis on trust

formation, information adoption, and purchase intentions, thus providing theoretical insights and practical recommendations for businesses intending to maximize emerging online shopping opportunities in India. The research adds to the debate on the worth of eWOM in the Indian digital economy by linking the divide that exists between consumer trust and digital marketing strategies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM)

The increasing influence of eWOM in marketing has received wide acceptance from scholars. The Internet has largely changed consumer purchase behavior, transferring traditional word-of-mouth recommendations to online platforms. Nowadays, consumers prefer checking product or service information on online sources rather than consulting with relatives or friends (Hamdani, 2018). The evolution of eWOM platforms has also empowered the consumer as they progressed from being one-way, impersonal means of communication toward real-time interactions enriched through social media embracing two-way communication (Abedi, 2019).

The most distinguishing merit of social media as a form of eWOM lies in its ability to facilitate two-way interaction. Social media creates a platform through which users can not only read product reviews from the mouths of diverse sources but also have that opportunity to interact with friends, peers, family, and colleagues on a vibrant digital platform (Kala, 2018). It can disseminate information so quickly that it can immediately share preferences and opinions. This is one of the salient features for the credibility of online information. On the other hand, successful trust makes a havoc of spreading harmful and false information (Lkhaasuren, 2018).

Empirical studies suggest that information usefulness, information quality, and argument quality are key antecedents of effective eWOM communication. High-quality content on social media platforms fosters consumer trust, influencing their purchase decisions. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1. *Information quality has a significant positive effect on trust inclination.*

Unlike traditional word-of-mouth, eWOM is challenging to control. While it presents an opportunity for marketers to boost product sales and precisely target consumers, it also has the potential to harm a company's reputation. The credibility of shared information plays a vital role in consumer decision-making. If the content lacks authenticity, it is perceived as unreliable and ineffective (Zhang, 2014). Based on this perspective, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H2. *Information usefulness has a significant positive effect on trust inclination.*

Prior research highlights that eWOM significantly contributes to product and service sales. The extent of consumer interaction with company representatives is a critical determinant of trust. Scholars suggest that consumer reviews posted on company websites or social media pages strongly influence future sales performance. An influx of negative reviews can adversely impact a company's revenue, whereas an overwhelming number of positive reviews—without neutral perspectives—may lead to skepticism (Poulis, 2019). Given these dynamics, argument quality is considered an essential antecedent of eWOM.

H3. *Argument quality has a significant positive effect on trust inclination.*

Perceived Risk

Perceived risk is inherently subjective and varies across different purchasing contexts. Khwaja et al. (2019) argue that consumer behavior often involves risk-taking, which, in turn, fosters business growth. Mahmood et al. (2019) further explain that the level of perceived risk is influenced by both the stakes involved and the consumer's sense of certainty regarding a purchase.

Risk perception is classified into two primary categories: Inherent risk, which is associated with the nature of the product itself. Consumers consider multiple factors, including price, functionality, and significance in their daily lives. For example, purchasing a luxury vehicle, such as a German automobile, carries a higher inherent risk compared to buying a chocolate bar (Pelaez, 2019). Handled risk, which refers to unavoidable risks linked to a

product or service. However, with sufficient information, consumers can mitigate perceived risks (Dabrynin, 2019). Given these insights, investigating the influence of perceived risk on trust inclination presents a compelling research dimension.

H4. *Perceived risk has a significant positive effect on trust inclination.*

Trust Inclination

Trust in eWOM content is an immensely important factor affecting consumer behavior. High perceived risk decreases the chances of a transaction. Instead of only depending on seller information, consumers seek additional information through peer reviews. Past studies have found that consumer-generated reviews are regarded as more trustworthy than marketer-generated content and remain unbiased sources of insight on products (Khwaja et al., 2019). After all, firms promote their products with hype, leaving a buyer with a healthy skepticism at best. Therefore, it is assumed that trust inclination should relatively affect information uptake.

H5. *Trust inclination has a significant positive effect on information adoption.*

Information Adoption Model (IAM)

eWOM communicates information through social media channels, but effects are largely subjective. The same eWOM message thus could be interpreted

differently by individuals because of their prior experiences, knowledge, and trust levels. As eWOM particularly on social media is ambiguous, one major concern is whether the particular content is from users or marketers. One strong theoretical frameworks to address the above issues is Information Adoption Model [IAM]. The model is mostly used for computer-mediated communication as a basis to assess consumer reactions to online content (Hussain, 2018). This model postulates that intention to adopt information will be determined by argument quality, source credibility, and information usefulness (Zhang, 2017). By systematic integration of all these factors, the likelihood of adoption of the advertised information and subsequent purchase decisions by consumers is increased.

H6. *Information adoption has a significant positive effect on purchase intentions.*

There is significant empirical evidence from literature that shows that information quality, information usefulness, and argument quality are important antecedents of trust inclination in eWOM communication. Also, perceived risk and trust inclination greatly influence the adoption of information and thus purchase intentions. This study, therefore, builds a comprehensive framework in understanding the consumer decision-making process in online environments. Instead, it addresses the expanding landscape in digital commerce.

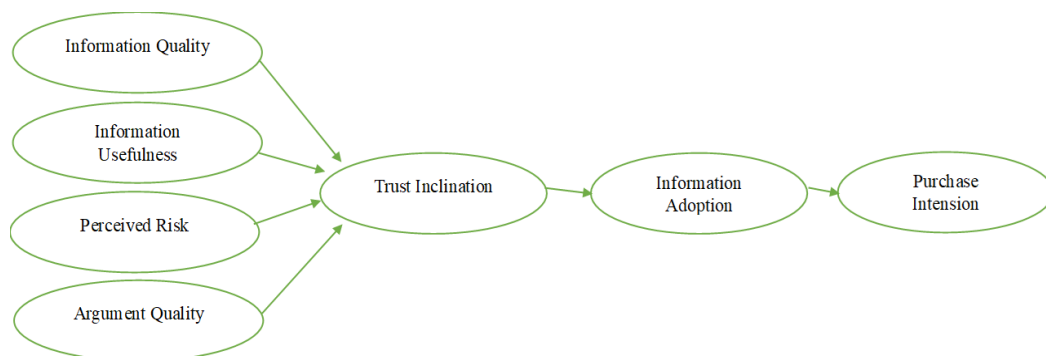


Figure 1 Research Framework

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In alignment with the study's objectives and the empirical examination of relationships depicted in Figure 1, a positivist research philosophy was

adopted, employing a deductive approach. This study follows a cross-sectional research design, with data collected through a structured questionnaire. The key constructs measured include information quality, information usefulness, perceived risk,



argument quality, trust inclination, information adoption, and purchase intentions. From an Indian perspective, where digital adoption is rapidly increasing, the study acknowledges the vast online consumer base. In 2019, India had approximately 1.15 billion mobile phone subscriptions, reflecting the country's extensive mobile network penetration. Regarding social media usage, there were about 330 million active users in India during the same year. These figures highlight the significant reach of mobile and social media platforms in India, providing a substantial base for studies examining digital consumer behavior. Given this significant digital penetration and the growing influence of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), a simple random sampling technique was employed for data collection. The target population was identified through secondary research, ensuring that respondents were actively engaged in online purchasing—a behavior increasingly prevalent in urban and semi-urban regions of India.

Random sampling was deemed appropriate as it provides a representative sample of the Indian digital consumer base, minimizing selection bias. Data were primarily collected from active social media users who frequently engage with online product reviews and recommendations. Following Muthen and Muthen (2002), a minimum sample size of 150 respondents is considered adequate for structural equation modeling (SEM) with normalized data. Additionally, Hair et al. (2010) and Lowry and Gaskin (2014) suggest a minimum of 200 respondents for robust SEM analysis. To ensure statistical validity, 500 questionnaires were initially distributed. After data cleaning, removal of outliers, and treatment of missing values, a final sample of 438 respondents was retained for analysis. The demographic characteristics of the survey participants are summarized in Table 1, reflecting the diversity of Indian digital consumers across various socioeconomic backgrounds.

RESULTS

Table 1. Sample demographics (N = 438)			
Demographics	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	225	51.40%
	Female	213	48.60%
Age	20 years and below	60	13.70%
	21–30 years	280	63.90%
	31–40 years	70	16.00%
	Above 40 years	28	6.40%
Education	High School	40	9.10%
	Bachelor’s Degree	180	41.10%
	Master’s Degree	190	43.40%
	Doctorate	28	6.40%
Social Media Usage	YouTube	208	47.50%
	Facebook	91	20.80%
	Instagram	122	27.80%

Source: Primary Data

Table 1 provides the demographic distribution of the study sample (N = 438). The gender ratio is nearly balanced, with 51.40% male and 48.60% female respondents, ensuring diverse perspectives. The majority of participants (63.90%) fall within the 21–30 years age group, indicating that young adults are the primary users of online platforms. A highly educated sample is evident, with 43.40% holding a Master’s degree and 41.10% a Bachelor’s degree,

reflecting a well-informed consumer base. In terms of social media preferences, YouTube (47.50%) dominates, followed by Instagram (27.80%) and Facebook (20.80%), suggesting that video and image-based platforms play a crucial role in influencing online consumer behavior.

Table 2. Constructs Composite Normality (N = 438)

Variables	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	SE	Statistic	SE
PurInt	1	5	3.2189	1.2154	0.298	0.118	1.215	0.245
InfUse	1	5	3.9123	0.6895	0.728	0.118	1.598	0.245
ArgQty	1	5	2.9745	0.7128	0.152	0.118	0.087	0.245
InfQty	1	5	4.0124	0.6783	0.765	0.118	1.342	0.245
TrtInc	1	5	3.5628	0.7942	0.382	0.118	0.215	0.245
PerR	1	5	2.8645	0.7963	0.115	0.118	0.557	0.245
InfAdop	1	5	3.9876	0.6231	0.592	0.118	1.385	0.245

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 presents the composite normality statistics for the study constructs, based on a sample of 438 respondents. The mean values for all variables range between 2.86 and 4.01, indicating moderate to high agreement among respondents. Information Quality (IQ) and Information Adoption (InfAdop) have the highest mean scores (4.01 and 3.98, respectively), suggesting that respondents perceive these factors as crucial in eWOM communications. Perceived Risk

(PerR) has the lowest mean (2.86), indicating relatively lower concern about risk in online purchasing decisions. Skewness values range between 0.115 and 0.765, and kurtosis values between 0.087 and 1.598, both within the acceptable range (-1 to +1 for skewness and -3 to +3 for kurtosis), confirming a normal data distribution suitable for further statistical analysis. These findings validate the reliability of the dataset for hypothesis testing.

Table 3. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)/Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) Factor Loadings, Reliability, and Validity of the Measurement Model (N = 438)

Constructs and Items	P	λ	α	C.R	AVE
Information Quality					
InfQty1	0.752	0.765	0.821	0.824	0.598
InfQty2	0.791	0.772			
InfQty3	0.859	0.831			
Information Usefulness					
InfUse1	0.879	0.892	0.889	0.894	0.723
InfUse2	0.954	0.928			
InfUse3	0.669	0.752			
Perceived Risk					
PerR1	0.729	0.754	0.782	0.784	0.543
PerR2	0.808	0.779			
PerR3	0.682	0.688			
Information Adoption					
InfAdop1	0.873	0.826	0.792	0.793	0.657
InfAdop2	0.638	0.798			
Trust Inclination					
TrtInc1	0.759	0.802	0.879	0.881	0.712
TrtInc2	0.857	0.872			
TrtInc3	0.898	0.871			
Argument Quality					
ArgQty1	0.641	0.671	0.918	0.914	0.594
ArgQty2	0.881	0.864			
ArgQty3	0.738	0.799			
ArgQty4	0.695	0.788			
Purchase Intentions					
PurInt1	0.869	0.775	0.921	0.912	0.715



PurInt2	0.819	0.856			
PurInt3	0.864	0.796			
PurInt4	0.928	0.972			

Source: Primary Data

Table 3 demonstrates strong reliability and validity of the measurement model, supporting its suitability for further analysis. The factor loadings (λ) for all items exceed the recommended threshold of 0.6 (Hair et al., 2010), indicating good item reliability. The Cronbach's alpha (α) and composite reliability

(C.R.) values are above 0.7, confirming internal consistency (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Additionally, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values surpass 0.5, establishing adequate convergent validity (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). These findings ensure the robustness of the constructs, making the model appropriate for structural equation modeling.

Results of Hypotheses (N = 438)				
Independent Variables	Model 1 (TrtInc)	Model 2 (InfAdop)	Model 3 (PurInt)	Results
Hypothesized direct effect paths				
H1. InfQlty	0.152**			Supported
H2. InfUse	0.341**			Supported
H3. PerR	0.148*			Supported
H4. ArgQlty	0.429**			Supported
R-square	0.423**			Supported
Hypothesized indirect effect paths				
H5. TrtInc		0.571**		Supported
H6. IA			0.928**	Supported
R-square		0.319**	0.053	
*p<0.05, **p<0.01				

Source: Primary Data

The hypothesis testing results provide empirical support for the proposed model, demonstrating significant relationships between key variables. The direct effects indicate that Information Quality (InfQlty) positively influences Trust Inclination (TrtInc) ($\beta = 0.152, p < 0.01$), suggesting that consumers are more likely to develop trust when they perceive the information as accurate and reliable. Similarly, Information Usefulness (InfUse) significantly impacts Trust Inclination ($\beta = 0.341, p < 0.01$), reinforcing the idea that useful information enhances consumers' trust in digital environments. Perceived Risk (PerR) also has a positive but relatively weaker effect on Trust Inclination ($\beta = 0.148, p < 0.05$), indicating that while risk perception matters, it does not dominate trust formation. Argument Quality (ArgQlty) emerges as the strongest predictor of Trust Inclination ($\beta = 0.429, p < 0.01$), signifying that well-structured, persuasive arguments significantly enhance consumer trust. The overall R-square value (0.423) suggests that these independent variables

collectively explain 42.3% of the variance in Trust Inclination.

The indirect effects further highlight the role of trust in influencing information adoption and purchase intentions. Trust Inclination (TrtInc) significantly predicts Information Adoption (InfAdop) ($\beta = 0.571, p < 0.01$), confirming that when consumers trust the information, they are more likely to adopt and rely on it for decision-making. Additionally, Information Adoption has a strong effect on Purchase Intentions (PurInt) ($\beta = 0.928, p < 0.01$), suggesting that consumers who accept and internalize the provided information are highly likely to proceed with a purchase. The low R-square figures [0.319 for InfAdop and 0.053 for PurInt] indicate the potency of trust in explaining variance in information adoption, as well as its modest direct effects on purchase intention and, thus, point to the possibility of additional influences.

The research findings coincide with the previous studies (e.g. Erkan and Evans, 2016; Hussain et al.,

2018) about the importance of trust and perceived credibility of information in their effect on consumer decisions in digital ecosystems. Information adoption becomes a very significant channel in which trust influences purchasing behavior followed by Babic et al. (2016). Argument quality highly correlates well with trust inclination as found in earlier literature insisting upon the importance of a wellstructured persuasive content in manipulating online consumer behavior. Specifically, in India, where customers turn to the digital form for most of their purchase decisions, personalization should then become the increasingly important online information quality, relevance, and persuasion that will breed trust. This coupled with the heterogeneous and price-sensitive population of Indian consumers makes minimizing perceived risk and improving the credibility of the information even more necessary building blocks in determining buying patterns. This shall require marketers' efforts away from typical cultural norms toward more transparent and compelling messages to build trust, engagement, and certainly greater purchase intention within the Indian setting.

DISCUSSION

The result of the present study provides a better understanding of the relationships between information quality, information usefulness, perceived risk, argument quality, trust inclination, information adoption, and purchasing intentions in the Indian e-commerce domain. Trust inclination becomes important to consumer behavior in India, specifically in the online shopping experience, due to the growing digital market as many of these consumers continue to be wary of digital transactions. Argument quality has a strong influence on trust inclination, which means that well-articulated, persuasive content can give a major boost to consumer trust, corroborating previous studies stressing the importance of the clarity and authenticity of messages in building consumer trust (Erkan & Evans, 2016). Further, the substantial mediating effect of information adoption on purchase intention supports the existing literature and implies that Indian consumers are inclined toward purchasing especially when they feel that the

online information is credible and trustworthy (Babic et al., 2016; Hussain et al., 2018).

However, the relatively low R-square value for purchase intention negates the effect of trust propensity and information adoption because it implies that other factors not investigated in this study are likely to influence the final purchase decision. In the Indian context, psychological, social, and cultural factors like brand reputation, word-of-mouth recommendations, and economic conditions play a very big role in steering consumer choices (Zhang, Pauwels, & Peng, 2019). Further, factors such as discounts, cashback, and family and friends influence consumer trust and behavioral approaches on purchase decisions. This indicates that trust and information adoption are not adequate determinants, but rather some socio-economic factors or reasons need to be included.

LIMITATIONS

There are certain limitations pertaining to this study. First, the research entirely depended on one sample (N = 438), which may restrict cross-national generalization of results among diverse samples of consumers in India. Future attempts must try replicating the research with samples segmented to mainly include urban and rural along with other demographic groups, for example age and gender, as an effort to strengthen external validity (Muthén & Muthén, 2002). Second, about self-reported survey measures, so that data could have further response biases such as desirability or interpretation variance regarding the same. It might actually be very useful to incorporate behavioral data such as actual purchase recorded purchases in context of behavioral or eye tracking analysis to really "come full circle" with respect to a consumer decision making understanding (Lowry and Gaskin 2014).

Also, limitation to argument is the cross-sectional essence of the study where causal estimations are not possible. To be able to see the gradual changes made in the inclination to trust as well as information adoption and how these would have affected the various stages in consumer decision making process concerning purchase intention, it would have been better to conduct longitudinal studies (Hair et al., 2016). In addition, this research does not consider

other major constructs such as culture, digital payment security, and regional habits of shopping that affect online consumer trust. Such constructs would be useful for future research into developing a more comprehensive model for Indian online consumer behavior.

FUTURE STUDY

Future research should extend the existing model by considering extra variables like brand credibility, online customer reviews, and peer recommendation so that the entire variable list can better show their influence on consumer trust and purchase intentions in India (Wang, Wang, & Wang, 2018). The experimental studies can also differentially assess the effects on argument quality and information adoption, based on factors such as message format, the use of regional language, and presentation styles (Yang et al., 2019). Another burgeoning area of study includes examining cultural and contextual differences in how Indian consumers respond to online information. In that view, given the widely diverse linguistic and socio-economic context, comparisons across different states and regions in India could lead to better consumer behavior insights (Hanif, 2019).

Lastly, other directions for the future may involve searching for the effects of newer technologies, such as artificial intelligence, chatbots in the local tongue, and enhancements in digital payment security, on trust propensity and information adoption in the Indian e-commerce context (Poulis, Rizomyliotis & Konstantoulaki, 2019). In other words, knowing these aspects would help the firms tailor their digital marketing strategies for the fast-evolving online consumer market in India.

CONCLUSION

In understanding the influence of information-related factors on consumer trust and adoption of information and purchase intentions in the Indian e-commerce setup, this study bridges the gap. The results affirm that inclination to trust serves a significant mediating function reinforcing the fact that credible and persuasive information online affect consumer behavior—particularly an argument quality that emerged as a prime contributor to trust, thus indicating the way that companies should

develop well-structured engaging India-specific compelling messages (Cheung et al., 2009). Further, with lowering perceptions related to risk and increased usefulness of information, trust can also be developed for the adoption and continued availability of information.

While the model accounts for a great deal of variance in trust inclination and information adoption, purchase intention is affected by other external factors like brand loyalty and price and promotional incentives which would need further exploration. To summarize, results highlight the paramount importance of trustworthy online information in shaping the consumer decision-making process in India. By applying these findings to the strategies of digital marketing, businesses can build trust among consumers, increase engagement, and ultimately boost conversion rates in the competitive Indian e-commerce environment. Future studies should leverage these insights in creating a more holistic understanding of the ever-changing digital consumer ecosystem in India.

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