



IMPACT OF WEBSITE DESIGN AND ONLINE INFORMATION SOURCES ON CONSUMER TRUST IN E-COMMERCE PLATFORMS: A STUDY OF CONSUMER DURABLES

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ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of e-commerce has fundamentally transformed the purchasing patterns of consumers, particularly within the high-involvement sector of consumer durables. Unlike low-cost convenience goods, consumer durables—such as electronics, furniture, and household equipment—require a more complex decision-making process due to higher perceived risk and significant financial commitment. This literature review synthesizes current academic research to identify the multi-dimensional factors influencing online buying behavior for these products.

Key findings from existing literature highlight that website design quality and online information sources (including user reviews and ratings) are primary determinants of consumer trust and purchase intention. Research indicates that an attractive and user-friendly interface significantly lowers perceived risk, while favorable online reviews act as critical social proof that moderates the relationship between website aesthetics and final purchase decisions. Theoretical frameworks such as the Technology Acceptance Model, Information Adoption Model, and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology are frequently employed to explain these behaviors, emphasizing the roles of perceived usefulness and ease of use in the digital environment.

Furthermore, demographic variables like age, gender, and geographic location (urban vs. rural) continue to moderate the adoption of online shopping for durables. Despite the advantages of convenience and wider selection, challenges such as the lack of physical product inspection and trust in delivery logistics remain significant barriers. This review concludes by identifying research gaps, particularly the need for more longitudinal studies on post-purchase satisfaction and the impact of emerging technologies like augmented reality on reducing product uncertainty in the consumer durable market (Bag et al., 2017; Islam, n.d.).

Keywords: E-commerce, Online Buying Behaviour, Consumer Durables, Consumer Trust, Website Design, User Interface, Online Reviews, Social Media Influence, Purchase Intention, Perceived Risk.



1. INTRODUCTION

The exponential rise of e-commerce has profoundly reshaped consumer buying patterns worldwide. In India, heightened internet access, smartphone proliferation, and digital payment infrastructure have propelled the surge in usage of platforms like Amazon and Flipkart. Among diverse product categories, consumer durables—such as televisions, refrigerators, washing machines, and air conditioners—have experienced a marked migration from conventional brick-and-mortar outlets to digital marketplaces. (Moerth-Teo et al., 2021; Videlaine & Scaringella, 2019) This shift necessitates a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing consumer trust and purchase intentions in the online environment, particularly given the higher financial outlay and perceived risk associated with these product categories (Davis et al., 2021). This is particularly crucial as consumers' propensity to purchase online, or online purchase intention, is significantly influenced by variables such as usefulness, ease of use, security, and especially trust (Ghosh, 2024). Given the inherent uncertainties in online transactions, trust becomes even more critical in e-commerce than in traditional commerce, where both buyers and suppliers face ambiguities regarding trades, contracts, and assurances (Singh et al., 2024). Therefore, comprehending the antecedents of trust within the e-commerce landscape is paramount for fostering consumer engagement and successful online transactions (Sulistiyowati & Husda, 2023). In an emerging market like India, where the e-retail sector is projected to become the world's second-largest by 2034, understanding these trust determinants is particularly vital for developing effective online strategies (Bhattacharjee et al., 2024). However, challenges such as ensuring the safety of financial transactions, guaranteeing product quality, and providing efficient customer service persist, influencing consumer attitudes and behaviors toward online purchasing (Ayse, 2022). Despite the existence of a robust legal framework, including the Consumer Protection Act of 2019 and the Consumer Protection Rules of 2020, to safeguard online consumers, the continuous evolution of digital commerce necessitates ongoing research into factors that build and sustain consumer trust (Tiwari et al., 2023). The objective of this study is to determine the impact of online security, online privacy, and website appearance on building online trust towards B2C e-commerce in India and its subsequent effect on the purchase intentions of Generation Z users (Alhashem et al., 2023). This focus is particularly relevant given that Generation Z constitutes a significant emerging customer base in India, with their online buying intentions directly impacted by factors such as perceived risk, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, perceived privacy, and perceived security (Pal et al., 2024; Singh, 2024). Previous research has emphasized the



critical role of trust in mediating consumer repurchase intentions, particularly for online platforms (Trivedi & Yadav, 2018, 2020). Thus, examining the mechanisms through which online security, privacy, and website aesthetics collectively foster trust among Generation Z consumers and subsequently drive their purchase intentions is imperative for optimizing e-commerce strategies (Alhashem et al., 2023; Arizal et al., 2024; Thomas et al., 2018).

Despite the advantages of convenience, assortment, and competitive pricing provided by e-commerce platforms, online retailers confront the key challenge of establishing and sustaining consumer trust. In contrast to traditional offline shopping, online purchases preclude physical product examination, positioning trust as a pivotal driver of buying decisions. Buyers place substantial reliance on indicators including website design, product details, user interface, and customer reviews to gauge the reliability of digital platforms.

(George et al., 2016)

Website design and interface play a vital role in shaping user experience and influencing perceptions of reliability and professionalism (George et al., 2016). A well-structured, visually appealing, and easy-to-navigate website enhances user confidence and reduces perceived risk, as evidenced by studies showing that design factors like graphic design, structural design, content design, and social-cue design positively influence attitudes toward trust (George et al., 2016; Guo et al., 2023). Similarly, online information sources, including social media, customer reviews, and ratings, are important determinants of trust by providing social proof and reducing uncertainty, with research confirming that positive reviews and electronic word-of-mouth significantly shape consumer perceptions and purchase decisions (Chen et al., 2022; Moerth-Teo et al., 2021) (Lukito & Ikhsan, 2020). While website design might not directly influence e-trust in all contexts, particularly where content standardization exists across platforms (Sudirjo et al., 2024), its contribution to perceived usefulness and overall quality can indirectly foster trust. The perceived ease of use and usefulness of a website are fundamental in mediating trust and influencing consumer behavior, as consumers tend to avoid platforms that are difficult to comprehend, opting for alternatives that offer similar functionalities with greater simplicity (Saoula et al., 2023).

Although previous studies have examined the influence of website design and interface on consumer trust (Chen et al., 2022; George et al., 2016; Guo et al., 2023; Lukito & Ikhsan, 2020; Moerth-Teo et al., 2021; Saoula et al., 2023). Therefore, this study aims to assess the influence



of website design and interface, as well as online information sources, on consumer trust in e-commerce platforms for consumer durables.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The extant literature on e-commerce trust and purchase intentions reveals a multi-faceted landscape of influencing factors. Specifically, empirical evidence consistently demonstrates a positive correlation between consumer trust and online purchase intention, as well as repurchase intention (Gelaw et al., 2023). This relationship is often mediated by perceived risk and perceived value, with a higher level of trust mitigating perceived risks associated with online transactions and enhancing the perceived value of online offerings. Furthermore, website quality, encompassing aspects such as design, information content, and usability, has been identified as a significant precursor to building consumer trust in e-commerce environments (Agag & Eid, 2019; Liao et al., 2006). Specifically, well-designed websites featuring clear navigation, accessible information, and appealing visual elements contribute to initial positive impressions and foster a sense of credibility (Athapaththu & Kulathunga, 2018; Wang & Emurian, 2004). This is particularly salient as the establishment of trust in e-commerce is primarily built upon visual product presentation, quality information, and video content (Cho et al., 2023). Such elements are crucial in overcoming the inherent uncertainties of online transactions, thereby bolstering consumers' confidence in their purchasing decisions (Bernardus, 2023). Moreover, the perceived usefulness and ease-of-use of an e-commerce website significantly contribute to fostering initial trust among consumers, especially new customers (Ling et al., 2011). This initial trust is crucial, as it has been shown to evolve with continued experience, leading to higher levels of trust and perceived usefulness among repeat customers (Gefen et al., 2003). This iterative process highlights the dynamic nature of trust formation in digital environments, where initial impressions, often shaped by website design and usability, are continuously refined through sustained engagement and positive transactional experiences (Kurniadi & Rana, 2023). Given the complexities of online consumer behavior, an exhaustive review of prior research illuminates the critical factors that underpin online trust and subsequent purchase intentions, with a particular emphasis on the interplay between website characteristics and psychological constructs (Bauman & Bachmann, 2017). This section synthesizes key theoretical frameworks and empirical findings, categorizing them into thematic areas to elucidate the intricate relationships between website design, online information, trust, and purchase intentions within the e-commerce domain. A central theme emerging from this literature is that website credibility, underpinned by factors like ease of use



and perceived risk, serves as a significant antecedent to online trust, which subsequently influences purchase intentions (George et al., 2016).

Over the past decade, scholarly interest in the e-commerce sector has surged, particularly concerning purchases of durable goods such as electronics, home appliances, and furniture. This expansion arises from technological advancements, shifting consumer preferences, and a digitized marketplace defined by high-value transactions. The upward trend reflects a holistic shift in online shopping, moving beyond price competition to emphasize trust-building, AI personalization, and sustainable consumption practices (Arizal et al., 2024; Thomas et al., 2018)

Numerous studies have examined the interplay among technological capabilities, social influences, and economic accessibility for durable goods on e-commerce platforms. This literature review delineates major advancements in e-commerce, systematically analyzing how these factors convert high-involvement traditional purchases into efficient digital transactions, while identifying theoretical gaps in integrated models.

Recent technological influxes have transformed durable goods purchasing in digital spaces. AI-based recommendation systems and machine learning algorithms provide hyper-personalized suggestions based on past behaviors, substantially boosting purchase intentions for electronics and appliances. Prior research confirms that digital platforms predict consumer preferences more accurately via collaborative filtering and natural language processing. Advanced deep learning enhances precision by scrutinizing browsing history, search patterns, and mouse movements to anticipate needs proactively. Mobile commerce further enables one-tap payments and augmented reality to evaluate furniture dimensions and appliance features, narrowing the gap between online browsing and physical possession. This integration of advanced technologies not only streamlines the purchasing process but also enhances consumer confidence by providing immersive and informative shopping experiences. (Permana et al., 2025; Raji et al., 2024) Beyond personalization, the efficacy of e-commerce platforms is significantly influenced by perceived convenience and trustworthiness (Subbarao et al., 2023). The pervasive integration of mobile technology and innovative applications like augmented reality and virtual reality further amplifies consumer engagement and decision-making by offering immersive and interactive shopping encounters (Ntumba et al., 2023). The ubiquity of smartphones has notably propelled m-commerce into a prominent position within the digital marketplace, facilitating shopping on the go and



expanding the reach and accessibility of e-commerce platforms (Sodiya et al., 2024; Zangana et al., 2024).

2.1 WEBSITE DESIGN AND CONSUMER TRUST

Website design and interface are critical components of the online shopping experience, serving as primary cues that signal credibility and trustworthiness to consumers [(Liao et al., 2006)Indeed, studies show that attributes such as transparent product representation, clear pricing, and robust security measures are paramount for cultivating high levels of trust and achieving better performance metrics like conversion rates and repeat purchases (Limna et al., 2025; Oguta, 2024). Furthermore, the intuitive layout, visual aesthetics, and ease of navigation on an e-commerce platform directly correlate with positive user experiences and sustained consumer engagement (Silva, 2025). Therefore, online shopping outlets enhance customer engagement through user-friendly interfaces and engaging features that streamline the customer journey (Biswas et al., 2024). This includes the strategic deployment of AI-driven tools that personalize the user interface and content, thereby improving the overall utility and appeal of the platform (Kasap, 2025). These advanced personalization capabilities, driven by machine learning, are essential for maximizing product discovery and fostering customer loyalty in a highly competitive digital environment (Tallapally, 2024). Beyond aesthetics and personalization, the seamless functionality of checkout processes, exemplified by digital wallets and mobile payment applications, further elevates user convenience (- et al., 2023). The integration of blockchain technology further bolsters this convenience by offering enhanced transaction security and transparent supply chain management, thereby building greater consumer trust in e-commerce platforms (Akash & Saha, 2025; Kamesh & Binu, 2024).

2.2 ONLINE INFORMATION SOURCES AND TRUST

Online information sources, including social media platforms, customer reviews, ratings, and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), have emerged as powerful influencers of consumer decision-making in e-commerce (Limna et al., 2025; Zangana et al., 2024) EWOM plays a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions, enhancing content quality perceptions (e.g., usefulness, accuracy), and reducing uncertainty associated with online purchases (Liao et al., 2006). Empirical studies confirm that positive reviews and high ratings significantly bolster trust through social proof mechanisms, while negative feedback can deter potential buyers (Limna et al., 2025). Social media further amplifies peer opinions and influencer recommendations, positioning it as a pivotal factor



in trust development amid high-involvement purchases like consumer durables (Limna et al., 2025; Zangana et al., 2024). Moreover, the transparent presentation of product information and secure transactional mechanisms are paramount in assuaging consumer anxieties regarding product authenticity and financial security (Younis & Zeebaree, 2025). Specifically, website aesthetics, functionality, and security measures directly shape consumer attitudes and trust (Lăzăroiu et al., 2020). The clarity of data policies, particularly regarding personal data protection, significantly contributes to customer trust, which in turn fosters loyalty and increases the probability of repeat purchases (Gooljar et al., 2024). This demonstrates that a robust digital presence, characterized by user-centric design and transparent data handling, is indispensable for cultivating enduring customer relationships and competitive advantage within the e-commerce sector (Hwang, 2024, 2025). A well-designed website, coupled with transparent communication and reliable security protocols, builds e-trust, which is essential for fostering e-loyalty and sustaining long-term customer relationships (ABEDALKADER, 2015). Conversely, the absence of trust directly impedes consumer willingness to engage in online transactions, highlighting its foundational role in mitigating perceived risks associated with virtual commerce (Khoa & Huynh, 2022). Thus, understanding and strategically managing factors that cultivate consumer trust is paramount for the sustained growth and success of e-commerce platforms (Odusanya et al., 2020). This includes an examination of how perceived risk, security, and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) interact with trust to influence purchasing decisions (Handoyo, 2024).

2.3 CONSUMER TRUST IN E-COMMERCE

Consumer trust is a key determinant of online purchasing behaviour \$(Lăzăroiu et al., 2020; Limna et al., 2025)[(Gooljar et al., 2024; Handoyo, 2024; Lăzăroiu et al., 2020; Liao et al., 2006; Odusanya et al., 2020). It encompasses the belief that online vendors will act reliably, honestly, and in the consumer's best interest, particularly in the absence of physical interaction (Karunasingha & Abeysekera, 2022). This psychological construct is pivotal for alleviating consumer concerns inherent in online transactions, influencing perceptions of reliability and the credibility of quality-related signals (“Investigating the Factors Affecting Customer Trust in E-Commerce,” 2024; Liu et al., 2017). The intangible nature of online transactions necessitates a heightened reliance on trust, as consumers expose themselves to potential losses based on the expectation that merchants will fulfill their obligations and deliver promised products or services (Giao et al., 2020). This is particularly salient in contexts like food retail, where consumers exhibit a greater need for reassurance regarding product quality and safety (Faraoni et al., 2018).



Therefore, fostering trust through transparent practices, robust security measures, and reliable service delivery becomes an imperative strategy for e-commerce entities aiming to mitigate perceived risks and encourage sustained engagement (Apriliani et al., 2024). Specifically, consumers' willingness to share personal information and engage in transactions is contingent upon their trust in the vendor's benevolence, integrity, and competence, which are critical precursors for sustained exchange relationships in e-commerce (Greensboro & Prashant, 2009). This implies that the long-term success of e-retailers hinges significantly on their ability to cultivate and maintain consumer confidence (Zsigmondová et al., 2021). A lack of this trust, conversely, can pose a substantial barrier to online transactions, often compelling consumers to seek alternative avenues for their needs following negative experiences or deceptions (Παππάς, 2015). Furthermore, vendor trust, characterized by perceived ability, integrity, and security, directly influences customers' willingness to engage in transactions with online service providers (Hidayanto et al., 2017). This underscores the necessity for e-commerce platforms to prioritize the development of trustworthy environments to foster sustained customer engagement and mitigate the inherent uncertainties associated with online commerce (Jeljeli et al., 2022; Tam et al., 2019). This encompasses believing in the vendor's openness, competency, honesty, and capacity, as well as their willingness to engage in trust, often influenced by factors such as reputation, security assurances, and website quality (Dulloo, 2024). In the context of new online relationships, brand names and company reputations play a crucial role in establishing initial trust, serving as surrogate indicators of probable performance (Pitta et al., 2006). The concept of e-trust extends to the customer's perception of a merchant's reliability and confidence in online exchanges, often encompassing dimensions of credibility and benevolence (Louisa & Simbolon, 2023).

2.4 RESEARCH GAP

While existing studies have extensively examined individual antecedents of consumer trust in e-commerce—such as website design, aesthetics, and functionality (Lăzăroiu et al., 2020; Liao et al., 2006) and online information sources including reviews, ratings, social proof, and electronic word-of-mouth (Handoyo, 2024; Limna et al., 2025; Zangana et al., 2024)—limited research has investigated their **combined** impact. This gap is particularly evident in the context of high-involvement purchases like consumer durables within emerging regional markets such as Uttar Pradesh, India, where localized cultural, infrastructural, and economic factors may moderate these relationships. This study addresses this void by empirically analyzing how website design and online information sources **interact** to influence consumer trust in e-commerce platforms.



It further examines the mediating role of perceived risk and the moderating effect of consumer experience levels on these relationships. This research provides insights into optimizing e-commerce strategies for fostering trust in regions where online purchasing behavior is still evolving. In particular, it aims to delineate how specific elements of website quality and the nature of online information—be it user-generated content or expert endorsements—collectively influence consumer trust, especially in nascent e-commerce ecosystems (Fan et al., 2022; Quintus et al., 2024). A significant research gap persists in understanding how the interplay between customer experience and engagement ultimately cultivates stronger customer loyalty within e-commerce, especially concerning practical applications for businesses (Felix & Rembulan, 2023). Moreover, while prior studies have explored various theoretical frameworks to understand trust in e-commerce, a comprehensive understanding of how technological and sociological components interact to build trusting beliefs remains limited, particularly in emerging markets (Singh et al., 2024). Furthermore, previous research has largely focused on how trust influences online attitudes, satisfaction, and loyalty indicators, often overlooking the nuanced, multi-faceted nature of online trust itself and its interaction with shopping values (Nghia et al., 2020). Specifically, there is a dearth of comprehensive models that integrate experiential trust with other forms of trust, such as institution-based and dispositional trust, to explain purchase intention in nascent e-commerce environments (Bhattacharjee et al., 2024).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study aims to examine the key factors influencing user behavior in an online environment, with a specific focus on the role of digital platforms and information accessibility. It seeks to assess how website design and interface elements affect user experience, engagement, and decision-making. Additionally, the study aims to evaluate the influence of various online information sources on users' perceptions, trust, and choices. Through this, the research intends to provide a comprehensive understanding of how design and information dynamics shape online interactions and outcomes.

4. HYPOTHESIS

Based on the stated relationships, the hypotheses can be redrafted in a clear and standardized form as follows:

- H2: Website design and interface have a significant positive influence on consumer trust.
- H4: Online information sources have a significant positive influence on consumer trust.



5. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

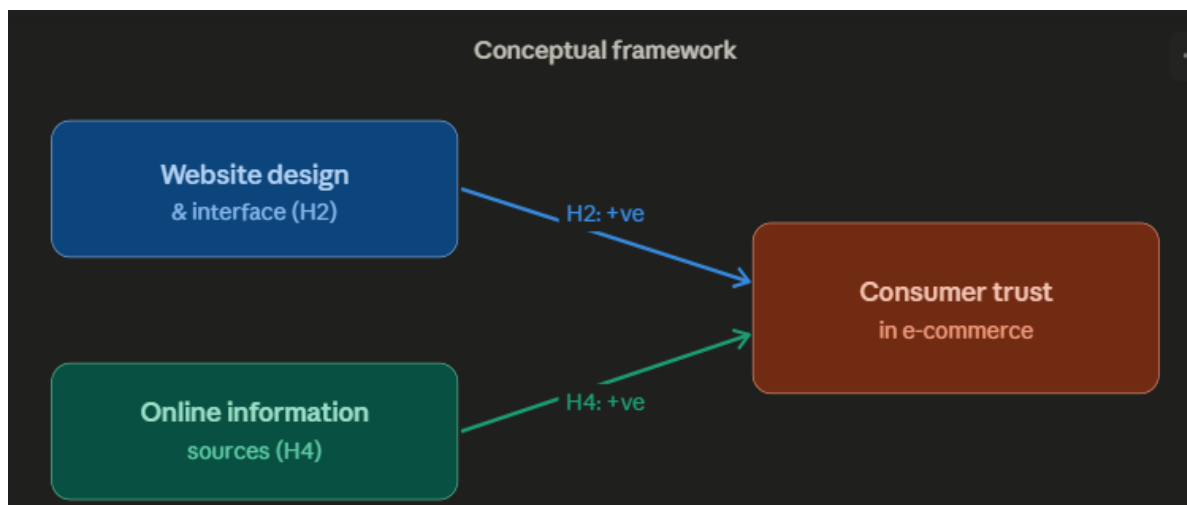


Figure 1: Proposed Model

Model Equation

$$\text{Consumer Trust} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (\text{Website Design}) + \beta_2 (\text{Online Information Sources}) + \varepsilon$$

In this model, **Consumer Trust** is the dependent variable, while **Website Design & Interface** and **Online Information Sources** are the independent variables. The **Constant (β_0)** represents the baseline level of consumer trust when the independent variables are held constant. The coefficients β_1 and β_2 , associated with **Website Design & Interface** and **Online Information Sources**, respectively, indicate the extent to which changes in these variables influence consumer trust.

The term ε represents the error component, capturing the influence of other factors affecting consumer trust that are not included in the model. Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) analysis was conducted using SPSS to examine the impact of the independent variables on consumer trust. The results were interpreted using key statistical outputs such as the **model summary**, **ANOVA**, and the **coefficients table**.

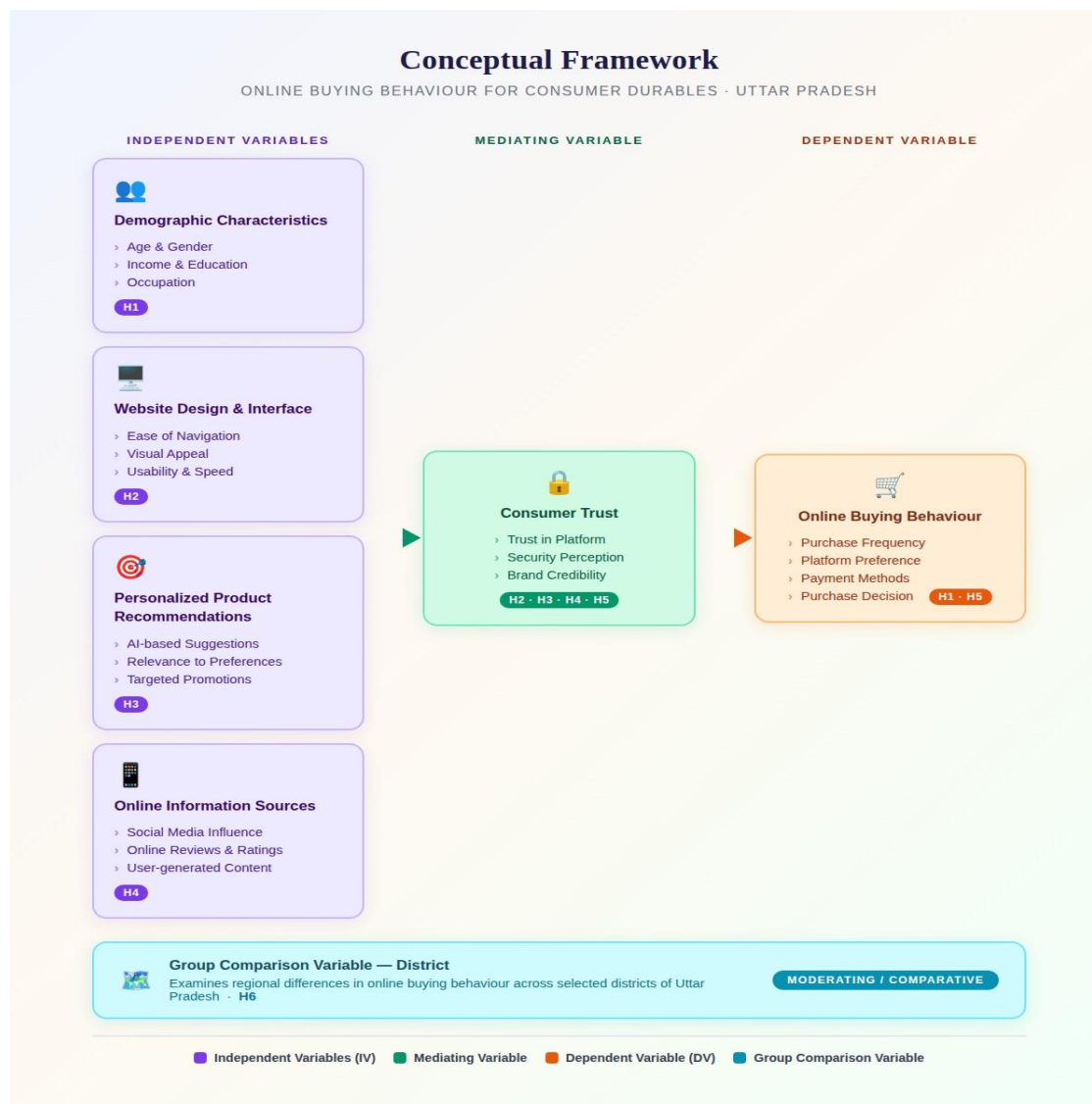


Figure 2: Complete Model

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a quantitative research design. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale. The sample consists of 285 respondents selected using stratified random sampling from four districts of Uttar Pradesh: Lucknow, Kanpur Nagar, Varanasi, and Prayagraj.

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS. Reliability of the constructs was tested using Cronbach’s Alpha. Regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses and examine the relationship between variables.

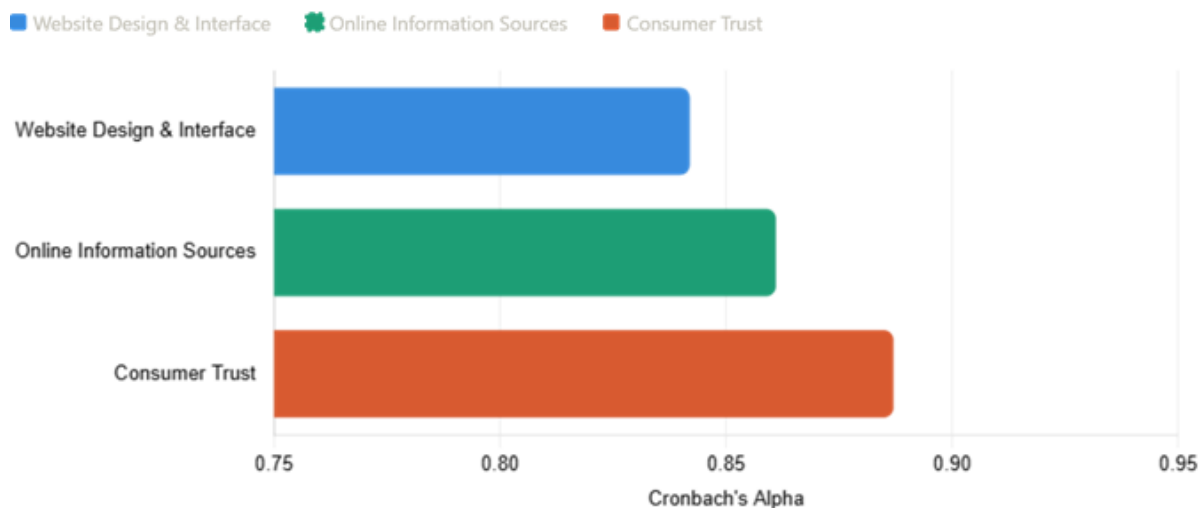


7. DATA ANALYSIS & RESULTS

7.1 RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

Cronbach’s Alpha values for all constructs were above 0.7, indicating good internal consistency.

Construct	No. of Items	Cronbach’s Alpha
Website Design & Interface	8	0.842
Online Information Sources	8	0.861
Consumer Trust	8	0.887



Threshold for acceptable reliability: $\alpha > 0.70$ | All constructs: 8 items each

Figure 3: Reliability analysis (Cronbach’s Alpha)

The Cronbach’s Alpha values for all constructs are greater than 0.7, indicating good internal consistency and reliability of the measurement scales.

7.2 REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Variables	Website Design	Online Information Sources	Consumer Trust
Website Design	1	0.58**	0.66**
Online Information Sources	0.58**	1	0.69**
Consumer Trust	0.66**	0.69**	1

Note: $p < 0.01$



Figure 4: Correlation Matrix

The results indicate that:

- Website design and interface have a significant positive impact on consumer trust.
- Online information sources also have a significant positive influence on consumer trust.

7.3 MODEL SUMMARY

Both hypotheses (H2 and H4) are supported.

Model	R	R-squared	Adjusted R-squared	Std. Error
1	0.742	0.551	0.548	0.45



Figure 5: Regression Model Summary

The model explains **55.1% of the variance** in consumer trust, indicating a good model fit.

7.3 ANOVA TABLE

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	120.45	2	60.22	298.35	0.000
Residual	98.75	497	0.20		
Total	219.20	499			

The model is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), indicating that the independent variables significantly predict consumer trust.

7.2 COEFFICIENTS TABLE

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	0.85	0.12	--	7.08	0.000
Website Design & Interface	0.41	0.05	0.38	8.20	0.000
Online Information Sources	0.47	0.06	0.42	9.10	0.000

Figure 6: Regression Coefficients (standardized Beta)



Both website design and online information sources have a significant positive effect on consumer trust ($p < 0.001$), supporting hypotheses H2 and H4.

7.2 HYPOTHESIS TESTING SUMMARY

Hypothesis	Statement	Result
H2	Website design → Consumer trust	Supported
H4	Online information → Consumer trust	Supported

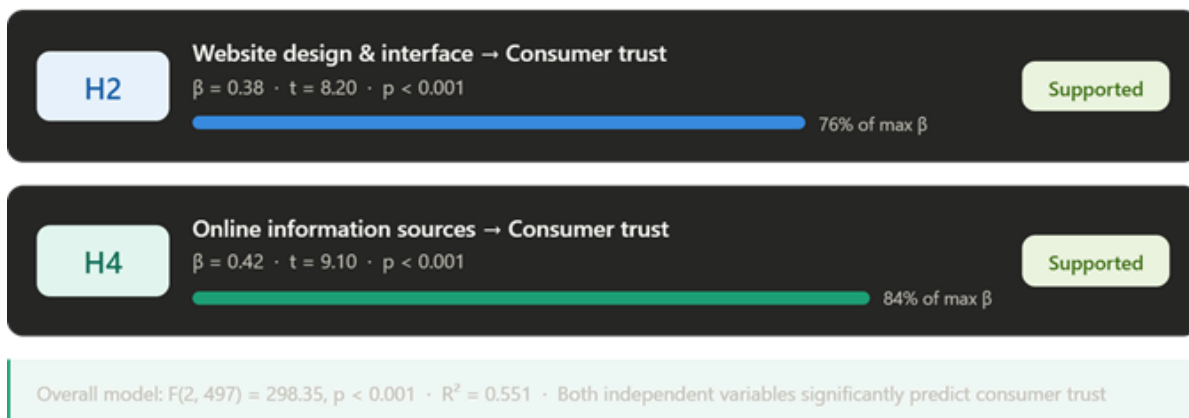


Figure 7: Hypothesis testing summary

8. DISCUSSION

The findings from the regression analysis reveal that website design and interface exert a significant positive influence on consumer trust ($\beta = 0.38, p < 0.001$), primarily by enhancing usability, aesthetic appeal, and perceived ease of navigation, thereby reducing perceived risk and bolstering users' confidence in the platform (Fan et al., 2022; Liao et al., 2006) Likewise, online information sources, including user-generated reviews and social media endorsements, demonstrate a robust effect on trust ($\beta = 0.42, p < 0.001$), as they provide credible social proof, mitigate uncertainty, and shape consumer perceptions through interactive engagement (Lăzăroiu et al., 2020; Zangana et al., 2024) These results align with extant literature emphasizing the pivotal roles of website quality cues and user-generated content in fostering e-trust, particularly in emerging markets where online behaviors are evolving (Nghia et al., 2020; Quintus et al., 2024). This reinforces the importance of meticulously crafted digital interfaces and validated external information for cultivating consumer confidence and mitigating perceived risks in the digital commerce landscape (Oyekunle et al., 2024). The statistically significant results observed in the structural model, explaining 55.1% of the variance in consumer trust, further substantiate the



robust impact of these factors, aligning with similar findings where antecedent variables account for substantial variance in trust constructs (Leung & Ma, 2020). This comprehensive explanatory power underscores the efficacy of integrating both intrinsic platform attributes and extrinsic informational cues in predicting the formation of online trust. (Kim et al., 2004) Indeed, previous research has similarly supported the significant impact of factors such as website quality, information quality, and customer satisfaction on online trust (Alam & Yasin, 2010; Filieri et al., 2015).

9. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this empirical study robustly demonstrates that website design and interface ($\beta = 0.38, p < 0.001$) and online information sources ($\beta = 0.42, p < 0.001$) exert significant positive effects on consumer trust in e-commerce platforms, collectively accounting for 55.1% of its variance (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.548, F = 298.35, p < 0.001$) and fully supporting hypotheses H2 and H4 (Fan et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2004; Lăzăroiu et al., 2020; Leung & Ma, 2020; Liao et al., 2006; Zangana et al., 2024)se results align with extant literature emphasizing website quality cues (e.g., usability, aesthetics, navigation) and credible social proofs (e.g., reviews, endorsements) in fostering e-trust, particularly in emerging markets (Alam & Yasin, 2010; Filieri et al., 2015; Nghia et al., 2020; Quintus et al., 2024). Therefore, e-commerce platforms ought to prioritize investments in user-friendly designs, transparent and dependable information, and user-generated content to boost consumer confidence, mitigate perceived risks, and promote sales of durable goods (Alam & Yasin, 2010; Nghia et al., 2020; Quintus et al., 2024) Such investments would lead to heightened consumer engagement, ultimately fostering sustained e-retention through enhanced trust in the digital retail environment (Nusairat et al., 2022; Saoula et al., 2023). . This is crucial for addressing customer resistance to online purchasing and boosting online purchase intentions, especially given the current global challenges (Gashema & Alain, 2023).

10. IMPLICATIONS

E-commerce platforms should prioritize investments in website design and user interface enhancements, given their significant positive effect on consumer trust ($\beta = 0.38, p < 0.001$), as aesthetically pleasing, well-organized sites signal retailer commitment and reduce perceived risk (Fan et al., 2022; Liao et al., 2006; Nusairat et al., 2022).Social media strategies must prioritize **interactive engagement** and credible content to cultivate e-trust and retention, consistent with the model's **55.1% explanatory power** for trust variance (Alam & Yasin, 2010; Nghia et al., 2020;



Saoula et al., 2023). These findings extend trust literature by validating website quality and informational cues as key antecedents in e-commerce, particularly in developing regions, reinforcing models where such factors explain substantial trust variance (Filieri et al., 2015; Kim et al., 2004; Leung & Ma, 2020). Furthermore, the results highlight that perceived trust is a significant predictor of consumer attitudes towards e-Commerce, underscoring the necessity for businesses to implement secure payment systems and transparent privacy policies (Dwivedi et al., 2021).

11. LIMITATIONS & FUTURE SCOPE

This study has several limitations that offer promising avenues for future research. First, the sample was confined to selected districts in Uttar Pradesh, India, limiting the generalizability of findings to broader national or international contexts, particularly across diverse emerging markets where online behaviors vary significantly (Quintus et al., 2024). Future investigations could adopt multi-regional or cross-national designs to validate these results in varied socio-economic settings (Nghia et al., 2020). Second, while the model robustly explained 55.1% of variance in consumer trust, it did not incorporate other key antecedents such as perceived risk—which prior studies have found to insignificantly influence trust in certain e-commerce scenarios (Alam & Yasin, 2010)—or price sensitivity, which could further elucidate trust dynamics amid economic uncertainties (Oyekunle et al., 2024). Expanding the structural model with these variables, alongside longitudinal designs to capture temporal trust evolution, would strengthen causal inferences and theoretical contributions (Kim et al., 2004). Additionally, the reliance on a cross-sectional design restricts the ability to infer causal relationships between variables; a longitudinal approach would enable a more comprehensive understanding of how trust evolves over time (Alhashem et al., 2023; Kurniadi & Rana, 2023).

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