

The Influence of E-Wom Quality and Trust on Purchase Decisions with The Mediating Role of E-Wom Adoption

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Abstract. Technological advances have changed consumer behavior, making them more active in searching for and comparing product information online through reviews and digital media before deciding to make a purchase. This study aims to analyze the influence of e-WOM quality and trust on purchase decisions mediated by e-WOM adoption among social media and marketplace users. The research method used a quantitative approach with Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) analysis and involved 170 respondents. The results show that e-WOM Quality and Trust have a positive and significant effect on e-WOM Adoption and Purchase Decision. Additionally, e-WOM Adoption mediates the relationship between e-WOM Quality and Trust on Purchase Decision. This study confirms that information quality and consumer trust are important factors that drive information adoption, leading to purchase decisions on digital platforms.

Keywords: e-WOM Quality, Trust, e-WOM Adoption, Purchase Decision, SEM-PLS, Social Media, Marketplace.

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Introduction

Technological advances have changed consumer behavior in shopping, especially through e-commerce and marketplaces. This has been further reinforced by COVID-19, which has lasted for approximately two years, forcing people to do everything at home, including shopping. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed consumer behavior, which previously relied on direct word-of-mouth promotion techniques. Now, consumers also adopt promotional information in the form of reviews, ratings, and comments for online purchasing decisions that can be found through social media, websites, and blogs. All information is very easy and quick to access. This makes it easier for consumers to search, evaluate, and decide on purchasing a product. One of the factors influencing consumers' decisions to purchase a product is electronic word of mouth (e-WOM). According to (Khwaja & Zaman, 2020), e-WOM is a review or information conveyed by consumers about a product on e-commerce channels, marketplaces, or social media. These reviews include comments, star ratings, and even photos or videos of the product from previous consumers. The difference between e-WOM (electronic word of mouth) and traditional WOM (word of mouth) lies in the means of information dissemination. E-WOM uses fast communication facilities through online communication channels that can be accessed anytime and anywhere, while traditional WOM is limited to space and time (Huete-Alcoer, 2017). E-WOM plays an important role in shaping perceptions or influencing purchasing decisions, especially among millennials and Generation Z, who are digital natives and active users of social media. This phenomenon has opened up new avenues for direct communication and interaction between businesses and consumers, shaping the landscape of e-WOM in the modern era (Goyette I. et al., 2010)

Prospective buyers can explore the quality of the product they want to purchase through e-WOM in the form of reviews, product and store ratings, and discussions between product users that take place in social media comment sections or review columns in marketplaces. The user experience in using the reviewed product is very helpful in making decisions, whether the product will suit the needs of potential buyers or not.

Marketplaces operating in Indonesia, such as Shopee, Lazada, Tiktok Shop, and Tokopedia, are consistent in providing features for reviews, ratings, and discussions between fellow buyers of the product or between potential buyers and sellers. This can help other prospective buyers because the discussion section can be viewed by all prospective buyers who open the page, making it easier for prospective buyers to obtain information and easier for sellers to provide information (Meng et al., 2022).

Apart from marketplaces, prospective buyers can also find information about the products they want to buy through social media (Neneng Nurmalasari & Masitoh, 2020). Information about products can spread rapidly on social media because social media is the fastest place for information dissemination. Through social media, images and videos of the product's application are available, giving potential buyers an idea of whether the product will suit them. Through the photos and videos uploaded, the uploaders usually provide reviews and alternative options. For example, for makeup products, they provide reviews and suggestions for dark brown, light brown, and white skin tones so that potential buyers can choose the color that best suits their skin tone.

However, social media is very dynamic, and consumers often encounter a wide variety of reviews/information. In fact, in this era, many brands use buzzers in promotions that create virality, influence opinions, and utilize many influencers or celebrities to promote their products. This forms two groups of consumer behavior in line with dual process theory (Strack & Deutsch, 2004) because it explains the social and informational factors that influence individuals psychologically in making purchasing decisions. To obtain accurate results, this study combines dual process theory with the information adoption model. The combination of these two theories provides a strong scientific basis for capturing the complexity of digital consumer behavior, which often processes information both rationally and emotionally.

1. Literature Review

1.1. Electronic Word of Mouth

E-WOM is essentially positive or negative statements made by previous consumers about products or companies through digital media (Ghosh et al., 2025). In this article, the term e-WOM is used to refer to negative, neutral, and positive reviews about a product or service that are created and published by previous customers on social media and marketplaces. E-WOM includes information, opinions, suggestions, and recommendations about products, services, or purchasing experiences (Ngo et al., 2024). The quality of e-WOM information and trust in that information influence the perspective of potential buyers. Customers can express their assessments of products or services in the form of text, images, or videos that can be uploaded in the review column of the purchased product or conveyed through social media. Social media plays a major role in shaping consumer perceptions of products or services, influencing the decision-making process, and exchanging information. This has led businesses to embrace social media as an efficient platform for distributing information about their products or services.

1.1.1. Dual Process Theory

Dual Process Theory is a psychological theory that explains that humans process information and make decisions through two different cognitive systems. This theory was developed by (Strack & Deutsch, 2004) to explain the influence of social roles on individual psychological processes. The first system, called System 1 (Chaiken, 1980), works quickly, automatically, intuitively, and is often based on feelings and previous experiences, without requiring deep conscious thought. For example, in the context of consumer behavior, System 1 allows a person to quickly trust reviews or recommendations based on trust or the reputation of the information source. In contrast, System 2 (Evans, 2019) is slow, conscious, and reflective. This system involves more rational and analytical thinking processes, where consumers critically and deeply assess the quality of the information they receive, such as evaluating the completeness, clarity, and relevance of product reviews. Understanding these two systems is highly relevant in the context of e-WOM because consumers often use a combination of heuristic (System 1) and analytical (System 2) processing in deciding whether to adopt information and make purchasing decisions. Overall, Dual Process Theory provides a strong conceptual framework for explaining how the quality of e-WOM and trust can simultaneously influence the information adoption process (e-WOM adoption) and purchasing decisions through cognitive and heuristic pathways.

1.1.2. Information Adoption Model

The e-WOM communication process is said to be successful not only due to the quality of e-WOM and trust building, but also because e-WOM adoption plays an important role throughout the entire process, from credibility to purchasing decisions. Based on research by (Handoyo, 2024) e-WOM adoption acts as a mediator in determining and connecting the impact of e-WOM quality and trust on purchasing decisions among consumers. In the research by (Arief et al., 2023) the basic requirements for e-WOM adoption are quality and trust. E-WOM adoption refers to the acceptance of compatible review recommendations (Ishak & Elgeka, 2023). Furthermore, there is a fairly high tendency that people who receive high-quality and trustworthy e-WOM messages usually utilize the information in their actual purchase decision stage. The quality of e-WOM and trust combined with adoption open up opportunities for consumers to determine and change their attitudes toward purchasing decisions. Furthermore, (Fileri, 2015) highlights that information adoption is a process in which consumers are actively involved in receiving and using information, such as following recommendations in online product reviews.

A number of previous studies have extensively assessed the influence of e-WOM on purchasing decisions using the IAM model (Meng et al., 2022) (Calista et al., 2023). Therefore, the use of the IAM model is appropriate for investigating the influence of e-WOM on purchasing decisions.

1.2. Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis Development

This section formulates hypotheses based on a literature review and previous studies that examine the relationship between variables and lead to the development of a theoretical framework. Based on the fundamental theories used in this study, namely Dual Process Theory and Information Adoption Model (IAM), this study analyzes the role of quality and trust in the context of e-WOM promotion on social media and marketplace comment columns.

1.2.1. E-WOM Quality

The quality of E-WOM refers to the strength of convincing and persuasive comments contained in the information message (Sabrina Desweriel, 2022). Information quality refers to the subjective perception of the

recipient of the information about the convincing information. Information quality has a positive and significant influence on online purchase interest and purchase decisions. Clear, relevant, honest, and complete information in online reviews or comments helps consumers accurately assess products, thereby increasing their confidence to make a purchase. Consumers tend to be more receptive to reviews from credible and experienced sources, which is reflected in the quality of e-WOM information (Anuradha & Malhotra, 2025). To improve information quality, marketplaces can ensure that product information is presented accurately and completely, and in an easy-to-understand format. In the Information Adoption Model (IAM), e-WOM quality represents the concept of argument quality, which is how clear, relevant, honest, and complete the information presented in online reviews is. Good e-WOM quality increases the perception of information usefulness, thereby triggering high information adoption by consumers. In Dual Process Theory, e-WOM quality enters the cognitive analysis pathway (System 2), where consumers consciously process and deeply evaluate the quality of information before deciding to adopt and act on it. Previous studies have concluded that several characteristics related to e-WOM information quality include comprehensibility, clarity, quality, detail, being based on experience and facts, and relevance to needs (Gvili & Levy, 2018)(Filieri, 2015)(Nittayoosakulchot & Pankham, 2025). It has been observed that e-WOM quality influences information adoption and purchasing decisions (Alrawad et al., 2025). Therefore, the hypotheses can be formulated as follows:

H1: E-WOM quality has a positive and significant effect on online purchase interest and purchasing decisions.

H2: The quality of e-WOM has a positive and significant effect on e-WOM adoption.

1.2.2. Trust

Considering the fact that new social media and marketplaces continue to emerge, it is very important to ensure the accuracy of information contained in e-WOM. It is said that credible e-WOM can have an impact on the formation of consumer trust and loyalty(Zeqiri et al., 2023). E-WOM credibility is related to the extent to which a person assesses that recommendations from certain sources, whether individuals or organizations, are trustworthy or not (Filieri, 2015). According to(Ngo et al., 2024) e-WOM credibility refers to the extent to which a person feels that recommendations from certain sources, whether individuals or organizations, are trustworthy.

Trust is the recipient's cognitive assessment of the ability and motivation of the information source, and the recipient will have a certain disposition of trust toward the source (Handoyo, 2024)If consumers consider product and service reviews or comments to be credible sources, they will use them to make purchasing decisions(Khwaja & Zaman, 2020). Then, in the research by(Putz et al., 2025), the credibility of the message source refers to the extent to which the message recipient trusts the message bearer. If the source has credibility, customers will trust the message. This study also explains that if the source has credibility, customers will trust the message, so the credibility of the message source has many effects on whether customers trust the message or not.

According to (Teng et al., 2014), credibility is generally supported by three factors, namely:

- Expertise, referring to the communicator's professional knowledge about the product or service.
- Trustworthiness, which is the level of trust and acceptance of a source developed by the message recipient.
- Source experience, which is the level of familiarity based on the communicator's actual experience with the product or service from the perspective of the e-WOM recipient.

In this context, trust functions as the main element in the heuristic pathway (System 1), where trust in the information source allows individuals to quickly and intuitively accept and adopt information without the need for in-depth analytical processes. When someone has a high level of trust in a particular review or information source, they tend to automatically trust and follow that information without conducting complex critical evaluations. Conversely, in the analytical pathway (System 2), trust acts as a supporting factor that reinforces the perception of the usefulness and reliability of information after going through a more in-depth evaluation process. Thus, trust not only accelerates the decision-making process through the heuristic pathway but also improves the quality of analysis in the analytical pathway, making its relevance central to understanding how consumers process and adopt information in the digital world, particularly in the context of e-WOM and purchasing decisions.

H3: The trust variable has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions.

H4: The trust variable has a significant positive influence on e-WOM adaptation.

1.2.3. Information Adoption

Building trust or credibility in e-WOM is not the only factor contributing to successful e-WOM communication; e-WOM adoption also plays an important role throughout the entire process, from credibility to purchasing decisions. Based on research (Chiu et al., 2023). E-WOM adoption acts as a mediator in determining and connecting the impact of e-WOM quality and purchasing decisions among consumers. In the study (Arief et al., 2023), the basic requirement for e-WOM adoption is credibility. According to (Sardar et al., 2021) e-WOM adoption refers to the acceptance of compatible review recommendations. Additionally, there is a fairly high tendency for people who receive high-quality and credible e-WOM messages to try to utilize the information in their actual purchase decision stage. The quality and credibility of e-WOM information combined with adoption enable consumers to determine and change their attitudes toward purchase decisions.

The relevance of the concept of information adoption to the Information Adoption Model (IAM) is very close because information adoption is at the core of the model. IAM was developed to explain how individuals receive, evaluate, and ultimately adopt the information they receive, especially in the context of technology-based communication such as e-WOM. In this model, the information adoption process is influenced by two main factors, namely argument quality and source credibility. When an individual assesses that the information received is of good quality and comes from a reliable source, then the information is considered useful (information usefulness)(Parveen & Chaudhary, 2025) and more likely to be adopted. By adopting this information, individuals can use it as a basis for decision-making, such as purchasing decisions. Therefore, the concept of information adoption in IAM is not merely receiving information, but also includes critical evaluation and acceptance that actively influences consumer behavior. Thus, the use of IAM in your research directly links how the variables of e-WOM quality and trust drive the information adoption process, which then impacts purchase decisions.

H5: The e-WOM adoption variable has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions.

1.2.4. Research Design

This research framework was developed by integrating relevant literature and formulating hypotheses, as shown in [Figure 1](#). This research framework investigates the impact of e-WOM Quality and Trust as independent variables on the dependent variable, namely Purchase Decision, as well as the role of e-WOM Adoption as a mediating variable.

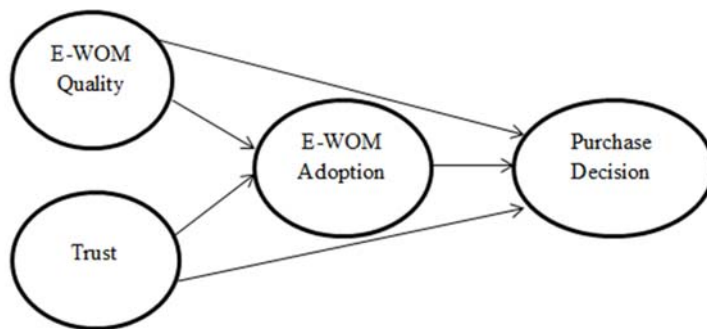


fig 1. Research Design

2. Research Methodology

This study uses quantitative methods to examine the correlation between aspects of e-WOM quality, trust, adoption information, and purchasing decisions among social media and marketplace users. This study uses data collection methods through questionnaires or surveys. According to (Pramiyati et al., 2017), primary sources are data sources obtained directly from the original source. Primary data is generally used to produce information that reflects the truth in accordance with factual conditions, so that the information produced can be useful in decision making. This study uses non-probability sampling techniques and the sampling technique used is purposive sampling with predetermined criteria.

The criteria for respondents needed to complete this questionnaire have two criteria, namely collecting demographic information on respondents, including age, gender, and how long they have been using social media and marketplaces. The measurement scale in this study uses a Likert scale (Budiaji et al., 2019), which consists of a total of 33 statements to measure individual behavior by responding to 7 choice points on each question item: strongly agree, agree, slightly agree, neutral, slightly disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree (Budiaji et al., 2019).

Data was obtained through an online questionnaire created using Google Forms, and the questionnaire link was shared through communication media such as WhatsApp and social media such as Instagram, X, and TikTok. The data obtained was processed using the Partial Least Squares (SEM PLS) statistical analysis method, aiming to test complex results between variables (Parveen & Chaudhary, 2025).

3. Result

3.1. Respondent

As reported in Table 1, respondents consisted of various age groups, with the largest number between the ages of 17 and 28, totaling 139 respondents (69.5%), followed by 47 respondents (23.5%) between the ages of 29 and 45, and 14 respondents (7%) over the age of 45. Of the total 200 respondents, 139 were female (69.5%) and 61 were male (30.5%). Among the survey respondents, 160 respondents (80%) stated that they had been using social media and marketplaces for >5 years, while the other 40 respondents (20%) stated that they had been using social media and marketplaces for <5 years.

Table 1 Respondent

Criteria	Option	Frequency	%
Age	17-28	139	69.5
	29-45	47	23.5
	>45	14	7
Gender	Male	139	69.5
	Female	61	30.5
Long time use of media social and marketplace	>5 years	160	80
	<5 years	40	20

Table 2 indicators

Variable	Indicators
EWOM Quality	I pay attention to comments/reviews and ratings on marketplaces and social media before making a purchase.
	I believe that reviews accompanied by videos, photos, and detailed information about the product in the comments section are valid information.
	The details in the comments/reviews help me make purchasing decisions.
	I believe that comments/reviews and ratings on marketplaces are based on personal assessments of the product and service.
Trust	I use comments/reviews and ratings as a reliable source of information before making a purchase.
	I believe that reviewers have sufficient knowledge or experience about the products they review.
	I trust organic reviews more than reviews for

	advertising or endorsements.
	I read many reviews to increase my confidence in making a purchase decision.
	Reviewers are trustworthy
Information Adoption	I consider reviews and ratings from other users before making a purchase.
	Comments/reviews and ratings are generally very helpful in helping me understand the pros and cons of the product I intend to buy.
	I feel comfortable adopting the suggestions and recommendations found in the comments or review section.
	Comments/reviews on social media and marketplaces help me narrow down the alternatives for the products or services I want to buy.
	I tend to follow the suggestions or recommendations found in online reviews or comments.
	The information provided in the comments/reviews section on marketplaces and social media is easy to understand.
	Comments/reviews and ratings on marketplaces and social media can answer my questions about the products I want to buy.
Purchase Decision	Comments, reviews, and ratings make it easier for me to make decisions.
	Comments/reviews and ratings have motivated me to make purchasing decisions.
	I feel confident about my purchasing decision after obtaining information from comments and reviews on social media and marketplaces.
	I choose products based on recommendations or other users' experiences that I read online.
	I am satisfied with purchasing decisions based on information from other people's reviews and my personal trust.

3.2. Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model in this study consists of a reflective measurement model, namely the variables of e-WOM Quality, Trust, e-WOM Adoption, and Purchase Decision, which are measured reflectively. Based on research (J. F. Hair et al., 2019), the evaluation of the reflective measurement model is carried out by assessing its reliability and validity. Reliability can be seen from the Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values. If both are ≥ 0.70 , then it is considered reliable. Convergent validity is measured if the Average Variance Extracted or AVE is ≥ 0.50 , then the measurement value is considered valid. Discriminant validity can be tested through several methods, such as Cross Loading, Fornell-Larcker Criterion, and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). Based on the cross loading output in the study, the indicators have a higher correlation with the main construct than with other constructs, so the validity requirements have been met. This cross loading test needs to be reinforced with the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value and Fornell-Larcker analysis, where the AVE root of each construct is greater than the

correlation of the construct with other constructs, indicating that validity has been fulfilled. Furthermore, HTMT testing was conducted to ensure that there were no significant relationships between different constructs. An HTMT value below 0.90 indicates that discriminant validity is valid, so that each construct stands independently and does not have excessive associations with one another (J. Hair & Alamer, 2022).

Table 3 Outer Loading, Cronbach's Alpha, CR, AVE

Construct	Items	Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
E-WOM Quality	EQ1	0.794	0.792	0.874	0.613
	EQ2	0.736			
	EQ3	0.814			
	EQ4	0.786			
Trust	T	0.716	0.808	0.867	0.566
	T2	0.737			
	T3	0.756			
	T4	0.739			
	T5	0.810			
E-WOM Adoption	EAd1	0.745	0.878	0.906	0.579
	EAd2	0.737			
	EAd3	0.719			
	EAd4	0.782			
	EAd5	0.802			
	EAd6	0.807			
	EAd7	0.726			
Purchase Decision	PD1	0.754	0.820	0.864	0.581
	PD2	0.816			
	PD3	0.749			
	PD4	0.750			
	PD5	0.739			

Based on [Table 3](#), all variables meet the requirements of being valid and reliable because all Cronbach's Alpha and CR values for each variable have a score >0.70, indicating that the variables are reliable and have an AVE value >0.50, reflecting that all variables meet the requirements of convergent validity.

[Table 4](#) shows the discriminant validity data obtained from Fornell-Lacker. The data shows that the e-WOM Adoption variable has a larger AVE root (0.781) correlation than e-WOM Quality (0.761), a larger correlation than Purchase Decision (0.702), and a larger correlation than Trust (0.538). These results indicate that the discriminant validity of the e-WOM Adoption variable is fulfilled. Similarly, the e-WOM Quality variable has an AVE root (0.783) that is greater in correlation than Purchase Decision (0.599) and greater in correlation than Trust (0.477). These results indicate that the discriminant validity of the e-WOM Quality variable is also fulfilled. Similarly, the Purchase Decision variable has an AVE root (0.762) that is greater than its correlation with Trust (0.640). The evaluation of discriminant validity is a form of evaluation to ensure that variables are theoretically different and empirically proven. The Fornell-Lacker criterion is that the AVE root of a variable is greater than the correlation between other variables (Chin, 2010).

Table 4 Fornell Lacker

	EAd	EQ	PD	T
EAd	0.781			
EQ	0.761	0.783		
PD	0.702	0.599	0.762	
T	0.538	0.477	0.640	0.752

3.3. Hypothesis

The inner model test, which examines the relationship between constructs, was conducted by estimating the path coefficient values, T-statistics, and P-values through a bootstrapping procedure with 5000 subsamples. These results were used to determine the significance and strength of the relationships between variables. Significant path coefficients with P values < 0.05 and T-statistics > 1.96 indicate that the hypothesis is statistically supported(Latan, n.d.). This reinforces that the variables of e-WOM quality, trust, e-WOM adoption, and purchase decision are significantly related to each other in accordance with the proposed theoretical model. Based on [Table 5](#), H1 has a P-value of 0.023 < 0.05, meaning that the quality of e-WOM has a positive and significant effect on the adoption of e-WOM. This means that the higher the quality of online reviews/comments, the more likely consumers are to adopt this information as a basis for decision making. H2 has a P-value of 0.713, which is not < 0.05, so e-WOM quality does not have a direct and significant effect on purchasing decisions. The finding that e-WOM quality significantly influences adoption, but not directly purchase decisions, indicates that consumers need a process of evaluation and acceptance of information before it can influence their purchasing behavior. This is in line with the concept in the Information Adoption Model, which places information adoption as an important mediator in the relationship between information quality and purchase decisions. In other words, improving the quality of e-WOM alone does not directly make consumers more likely to make a purchase, without going through the adoption process. H3 has a P-value of 0.000 > 0.05, indicating that trust has a positive and significant effect on the adoption of e-WOM. The more consumers trust the source of information, the more likely they are to adopt that information in their decision-making process. H4 has a P-value of 0.003 > 0.05, indicating that trust also has a positive and significant direct effect on purchasing decisions. This means that the higher the trust, the greater the chance of a purchase. H5 has a P Value of 0.000 > 0.05. The adoption of e-WOM information has a positive and very significant effect on purchasing decisions. This shows that purchasing decisions are greatly influenced by the acceptance/adoption of information obtained from e-WOM.

Table 5 Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Path	T-Statistics	P Value	Result
H1	EQ -> EAd	2.269	0.023	Supported
H2	EQ -> PD	0.369	0.713	Not supported
H3	T -> EAd	7.627	0.000	Supported
H4	T -> PD	2.957	0.003	Supported
H5	EAd -> PD	9.730	0.000	supported

Thus, the comprehensive validation of the PLS-SEM model confirms that the research model has met the standards of reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and significant structural relationships. This provides a strong empirical basis to support the theoretical interpretation of the role of e-WOM quality, trust, and information adoption in influencing consumer purchasing decisions on social media and marketplaces. This validation adds credibility to the research results and supports theoretical generalizations in the context of modern digital marketing.

4. Conclusion and Limitation

This study found that e-WOM quality and trust have a positive and significant effect on the adoption of e-WOM among social media and marketplace users. Furthermore, the adoption of e-WOM has been proven to mediate the relationship between information quality and trust in purchasing decisions. The success of e-WOM adoption as a

mediator shows the involvement of both cognitive systems in purchasing decisions. Trust as part of System 1 allows for quick and intuitive information acceptance, while the quality of e-WOM that is critically evaluated in System 2 requires a more in-depth adoption process before driving purchasing decisions. However, the direct effect of e-WOM quality on purchasing decisions is not significant, so information quality needs to be adopted first by consumers in order to have a real impact on decision making. On the other hand, trust has both a direct and indirect (through e-WOM adoption) effect on purchasing decisions. These findings confirm that information quality and trust are central factors that drive the information adoption process, which ultimately influences consumer purchasing decisions on digital platforms.

This study has several limitations that need to be considered when interpreting the results and developing further studies. This study only focuses on social media and marketplace users, so the results obtained cannot necessarily be generalized to offline purchasing contexts or other digital platforms. All data was collected through an online survey, so respondent bias, such as self-selection bias and lack of control over responses, is highly likely. In addition, the cross-sectional nature of the study design does not allow for an examination of the dynamics of changes in consumer behavior over time. Other external factors such as promotions, prices, and product characteristics have not been thoroughly examined, even though they may influence purchasing decisions. Therefore, further research is recommended to consider a broader scope and address these shortcomings in order to obtain more general and accurate results.

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