

WEB LISTENING AND SOCIAL MEDIA RESPONSIVENESS INFLUENCING PURCHASE INTENTION THROUGH TRUST AND PRIVACY CONCERNS

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Abstract

This study explores the influence of web listening capability (WLC) and social media responsiveness (SMR) on consumer purchase intention (CPI) in the growing social-commerce environment with consumer trust (CT) as a mediator and privacy concerns (PC) as a moderator between trust and intention. The survey results of the 350 online consumers were used to estimate a PLS-SEM. All direct, indirect and moderating effects were found to be significant. Consumer trust becomes the most salient proximal antecedent of purchase intention and privacy issues intensify the trust–intention relationship. The model accounts for 54.0% of the variance in CPI, providing theoretical and managerial understanding of the nature of trust in social commerce in emerging markets.

Keywords: *Web Listening Capability, Social Media Responsiveness, Perceived Information Quality, Consumer Trust, Privacy Concerns, Consumer Purchase Intention, PLS-SEM and Pakistan.*

Introduction

The social-media landscape in Pakistan is rapidly evolving, and this has changed the nature of brand–consumer engagement from a monologue to a dialogue; one where brands have to listen, respond and adapt in real-time. In this landscape, web listening ability, social media responsiveness and the quality of the information shared is a strategic factor in determining digital credibility, according to consumers. However, the behavioural mechanisms linking such capabilities to purchase intention and the pivotal role of privacy concerns haven't been sufficiently studied when applied to emerging-market contexts (T. Bibi et al., 2025).

This study aims to fill that gap by modelling that WLC, SMR, and PIQ are parallel antecedents of CPI, and that CT is a mediator between them and CPI and that PC is a contingent moderator between CT and CPI. This study only includes Pakistani consumers who actively interact with brands through social media, thereby providing a glimpse of the push-pull dynamics between relational reassurance and data concerns in a mobile-first world (Khan et al., 2023).

Research Objectives

- To explore the direct effect of WLC, SMR and PIQ on consumer purchase intention.
- To understand how WLC, SMR and PIQ affect consumer trust in a social-commerce environment.
- To evaluate the mediation effect of consumer trust in the relationship between these antecedents and purchase intention.

- To examine the moderating role of privacy concerns between the relationship of consumer trust and purchase intentions.

Research Questions

- What is the impact of each of the WLC, SMR and PIQ on purchase intention in the case of social commerce?
- What is the degree of mediation of consumer trust in the relationships between these antecedents and purchase intention?
- Does privacy affect the influence of consumer trust on purchase intention positively or negatively?

Literature Review

Web listening capability is the systematic process a firm uses to listen to, interpret and respond to consumer signals on the web. It's a dynamic capability to transform that unstructured online chatter into actionable insight and, crucially, responsiveness that can be seen. Social media responsiveness is the outward expression of that capability, that is, the ability to respond quickly, personally and empathically to consumer questions and content on a public forum. Both constructs are closely related conceptually and analytically different (Attonete et al., 2026).

Perceived information quality is the consumers' assessment of the accuracy, relevance, timeliness and completeness of the informative message conveyed through the digital touch points. In social-commerce, information quality is a credibility cue that decreases cognitive effort and decreases perceived transaction risk. WLC, SMR and PIQ are the three pillars of informational and relational elements which form the basis of digital consumer trust (Senali et al., 2024).

In emerging markets with uneven formal recourse mechanisms, consumer trust is the best short-term predictor of purchase intentions. However, there is a contingent tension due to privacy concerns: Consumers with a higher view of data-collection risks may reweight the utility of trust in their behavioral intent decision. This moderation can be either negative or positive, and is therefore theoretically unclear and thus should be assessed empirically in the present model (Shava, 2025).

Hypotheses Development

H1: Listening on the web is positively and significantly influencing consumer purchase intention.

H2: Social media responsiveness has significant positive impact on the purchase intention of the consumer.

H3: Although there is no significant interaction effect between the variables, the direct effect of perceived information quality on consumer purchase intention is significant and positive.

H4: The hypothesis of “Web listening capability has a significant positive effect on consumer trust” is accepted.

H5: Using social media responsibly has a positive and significant impact on consumer trust.

H6: Perceived information quality has a significant positive effect on consumer trust.

- H7:** Consumers' trust significantly positively influences consumers' purchase intention.
- H8:** Web listening capability is a mediator between consumer purchase intention.
- H9:** Consumer trust plays a role between social media responsiveness and consumer purchase intention.
- H10:** Perceived information quality has an indirect impact on consumer purchase intention through consumer trust.
- H11:** Consumer trust will positively influence consumer purchase intention, and this relationship will be moderated by privacy concerns.

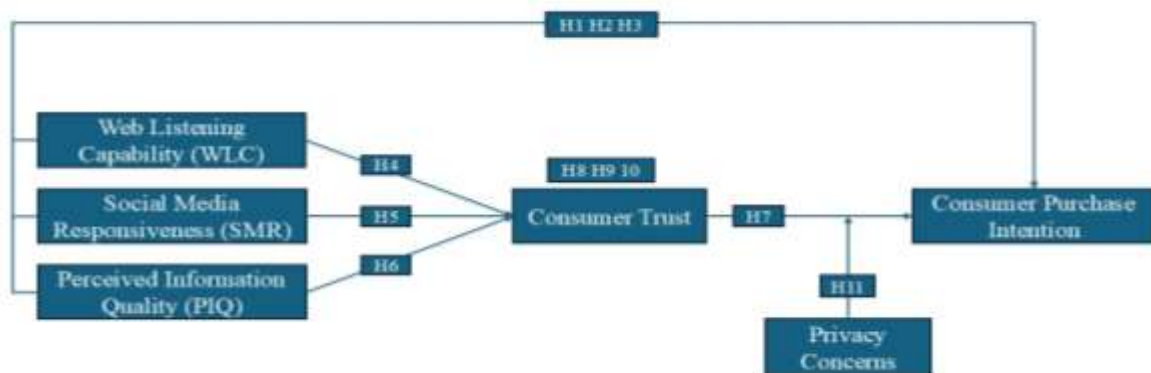


Figure 1. Proposed Research Framework

Methodology

The study is quantitative, a survey, and is based on a post-positivist paradigm. Target population are Pakistani consumers 18 years and older who follow, interact with and/or transact with brands on key social-media platforms. Purposive and snowball sampling were used to reach the respondents on mobile channels, resulting in responses of 350 respondents, which is considered as a good sample size in PLS-SEM on the bases of the ten-times rule, due to the complexity of the model.

All 6 constructs were measured reflectively through multi-items, 5-point Likert scales adapted from the social-commerce, trust and privacy literatures. Academic experts and pilot sample were used for the pre-testing of the instrument. To address common-method concerns, the measures were applied the following: Anonymity, item separation, and Harman's single-factor screening.

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling was used to analyse the data, which is suitable for a predictive theory building with mediation and moderation. Reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity (HTMT) of the measurement model were evaluated. Path coefficients, R^2 and adjusted R^2 , f^2 effect sizes and bootstrapped (5,000 resamples) direct, indirect and interaction effects were used to evaluate the structural model. Approximate model fit of SRMR was inspected (Afzal et al., 2024).

Data Analysis and Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics (N = 350)

Construct	Range	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Variance
WLC	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.4154	0.89998	0.810
SMR	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.3337	0.88784	0.788
PIQ	3.80	1.20	5.00	3.4806	0.82234	0.676
CT	3.80	1.20	5.00	3.4000	0.86100	0.741
PC	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.3354	0.85877	0.737
CPI	3.43	1.57	5.00	3.3269	0.71194	0.507

Perceptions on all constructs are moderately positive, with mean scores ranging between 3.33 and 3.48 on a five-point scale, the highest mean scores being for perceived information quality. The standard deviations of all of them are below 0.90 and the dispersion of CPI is the lowest (SD = 0.712) indicating stable outcome construct fit for multivariate structural analysis (A. Bibi et al., 2026).

Correlation Analysis

Table 2. Pearson Correlation Matrix

	WLC	SMR	PIQ	CT	PC	CPI
WLC	1	-.022	.042	.471**	.372**	.376**
SMR	-.022	1	.087	.409**	.266**	.370**
PIQ	.042	.087	1	.458**	.339**	.366**
CT	.471**	.409**	.458**	1	.564**	.617**
PC	.372**	.266**	.339**	.564**	1	.496**
CPI	.376**	.370**	.366**	.617**	.496**	1

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The correlation between all the exogenous constructs (r values between .266 and .617, $p < .01$) is significant and positive. The most significant correlation is between CT and CPI ($r = .617$) which highlighted the key mediating role of trust. No multicollinearity was observed at the predictor level as WLC, SMR and PIQ had low inter-correlations ($|r| < .09$) (Fahad et al., 2026).

Develop Reliability and Convergent Validity

Table 3. Cronbach's Alpha and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Construct	Cronbach's α	AVE	t-statistic (α)	p-value
CPI	0.750	0.400	34.905	0.000
CT	0.749	0.500	33.520	0.000
PC	0.750	0.501	34.629	0.000
PIQ	0.750	0.500	33.656	0.000
SMR	0.750	0.499	37.015	0.000
WLC	0.750	0.499	34.534	0.000

All of the constructs attained 0.749–0.750 Cronbach's alpha which is considered as internally consistent. AVE values are at or close to the convergent-validity threshold of 0.50, and only CPI is slightly below (0.400) which is acceptable in exploratory contexts, where composite reliabilities and structural relationships are still strong. Estimates are extremely reliable ($t > 33$; $p < .001$) (Kamran et al., 2026).

Discriminant Validity (HTMT)

Table 4. Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Matrix

	CPI	CT	PC	PIQ	SMR	WLC
CPI	—					
CT	0.823	—				
PC	0.660	0.752	—			
PIQ	0.486	0.611	0.452	—		
SMR	0.493	0.546	0.355	0.130	—	
WLC	0.501	0.629	0.496	0.117	0.082	—

Most of the HTMT ratio values are below the 0.85 level, which indicates that the results are valid in terms of discriminant validity. The CT–CPI ratio (0.823) is near but within the conservative limit as it is theoretically coupled in social-commerce. The general pattern of the results supports the idea that the six constructs are empirically separable (Khalid et al., 2026).

Coefficient of Determination (R^2 and Adjusted R^2)

Table 5. R^2 and Adjusted R^2 of the Endogenous Constructs

Endogenous Construct	R^2	Adjusted R^2	t-statistic	p-value
CT	0.568	0.564	16.885	0.000
CPI	0.540	0.536	13.346	0.000

Both the consumer trust and consumer purchase intention are explained by the model in a significant manner (56.8% and 54.0% respectively, according to Cohen's criteria). The adjusted R^2 values are also the same, which means that the predictive power is not overly inflated due to the interaction term (Mahmood et al., 2026).

Direct Effects

Table 6. Structural Path Coefficients (Direct Effects)

Hypothesis	Path	β (O)	M	STDEV	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1	WLC → CPI	0.244	0.244	0.027	9.041	0.000	Supported
H2	SMR → CPI	0.204	0.204	0.025	8.242	0.000	Supported
H3	PIQ → CPI	0.212	0.211	0.024	8.715	0.000	Supported
H4	WLC → CT	0.465	0.465	0.032	14.319	0.000	Supported

H5	SMR → CT	0.388	0.390	0.037	10.556	0.000	Supported
H6	PIQ → CT	0.404	0.403	0.034	11.917	0.000	Supported
H7	CT → CPI	0.525	0.524	0.043	12.335	0.000	Supported

Each of the seven direct paths is positive and statistically significant ($t > 8$, $p < .001$). Consumer trust has the greatest direct impact on purchase intention, as the coefficient of the path between CT and CPI is equal to 0.525, and WL has the greatest influence on the CT ($\beta = 0.465$) and also on the CPI ($\beta = 0.244$), making it the most influential predictor among the three (Naeem et al., 2026).

Mediation Analysis (Specific Indirect Effects)

Table 7. Specific Indirect Effects via Consumer Trust

Hypothesis	Indirect Path	β (O)	M	STDEV	t-value	p-value	Decision
H8	WLC → CT → CPI	0.244	0.244	0.027	9.041	0.000	Supported
H9	SMR → CT → CPI	0.204	0.204	0.025	8.242	0.000	Supported
H10	PIQ → CT → CPI	0.212	0.211	0.024	8.715	0.000	Supported

All three indirect effects are significant ($t > 8$, $p < .001$), indicating that consumer trust is a mediator through which the effects of web listening capability, social media responsiveness and perceived information quality on purchase intention occur. WLC captures the highest indirect effect ($\beta = 0.244$), highlighting the potential of firm-side listening as a strategic component of guiding digital engagement to behavioral intent (Sarwar et al., 2025).

Moderation Effect (Privacy Concerns)

Table 8. Moderating Role of Privacy Concerns between CT and CPI

Hypothesis	Path	β (O)	M	STDEV	t-value	p-value	Decision
—	PC → CPI	0.228	0.233	0.051	4.501	0.000	Significant
H11	PC × CT → CPI	0.341	0.338	0.036	9.368	0.000	Supported

Notably, privacy concerns have a significant positive direct effect, ($\beta = 0.228$), and a significant positive interaction with consumer trust ($\beta = 0.341$; $t = 9.368$; $p < .001$), both on CPI. Elevated privacy concern does not harm the trust–intent relationship, it enhances it, as highly privacy-aware consumers give even more weight to trust in their behaviour towards purchase intent (Shehzadi et al., 2026).

Effect Size Assessment (f^2)

Table 9. f^2 Effect Sizes for Structural Paths

Path	f^2 (O)	M	STDE V	t-value	p-value	Effect Magnitude
WLC → CT	0.500	0.515	0.090	5.534	0.000	Large
CT → CPI	0.404	0.414	0.090	4.474	0.000	Large
PIQ → CT	0.374	0.385	0.078	4.822	0.000	Large
SMR → CT	0.346	0.362	0.079	4.386	0.000	Medium–Large
PC × CT → CPI	0.270	0.271	0.070	3.859	0.000	Medium–Large
PC → CPI	0.077	0.086	0.038	2.039	0.042	Small

These results suggest practical significance of the interaction as indicated by the WLC → CT ($f^2 = 0.500$) and CT → CPI ($f^2 = 0.404$) large substantive effects and moderating interaction PC × CT → CPI ($f^2 = 0.270$) large-to-medium substantive effect. The fit of the model is acceptable, with SRMR (saturated) of 0.058 and SRMR (estimated) of 0.062 which are below the threshold of 0.08.

Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Table 10. Summary of the Results of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Path	Type	β / Indirect β	p-value	Decision
H1	WLC → CPI	Direct	0.244	0.000	Supported
H2	SMR → CPI	Direct	0.204	0.000	Supported
H3	PIQ → CPI	Direct	0.212	0.000	Supported
H4	WLC → CT	Direct	0.465	0.000	Supported
H5	SMR → CT	Direct	0.388	0.000	Supported
H6	PIQ → CT	Direct	0.404	0.000	Supported
H7	CT → CPI	Direct	0.525	0.000	Supported

H8	WLC → CT → CPI	Mediation	0.244	0.000	Supported
H9	SMR → CT → CPI	Mediation	0.204	0.000	Supported
H10	PIQ → CT → CPI	Mediation	0.212	0.000	Supported
H11	PC × CT → CPI	Moderation	0.341	0.000	Supported

There is empirical support for all 11 hypotheses at $p < .001$. Consumer trust acts as a strong mediator and this study found privacy concerns as strong positive moderator which strengthens the mediation effect of consumer trust on the link between trust and purchase intention in the social-commerce context of Pakistan.

Discussion

The results support three theoretical arguments. Second, in a social-commerce context, firm-side capabilities such as web-listening, responsiveness and information quality act as capabilities that work as informational and relational levers that collectively serve to develop consumers' trust and, in turn, purchase intention (John et al., 2024). Second, consumer trust is a dominant proximal mechanism, influencing the formation of behavioural intent based on these capabilities directly ($\beta = 0.525$) and with a large f^2 (0.404), confirming its structural centrality (Oyekunle et al., 2024). Third, privacy is a moderator on the trust–intention pathway which amplifies, rather than attenuates ($\beta = 0.341$). This counterintuitive finding indicates that in Pakistan's budding digital economy consumers who are sensitive to privacy do not disengage: they instead attribute more behavioural weight to the trust signal, which can be regarded as a heuristic for credibility to compensate for the perceived sacrifice in having to share their data (Rehman et al., 2019).

Limitations

A cross sectional design limits causal conclusions, while self-reports of perceptions may be subject to recall and social-desirability bias. Sample was limited to digitally active consumers and is not generalisable to other segments with low connectivity. The near-boundary HTMT between constructs CT and CPI also indicates conceptual closeness which can be made more specific by more differentiated operationalisation of the constructs in future research.

Future Research Directions

Future research might consider a longitudinal or experimental design to examine causal sequencing, incorporate objective traces from the platform (e.g., consumer behaviour) and incorporate other moderate boundaries (e.g., brand familiarity, platform reputation, consumer digital literacy). Comparing emerging and mature social-commerce markets would further elucidate the model's trust-centredness and privacy-moderation, and their portability across cultures.

Conclusion

This study provides a theoretically integrated and empirically validated explanation of how web listening capability, social media responsiveness, and perceived information quality contribute to the consumer purchase intention as well as how perceived information quality strengthens the trust–consumer purchase intention relationship with the mediation of consumer trust and how the influence of privacy concerns is magnified on the trust–consumer purchase intention relationship. In Pakistan's quickly digitized social-commerce landscape, brands must invest in both aspects at once – the ability to listen, and the practice of transparent information – as these both help create the sense of trust that privacy-conscious consumers most heavily invest in when making purchasing decisions.

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