Predicting behavioural intentions through social media advertising: The roles of customer habits, informativeness and ad clicks

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ABSTRACT

Organizations expend lot of resources on social media advertising expecting enhanced purchasing behaviour of customers. This imposes a challenge for marketers to design effective and attractive ads leading to positive online buying behaviour of customers. Based on information adoption model and hierarchy of effects theory, the study empirically demonstrates the effect of customer habit, ad informativeness and ad click on purchase intentions and e-word of mouth. The study used questionnaire method to collect data from 455 respondents using convenient sampling. The results of SEM reveal that the customer habits and ad informativeness drive ad clicking behaviour and in turn, increase the intentions of customers to purchase products and contribute to e-word of mouth. The study further explains the intervening effect of ad clicks. The practical and theoretical implications for utilizing the potential of social media advertising are also presented followed by future research directions.

Keywords: Customer habits, ad informativeness, ad clicks, purchase intentions, e-WOM

INTRODUCTION

The 21st century has witnessed a paradigm shift in the firms' approach of attracting customers through social networking sites. Social media has now made space in all walks of everyone's life. People are engaged on social media in reading and watching product and service-related content uploaded by brands and businesses. Indeed, social media paves the way for firms to network with customers and exchange information (Dwivedi et al., 2019; Zhu & Chen, 2015). Customers have developed a habit of using social media and are now more routinely busy in using social media websites like YouTube, Twitter, Facebook (Alalwan et al., 2017; Kim & Kim, 2018). Consequently, firms have also started deliberations on making these platforms useful for building long term relationship with customers in order to foster their business profits(Alalwan et al., 2018; Alalwan,

Dwivedi, et al., 2016). With the increase in social media usage, organizations are also encouraged to use these platforms to carry out marketing, advertising, and customer feedback related activities. Businesses have started spending a lot of resources, money, and time on social networking sites primarily in advertising, increasing followers and creating content. India ranked third in terms of digital and social media ad spending globally (Statista, 2020). With large expenditure on ads on social media platforms, the question arises that what factors contribute to revenue earnings from firm's perspective. Furthermore, along with the increased presence of customers and brands in social media websites, there is a need to examine the underlying mechanism which contributes to customers' purchase intentions and e-word of mouth (e-WOM) in order to comprehend about how customers are adopting online information to make purchase decision from consumer behaviour point of view.

Huge amount of content uploaded by social media users and businesses is posing challenge for marketers to design effective and attractive ads campaigns. The accrued collection of content on social media could be used by firms to tap potential customers and improve their buying experience (Chen et al., 2010). Therefore, brands and businesses are communicating with prospective customers, collecting feedbacks from existing ones, making relationships and creating content to motivate them for purchase and brand advocacy (Alalwan, Rana, et al., 2016; Kamboj et al., 2018). The existing research and the arguments presented in previous studies have also raised a question how hierarchy of effects theory has given rise to advertisement of products/services in social media. Therefore, based on information adoption model and hierarchy of effects theory, the constructs which need attention are purchase intentions, customer habits, e-word of mouth, ad informativeness, and ads clicks. Hence, this paper attempts to build up a theoretical model incorporating the mentioned variables in the context of online buying behaviour.

Furthermore, with the establishment of web 2.0, social media ads have become more informative to facilitate two-way communications with customers in comparison to conventional mass media advertising (Barreda et al., 2016; Palla et al., 2013; Swani et al., 2017).Various types of advertising like display ads, sponsored event ads, offer marketing ads, and company page promotion ads methods available on social networking sites. Display advertising is our focus because of its attractiveness and informativeness among both social media users and marketers. Social media ads are different from other internet ads in nature as they allow customers liking, sharing, and commenting to which we also call e-word of mouth (Laroche et al., 2013). Organizations are facing challenges in creating ads creative in case of display advertising. Specially, display ads such as video ads, text ads, image ads, slide-show ads and rich media ads have prominent existence on various social media platforms. Attractive, informative and targeted social media ads can achieve various business goals and marketing goals like forming brand awareness, imparting product knowledge to customers, changing customer perception and fulfilling company's sales goals (Alalwan et al., 2017; Kapoor et al., 2018)

Theoretical foundation and hypotheses development:
Customer Habit:
Habit was expressed as to how smoothly persons were ready to act routinely due to familiarity (Venkatesh et al., 2012). The customer habit was regarded as one of the key aspect in shaping the

visitor's purpose, actions, and perception towards social media advertising (Wu et al., 2016). Wang et al. (2015) had examined habit in relation to consumer past social media usage experience and verified that it impacted three dimensions of usage experience such as ease of use perception, perception of usefulness, and perceived enjoyment. LaRose et al. (2014) observed that negative effects of social network advertising could be minimized if users were habitual of using the platform and could even accelerate the positive results of utilizing social media platforms.

Due to consumers' everyday connectedness with social media websites, they became prone to have routine activities on social media websites of their interest and also updates, advertising, learning and entertainment activities on these sites (Alalwan et al., 2017). These consequences had enhanced the users' level of information, knowledge, and expertise pertaining to content posted on social media platforms (Limayem et al., 2007). People appeared to be more users friendly and enjoyed new applications and devices if they consistently used such devices (Alalwan et al., 2018; Eriksson et al., 2008).

Ads Informativeness:
Advertising informativeness was defined as the skill of advertising to communicate with customers about optional product details (Ducoffe, 1996), which could satisfy customers' needs and wants with respect to manufacturers' products. Informativeness was also explained as the "skill to communicate consumers about product options that facilitate them to make selections resulting the best worth" (Katz et al., 1978). Informativeness was regarded as a logical call that is theoretically different from the emotional appeal. It helped consumers to make an informed decision after evaluating all available alternatives. Informative display ads creatively displayed messages and attracted consumer's attention and motivated them to like, comment and share on social media platforms, and also encouraged users for future purchases. Informativeness provided alternatives to users hence able to make a positive attitude towards the product or service.

Dix et al. (2012) carried out relative research and specified that informativeness had a considerable effect on the importance of social media advertising. Ads informativeness recognized as one of the key sources of advertising effectiveness. Creative, entertaining, and informative content always solicited in all social media channels. Display ad's informative content attracted social media users and created interest among them (Reinartz & Saffert, 2013). Gao & Koufaris (2006) proved that informativeness was vital in shaping customer perception and attitudes towards brands and products in e-commerce stores. People were engaged on social media platforms in reading and watching content uploaded by friends, family members, and entertainment firms. Customers showed interest in product and service-related informative content uploaded by brands and businesses in the form of display ads or posts on social media (Muntinga et al., 2011).

Ads Click:
Ads click was the first step to generate online sales from an ads campaign; display ads improved offline and online sales (Fulgoni & Lipsman, 2014). Social media ads were different from internet or other online ads as they possessed engagement characteristics. Consumers on social media channels had opportunity to like, comment, and share display ads featuring a product or service. A range of ads namely displays ads, event ads, limited offer ads, and company profile promotion ads

existed on social media. Consumer concern towards display advertisements on social media indicated their interest in purchase and e-WOM (Hoyer, MacInnis, Pieters, MacInnis, and Pieters, 2013).

Mc Guire (1968) explained in its information processing model that longer ads watch time took information to another psychological level; this might shape positive consumer perceptions and attitudes in contrast to no ad click. A higher click-through rate indicated better chances of product evaluation and customer purchase intention. Consequently, it also indicated a positive response to the product or service advertised compared to no click. User normal outlook towards display ads and social media advertising determines ad click, not by users' response to a particular ad (Taylor et al., 2011).

Chen et al. (2019) pointed out that consumers habitual with social media had trust in it that played a considerable role in individuals' ads-click intention to know more about products or services advertised. The users who used smartphone to access social media had developed a habit towards social media channels using mobile social apps and expected to carry on such activities (Hsiao et al., 2016). Informative social media ads were able to attract consumer attention subsequently ads click. As per hierarchy effects of advertising (Olney et al., 1991) informativeness of the ads engaged consumers in thinking and feeling about the products or services displayed on the ads. Subsequently, it motivated consumers to click on the ads to know more about the products or services displayed before taking a buying decision. Moreover, we argue that when consumers spend more time on ads as a consequence of ad informativeness, chances of getting ads click are high. Based on the preceding discussion, following hypotheses have been framed:

H1: Customer habit positively influences ad clicks on products presented in social media.
H2: Ads Informativeness positively influences ad clicks on products displayed in social media.

Purchase Intention:
Purchase intention was defined as a judgment making process in which consumers form a valid readiness to act towards a product or service (Wells et al., 2011). It is the possibility of purchasing products or services from a particular brand (Keller, 2013). Purchase intention was also explained as an individual's assessment of a brand before the purchase of a product or service (Shao et al., 2004). Purchase intention raised the likelihood of buying, as a result, the more the buying intention, the higher the purchase likelihood. Purchase intention was measured as an attitudinal construct and was responsible to change customers' future behavior (Whan Park et al., 2010). Kotler (2000) discovered that purchase intention had a bearing on consumer conduct and determined effectiveness. Informal communication with consumers on social networking sites also had a crucial role to play in determining purchase intention.

Consumers who habitually watched ads available on social networking sites were more probably to be influenced by such ads hence had higher purchase intention for the products and services displayed on the ads (Alalwan et al., 2018). Research conducted on online shoppers (Ahn et al., 2004) found that social media display ads informativeness helped in forecasting purchase intention of consumers on e-stores. An empirical study conducted by Lee and Hong (2016) on social media

ads informativeness proved that informativeness positively affected customer purchase intentions. Ads informativeness had a positive relation with purchase intention as demonstrated by Phau and Teah, (2009). In a study conducted by Gao and Koufaris (2006) found informativeness vital in the formation of customer purchase intention from online shopping websites. Based on the preceding discussion, following hypotheses have been framed:

H3: Customer habit positively influences purchase intention for products displayed in social media.
H4: Ads informativeness positively influences purchase intention for products displayed in social media.

Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM):
Hennig-Thurau (2004) described E-Word of Mouth (e-WOM) as "any encouraging or harmful statement by the prospective, real, or previous consumer about the products or service and which is readily accessible to consumers and organizations via electronic stores". E-WOM is sharing reviews, comments, recommendations, and experience with consumers. Keller and Fay (2012) observed that the heightened use of social media channels by marketers motivated users to review and comment on brands advertising, organic content; and to share recommendations to friends and followers. With the invention of web 2.0 most, consumers have started using social media and other communication methods like review sites, discussion groups, and forums to share product, service, or company-related information (Cheung et al., 2008).

In a study conducted by Keller and Fay (2012), customers endorsed high trustworthiness to information they listen to during an online conversation and eventually, bought the products as a result of the discussion. e-WOM laid importance on consumers' keenness to widen either type of words and recommendations about the product or company (Turel et al., 2010). Social media advertising is different from conventional in disseminating ads message to the targeted audience. e-WOM facilitated by social media platform has enhanced the spread of the marketing information on the social media platform. A study conducted on online people proved that social networking had given product knowledge to take buying judgment (Powers, Advincula, Austin, Graiko & Snyder, 2012).

The extant literature pointed out that e-WOM was a dominating instrument to persuade consumers. People were gaining social media habit and were sharing their product and service usage experience online or offline and making e-WOM an increasingly popular measure (Ferguson, 2008; Ferguson et al., 2010). Consumers were sharing informative advertisement content along with their user experience of the product. A study conducted by Zhang and Mao (2016) highlighted that ads click led to product evaluation and product evaluation led to e-WOM. Informative display ads on social media drew consumer attention and persuaded them to connect the ad with a positive image; consequently motivated them to spread the communication among friends and followers on the social media platforms (Lee & Hong, 2016). Hence, with this discussion, following hypotheses have been framed:

H5: Customer habit positively influences e-word-of-mouth for products displayed in social media campaigns.

H6: Ad informativeness positively influences e-word-of-mouth for products displayed in social media campaigns.

H7: Ad Clicks mediates the relationships of Customer habit with (i) Purchase intention and (ii) e-WOM.

H8: Ad Clicks mediates the relationship of Ad Informativeness with (i) Purchase Intention and (ii) e-WOM.
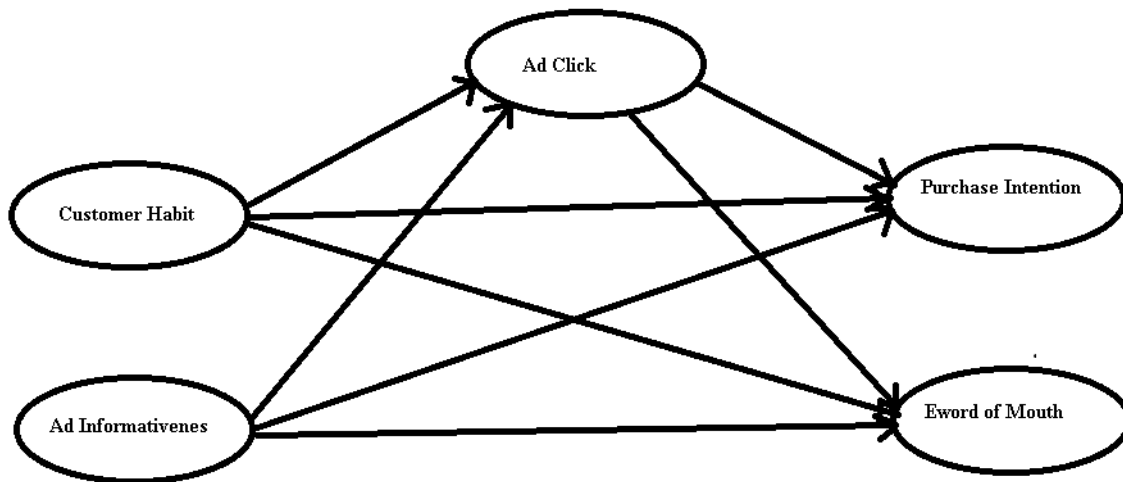

Fig 1 Proposed Theoretical Model

Research Methodology:

Sampling and Collection of Data:

A self –administered questionnaire was used to collect data. Questionnaire is an effective tool in data collection as it leads to a more generalized and accurate statistical analysis (Rowley, 2014). Further, as respondents are not influenced by researchers, results of questionnaires are more truthful and sincere (Saunders et al., 2008). To assess whether questions in the questionnaire could be easily understood by the respondents, as a pilot test, it was distributed among 20 online customers. In this pilot test, all variables were found supportive. Hence, the questionnaire used in pilot test was used in actual survey without any alteration. Sampling technique used was Convenience sampling. Questionnaire was prepared on Google Forms as it automatically records the responses of the respondents in a structured format in Google Drive. The survey was conducted during June 2020-October 2020. The questionnaire was sent, using the hyperlink of Google Form, to social media users of India who were members of various social groups on WhatsApp messaging platform. The intent public of this research was social media users. A total sample of 489 respondents was received, but only 455 were used while rest were rejected because of wrongly filled forms. The minimum sample size for this study, comprising of 5 variables, was determined to be 50 (Chin and Newsted ,1999; Hair et al. ,2014; and Sarstedt et al. ,2017). As this study had the sample size of 455, it met the conditions of minimum sample size. Table 1 shows respondents' demographic profile.

Table 1: Demographic Information

n= 455	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Female	207	45.5
Male	248	54.5
Age Group		
17 To 25	345	75.8
25 To 35	62	13.6
35 To 45	31	6.8
45 To 55	15	3.3
Above 55	1	.2
Under 17	1	.2
Occupation		
Salaried	79	17.4
Self-Employed	31	6.8
Student	345	75.8
Marital Status		
Married	84	18.5
Single	371	81.5
Annual Income		
4-6 lacs	27	5.9
6-8 lacs	23	5.1
8-10 lacs	10	2.2
Above 10 lacs	22	4.8
Less Than 4 lacs	33	7.3
Student	340	74.7

Measures

A multidimensional scale that uses the existing standard scales of the core constructs was used to assess the hypothesized model. This scale used a seven -point Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree.

Table 2

Construct	Item Label	Item	Source
Customer Habit	CH1	The use of social media advertising has become a habit for me	Adopted from Venkatesh et al. (2012)
	CH2	I am addicted to using social media advertising	
	CH3	I must use social media advertising	
	CH4	Using social media advertising has become natural to me	
Informativeness	IF1	Display ads on social media are a valuable source of product service informa	Adopted from Cheng et al (2009) and Logan et al. (2012)
	IF2	Display ads on social media are a convenient source of product service infor	
	IF3	Display ads on social media help keep me up to date	
Ads Click	AC1	I click on the display ads on social media to understand more about the produc	Self created scale using Literature review Zhang & Mao (2016)
	AC2	I click on the display ads on social media to make a purchase	
	AC3	I click on the display ads on social media to get more information about the pr	
Purchase Intension	PI1	I will buy products that are advertise don social media	Adopted from Duffett (2015)
	PI2	I desire to buy products that are promoted on advertisements on social media	
	PI3	I am likely to buy products that are promoted on social media	
	PI4	I plan to purchase products that are promoted on social media	
E-Word of Mouth	EWM1	I recommend the brands shown in the display ads on social media to other peopl	Adopted from Ferguson (2008) and Turel et al (2010)
	EWM2	I introduce the brands shown in the display ads on social media to other peopl	
	EWM3	I say positive things about the brands shown in the display ads on social medi	

Items of the constructs Customer habit, Informativeness, Purchase Intention and E-word of Mouth were adopted from previous studies as indicated in Table 2. The items of the construct Ads Click were self-constructed using literature review. Items CH3, IF3 and PI1 were dropped on account of low values of factor loading. According to (Hair et al., 2010), a good standardized factor loading value should be ideally 0.7 or above. As shown in Table 3, items (total =14) used to measure the theoretical model support both the reliability and validity.

Table 3

Item	Cronbach's Alpha	Factor Loading	t-statistic	P-Value
CH1	0.78	0.722		
CH2		0.748	12.826	***
CH4		0.741	12.777	***
IF1	0.83	0.82		
IF2		0.86	15.825	***
AC1	0.87	0.825		
AC2		0.801	18.986	***
AC3		0.869	20.868	***
PI2	0.87	0.788		

PI3		0.861	19.57	***
PI4		0.834	18.921	***
EWM1	0.85	0.869		
EWM2		0.898	24.462	***
EWM3		0.689	16.639	***

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
CustomerHabit	455	4.2542	1.40974
AdInformativeness	455	4.9956	1.35941
AdClick	455	4.2425	1.59909
PurchaseIntention	455	4.1729	1.42022
EWordofMouth	455	4.1971	1.44672

Analytical Approach

AMOS 21 was used to apply confirmatory factor analysis to the theoretical model. The goodness of fit was measured using the values of Chi-square statistics, CFI, SRMR, RMSEA and P close (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Structural Equation Modelling was used to test the hypotheses of the theoretical model. AMOS 21 was used for the SEM. Structural Equation Modelling is the best tool to assess multi-item latent variables and is widely used to examine mediating effects (Cheung, 2007). Yadav and Singh (2016) mention that the relevant paths are specified, and several measurement errors are controlled while testing hypotheses in SEM.

Results:
Confirmatory Factor Analysis:

Table 4 shows the descriptive statistics that include mean and standard deviation. The results of confirmatory factor analysis show that the model fit measures are within the threshold limits. The

values are CMIN/DF= 2.098, CFI= 0.98, SRMR=0.033, RMSEA= 0.049, PCLOSE= 0.53 (Table 5). As the factor loadings of 13 items out of 14 items is greater than 0.7 and factor loading of remaining one item is 0.69 , the reliability of all the items is confirmed (Hair et al., 2010). The convergent validity of the model is confirmed by the significant loadings and the high reliabilities of the constructs. The values of AVE for all the items are above 0.5 and for all items composite reliability is greater than its AVE, which confirms the convergent validity(Hair et al., 2010). Discriminant validity exists as all values of AVE are greater than MSV (Hair et al., 2010) and the values of inter construct correlations are less than the values of square root of AVE as shown in Table 6 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Herman's single factor Method was used to check the common method bias. All items were loaded into a single factor using SPSS. Total variance for this single factor is 48.5%. This indicates that the results are free from common method bias.
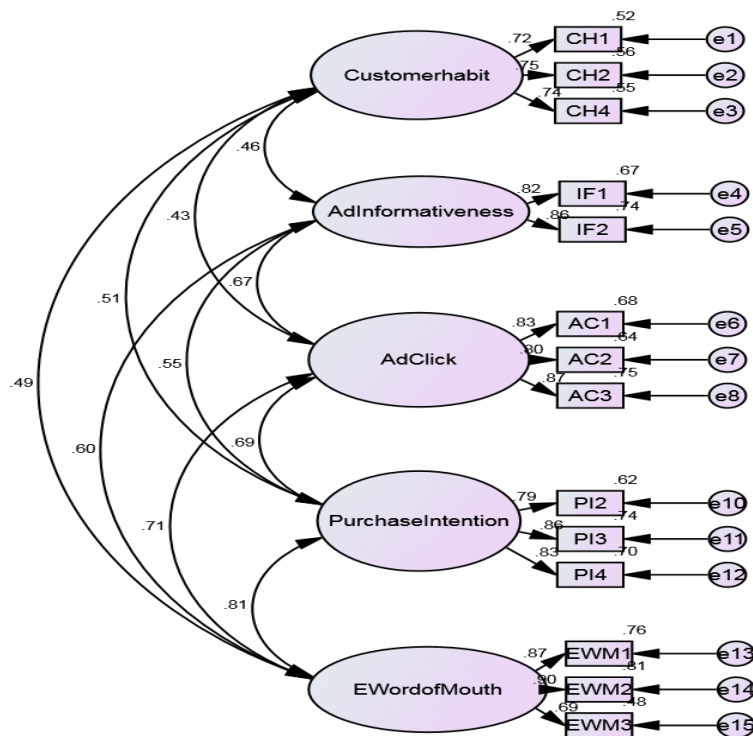

Figure 1

Table 5 Fitness Measures

Measure	CMIN/DF	CFI	SRMR	RMSEA	PClose
Observed Value	2.098	0.98	0.033	0.049	0.53

Table 6 Validity Measures

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	PurchaseIntention	Customerhabit	Informativeness	AdClick	EWordofMouth
PurchaseIntention	0.867	0.686	0.663	0.872	0.828				
Customerhabit	0.781	0.543	0.260	0.782	0.510	0.737			
Informativeness	0.828	0.706	0.452	0.830	0.550	0.457	0.840		
AdClick	0.871	0.692	0.507	0.875	0.686	0.431	0.672	0.832	
EWordofMouth	0.862	0.679	0.663	0.891	0.814	0.492	0.595	0.712	0.824

Structural Equation Modelling:

In the hypothesized model, purchase intention and e-WOM are outcome variables; customer's habit and ad informativeness are independent variables; and ads Click is mediating variable. Table 7 indicates that all SEM Model fit indices are within the acceptable range (Hooper et al., 2008), thereby support the model fit.
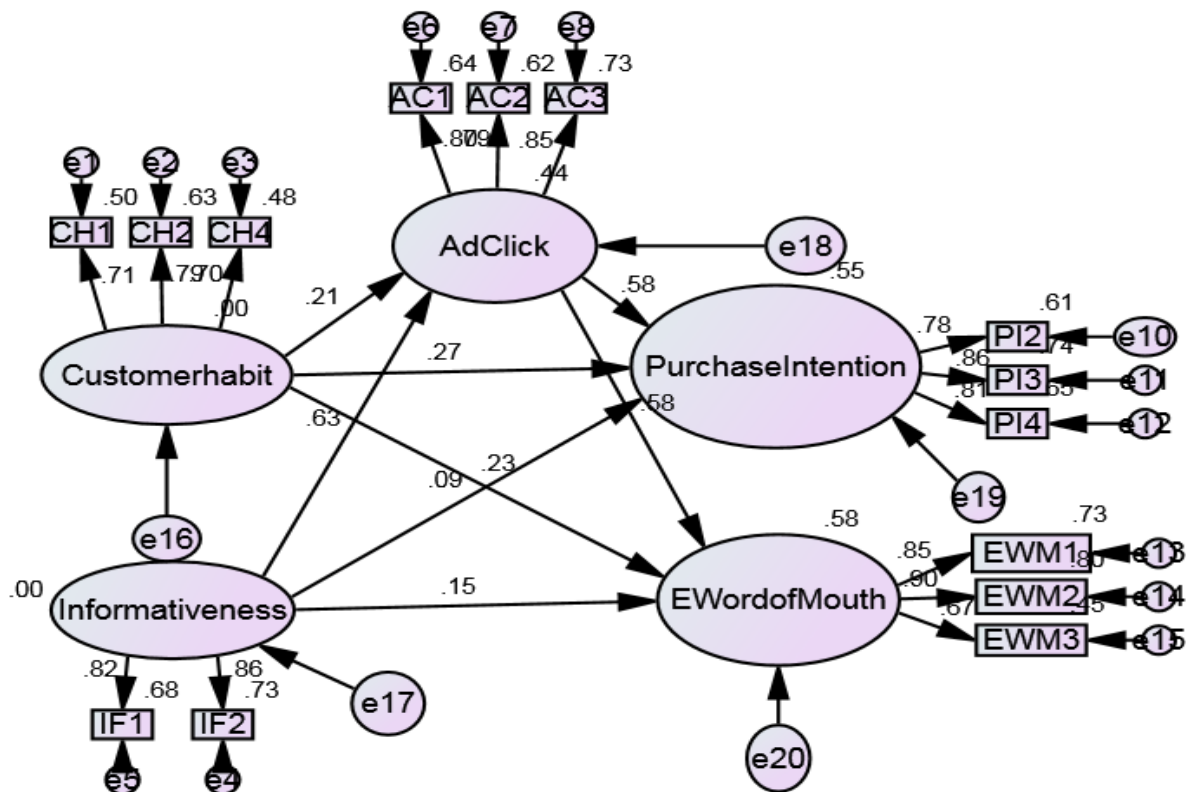

Figure 2 SEM Model

Table 7 SEM Fitness Measures

Fitness Indices	CFI	NFI	TLI	CMIN/df	RMSEA	LO 90	HI 90
Observed Value	0.939	0.922	0.919	4.255	0.085	0.075	0.095

Table 8 Regression Weights

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
AdClick	<---	Customerhabit	0.214	0.06	4.347	***
AdClick	<---	Informativeness	0.628	0.064	11.167	***
PurchaseIntention	<---	AdClick	0.582	0.06	8.389	***
PurchaseIntention	<---	Customerhabit	0.267	0.052	5.382	***
PurchaseIntention	<---	Informativeness	0.091	0.061	1.465	0.143
EWordofMouth	<---	AdClick	0.582	0.063	8.89	***
EWordofMouth	<---	Informativeness	0.145	0.065	2.44	0.015
EWordofMouth	<---	Customerhabit	0.234	0.054	5.008	***

Source AMOS Output

Standardized impact of Customer habit on Ad Click ($\beta = 0.214$ at $p \leq 0.001$) and of Ad Informativeness on Ad Click ($\beta = 0.628$ at $p \leq 0.001$) are positive and significant (Table 8). This supports the hypothesis 1 and 2 that Customer social media habit and ads informativeness will positively influence ad clicks on products presented in social media advertising. Furthermore, the standardized effect of customer habit on purchase intention is positive and significant ($\beta = 0.214$ at $p \leq 0.001$), but the standardized impact of Ad informativeness on purchase intention is not significant ($\beta = 0.091$, $p = 0.143$). So, Hypothesis 3 is supported, and Hypothesis 4 is not supported. The standardized effects of Ad informativeness and customer habit on e-WOM are positive and significant, therefore, hypotheses 5 and 6 are supported.

Bootstrapping Method was used to test the mediation effect (Bollen & Stine, 1990; Shrout & Bolger, 2002).The standardized direct effect of customer habit on purchase intention in the absence of any mediator is positive and significant ($\beta = 0.505$ at $p \leq 0.001$), which is the necessary condition to check mediation. Table 9 shows that for the path from customer habit to purchase intention via Ad clicks the standardized indirect effect is significant ($\beta = 0.125$, $p \leq 0.002$). This indicates the

presence of a partial mediation effect of Ad Clicks on the relationship of customer habit and purchase intention.

Table 9 : Standardized Direct, Indirect and Total Effects

Standardized Direct Effects (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Informativeness	Customer habit	AdClick	EWordofMouth	PurchaseIntention
AdClick	0.628	0.214	0	0	0
EWordofMouth	0.145	0.234	0.582	0	0
PurchaseIntention	0.091	0.267	0.582	0	0

Standardized Direct Effects - Two Tailed Significance (BC) (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Informativeness	Customer habit	AdClick	EWordofMouth	PurchaseIntention
AdClick	0.001	0.001	...	...	...
EWordofMouth	0.151	0.004	0.004	...	...
PurchaseIntention	0.387	0.003	0.004	...	...

Standardized Indirect Effects (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Informativeness	Customer habit	AdClick	EWordofMouth	PurchaseIntention
AdClick	0	0	0	0	0
EWordofMouth	0.365	0.125	0	0	0
PurchaseIntention	0.365	0.125	0	0	0

Standardized Indirect Effects - Two Tailed Significance (BC) (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Informativeness	Customer habit	AdClick	EWordofMouth	PurchaseIntention
AdClick	...	...	...	...	...
EWordofMouth	0.003	0.002	...	...	...
PurchaseIntention	0.002	0.002	...	...	...

Standardized Total Effects (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Informativeness	Customer habit	AdClick	EWordofMouth	PurchaseIntention
AdClick	0.628	0.214	0	0	0
EWordofMouth	0.511	0.358	0.582	0	0
PurchaseIntention	0.456	0.391	0.582	0	0

Standardized Total Effects - Two Tailed Significance (BC) (Group number 1 - Default model)

	Informativeness	Customer habit	AdClick	EWordofMouth	PurchaseIntention
AdClick	0.001	0.001	...	...	...
EWordofMouth	0.001	0.001	0.004	...	...
PurchaseIntention	0.001	0.001	0.004	...	...

Table 10: Mediation Check

Path	Std Direct Effect	Std Indirect Effect	Comment
Customer habit->Ad Click ->Purchase Intention	$\beta = 0.267$ at $p \le 0.003$	$\beta = 0.125$, $p \le 0.002$	Partial Mediation
Customer habit->Ad Click ->E-Word of Mouth	$\beta = 0.234$ at $p \le 0.004$	$\beta = 0.125$, $p \le 0.002$	Partial Mediation
Informativeness->Ad click->E-word of mouth	$\beta = 0.145$ at $p \le 0.151$	$\beta = 0.365$, $p \le 0.003$	Total Mediation

The standardized direct effect of customer habit on e-WOM in the absence of any mediator is positive and significant ($\beta = 0.486$ at $p \le 0.001$). Table 9 and 10 show that for the path from customer habit to e-WOM via ad clicks, the standardized indirect effect is significant ($\beta = 0.125$, $p \le 0.002$). This indicates the presence of a partial mediation effect of ad Clicks on the relationship of customer habit and e-WOM. These results support the hypothesis 7. The standardized direct effect of ad Informativeness on e-WOM is positive and significant. Table 9 and Table 10 show that for the path ad informativeness to e-WOM via ad clicks, the standardized direct effect is insignificant, but the standardized indirect effect is significant. This indicates the total mediation of ad clicks on the relationship of informativeness and e-WOM. This supports the second part of hypothesis 8. The first

part of hypothesis is not supported as the relationship between ad informativeness and purchase intention is not significant (Table 8).

Discussion:

The study demonstrates the dynamics of how ad informativeness and customer habit affect purchase intentions of consumers and e-word of mouth using mediating role of ad clicks. From the viewpoint of consumer information acceptance, the study acknowledges the important role of ad clicks in explaining purchase intentions and e-word of mouth. The results show that customer habit of using social media increases the chances of ad clicks, and in turn, induces customers to exhibit positive intent towards purchase. The partial mediating role of ad clicks between habit and e-word of mouth also establishes the fact that both customer habit and ad clicks are important factors in order to disseminate positive e-word of mouth towards products/services present in social media. More the duration a customer spends on social media, higher will be chances of such encounters leading to higher number of ad clicks, thereby, increasing purchase intentions and spreading positive e-WOM. To put it in another words, customers who exhibit high level of interactivity in social media ads are keener to show positive intent towards purchasing products & services and to enhance their perceptions of usefulness related to such advertisements.The possible reason of such associations can be dedicated to the fact that when the customer clicks on a particular advertisement, he/she develops a kind of trust which is based on emotions and cognition (Chen et al., 2019).

Furthermore, ad clicking behavior of consumer is also driven by ad informativeness as quality of information tends to encourage users to click on the advertisement. It is the users who drive social media (Zhang & Mao, 2016). If users' consumption habit is passive, their responses to social media ads will also be silent. Therefore, ad clicks largely hinge upon the customer habits and the information those ads carry in terms of quality of content. Consistent with extant literature on informativeness, the more they receive that the informativeness of ads is high, the more will be chances of ad clicks. However, the study contradicts to existing notion of positive relationship between informativeness and purchase intentions. The possible reason can be dedicated to the fact that, customers are still not very much comfortable with online purchasing of products and services as reported by survey conducted by Salesforce (Salesforce, 2020). Second, as reported by Safko and Brake (2009), social media uses a unique ecosystem which is user to user ecosystem and very different from regular internet environment. Such contextual differences also affect the purchase intentions of customers. However, one of the major findings of the study is that ad clicks fully mediates the relationship between informativeness and purchase intentions. This indicates that just adding relevant information in the ads may not lead to purchase intentions of customers but if the customers click on the ads, it enhances customers' purchase intentions for buying products having relevant information in ads.

The present study provides an in-depth understanding into how customers' habit and informativeness influence customers to click on advertisement showcased on social media websites and eventually form purchase intentions and propagate positive e-WOM. The model is built on information adoption model (Sussman & Siegal, 2003) and hierarchy of effects theory (Olney et al., 1991). The supporting evidence for these models implies the generality of existing knowledgebase to a relatively new area of research i.e. advertising on social media and consumer behaviour. By

illuminating the effect of customer habit and informativeness on ad clicks, this research contributes to existing understanding of factors that are responsible for customers' choice for ad clicks as a determinant for purchase intentions and dissemination of positive e-word of mouth. In practice, the study can support brand and businesses in designing promotional campaigns for social networking websites in terms of what components they should take on not only in designing and pitching promotional activities and display ads but also to capture customers' attentions leading to ad clicks.

Limitations and future scope of research:
Similar to other studies, this research also has certain limitations that put certain restrictions in terms of generalizability. First, the respondents to the survey were limited to Indian users. Therefore, the applicability of this study may have limited applicability to other countries. Second, the study used cross-sectional data; the demonstrated relationships can only be viewed correlation. Future research may be undertaken with real time data to comprehend the dynamics of relationships among the variables discussed in the study. Third, self-selection bias may have affected our study. Fourth, the questionnaire method has been used to collect data. The respondents were assured about the confidentiality of responses and their anonymity while conducting survey. However, there might have been occurrence of social desirability. Utmost care must be taken to generalize the results in other contexts. The diverse sample from other countries especially developed countries could lead to better understanding of the model. Future studies may also incorporate other forms of advertisement such as paid narratives and reach creator. Other antecedents like peer pressure on social media, supposed inappropriateness of social media ads may also be studied to further increase the explanatory power of the conceptualized model presented in the study.

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