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Information Quality Assessment in Social Commerce: A Systematic Review of Evaluation Items and Metrics

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Abstract

As social media and e-commerce platforms expand, information quality has become critically important to users. This systematic literature review examines the correlation between information quality and purchase intention across social media and e-commerce platforms. After screening the Scopus and Web of Science databases, researchers analyzed 39 articles. The findings reveal the presence of critical mediating factors linking information quality to purchase intention. Additionally, the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model is frequently used to explain this relationship. Moreover, the study underscores the importance of accuracy as a fundamental criterion in evaluating information quality. By delving into the relationship between information quality and purchase intention, this research contributes fresh insights into theories and practices related to information quality measurement. It establishes a theoretical base and offers valuable guidance for subsequent studies and practices in the field.

Keywords: E-Commerce, Information Quality, Purchase Intention, Social Media, Systematic Literature Review

Introduction

The rapid proliferation of social media and e-commerce platforms has fundamentally transformed how consumers seek and interact with information. The widespread availability of the internet and smartphones has facilitated easier and more efficient product searches and purchases (Ho & Yang, 2018). However, this access to vast amounts of data presents challenges, particularly regarding the quality of the content presented to users. Understanding information quality is crucial as it directly influences trust, user satisfaction, and subsequent purchase behavior (Hussain et al., 2020; Erkan & Evans, 2016). In an era where consumers can actively shape others' purchasing decisions (Lou & Yuan, 2019), establishing robust criteria and metrics for evaluating information quality is essential.

Given the pivotal role that social media and e-commerce platforms play in shaping consumer behavior, studying information quality in these contexts is necessary. High-quality information not only satisfies utilitarian needs but also fosters trust and engagement, ultimately impacting purchase intentions (Al-Fraihat et al., 2020; Handarkho, 2020; Zhang et al., 2016). Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Weibo have demonstrated that well-presented, high-quality content can enhance consumer attitudes and purchasing behaviors (Chen & Chang, 2018; Dirgantara & Akbar, 2022; McClure & Seock, 2020). Conversely, low-quality user-generated content (UGC) can diminish trust and lead to dissatisfaction (Song et al., 2021), underscoring the need for marketers and content creators to understand and apply effective information quality metrics (Park et al., 2006).

While the significance of information quality is well-established, substantial variation exists in how it is assessed. Some studies emphasize objectivity and relevance, while others focus on timeliness and usefulness (Park et al., 2007; Yuan et al., 2018). This inconsistency underscores the need for further research to establish standardized and comprehensive criteria. Addressing this gap is vital for improving information quality, thus benefiting marketers, content creators, and platform users through enhanced engagement and consumer trust.

This systematic review aims to bridge these gaps by evaluating recent literature on information quality metrics and their impact on purchase intention. By identifying key evaluation items and their application, this study provides crucial insights into the use of these metrics and their influence on consumer behavior. Ultimately, this research seeks to strengthen the theoretical framework and offer practical strategies for marketers and businesses to optimize content strategies for better consumer outcomes.

This review will address the following research questions:Is the relationship between information quality and purchase intention direct or mediated by other variables? If mediated, which variables commonly serve this role? What theoretical frameworks do researchers commonly apply to explore the relationship between information quality and purchase intention? What measurement standards are employed to assess information quality when studying its relationship with purchase intention? How frequently and intensely are these measurement items utilized in studies relating to purchase intention?

This research synthesizes findings from 39 articles, contributing valuable insights to both the academic literature and practical marketing strategies. By following the structured approach proposed by Kitchenham and Charters (2004), the study ensures a comprehensive methodology, which is elaborated upon in the subsequent chapters detailing the methodology, findings, implications, and recommendations.

Methodology

Search Strategy

This study employs a systematic review to analyze the literature on information quality and purchase intention, providing a comprehensive understanding of the topic and guiding future research directions (Paul & Criado, 2020). A systematic review offers a strong theoretical foundation (Webster & Watson, 2002) and follows the guidelines outlined in PRISMA 2020 to ensure methodological rigor and transparency (Sohrabi et al., 2021).

After defining the research topic and objectives, the Web of Science and Scopus databases were selected due to their comprehensive coverage and credibility in academic research. Scopus offers a broad range of sources, including books and journals, while Web of Science is recognized for its multidisciplinary coverage, especially valued in the social sciences.

Keywords Selection

To explore the relationship between information quality and purchase intention, the keywords "information quality" and "purchase intention" were used in both databases. Given the significant growth in research since 2018, the search was limited to publications from 2018 to 2023, yielding 118 articles from Scopus and 59 from Web of Science.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

To ensure the literature's relevance to the study, inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied (Nanda & Banerjee, 2021). Articles had to be (1) in English and (2) published in peer-reviewed journals. Consequently, non-English and non-peer-reviewed articles were excluded, including 36 from Scopus, 7 from Web of Science, and 1 non-English article from Web of Science. After removing 44 duplicates, 89 articles remained. Table 1 outlines the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Eleven articles were excluded due to access restrictions. Subsequently, a further selection was conducted based on the research methodology, retaining only quantitative studies and excluding four qualitative studies. This filtering process resulted in a final selection of 74 articles for analysis.

Table 1
Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Study manuscript written in English.	Non-English
Peer-reviewed journal	Non-peer-reviewed source
Quantitative research	Qualitative research
	Unobtainable

Screening Procedure

To ensure the quality of the research, a checklist approach was used to screen the literature based on specific criteria (Bandara et al., 2011). This study applied three questions to evaluate the 74 articles: (1) Does the article focus on e-commerce platforms or social media? (2) Does the research examine the relationship between information quality and purchase intention? (3) Does the article specify the items used to measure information quality?

First, titles were screened to filter out unrelated topics. Articles such as those on AI-powered chatbots were excluded. In total, three articles were removed at this stage. Next, a scoring method assessed abstracts and full texts based on the criteria (Busalim, 2016). Articles with any negative responses scored 0 and were excluded, removing nine—two based on abstracts and seven from full-text reviews.

The remaining literature was further analyzed for clarity in linking information quality to purchase intention and detailing measurement items. Twelve articles lacking clear measurement details were excluded, as well as 11 that specified sources but not the actual

items used, due to potential deviations from original scales. After this screening, 39 articles were retained for the study (see Figure 1).

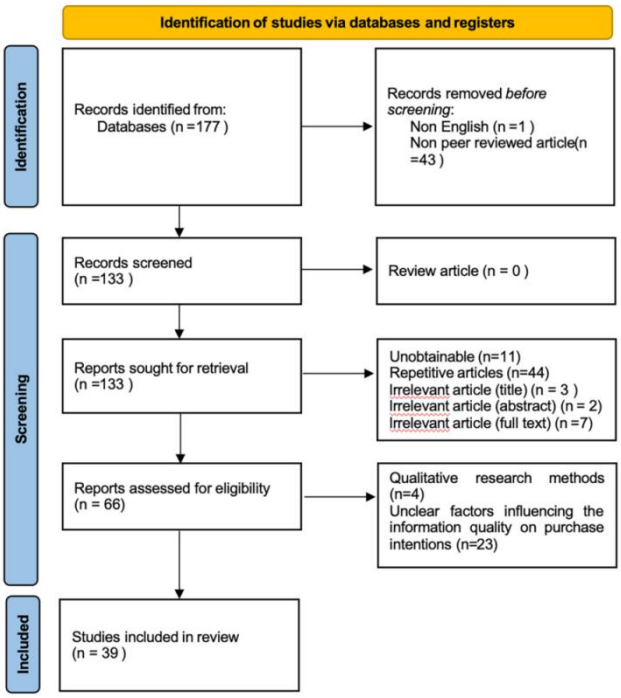

Figure 1. Schematic of PRISMA inclusion and exclusion process

Data Extraction

Information was systematically gathered through literature reviews at the data extraction stage, using Mendeley and Microsoft Excel to manage data from database exports. Extracted data included the relationship between information quality and purchase intention, mediating variables, theory, information quality measurement items, and the source of original scales. These data points were selected to align directly with the study's objectives and four research questions.

Findings

Publication Trends and Analysis of Variable Relationships

This review examined 39 articles, most published in reputable, high-impact journals, with nearly half (19 articles) appearing in SSCI-indexed journals.

The analysis aimed to determine whether the relationship between information quality and purchase intention is direct or mediated by other variables. Among the articles, 5 supported a direct relationship, 2 explored both direct and indirect links, while the majority (32 articles) indicated an indirect relationship involving mediating variables. Table 2 provides an overview of these findings.

The most frequently identified mediating variables were satisfaction/gratification (7 articles), information usefulness (7 articles), information adoption (7 articles), trust (7 articles), and attitude (5 articles). Additionally, perceived value was highlighted as a mediator in 3 studies.

Table 2
Variable Relationships and Mediators

Study	Relationship	Mediating Variables
Nguyen et al. (2020)	Direct	-
Qiang et al. (2019)	Direct	-
Sun et al. (2021)	Direct	-
Chen et al. (2021)	Direct	-
Yuan et al. (2018)	Direct	-
Shah et al. (2023)	Direct/Indirect	Perceived influence
Zhu et al. (2020)	Direct/Indirect	Trust, satisfaction
Ing&Ming (2018)	Indirect	Attitude
Anubha et al. (2019)	Indirect	Online consumer engagement
Suryani et al. (2022)	Indirect	Brand awareness
Zhao et al. (2020)	Indirect	Social psychological distance, trust
Zhang et al. (2021)	Indirect	Swift Guanxi
Ruangkanjanases et al. (2021)	Indirect	Information usefulness, information adoption
Khwaja et al. (2020)	Indirect	Trust Inclination, information adoption
Ho&Yang (2018)	Indirect	Information attractiveness, the gratification of MT use
Tseng&Lee (2018)	Indirect	Perceived usefulness
Lin et al. (2021)	Indirect	Perceived utilitarian value, perceived hedonic value
Khumalo-Ncube &Motala (2021)	Indirect	Customer Satisfaction
Hsu et al. (2018)	Indirect	Customer satisfaction
Zhang et al. (2021)	Indirect	Experiential value, perceived flow
Shafieizadeh et al. (2023)	Indirect	Perceived information credibility, information adoption, trust
Zhu et al. (2023)	Indirect	Perceived usefulness, customer trust
Trivedi&Trivedi (2018)	Indirect	App satisfaction
Chi (2018)	Indirect	Consumer satisfaction
Mathur et al. (2022)	Indirect	Attitude towards UGC
Shi et al. (2023)	Indirect	Perceived reciprocity, perceived diagnosticity
Kohler et al. (2023)	Indirect	Information usefulness, information adoption
Erkmen&Turegun (2022)	Indirect	Brand image
Sundjaja et al. (2020)	Indirect	Attitude
Oliveira et al. (2020)	Indirect	Perceived usefulness
Rosário&Loureiro (2021)	Indirect	Information usefulness, information adoption
Khoi&Le (2018)	Indirect	Perceived usefulness, CGC adoption, attitude toward CGCs
Leong et al. (2022)	Indirect	Information usefulness, information adoption
McClure&Seock (2020)	Indirect	Involvement on brand's social media, attitude toward the brand's social media
Dong et al. (2022)	Indirect	Green trust
Han et al. (2023)	Indirect	Perceived value, consumer trust
Guo&Sun (2022)	Indirect	Perceived information usefulness, arousal
Zhou et al. (2022)	Indirect	Perceived value
Chen&Chang (2018)	Indirect	Satisfaction

Theoretical Perspectives

The second research question seeks to identify the theories applied in studies on the relationship between information quality and purchase intention. The review analyzed the theoretical frameworks and models employed in these studies to address this. Of the 39 articles reviewed, 26 explicitly stated their theoretical frameworks.

Table 3 outlines the frequency of use for each theory and model. The most frequently applied framework for examining the relationship between information quality and purchase intention is the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model, cited in 11 articles, accounting for 42.3% of those that specified a theoretical framework. The Information Acceptance Model (4 articles) and Theory of Reasoned Action (3 articles) were also frequently used in studies on this topic.

Additional theories mentioned only once include the Elaboration Likelihood Model, Social Exchange Theory, Uses and Gratifications Theory, DeLone and McLean Information Systems Success Model, Network Theories of Memory, Media Dependency Theory, Information Adoption Model, Information Processing Theory, Construal Level Theory, Parasocial Interaction Theory, Theory of Self-Regulatory Process, Social Learning Theory, Signaling Theory, Flow Experience Theory, Framing Theory, and Cognitive Consistency Theory.

Table 3
Theoretical Frameworks in the Literature

Theory	Frequency
Stimulus-Organism-Response model	11
Information acceptance model	4
Theory of reasoned action	3
Theory of planned behaviour	2

Overview of the Measurement Items

This study extracted and recorded the measurement items used to assess information quality from the literature. This approach addressed the third research question, which aimed to determine the measurement components applied in studies investigating information quality and purchase intention. Table 4 lists the measurement items used in the reviewed literature, along with the sources of the scales. The sources of the scales for seven articles still need to be identified.

A statistical analysis of the confirmed sources reveals that Park, Lee, and Han's (2007), research is the most frequently cited, appearing in six out of 32 articles (18.75%). Additionally, another study by the Korean scholar Park Do-hyung (ID: 55907612900), published in 2008, was cited once, bringing Park's total citation share to 21.9%. Scales from Cao et al (2005), were used in three studies, while Erkan and Evans (2016), were referenced in two articles, and their 2018 publication was cited once. Studies by Shih (2004), Kim et al. (2008), and Lee et al (2002), were each cited twice. Similarly, the works by DeLone and McLean (2003, 2004), and Wang, and Wang (2016, 2019), were each cited in two articles.

The analysis also highlights variations in the measurement items used to assess information quality, even within the same cited scale. For example, while Khwaja et al (2020), used

'understandable,' 'clear,' and 'high-quality' from Park et al. (2007), Ing and Ming (2018), selected 'sufficient,' 'objective,' 'understandable,' 'credible,' and 'clear'.

Table 4
Measurement Items and Scale Sources

Study	Items	Scale Sources
Suryani et al. (2022)	right, understood, complete, factual	-
Ruangkanjanases et al. (2021)	clear, understandable, relevant	-
Zhang et al. (2021)	well organized, helpful, easy to understand	-
Chen et al. (2021)	subjectivity, diversity, polarity, relevancy, timeliness, reputation, consistency	-
Kohler et al. (2023)	relevant, accurate, up-to-date，in-depth	-
Dong et al. (2022)	correct, trusted, no errors , dependable, credible	-
Chen & Chang (2018)	reliable, realistic	-
Khoi & Le (2018)	complete, consistent, accurate, persuasive	Bhattacherjee & Sanford (2006)
Trivedi and Trivedi (2018)	precise, exactly, sufficient, accuracy, helpful	Brown & Jayakody (2009)
Anubha et al. (2019)	informative, accurate, up to date	Cao et al. (2005)
Shafieizadeh et al. (2023)	accurate, informative, updated, high-quality, timely, relevancy(customer/restaurant), needed	Cao et al. (2005)
Nguyen et al. (2020)	useful, timely, relevant,accurate	Cao et al. (2005); Bressolles (2006)
Zhang et al. (2020)	believability, usefulness, vividness	Cheung et al. (2008); Lee et al. (2002); Erkan & Evans (2016); Zhang et al. (2018); Orús et al. (2017)
Ho and Yang (2018)	easy to understand, accurate, complete, reliable	DeLone & McLean (2003); Chiu et al. (2005); Park & Kim (2006)
Yuan et al. (2018)	useful, complete, timely, relevant	DeLone & McLean (2004); Liu et al. (2000); Ahn et al. (2004); Shih (2004)
Mathur et al. (2022)	understandable, clear, high-quality	Erkan & Evans (2016)
Leong et al. (2021)	objective, understandable, clear, sufficient	Erkan & Evans (2018); Park et al. (2007)

Tesing and Lee (2018)	relevant, accurate, understandable	Fang et al. (2011)
Guo & Sun (2022)	accurate, useful, reliable, up-to-date, sufficient	Fu et al. (2020)
Zhu et al. (2020)	adequacy, depth, reliability, relevancy, understandability, conciseness, completeness, accuracy, factuality, diagnosticity	Jiang and Benbasat (2004); Xu et al. (2013); Zhao et al. (2017)
Chi (2018)	accurate, informative, updated, high-quality, timely, relevant	Kim & Niehm (2009)
Han et al. (2023)	correct, useful, reliable, sufficient	Kim et al. (2008)
Sun et al. (2021)	need, usefull, timely, complete	Kim et al. (2008); Zheng et al. (2017)
Shi et al. (2023)	important, appealing, valuable,exciting	Kim et al. (2009); Zaichkowsky (1994)
Qiang et al. (2019)	concise, consistent, completeness, free of error	Lee et al. (2002)
Zhou et al. (2022)	accurate, believable, detail, appropriate format	Lee et al. (2019)
Khumalo-Ncube and Motala (2021)	easy to understand, relevant, help, accurate, adequate	Loiacono et al. (2007)
Sundjaja et al. (2020)	accurate, needed, latest	Nilashi et al. (2016)
Zhao et al. (2020)	real-time, comprehensiveness, completeness, professional	Park & Kim (2008)
Ing and Ming (2018)	sufficient, objective, understandable, credible, clear	Park et al. (2007)
Khwaja et al. (2020)	understandable, clear, high-quality	Park et al. (2007)
Zhu et al. (2023)	well founded, objective, understandable, credible, clear, high-quality	Park et al. (2007)
Oliveira et al. (2020)	well-founded, factual, understandable, clear, high-quality	Park et al. (2007)
Rosário & Loureiro (2021)	sufficient, objective, understandable, clear, high-quality	Park et al. (2007)
McClure & Seock (2020)	useful, correct, specific, objective, valuable, factual, comprehensive, interesting, reliable, official, good variety	Savolainen (2011)
Hsu et al. (2018)	accuracy, completeness, understandability, timeliness, availability	Shih (2004)
Shah et al. (2023)	correct, up-to-date, helpful, complete	Wang & Lin (2011)
Lin and Guo (2021)	exact, meets my needs, reliable, latest information	Wang et al. (2016)
Erkmen & Turegun (2022)	need, sufficient, up-to-date	Wang et al. (2019)

Measurement Item Frequency of Use

To address the fourth research question regarding the intensity of factors influencing information quality in purchase intention research, we conducted a statistical analysis of measurement items across 39 studies, using a spreadsheet for data organization (see Table 5).

Although researchers select different scales and items based on their study's focus and requirements, cross-usage of measurement items is common. As shown in Table 5, the most frequently used items are 'accurate' (15 times), 'completeness' (10 times), and 'up-to-date' (9 times). To standardize terms, synonymous items from different studies were grouped using Collins and Cambridge Dictionary definitions, and their frequencies were statistically analyzed.

The analysis revealed that 'accuracy' and 'timeliness' were the most common dimensions, appearing 27 and 17 times, respectively. 'Dependability' and 'understandable' followed, each cited 15 times, highlighting their importance in assessing information quality. Additionally, 'perceived information value,' 'completeness and comprehensiveness,' and 'relevance' were frequently mentioned, appearing 14, 12, and 10 times, respectively.

Several measurement items appeared only once in the reviewed literature, such as 'Appropriate Format,' 'Appealing,' 'Availability,' 'Exciting,' 'Important,' 'Interesting,' 'Official,' 'Polarity,' 'Professional,' 'Realistic,' 'Reputation,' 'Subjective,' 'Vividness,' 'Well organized,' and 'Specific.' These items, due to their limited representation, are not included in the table.

Table 5
Measurement item Frequency of Use

Measurement Item	Frequency	Synonyms with Frequency
Accuracy	27	accurate (15), correct (4), error-free (2), exact (2), right (1), precise (1), well founded (2)
Timeliness	17	up-to-date (9), timely (7), real-time (1)
Dependability	15	reliable (7), credible (3), believability (2), dependable (1), persuasive (1), trusted (1)
Understandable	15	-
Perceived Information Value	14	usefulness (7), helpful (5), valuable (2)
Completeness& Comprehensiveness	12	completeness (10), comprehensiveness (2)
Relevance	10	-
Adequacy	9	sufficient (7), adequate (2)
Clear	8	-
High-quality	7	-
Needed	5	-
Objective	5	-
Factual	4	-
Informative	3	-
Consistent	3	-
Detailed	2	-
Diversity/ variety	2	diversity (1), good variety (1)
Concise	2	-
In-depth	2	-

Discussion

This systematic review assessed 39 studies on the relationship between information quality and purchase intention, effectively addressing the research questions. Most studies highlighted an indirect relationship, with mediating factors such as satisfaction, information usefulness, information adoption, trust, and attitude. Consistent with prior research, high-quality information in online environments enhances consumer engagement, builds trust, reduces uncertainty, and supports informed purchase decisions (Goh et al., 2013). Accurate, timely, and reliable information from social media and e-commerce platforms positively influences consumers' perceptions and purchase intentions (Handarkho, 2020; Xie et al., 2017).

The review identified the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model as the most frequently used framework (11 articles), followed by the Information Acceptance Model (IACM) (4 articles) and the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (3 articles). These models are commonly applied to explore the indirect effects of information quality on purchase intention through mediating variables like attitudes and trust (Leong et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2019).

In terms of measurement items, 52 were identified across the 39 studies over the past six years, consolidated into 34 distinct items after accounting for synonyms. Despite many studies using the same sources, variations in measurement items and quantities were observed, possibly due to differences in research platforms and types of information studied. This aligns with findings that platform characteristics influence content dissemination and consumer behavior (Roma & Aloini, 2019). Notably, Park Do-hyung's work (ID: 55907612900) represented 21.9% of cited scale sources, along with contributions from Cao, Zhang, Seydel, Erkan, and Evans.

Finally, the review identifies commonly used metrics for assessing information quality. 'Accuracy' is the most cited metric, followed by 'completeness' and 'up-to-date.' Aggregating synonyms reveals 'accuracy' and 'timeliness' as the most frequent dimensions, followed by 'dependability' and 'understandability.' Other widely used dimensions include 'perceived information value,' 'completeness and comprehensiveness,' and 'relevance.' These metrics, aligned with influential studies such as Park et al (2007), Cao et al (2005), and Erkan and Evans (2016), demonstrate consistency and widespread adoption. The application frequency of these metrics varies, showing a strong correlation with purchase intentions, though this impact may differ based on theoretical frameworks, methodologies, and sample characteristics.

Conclusion

This review systematically examined 39 studies from the past six years on information quality and purchase intention, addressing the research questions and objectives. The findings contribute to theoretical understanding by exploring mediating variables and key measurement items, providing a solid foundation for future studies on social media and e-commerce platforms.

Practically, the study offers insights for businesses and marketers to enhance information management, ultimately improving consumer intent and sales. Focusing on metrics like

accuracy, timeliness, dependability, and understandability can increase product attractiveness and competitiveness.

However, the study has limitations. It relied on Scopus and Web of Science databases, excluding non-English and non-peer-reviewed studies, potentially limiting the comprehensiveness. Additionally, it did not differentiate between information sources like social media and e-commerce. Future research could expand by including other databases (e.g., Google Scholar, ScienceDirect) and exploring source differentiation for deeper insights.

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