

CHAPTER 2 : LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is organized into two major sections. The first section discusses theoretical foundation of research on trust, wherein selected models of trust along with its antecedents, attributes and consequences are highlighted from previous research works. This section then underscores the importance of trust in the online environment and describes the building blocks of trust. Selected models from online trust are then elaborated. This section ends with emphasizing the importance of trust in the context of online social media marketing. Taking cues from the first section, the second section identifies research gaps, some of which are explored in the course of this thesis work.

2.1 Theoretical Foundation of Research on Trust

Trust, a complex multidimensional construct, is difficult to study, operationalize, measure and interpret as it is a function of three components: (1) properties of the trustor, (2) attributes of the trustee & (3) the specific goal in the current context (Hardin, 1992; Simpson, 2007). It can be construed in different ways with varying importance at different stages of relationship development, which emerges and changes in situations that are difficult to observe and study. Every discipline of study views trust from its own unique perspectives. Moreover, like any natural language term, it has acquired many meanings (Mcknight & Chervany, 2002). Interestingly, the Corpus of Contemporary American English ranks the word “Trust” at 1855th position among 450 million English words considered, at 389th position among the verbs and at 1063rd position among the nouns (Davies, 2016). This clearly shows the importance of “Trust” in literature and our daily life.

Social Exchange Theory (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978) highlights the role of trust in social and transactional relationships in order to explain people’s motivation of behaviour that occurs without explicit binding contracts or legal protections. Origin of trust can be traced to exogenous and endogenous risks (Kantsperger & Kunz, 2010). Exogenous risks stem from incidents within the environment and cannot be influenced by the exchange partners. People counteract such risks with hope, a conceptually different construct from trust. Endogenous risks, originating from the behaviour and actions of third parties, can be reduced by showing trust in the exchange partner. Thus a customer holding confidence in and relying on the exchange partner does not have to be cautioned about the outcome of the business.

2.1.1 Selected Models of Trust

The theoretical perspectives used in the studies related to trust may be aggregated into three categories (Schoorman, Mayer, & Davis, 2007):

- Personality theory, conceptualizing trust as a belief, expectancy, or feeling deeply rooted in the personality and originating in the individual’s early psychological development.
- Sociology and economics, conceptualizing trust mainly as a phenomenon within and between institutions, and as the trust individuals put in those institutions.
- Social psychology, characterizing trust in terms of the expectations and willingness of the trusting party in a transaction, the risks associated with acting on such expectations, and the contextual factors that either enhance or inhibit the development and maintenance of that trust. Social psychology suggests strongly that group attachments shape individual perceptions of trust.

Historically, there have been two main approaches to conceptualizing interpersonal trust. First is the dispositional (person-centred) view, which states that trust entails general beliefs and attitudes about the degree to which other people are likely to be reliable, cooperative or helpful in daily life contexts (Simpson, 2007). On the other hand, as per the Dyadic (interpersonal) perspective, trust is a psychological state or orientation of an actor (the trustor) toward a specific partner (the trustee) with whom the actor is in some way interdependent (i.e., the trustor needs the trustee’s cooperation to attain valued outcomes or resources) (Simpson, 2007) (Figure 2.1).

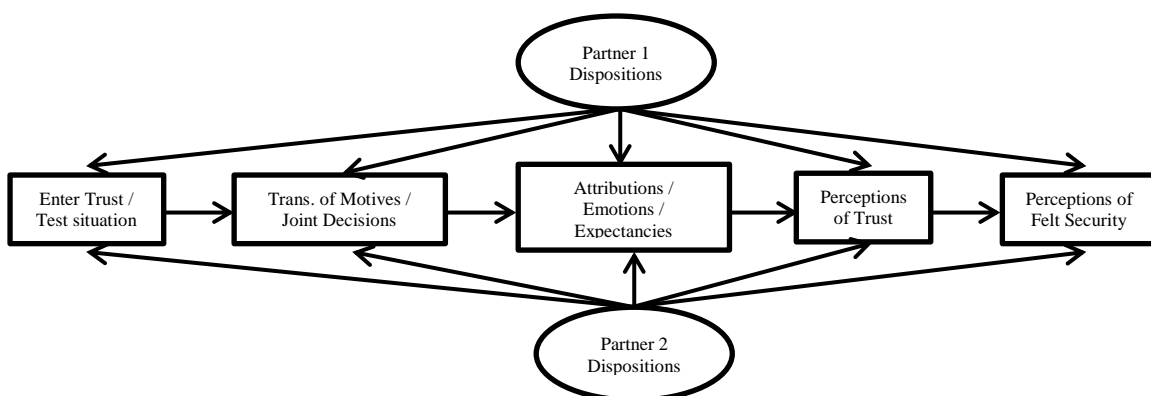


Figure 2.1: Dyadic model of trust in relationship

Researchers have recommended studying trust from four levels (Kelton et al., 2008): (i) individual (personality trait), (ii) interpersonal (trust placed on one entity by another), (iii)

relational (mutual trust between two entities) and (iv) societal (trust in a community). This is quite similar with the framework put forward by McKnight & Chervany (McKnight & Chervany, 2002), who suggested three high levels of trust, namely (i) dispositional trust, (ii) institutional trust and (iii) interpersonal trust.

On the basis of Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), customer’s trusting beliefs can be viewed in four dimensions: a vendor’s benevolence, integrity, competence, and predictability (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Trust is likely to be higher in relationship when (a) each member’s self-interested outcomes match those that are the best for their partner or the relationship, or (b) both members believe that their partner will act on what is best for the relationship even when the members’ personal self-interests diverge (Simpson, 2007).

Previous researchers have proposed honesty, reliability, fulfilment, competence, quality, credibility and benevolence as characteristics of trust (Ganesan, 1994; Garbarino & Lee, 2003; Grayson, Johnson, & Chen, 2008; Moorman, Deshpande, & Zaltman, 1993; Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Sirdeshmukh, Singh, & Sabol, 2002). Based on these, Kantsperger and Kuntz (Kantsperger & Kunz, 2010) have developed another model of consumer trust (Figure 2.2).

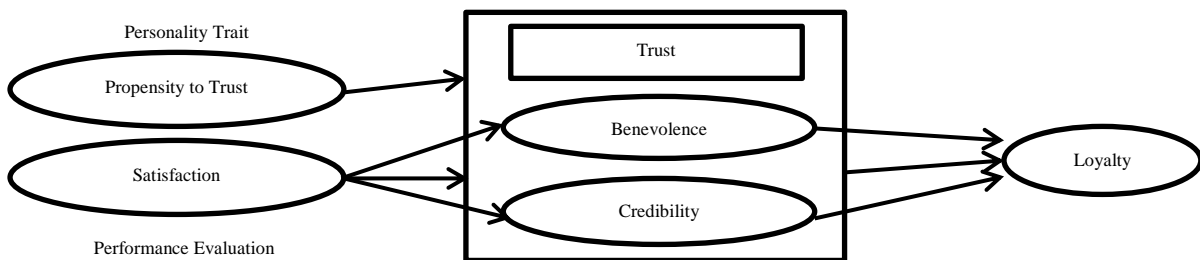


Figure 2.2: Model of consumer trust (Kantsperger & Kunz, 2010)

Antecedents, Attributes and Consequences of Trust

Transaction specific investments (Ganesan, 1994), similarity between the trustors and trustees (Crosby, Evans, & Cowles, 1990) and shared values between them (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), goal congruence (Anderson & Weitz, 1989), reputation (Anderson & Weitz, 1989; Doney & Cannon, 1997; Ganesan, 1994), organizational structure and culture and characteristics of the transaction object (Moorman et al., 1993) have been identified as antecedents of trust.

Earlier studies have discovered commitment to maintain a relationship (Ganesan, 1994; Moorman, Zaltman, & Deshpande, 1992; Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Nielson, 1998), the level of conflict (Anderson & Narus, 1990; Morgan & Hunt, 1994), non-coercive power (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), greater probability of allocation of resource in favour of trusted entity (Nielson, 1998), reduction of transaction cost (Cummings & Bromiley, 1996; Zaheer & Venkatraman, 1995), greater ease in influencing the partner (Swan & Nolan, 1985), facilitation of collaborative behaviour (Anderson & Weitz, 1989; Crosby et al., 1990; Ganesan, 1994; Kumar, 1996) and increased sales (Crosby et al., 1990; Doney & Cannon, 1997; Kumar, 1996) as some consequences of trust.

Nevertheless, there have been disagreements among researchers regarding the antecedents and consequences of trust due to the difficulty in classifying and segregating them. While some studies consider ability and motivation as antecedents of trust (Crosby et al., 1990; Moorman et al., 1993; Morgan & Hunt, 1994), some other scholars consider them as components of trust (Doney & Cannon, 1997; Ganesan, 1994). The difficulty in determining and segregating the antecedents, components and consequences of trust reveal the circular dynamic nature of the construct itself, whereby the outcome of trust impacts trust itself. In the same way, researchers have differences regarding the role of communication and reputation in relation to trust. Dwyer et al (1987), and Mohr and Nevin (1990) consider communication as a consequence of trust, whereas others (Anderson, Lodish, & Weitz, 1987; Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Selnes, 1998) consider it as determinant of trust. Similarly, reputation can be considered as both determinant and consequence of trust (Raimondo, 2000).

2.1.2 Importance of Online Trust

Trust is of vital importance for interpersonal and commercial relationships (Morgan & Hunt, 1994) wherever risk, uncertainty or interdependence occurs. It is important for both virtual teams and e-Commerce (Ba, Whinston, & Zhang, 2003; Hoffman, Novak, & Peralta, 1999; Jarvenpaa & Leidner, 1999; Jarvenpaa, Tractinsky, & Vitale, 2000; Stewart, 1999). With the advent of e-Commerce, the marketing environment has taken a new shape; a new world has begun where consumers are no longer hostages to geography. Because of its increasing popularity aided by rapid penetration of computers and internet, as well as enhanced transaction complexity in computer mediated communication, e-Commerce necessitates higher importance of trust (Mishra, 1996).

In the marketing literature, trust has been studied primarily in the context of relationship marketing (Doney & Cannon, 1997; Dwyer et al., 1987; Ganesan, 1994; Ganesan & Hess, 1997; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). It allows consumers to transact with merchants who are not part of their immediate network (Jarvenpaa, Tractinsky, & Saarinen, 1999). It works as an order qualifier for purchase decision (Doney & Cannon, 1997).

Trust leaves one vulnerable to the action of the trustee in risky situations. In traditional context a customer's trust has been found to be affected by the seller's investments in physical buildings, facilities, and personnel. But the absence of physical cues makes the environment risky in e-Commerce environment.

Still, many of the risks of online transactions pertain to the information available to the parties in a transaction. There are three typical situations: (1) the situation of the perfect information in which all the parties know everything relevant to a transaction, (2) the situation of complete ignorance, where none of the parties has information relevant to a transaction, and (3) the intermediary situation of information asymmetry, in which one party has information that the other party does not have (Tan & Thoen, 2001). From the research perspective, the situation of information asymmetry is the most interesting one because of its ability to give rise to opportunistic behaviour.

Because of its importance, many researchers have conceptualized trust in e-Commerce. Among them, some notable ones are Jarvenpaa and Tractinsky (1999), Gefen (2000), Jarvenpaa et al (2000), McKnight et al (2002a), Kim et al (2008) and Gao & Wu (2010), who have conceptualized trust in e-Commerce. Chiu et al (2012) have examined the influence of trust on online repeat purchase intention.

2.1.3 Building Blocks of Online Trust

Propensity to Trust

Propensity to trust, also called disposition to trust, is a personality trait, a stable factor within a person that affects someone's likelihood to trust (Lucassen & Schraagen, 2011). Propensity to trust derives from the views of personality theorists who conceptualize trust as a belief, expectancy or feeling which is deeply rooted in the personality and has its origin in the individual's early psychological development (Lewicki & Bunker, 1995). It acts as the

foundation which affects more case-specific trust situations (Merritt & Ilgen, 2008). Because of the heuristic character of evaluation of trust online, there is a high probability that the impact of propensity to trust will be visible in other scenario involving interpersonal trust and institutional trust.

Propensity to trust has been shown to be among the most influential factors predicting consumers' trust in internet shopping (Cheung & Lee, 2001; Lee & Turban, 2001). Cheung and Lee (2001) hypothesized that consumer's trust in internet shopping is affected by propensity to trust, trustworthiness of the internet vendor and external conditions.

Interpersonal Trust

Social psychologists characterize trust in terms of expectation and willingness of trusting party engaging in transactions, the risks associated with such expectations and contextual factors that either enhance or inhibit development and maintenance of this kind of trust. This lays the foundation for interpersonal trust. Interpersonal trust is a psychological state or orientation of an actor (the trustor) comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based on positive expectations of the intentions or behaviors of a specific partner (the trustee) with whom the actor is in some way interdependent (i.e., the trustor needs the trustee's cooperation to attain valued outcomes or resources) (Rousseau et al., 1998). Interpersonal trust can be placed on an individual or a business organization by the trustor, e.g. consumer in the context of this study (McKnight, Choudhury, & Kacmar, 2002b).

Interpersonal trust in relationship among human beings that are mediated by information technology were found to be very valuable for explaining e-Commerce (Gefen et al., 2003) and virtual communities (Leimeister, Sidiras, & Krcmar, 2006). Conceptualization of interpersonal trust provided by Mayer et al (1995) has been well established and cited in various studies later on. This model (Figure 2.3) shows that interpersonal trust is determined by three factors of trustworthiness: ability, integrity and benevolence.

Ability reflects the trustor's perception about the trustee having requisite skills, characteristics and competencies which enable him to have influence in a specific domain. On the other hand, the perception of the trustor that the trustee follows and adheres to a set of principles acceptable to the trustor is reflected by integrity. Finally, the trustor's perception

that the trustee is not only motivated by his own profit but also has an intention to do good to the trustor is reflected by benevolence (Mayer et al., 1995). Nevertheless, some researchers have added others to (Gefen & Straub, 2004) or omitted others from (Singh & Sirdeshmukh, 2000) some of these dimensions of interpersonal trust. Mayer proposed that the consequence of interpersonal trust is risk-taking in a relationship. The outcome of the risk thus taken again influences the perception about the dimension of interpersonal trust.

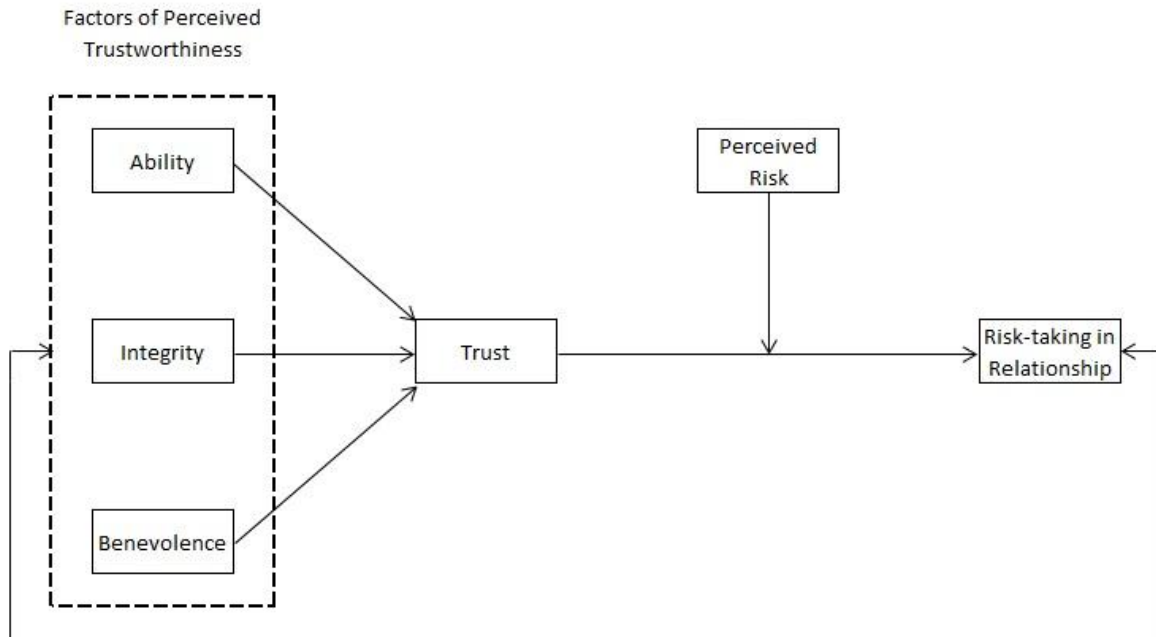


Figure 2.3: Model of interpersonal trust
[Adapted from Mayer et al. (1995)]

In the highly cited conceptual paper, McKnight and Chervany (2002) stated that in the context of e-Commerce, trust in the e-vendor constitutes interpersonal trust. They also mentioned that the term e-vendor may encompass both the web store and the store owner or manager.

In the context of OSMM, this type of trust can be formed between two individuals or an individual and an online store maintaining a profile in the OSN. Thus, perceived trustworthiness of the online store or the members of the OSN may work as important antecedents in OSMM context.

Institutional Trust

Sociologists and economists view trust as a phenomenon within and between institutions and the trust individuals put in those institutions. Thus essentially this kind of trust is affected by

the structural conditions prevalent (McKnight et al., 2002a). This kind of trust is an important driver for e-Commerce adoption and usage by end-users (McKnight et al., 2002b). Structural assurance and situational normality are two dimensions of institution-based trust.

Perceived existence of guarantees, regulations as well as technical and legal resources signal appropriate structure to promote successful interaction in a particular environment and gives rise to structural assurance (Shapiro, 1987; Zucker, 1986). It is determined by perceptions of robustness of technical architecture of the e-business platform to successfully execute e-business transactions (Banerjee & Ma, 2014; Riemenschneider & McKinney, 1999). On the other hand, situational normality refers to a person's expectation of a successful outcome in lieu of taking risk in a particular environment (Baier, 1986). Thus a person with high perception of situational normality in the context of e-Commerce would believe that internet is a well ordered environment and doing business on the internet would be a good idea in general, since vendors in this environment possess required ability, integrity and benevolence (McKnight et al., 2002a). Taking cue from this example, in the context of Online Social Media Marketing, the particular media may be considered as the object of institutional trust.

2.1.4 Models of Online Trust

In e-Commerce, an individual evaluates risk through familiarity of social and physical cues offered by online businesses (Gefen et al., 2003). Online trust is built through (a) a belief that the vendor has nothing to gain by cheating, (2) a belief that there are safety mechanisms built into the web site, and (3) by having a typical interface that is (4) easy to use (Gefen et al., 2003).

Various researchers have endeavoured to model online trust in different contexts. McKnight & Chervany (McKnight et al., 2002b) specified a conceptual typology of trust constructs, four resulting constructs and ten measurable sub-constructs (Figure 2.4). Their model depicts that one person having high disposition to trust, reflected by one's faith in humanity and trusting stance, would influence one's trusting beliefs towards the vendor, as businesses are run by people. While faith in humanity will have more effect on trusting beliefs, trusting stance will affect trusting intentions more. Both these constructs of disposition to trust positively influence institution-based trust consisting of two constructs- structural assurance and situational normality. Structural assurance reflects one's beliefs in legal and technological capabilities to protect one from different losses (financial, privacy, identity

etc.). Situational normality, on the other hand, reflects one's perception that online transactions are normal, customary and fitting.

They proposed that trusting belief can be measured by four constructs- competence, benevolence, integrity and predictability. Belief in ability indicates that the other party has the skills or power to perform the intended act, which in online context relates with the vendor having the ability to provide the goods and the services in a proper and convenient way. Benevolence indicates that the other party is motivated to act in one's interest, rather than taking part in opportunism. Integrity belief exhibits one's inclination to believe that the other party acts ethically and makes agreements in good faith. Predictability assures that the actions of the other party can be forecast with sufficient confidence in a given situation. Based on the Theory of Reasoned Action, McKnight & Chervany (2002) posited that strong belief in the honesty, benevolence, competence and predictability of the vendor would lead to willingness or intention to depend on the vendor.

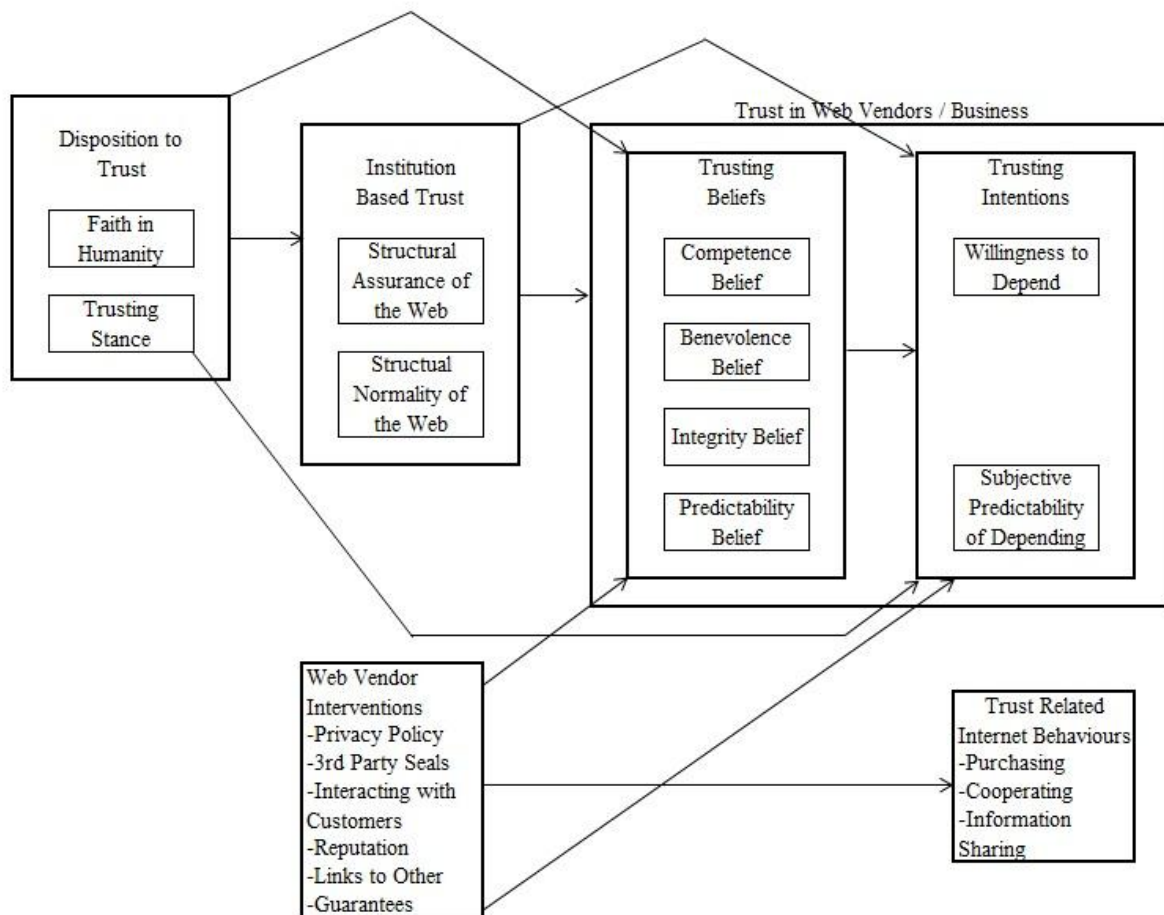


Figure 2.4: Model of e-Commerce customer relationships trust constructs (Mcknight & Chervany, 2002)

Willingness to depend indicates that one is volitionally prepared to make oneself vulnerable to the other party in a situation by relying on the other party. On the other hand, subjective probability of depending means that one predicts one’s willingness to rely or depend on the e-Commerce vendor in the future. These two are distinguishable as willingness to depend expresses volition or desire, whereas subjective probability of depending expresses something stronger—a verifiable intent or commitment to depend.

In their review paper, Beldad et al (2010) have emphasized that online trust is based on using three clusters of antecedents: customer-client relationship, website-based characteristics and organization/company-based criteria.

But, the literature has largely ignored the conditions under which trust has a varying effect on behavioral intentions, thereby assuming that trust always has an unconditional positive effect on behavioural outcomes. Gefen et al. (2008) suggested that this oversimplification needed to be researched further, especially in the institutional context of e-Commerce and online marketplaces.

Later research work found that cognitive perceptions of online shopping are much related to the general trust in e-commerce as an institution as well as an individual’s trusting intentions to use e-commerce (Gao & Wu, 2010). Perceived informativeness, perceived entertainment and perceived irritation of online shopping, coupled with trust propensity, contribute to a customer’s general trust in e-commerce and intention to use e-commerce (Gao & Wu, 2010) (Figure 2.5).

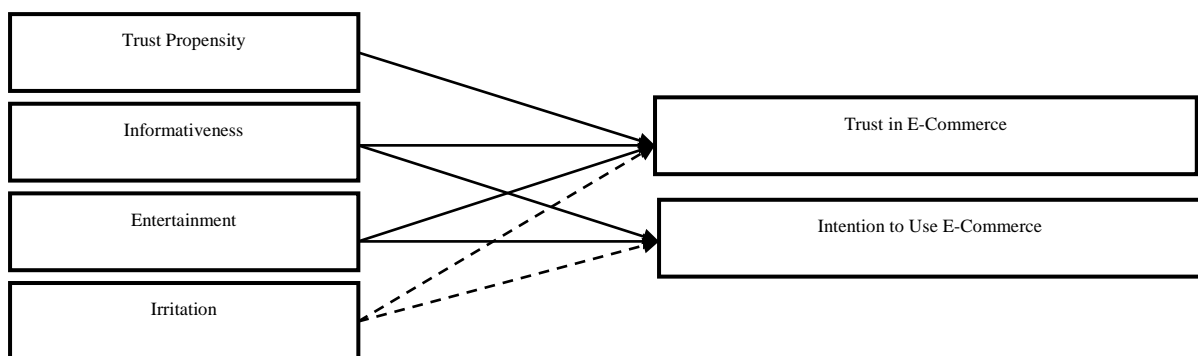


Figure 2.5: Cognitive model of trust in e-Commerce
(Gao & Wu, 2010)

Lee and Turban have investigated four main antecedents that influence consumer trust in internet shopping, a major form of business-to-consumer e-commerce: (1) trustworthiness of

the internet merchant, (2) trustworthiness of the internet as a shopping medium, (3) infrastructural (contextual) factors (e.g., security, third party certification), and (4) other factors (e.g., company size, demographic variables) (Lee & Turban, 2001). The antecedent variables are moderated by the individual consumer's degree of trust propensity, which reflects personality traits, culture and experience. Afterwards they proposed a model for consumers' trust in internet shopping (Figure 2.6).

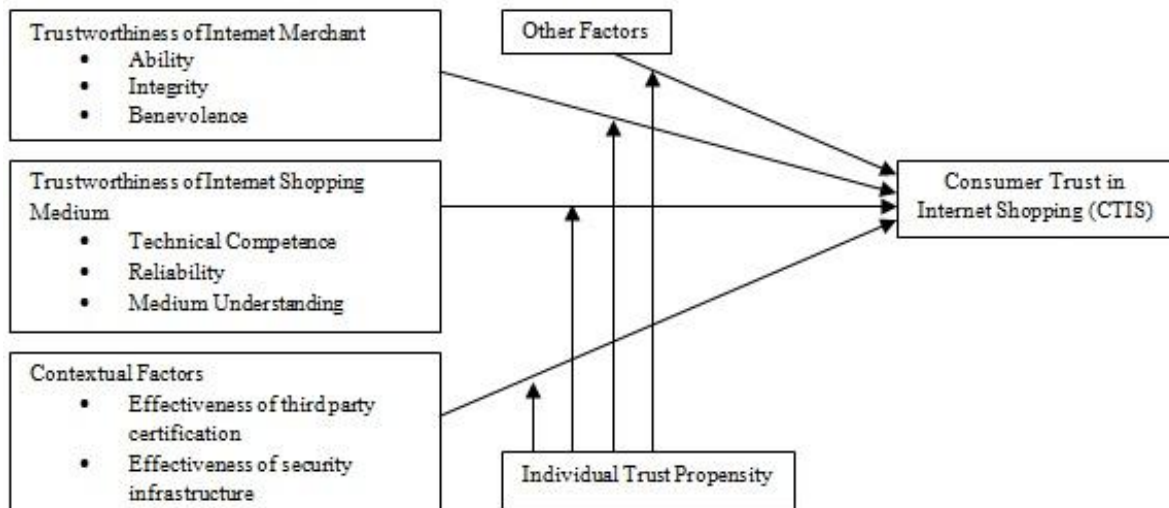


Figure 2.6: Model for consumers' trust in internet shopping (Lee & Turban, 2001)

Because of lack of time and motivation to verify credibility, internet users depend on available cues to help them decide on trustworthiness of the information presented to them. Lucassen and Schraagen (2012) proposed an integrated layer model of trust in the context of Wikipedia articles (Figure 2.7). According to this model, each layer influences the next. Thus, trust in information is influenced by trust in the source, which is again influenced by trust in the medium. All these are influenced by a more general propensity to trust.

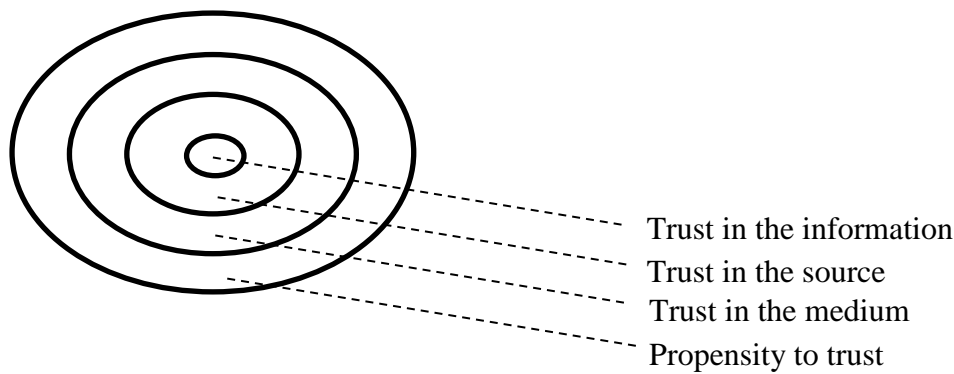


Figure 2.7: Layer model of trust
(Lucassen & Schraagen, 2012)

Although this model is quite logical in the case of Wikipedia, where the authors of articles cannot be identified, the same is not true with online social network sites, like Facebook or Google Plus. The authors of most of the posts can be identified or be linked with some organizations. Users of OSN may personally know some of these sources of information. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that trust in the institution may also have impact on trust in the source, in case the source is unknown to the recipient of information. For example, users may not perceive information obtained from Facebook as trustworthy as one obtained from a more topical online forum. Hence, this above model does not describe trust propagation process in OSN.

2.1.5 Importance of Trust in the Context of Social Media Marketing

In the modern marketing environment, instead of dyadic relationship between the company and its customers, direct marketing increasingly has to become involved in a triadic relationship among the company, the customer and the community to which the customer belongs (Palmer & Koenig-Lewis, 2009). Three elements of the social network– the seller, the customer and the community can be effectively handled by the use of OSM.

OSM, especially OSN, provides different means for users to communicate, such as e-mail, instant messaging services, blogging and photo/video sharing. These OSN sites provide a dynamic and multimodal platform, which enables discussions, sharing of multimedia content, organization of events, etc., amongst members with common interests or similar demographic variables (Cachia, Compañó, & Costa, 2007; Grabner-Kräuter, 2010).

The role of trust in OSM can also be investigated from a governance perspective integrating concepts of social network theory and social capital. Social capital is a way to describe value that can be accrued through a social network and from the social resources of the actors embedded within that network. Trust can be a powerful alternative to formal governance mechanisms that allows exchange relationships to be formed and that attempt to control opportunism (Grabner-Kräuter, 2010).

In the context of OSM, trust is viewed as a structurally embedded asset or a property of relationships and networks, which helps to shape interaction (Murphy, 2006). In OSN, trust is both a micro- and a macro-level phenomenon in which there is interplay between the macro-network created by the (corporate) actor who designed it and the micro-groups formed by the individual network users (Lai & Turban, 2008).

Users tend to trust other community members with expertise, identity, personal information, and, in extreme cases, even money lending. Users also tend to trust providers of OSM sites to keep their information and photos private. Thus, social networking obviously takes place within a (largely unwarranted) context of trust. Consequently, the question arises – why are OSM users being so trusting?

Although a majority of population hesitate to share their personal details with companies, it is surprising to find that many users willingly share a lot of personal information in this Web 2.0 environment, leaving them vulnerable to opportunistic fraudsters. Examples for potentially harmful opportunistic behaviours are the unauthorized tracking of members' activities on other websites, the practice of posting names of potential new friends onto a member's personal web page, and allowing members to anonymously search other members' profiles (Grabner-Kräuter, 2010). Moreover, technical issues in the OSM may compromise the privacy of user data.

In spite of being associated with self-disclosure in face-to-face interactions, trust has not been extensively studied in this type of computer-mediated environment or related to internet commerce. It is difficult to sort out the complicated cause and effect relations between participation in OSM and trust. The stronger impact is assumed to run from trusting to joining OSM.

Three different phases of trust can be distinguished: (1) the phase of trust building, (2) the phase of stabilizing trust, and (3) the phase of trust dissolution (Rousseau et al., 1998) in OSM. Participation in the network characterizes individual behaviour, which is influenced by trusting beliefs and intentions towards one or more of the objects of trust and comprises different forms of behaviour: the revelation of personal information, the non-adjustment of the privacy settings, and the online exchange of information and social support. The phases of trust may affect all these types of behaviour.

Messages received through online communities are more believable and trusted than messages received through conventional media (Gillin, 2007). But in OSM sites, some commentators have noted the confusion in users' mind when commercially provided material is mixed with anonymously submitted amateur material, sometimes using adaptations of previously published materials (Keegan, 2007).

As mentioned earlier, user interaction in OSM, especially in OSNs, may influence purchase decision making process to a great extent. On the other hand, as per the latest report published by Gartner (2012), 10% to 15% of the online reviews will be fake by 2015. Hence, companies which were utilizing OSM to their advantage till now, will need to understand the underlying consumer motivation to trust their friends and recommendation of them in this critical context.

2.2 Research Gap

There exists a need to understand whether OSM can be suitably used to develop marketing and communication strategies and tactics for creating and nurturing customer engagement. Consumer engagement within the realm of social media is a virtually unexplored area of scholarly inquiry. Most companies have faced difficulty not in developing and launching their social media initiatives, but in making them truly engaging and valuable to consumers (Schultz & Peltier, 2013). The capability of OSM to build highly engaged customer relationships has important ramifications for varied publics.

Hoffman and Fodor (2010b) stressed on the need to assess customer motivation to use OSM and measure their investments in OSM, as it reveals the likelihood of long-term payoff. This suggestion implies that rather than looking at their cost of OSMM, companies should focus

on the benefits of undertaking the same. In essence, companies should try to understand and evaluate customer's investment in marketer's social media efforts. They indicated that 4C's characterised by connection, creation, consumption and control may be the motivation behind consumer's use of social media. Moving a step back, it can be argued that trust probably plays a major role in establishing connection, sharing creation, motivating consumption and giving up control in OSM.

OSM, especially OSN, is still developing, and research on the topic has only started (Mayer, 2009). In their review paper, Beldad et al (2010) have mentioned that there are many possible antecedents of trust in e-Commerce, which have been studied by researchers. But although some researchers have started analysing the effect and outcome of trust in OSM, still gaps exist to explore more into various aspects of the same. Kusumasondjaja et al (2012) have researched on the credibility of online reviews, whereas Cugelman et al (2009) examined the relationships between web site credibility, target audiences' active trust and behaviour. Lucassen and Schraagen (2012) have experimented on the influence of source and medium cues in credibility evaluation, taking Wikipedia as the example, while Hu et al (2010) have analysed the effect of web assurance seals on consumers' initial trust in an online vendor. Dass & Kumar (2011) have studied the impact of economic and social orientation on trust within teams.

Still, whether and how trust affects perceived risk (or vice versa) in the internet shopping context is very much an open issue (Lee & Turban, 2001). Disparities in earlier studies imply that some trustworthiness cues on trust formation are bound by their contextual boundaries and hence call for further research in different contexts (Beldad et al., 2010). There is a need to learn more about the effect of consumer participation in different OSM in terms of varying levels of trust and its marketing outcomes.

The relationship amongst the concepts of social networks, social capital, and trust is not conclusive (Grabner-Kräuter, 2010). There is a need to study the relationship between ties of different strengths and trust of different levels in OSM. Relationships among structural attributes of OSM, especially OSN, and different levels of trust and their outcomes need to be formulated in the form of a model. These attributes may include tie strength among the connections, network centrality, homophily, privacy issues, social embeddedness, cohesiveness and density, required degree of self-disclosure, type of self-presentation

allowed, the primary purpose of establishing the OSM, ease of navigating the same and traversing various connections (users or nodes), redressal of security concerns and integration of direct or indirect marketing facilities (Grabner-Kräuter, 2010; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Shin, Park, & Ju, 2011).

Simpson (2007) has suggested that research should explore how and why certain combinations of partner attributes promote or impede the development and maintenance of trust. There is a need to explore the roles played by factors critical to the development of intimacy in fostering trust and felt security, especially when they occur in trust-relevant interactions.

Gefen (2000) indicated that trust is significantly affected by familiarity. OSM has the capability to give rise to familiarity. Thus there is a scope to explore the role of social media, in particular OSN, in building, maintaining and destruction of trust.

Practitioners and academicians have been plagued with an inability to understand how the co-creation of brand content and the brand experience on social media can positively impact consumer engagement (Christodoulides, Jevons, & Bonhomme, 2012; Moe & Schweidel, 2012; Porter, Donthu, MacElroy, & Wydra, 2011) and sales (Sonnier, Mcalister, & Rutz, 2011). Because of the enormous importance of trust, a lot of research works have focused on it from various perspectives, e.g. Behavioural/Psychological (Colquitt et al., 2007), Social/Institutional (Bachmann, 2001; Grimen, 2001), Economic (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), Managerial/Organizational (Balasubramanian et al., 2003; Jeffries & Reed, 2000; Mayer et al., 1995; Mishra, 1996; Olson & Olson, 2000; Urban et al., 2000) and Technological (Shneiderman, 2000).

Research has been conducted on trust in various online contexts, e.g. online firms (Bhattacharjee, 2002), information systems (Al-Natour, Benbasat, & Cenfetelli, 2011; Li, Hess, & Valacich, 2008), e-governance (Bélanger & Carter, 2008; Carter & Bélanger, 2005; Chan et al., 2010) as well as online auction (Ba & Pavlou, 2002). A lot of research has been carried out to understand and analyze various aspects of trust related to e-Commerce (Awad & Ragowsky, 2008; Benlian, Titah, & Hess, 2012; Everard & Galletta, 2006; Kim et al., 2008; D. J. Kim, Ferrin, & Rao, 2009; Lowry, Vance, Moody, Beckman, & Read, 2008; McKnight et al., 2002a; Sia et al., 2009). Some research has been executed on trust in virtual

communities (Breneman & Karimov, 2012; Laroche, Habibi, Richard, & Sankaranarayanan, 2012) [Please refer to *Appendix A: Research Papers on Trust in Virtual Communities* for more details].

Some researchers have also focused on trust in the context of OSM. Although these research papers provide good insight into OSM through conceptual development and empirical evidence, they do not specifically pay attention to OSMM (Table 2.1).

| Research Study | Type of Paper (Conceptual / Empirical) | Variables Considered | Sample Size & Methodology | Findings & Comments |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| Dwyer, Hiltz and Passerini (2007) | Empirical | Online privacy concern, Trust in social networking sites, Trust in other members of the social networking site, Willingness to share information and Development of new relationship | 117; ANOVA | Online relationships can develop in sites where perceived trust and perceived safeguards are weak. |
| Fogel & Nehmad (2009) | Empirical | Risk taking attitude, Trust, Privacy concern | 205; ANOVA / Mann-Whitney | Individuals with profiles on social networking websites have greater risk taking attitudes than those who do not; greater risk taking attitudes exist among men than women. General privacy concerns and identity information disclosure concerns are of greater concern to women than men. Greater percentages of men than women display their phone numbers and home addresses on social networking websites. |
| Valenzuela, Park & Kee (2009) | Empirical | Life Satisfaction, Social Trust, Civic and Political Participation | 2603; Hierarchical Multivariate Ordinal Least Square Regression | Positive relationship was found between intensity of Facebook use and students' life satisfaction, social trust, civic engagement and political participation. |

Table 2.1: Empirical research papers on trust in OSM

Very few research papers have focused on trust from the perspective of OSMM (Table 2.2). The lack of empirical research papers focused on OSMM may be because of two reasons: (1) OSMM is comparatively new and most of the companies still do not use OSMM to boost their sales directly; (2) OSMM is perceived as another version of e-Commerce. Most of the Online Social Networks (OSN) still do not have direct purchase option inbuilt in them. Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus and Pinterest have been trying to incorporate “Buy” buttons

in their networking sites, but none has made the option available globally (Bell, 2015; Ha, 2015; Matney, 2015; Yamartino, 2015). But looking at the speed at which companies have started utilizing OSM for marketing purposes, it is inevitable that direct purchase options will be available to more consumers in prominent OSMs sooner rather than later. Nevertheless, some researchers have also suggested that consumers who trust e-Commerce may not necessarily trust s-Commerce (Bansal & Chen, 2011). In the same way that theories and models grounded in business marketing practices in developed countries with mature markets need to be tested and extended in less mature and emerging markets for new insights and extend wisdom (Banerjee & Ma, 2014; Wang & Song, 2011), theories should be tested for their applicability in newer technologies. Thus, in spite of research on trust in the domain of e-Commerce, theories and models related to trust should be tested empirically in the context of OSMM.

The dearth of research papers focusing on trust in the perspective of OSMM becomes even more acute in developing countries. However, researchers (Bolton et al., 2013; Duffett, 2015) maintains that social media attitudes and usage may differ among different generations in emerging countries when compared to their wealthier counterparts, owing to technological infrastructure and different cultures. Moreover, growing markets pose new challenges to marketing (Sahay, Mukherjee, & Dewani, 2015). Therefore, a need for in-depth study on trust in the perspective of OSMM is felt.

| Research Study | Type of Paper (Conceptual / Empirical) | Variables Considered | Sample Size & Methodology | Findings & Comments |
|-----------------------|---|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| Bansal & Chen (2011) | Empirical | Privacy concern (Collection of user information, usage of user's information without approval, unauthorized access to user's information, errors in users' information) and security concern | 270; Median Split & Anova | Users trust e-Commerce sites more than s-Commerce ones. All four components of privacy concern and security concern impact users' trust in e-vendors. Comment: The study reveals that improper access of users' information increases trust in the e-Commerce site of the vendor, which is counter-intuitive and no explanation of this phenomenon is provided. |
| Pee (2012) | Conceptual (Pilot study included) | Information Quality, Source credibility, Majority influence, User's trust of information on OSM | 100; Partial Least Square | Majority influence has a stronger effect on trust than source credibility. Users are likely to rely on information quality as well as source credibility and majority influence in case of high personal involvement. |

| Research Study | Type of Paper (Conceptual / Empirical) | Variables Considered | Sample Size & Methodology | Findings & Comments |
|------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Gorner, Zhang & Cohen (2013) | Empirical | Social network of advisors | Simulation / Experiment | Proposed three ways to improve the number of trust modeling of agents, two relating to the limit of the advisor-network size by either setting a maximum size for a buyer's advisor network or setting a minimum trustworthiness threshold for agents to be accepted into that advisor network, and a third which using an advisor referral system in combination with one of the first two network-limiting techniques. |
| Shin (2013) | Empirical | Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Enjoyment, Attitude, Behavioural Intention, Subjective Norm, Perceived Trust, Perceived Social Support and Behaviour | 329 (final survey); Interview, Focus Group, Survey | Subjective norm is a key behavioural antecedent to use s-Commerce. Moderating and mediating effects of subjective norm on relationships among variables were found to be significant. |
| Esmaeili et al (2015) | Conceptual | - | 7 research papers | 18 antecedents of trust in s-commerce are identified from earlier research work. Five of these factors have been identified in in more than one earlier research studies (Familiarity with other members, Trust propensity, Word of mouth referrals, information quality and size of the firm). |

Table 2.2: Research papers on trust in OSMM / s-Commerce

The phenomenal growth of OSMM and the ever important role of trust in every facet of life, coupled by the lack of empirical research work, create a need to study the role that trust may play in the success of OSMM. The present thesis is an attempt to explore that gap, with a focus on theory building. Prudent marketers may find out ways to understand and pinpoint the underlying dynamics to trust for betterment of their marketing efforts.