

## CONTINUANCE USAGE IN ONLINE TRAVEL PLATFORMS: THE ROLE OF RELATIONSHIP QUALITY

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**Abstract:** The Internet has become a quick significant information and shopping resource, especially for the tourism sector. With the development of secure information systems, travel plan and booking have become increasingly dependent on technology. As a result, travel platforms today have a significant impact on tourists' choices and experiences. Based on the stimulus-organism-response (SOR) theory, this study examines the factors influencing consumers' continuance use intention toward travel-related purchase platforms. Specifically, it aims to investigate on how platform features affect relationship quality and continuance use. Data was collected from users with prior experience using travel platforms through a structured questionnaire, employing purposive and convenience sampling methods. The analysis was conducted using AMOS software to test both direct and indirect effects. The findings reveal that informativeness and privacy & security significantly impact relationship quality but do not influence continuance use. In contrast, customer support affects continuance use but does not have a significant impact on relationship quality. Moreover, relationship quality has a mediating effect between travel platform attributes and the continued use intention. The findings provide insights for enhancing long-term user engagement on travel platforms and offer key theoretical and practical implications. This study contributes to the body of literature on online travel by enhancing the knowledge on the continued utilization of online travel websites based on relationship quality. The findings also provide platform developers and tourism stakeholders to formulate credible and user-friendly web-based travel platforms that will necessitate frequent usage and facilitate long term competitiveness.

**Keywords:** continuance use, informativeness, relationship quality, customer service, privacy and security

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### INTRODUCTION

Customers may easily navigate between travel portals in the digital age, giving them the flexibility to choose how, when, and what kind of marketing information they get (Xiang et al., 2015; Bilan et al., 2024). Due to the growing significance of online platforms and e-commerce in the travel industry, website managers must comprehend how important it is to provide value in the e-shopping experience in order to turn website visitors into paying clients (Agag & El-Masry, 2017). It is difficult for businesses to draw in and hold on to customers because of the abundance of services and information available online. The aim of this study is to ascertain whether customers want to keep using smart technologies, such as websites, apps, pertaining to travel and tourism, to make purchases online. Even though online shopping for travel services has been the subject of much research recently, customer expectations and perceptions are always changing due to ongoing technological improvements (Fu Tsang et al., 2010). To plan vacations, make reservations, buy travel-related goods, and share their experiences, tourists rely on consumer platforms (Pan, 2015). Finding the elements influencing customers' propensity to keep buying travel services online is therefore essential. Additionally, improving the internet techniques in the tourism industry requires an awareness of customer traits.

In online travel platforms, credibility is essential to maintaining long-term client involvement. Businesses must implement tactics that improve e-commerce performance and client retention since websites that don't build relationships based on trust run the danger of losing users to rivals (Saraswati, 2017). In this situation, the quality of the relationship which includes trust and satisfaction is crucial in determining the user's intention to continue using the product (Saraswati, 2017). "Relationship quality" is a key component of effective relationship marketing tactics, as Morgan & Hunt (1994) point out, and it affects customers' propensity to interact with a platform and return. Since satisfaction and trust are usually recognized as important factors affecting customers' retention, companies must give them a top priority if they want to maintain their competitive advantage (Zeithaml et al., 2000). In the digital travel industry, relationship quality and intended

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to continue using a service are important aspects for organizational performance, which emphasizes the need for long-term engagement and customer connection strategy (Reyes Orantes, 2024; Saraswati, 2017).

Additionally, by investigating the relationship between these variables in the online purchase, this study looks at main elements that determine the intention of continuous use in online travel platforms. It also checks how these elements mediate one another, which provide insight into the user's engagement and retention in digital travel services.

In addition, the "Stimulus-Organism-Response" (SOR) paradigm is not widely used in research, especially to analyze the intention to continue the use of smart technology in tourism in India. In light of this research gap, this study tries to fill it by providing more intensive understanding of customer behavior in relation to the intention to continue the use of online travel platforms. This study examines elements that affect consumers' decisions to continue using the electronic travel platform for travel plan and purchase.

## LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS

### "Stimulus Organism Response" SOR model

The 'Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R)' model proposed by "Mehrabian & Russell" (1974) is derived from the field of environmental psychology, states that various attributes of the environment as stimuli (S), which somehow affect individuals' behavioural responses (R) by interfering with their internal states of being (O) (Cheng et al., 2020). This is extensively used as the theoretical basis for research pertaining to consumer behaviour (Choirisa, 2022; Lee et al., 2024; Liang et al., 2025; William & Fouad, 2025). While technology adoption models such as the "Technology Acceptance Model" (TAM) (Davis, 1989) and the "Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology" (UTAUT) (Venkatesh et al., 2003) have been widely employed to explain user behavior, they primarily emphasize utilitarian beliefs (e.g., "ease of use", "performance expectancy") These frameworks are highly effective for understanding initial adoption but offer limited explanatory power for post-adoption behaviors such as continuance usage. In contrast, the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974) captures the psychological and affective mechanisms that mediate between external stimuli and behavioral outcomes (Cheng et al., 2020; Lee & Min, 2021).

In this study, we adapt the S-O-R model to the area of consumer behaviour related to online purchases in tourism, as well as attempting to establish the connections between external stimulus (informativeness, privacy & security, customer service), travellers' inner states as an organism (Relationship quality i.e., trust and satisfaction), and the responses (online Continue use intention). Its use is appropriate for this study as it helps to discern the relationship between all the factors used in the study

### Informativeness

In the travel industry, "informativeness" refers to a combination of the quality and dependability of information provided by online tour operators (Jeong & Shin, 2019). Stated differently, the level of clarity, timely, and pertinent information accessible through digital platforms, websites, tools, or applications (Ukpabi & Karjaluo, 2016).

The accuracy of the information is a major determinant of how well digital networking works for travellers looking for information. When making travel plans, travelers think that the quality of the information they receive influences their perception and decision-making (Chung & Koo, 2015; Chamboko-Mpotaringa & Tichaawa, 2023). Being informative is crucial to tourism technology and can significantly affect tourists' perceptions of them (Pai, et al., 2020). Consumer credibility increases depending upon the reliability of the information that an individual get from various social networking sites. Furthermore, all age categories will find tourism informational applications and websites beneficial and are encouraged to investigate further if they provide pertinent and meaningful information.

**H1(a):** Informativeness has an impact on relationship quality

**H1(b):** Informativeness has an impact on continuance use intention

### Privacy and security

Concerns regarding privacy have grown in popularity in the internet world as people are concerned about the safety of their personal data. The internet is therefore frequently seen as a possible risk by online shoppers. Media reports regularly alert about the negative aspects of internet use, such as security and privacy breaches, which make it easier for fraud to occur and make online buying difficult, (Tran & Nguyen 2022). Security, which can be described as the nonrepudiation, privacy, integrity, and verification of online data and transactions, is an essential component of e-commerce systems (Nisar et al., 2020). When a consumer has belief in online platforms or websites, they are confident in their ability to protect personal data and are aware that online transactions are safe. In the world of online shopping, site security is crucial to trust. By fostering trust and happiness in online travel platforms, privacy and security improve the quality of relationships (Lee et al., 2016; Tran & Nguyen, 2022; Migelico & Hendijani, 2021). Robust data security protocols instill trust in users, promoting continued participation and willingness to use (Choi et al., 2023).

**H2(a):** Privacy and security has an impact on relationship quality

**H2(b):** Privacy and security has an impact on continuance use intention

### Customer service support

As consumers' concerns about confidentiality of online transactions grow, they want personalized responses to their questions and prompt, correct transactions (Rahi et al., 2017). Website designers must therefore put customer expectations first by making sure that their services are dependable and effective. Accordingly, customer service (CS) is a crucial component of the digital services industry and plays a vital part in the online buying process (Zeithaml & Parasuraman

2002). Reliability, individualized support, timely complaint resolution, and a thorough comprehension of client demands are characteristics of high-quality customer service (Nursalim et al., 2025). Additionally, customer service greatly influences the overall user experience by acting as a direct conduit between companies and customers during online transactions (Walter et al., 2018). Furthermore, prompt, individualized customer care combined with excellent service support increases satisfaction and trust, which encourages repeat business (Ngo et al., 2025).

**H3(a):** Customer service support has an impact on relationship quality

**H3(b):** Customer service support has an impact on continuance use intention

### Relationship Quality

Relationship quality refers to the strength of the relationship between a customer and a service provider, which includes key components such as satisfaction, trust and commitment, all of which influence customer continuance use intention (Masri et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2017). Trust reflects the belief in the reliability of the service provider, while satisfaction is the emotional response to the customer's experiences (Williams et al., 2015; Su et al., 2017).

Together, these elements promote customer loyalty and encourage the use of a platform that repeats. In the E-tourism sector, relationship quality plays a critical role in retaining customers and ensuring continued use of online travel platforms. Factors such as information, privacy and security and customer service support help to build trust and satisfaction, which affect the intention of continue using travel platforms (Masri et al., 2020).

**Trust:** The development of trust depends on a person's "trusting beliefs", which is their impression of the attributes and characteristics of the entity that they believe in (Gregori et al., 2014). **Satisfaction:** Customers' expectations are fulfilled by their opinion on their online shopping experience, it is known as consumer satisfaction (Migelico & Hendijani, 2021).

Previous studies emphasize that the quality of the relationship increases profitability for both customer and service provider, which is essential for long-term success. Trust and satisfaction are especially important in the e-tourism industry, where customers depend on a travel platform for important travel plan and purchases. Like Giovanis et al. (2015) suggest, customers will continue the relationship with a service provider as long as the relationship quality is high. Therefore, it is important to maintain the quality of high relationship quality through trust and satisfaction in order to drive intentions to use continuity and ensure long term in competitive online travel industry (Wei et al., 2023).

**H4 (a):** Relationship quality has an impact on continue use intention

**H4 (b):** Relationship quality plays a mediation role between informativeness and continue use intention

**H4 (c):** Relationship quality plays a mediation role between Privacy and security and continue use intention

**H4 (d):** Relationship quality plays a mediation role between Customer service support and continue use intention

### Continuance usage Intention

A user's intention to keep using a system is known as their continuation intention, which is derived from their behavioural intention of consumer (Bhattacherjee, 2001). According to Bhattacherjee, the decision to continue using consumers is largely influenced by how satisfied they are with their previous use. A study conducted by (Reichheld et al., 2000). Showed that the cost of bringing into a new customer can often be five times higher than keeping the current. Moreover, Businesses have identified the intention of continuous usage as a critical component in determining the probability that customers will return for more of their goods or services in the future (McDougall & Levesque, 2000; Foroughi et al., 2024). Continuous usage intention acts as an important predictor for future consumer behavior, especially in the electronic travel market. It affects word of mouth activity, such as recommendations and positive reviews, making it an important component of competitive digital landscape (Li & Liu, 2014; Lee & Min, 2021).

Figure 1 below presents the study framework based on the above literature, illustrating the key constructs and their proposed relationships

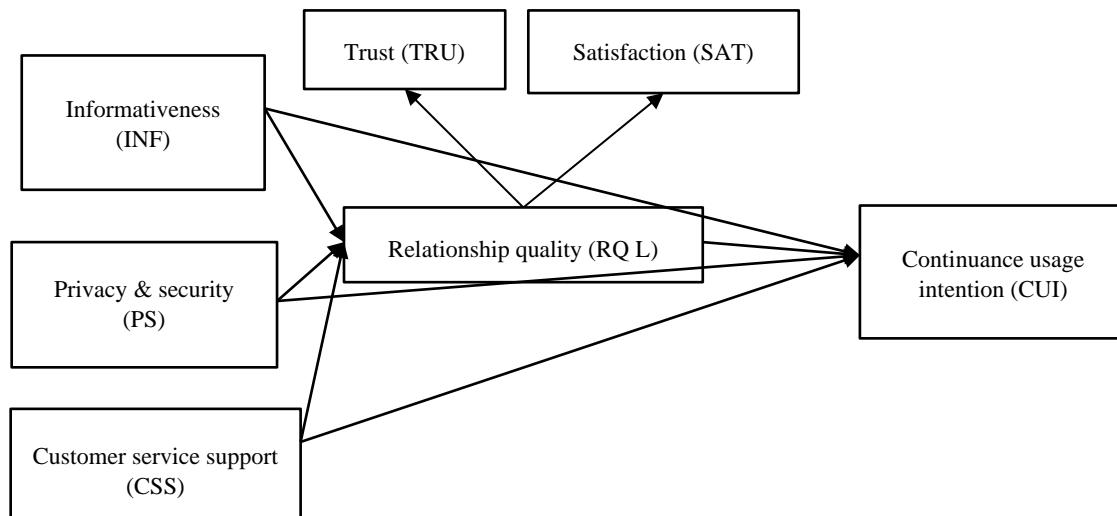


Figure 1. Framework of the study

## METHODOLOGY

The data was gathered through a structured questionnaire from respondents of India who make purchases through various digital travel platforms. "Purposive and Convenience" sampling technique is used in this study. Purposive sampling is used to exclusively collect data from respondents who used tourism or travel-related apps or website whereas, Convenience sampling was employed to select respondents who were easily accessible.

In order to make the items for the construct to measures appropriate for our study, we alternatively modified them or straightly adopted from the existing literature. As a result, the foundation for each measurement scale employed in this research is found in the literature. To ensure clarity and relevance in addressing the research objectives, the entire questionnaire was examined by experienced researchers. Later, we did offline and online survey.

In this study, 306 replies in total were used. 3 months of data collection was conducted. According (Anderson & Gerbing, 1998), the ideal sample size is 150 or more based on the needs and demands of SEM and the number of constructs. (Garver & Mentzer, 1999), suggest that for each parameter estimate, researchers should typically collect between 5 to 10 observations. However, "10-times rules" techniques supported the estimated criteria for the minimal sample size ( $306 > 19*10 = 190$ ). Moreover, if rules-of-thumb are applied improperly, design studies may suffer from a lack of statistical power due to insufficient sample sizes (Garver & Mentzer, 1999).

The first section of the survey prompted respondents to enter their personal information. The respondents were then asked to provide information on how long they had been using travel-related apps and websites. In part 2, The participants had to complete the remaining aspects of the questionnaire, which had 6 constructs and 19 items.

This section of the questionnaire, was based on the existing literature, comprised the instrument for evaluating the study model. The survey participants' responses regarding each of the items was measured on seven-point Likert scale, with 7 representing "strongly agree" and 1 representing "strongly disagree." Informativeness" is taken from (Fernandes & Barfknecht, 2020; Gao & Bai, 2014; Khan et al., 2023); "privacy & security" (Fang et al., 2017; Rahardja et al., 2023; Tran & Nguyen, 2022); "customer service" related items are taken from (Shariffuddin et al., 2023; Khare et al., 2019); "Trust" using three items are taken from (Wang et al., 2015; Su et al., 2017; Masri et al., 2020); "E-customer Satisfaction" using three items are obtained from (Bhattacherjee 2001; Foroughi et al., 2024; Masri et al., 2020) and finally, measurement items related to "Continue use intention" are gathered from (Bhattacherjee 2001; Foroughi et al., 2024; Khan et al., 2023).

## ANALYSIS

The study sample (Table 1) shows the demographic details. In terms of gender, the study shows a high representation of men, with 215 (70.26%) male respondents and 91 (29.73%) with female respondents.

In terms of age, 41.18% of the sample is in the 26–35 age range, followed by the 36–45 age range (30.72%), 19.6% are in the 46 and above age range, and just 8.5% are in the 18–25 age range. In terms of education, the majority of respondents (54.25%) have a master's degree, followed by graduates (34.97%), and 10.78% are in the "Other" group.

Table 1. Demographic data

Variable		Frequency	%
Gender	Male	215	70.26
	Female	91	29.73
Age	18-25	26	8.50
	26-35	126	41.18
	36-45	94	30.72
	46 and above	60	19.60
Education	Graduate	107	34.97
	Master's degree	166	54.25
	other	33	10.78

Measurement models are used to assess the reliability and validity of primary data (Khalique et al., 2020).

As part of the validity and reliability analysis of the research's parameters, studies of discriminant validity, convergent validity, and consistency reliability were conducted. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was computed in order to evaluate the convergent validity. Additionally, Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha values were calculated to evaluate the items' consistency within the components.

Table 2. Standardised loadings and Cronbach alpha

construct	indicator (standardise loading)	Alpha
INF	INF1 (0.762); INF2 (0.840); INF3(0.853); INF4(0.839)	0.894
PS	PS1(0.832); PS2(0.813); PS3(0.799); PS4(0.860)	0.896
CSS	CSS1(0.821); CSS2(0.784); CSS3(0.948);	0.882
TRU	TRU1(0.827); TRU2(0.823); TRU3(0.817)	0.862
SAT	SAT1(0.847); SAT2(0.816); SAT3(0.870)	0.881
CUI	CUI1(0.805); CUI2(0.804); CUI3(0.844)	0.857

Note: INF- informativeness; PS- Privacy & security; CSS- Customer service support; TRU- Trust; SAT- Satisfaction; CUI- Continuance usage intention

Results demonstrate that the factor loadings for all the constructs were significant and higher than 0.7 (Hair, et al., 2010). The reliability of the measures in each construct was ensured by Cronbach's Alpha coefficients that were all higher than 0.7. (Hair, et al., 2010) shown in Table 2. Additionally the results indicated that all constructs exhibited “Average variance extracted (AVE)” and “Composite Reliability (CR)” (Table 3) values are greater than the threshold levels of 0.5 and 0.7, respectively, ensuring the convergent validity (Hair, et al., 2010).

Table 3. Discriminate validity

	<b>CR</b>	<b>AVE</b>	<b>INF</b>	<b>PS</b>	<b>CSS</b>	<b>CUI</b>	<b>RQL</b>
<b>INF</b>	0.894	0.679	<b>0.824</b>				
<b>PS</b>	0.896	0.683	0.562***	<b>0.826</b>			
<b>CSS</b>	0.889	0.729	0.573***	0.525***	<b>0.854</b>		
<b>CUI</b>	0.858	0.669	0.637***	0.654***	0.605***	<b>0.818</b>	
<b>RQL</b>	0.969	0.940	0.728***	0.795***	0.582***	0.754***	<b>0.970</b>

Note: INF- informativeness; PS- Privacy & security; CSS- Customer service support; RQL- Relationship Quality; CUI- Continuance usage intention

### Structural model

The value of  $\chi^2/df$  was found to be 2.090, which indicated a good fit (recommended range: less than 3) (Hair et al., 1995). The CFI of 0.910 (recommended: 0.90 or higher), TLI of 0.954 (recommended: 0.90 or higher), IFI of 0.962 (recommended: 0.90 or higher), and GFI of 0.910 (recommended: 0.90 or higher) all showed a good fit, as did the NFI of 0.929 (recommended: better than 0.8). There was little difference between the model's implied covariance and the data's observed covariance, as evidenced by the RMSEA value of 0.060, which was significantly less than 0.1. In general, these results showed that the model suited the data quite well. The structural model and the hypothesized relationships among key constructs were evaluated, with the results presented in Table 4 and Figure 2.

Table 4. Results for Specific direct paths

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Path</b>	<b>Estimate</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>C.R.</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Decision</b>
H1(a)	INF --->RQL	0.376	0.057	6.571	***	Supported
H1(b)	INF--->CUI	0.125	0.078	1.602	0.109	Not Supported
H2(a)	PS --->RQL	0.541	0.056	9.589	***	Supported
H2(b)	PS --->CUI	0.117	0.089	1.309	0.190	Not Supported
H1(a)	CSS --->RQL	0.081	0.05	1.598	0.110	Not Supported
H3(b)	CSS --->CUI	0.212	0.061	3.463	***	Supported
H4(a)	RQL --->CUI	0.447	0.114	3.917	***	Supported

Note: INF- informativeness; PS- Privacy & security; CSS- Customer service support; RQL- Relationship Quality; CUI- Continuance usage intention

This study also examined the mediating effects as proposed in the hypotheses, with the results of the indirect effects presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Specific Indirect effect

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Indirect Path</b>	<b>Estimate</b>	<b>P-Value</b>	<b>Decision</b>
H4(b)	INF --> RQL --> CUI	0.168	0.001	Supported
H4(c)	PS --> RQL --> CUI	0.242	0.001	Supported
H4(d)	CSS --> RQL --> CUI	0.036	0.110	Not Supported

Note: INF- informativeness; PS- Privacy & security; CSS- Customer service support; RQL- Relationship Quality; CUI- Continuance usage intention

## DISCUSSION

In this study, the SOR model is used to construct the relationships between informativeness, privacy & security and continue use intention. The primary findings, above lead us to the conclusion that Relationship quality can all be significantly impacted by informativeness, privacy & security, which in turn can have an influence on tourist behaviour towards continuance purchase (Masri et al., 2020). Moreover, this study analyses the mediation effect of relationship quality (trust, and satisfaction), reinforcing the S-O-R model in the field of travel & tourism research.

The results of this study provide important new information about the variables affecting the quality of relationships and the intention to continue using them. In particular, relationship quality is strongly impacted by informativeness (Masri et al., 2020) and privacy and security, but customer service support doesn't have a significant effect on relationship quality which is in contrast with previous studies (Ali, 2020; Agarwal & Dhingra, 2023; Elshaer et al., 2024; Wibowo et al., 2023). Although customer service support has no effect on the quality of relationships, it does influence the intention to continue using the service (Tang et al., 2024; Djayapranata & Setyawan, 2024).

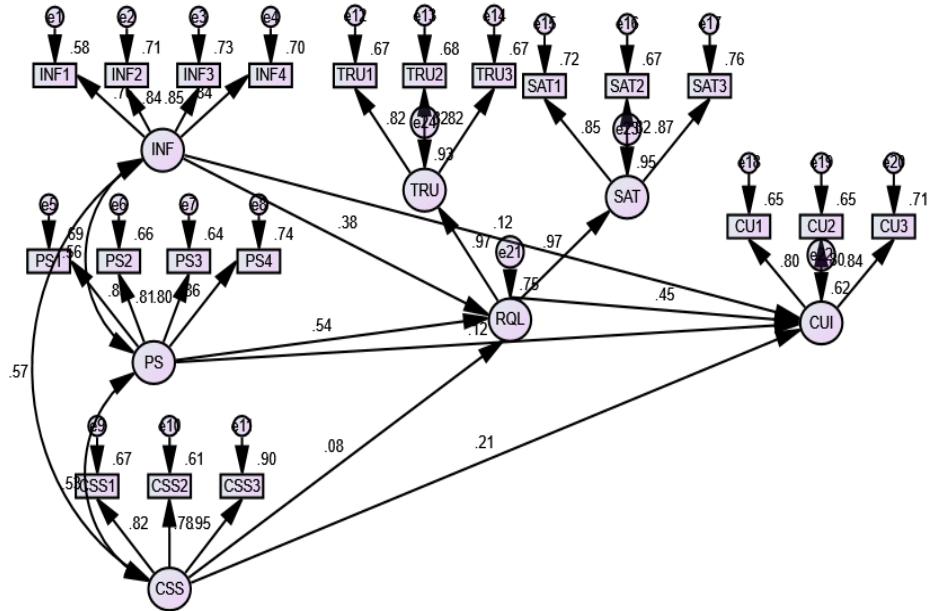


Figure 2. Structural model

Interestingly, the intention to continue using a product is not significantly impacted by either informativeness or privacy and security (Yeo et al., 2024; Darmiasih & Setiawan, 2021; Choi et al., 2023). This is because, in Indian online travel platforms, users primarily rely on trust and satisfaction when deciding whether to continue using a platform (Maqableh et al., 2021; Koloseni, 2025), thus reducing the impact of both informativeness and privacy& security on continuance usage. Informativeness does not directly affect continuance usage but exerts an indirect effect by enhancing relationship quality, which acts key mechanism linking platform features (stimulus) and continued use (response). Which shows that Informativeness is not a primary factor for continued use; its impact occurs indirectly by strengthening users' trust and satisfaction, which in turn influence continuance. Likewise, privacy and security do not directly drive continuance usage, consistent with prior research (Liu et al., 2022; Maqableh et al., 2021; Choi et al., 2023), but instead strengthen users' trust and confidence, thus encouraging continued use. Additionally, strong user relationships are essential for long-term engagement, as evidenced by the fact that relationship quality (trust and contentment) itself emerges as a significant factor of continuous usage intention (Wibowo et al., 2023).

The relationship quality also plays a mediating role between privacy & security and continuance use intention, as well as between informativeness and continuance use intention. This suggests that when consumers believe a service is safe and informative, they are more likely to stick with it; however, this effect is dependent on how well they believe they get along with the service provider. However, relationship quality did not act as a mediator in the association between customer service assistance and the intention to continue using the service. This suggests that although customer service directly encourages continuous use, it does not always improve the relationship between the user and the supplier. As, customer service drives continuance usage through functional utility rather than trust or satisfaction, as support interactions are task-focused, enhancing immediate satisfaction without strengthening long-term relationship quality.

These results emphasize how important it is to improve the privacy and security protocols as well as informativeness to establish reliable connections with users, which in turn encourages continuous commitment.

In addition, even customer service help cannot directly improve the quality of relationship, its impact on the desire to continue using a service is that service providers should ensure that their support systems are effective and responsible, so that consumers can be held around for a long time.

## IMPLICATIONS

### Theoretical implications

By using the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974) to investigate factors impacting continuous use intention, the study adds to the body for existing available knowledge of online travel platforms.

This study expands the stimuli by adding platform-specific dimensions, such as informativeness, privacy and security, and customer service support. These dimensions go beyond standard system quality or website features and capture service aspects that are particularly important in online travel platforms, particularly in developing nations like India. Moreover, this study considers relationship quality (i.e., trust and satisfaction) to be the organism, offering a comprehensive viewpoint on the interaction between the customer and the platform that mediates the connection between platform characteristics and user behavior.

According to this model, customer service help, privacy and security and informativeness act as stimuli, that mold users' relationship quality to use service as a reaction (R). The results are extended on the S-O-R paradigm, by indicating that customer service help has a direct impact on the intention of continuous use rather than trust and satisfaction, information and privacy and security, which improves the quality of the relationship. This shows that the role of customer service in online

travel platforms is more transactional, challenging conventional thinking that it primarily serves as a means for establishing trust. The study also demonstrates that relationship quality mediates the association between privacy & security and continuance use intention, as well as between informativeness and continuance use intention. However, it does not mediate the effect of customer service assistance on continuance use intention. These findings support the notion that customer engagement and retention in online travel services are greatly influenced by relationship quality (trust and satisfaction).

### **Practical implications:**

When viewed practically, the practical consideration of the results, however, suggests a few crucial tactics that online travel platform companies will need to engage in order to keep customers. First of all, informativeness is necessary to promote happiness and confidence, to highlight the need to offer accurate, complete and adapted travel information for platforms. Interactive content and AI-driven recommendations can enhance informativeness and improve relationship quality. Secondly, people are more likely to believe and stick to a platform when they believe that their financial and personal information is safe, so privacy and security measures should be prioritized. The confidence in the platform users can be increased with strong encryption protocols, transparent privacy rules and secure payment mechanisms in place and by clearly communicating these functions.

Customer service assistance is still an important factor in determining the intention of continuing to use a service, even though it has little impact on the relationship quality. This means that instead of just hiring customer service as a means of promoting confidence, travel platforms should prioritize efficiency, problem -solving and responsiveness. Offering round-the-clock assistance, chatbots run by AI, and smooth problem-solving processes can increase the customer's happiness and promote repeat use. In addition, online travel platforms should create strategies for customer relationship management (CRM) that promote positive user experiences, loyalty programs and engagement initiatives, as relationship quality serving as a mediator between information and privacy and security impact on the intention to continue use. Through enhancing user satisfaction and trust, platforms can promote sustained user retention.

### **CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

By creating and testing a conceptual model of online travel purchase intentions in the Indian context, this study adds to the body of knowledge on e-commerce and consumer behavior in the tourist industry. These findings underscore the need to consider both relational and functional aspects when designing strategies to encourage sustained engagement.

Despite its contributions, this study is subject to certain limitations. The reliance on purposive and convenience sampling may limit the generalizability of the findings beyond the studied population. Furthermore, cross-sectional design restricts the ability to track variations in user perceptions and behaviors over time. While the Indian context provides valuable insights, comparative research across diverse cultural settings could further enrich the findings.

Moreover, future studies could look into particular digital platforms that are utilized for ongoing trip purchases and take into account drawbacks like the impact of negative emotions on user loyalty and recurring use. Furthermore, employing longitudinal or experimental research designs would allow for stronger causal inferences and offer a more dynamic understanding of user behavior over time. Additionally, exploring the impact of emerging technologies such as AI enabled chatbots, recommendation algorithms, and predictive analytics could yield deeper insights into how technological innovations strengthen relationship quality and foster customer loyalty within the online travel industry.

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