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Shaping the Relationship between Customer Awareness and Customer Trust, An Applied Study on Over-the-Counter Products. Dose Customer Education Matter?

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Abstract.
The study aims to know and examine the formation of the relationship between customer awareness and trust. An applied study on over-the-counter medications. Is customer education important, there was a lack of awareness of the ingredients in over-the-counter products and the belief of many providers that these products are ineffective and unsafe may create confusion in diagnosis and may interfere with treatment? Therefore, the importance of this study stems from the fact that much of the research in the field of pharmacology is based on research and development, and a few of this research has been directed to the consumer, especially in the field of over-the-counter medications. The study sample was (397) of customers who who purchase over-the-counter products in Saudia Arabia.The data were analyzed through the PLS-SEM structural equation modeling approach.The results showed that there is a significant relationship between customer awareness and trust. Moreover, the results showed that the level of customer education played a significant moderating role in improving the relationship between customer awareness and trust in their choice of over-thecounter products.
Keywords: Customer awareness, Customer Trust, Customer education, Over-the-counter (OTC).

1. Introduction

Understanding consumer behavior and trends is essential given the increasing variety of products available and increased consumer awareness in today's competitive era. Some over-the-counter medications are now available to consumers directly on store shelves without a doctor's prescription. These products are known as over-the-counter medications. Over-the-counter medications are those that are considered safe for general use, allowing consumers to purchase them without a prescription (Worthen & Conca, 2012). Over the past 50 years, many prescription medications have transitioned to over-the-counter status, including Plerin (a laxative), omeprazole (an acid reducer), and Cetirizine (an antihistamine), which have been recognized as generally safe and effective for consumer use without medical supervision.

With over 100 active components or dosages that were previously only available with a prescription now available in over-the-counter drugs, this change has significantly increased the possibilities for self-care available to people in the United States. Certain drugs, such docosanol and the nicotinecontaining Polacrilex lozenge, were released straight onto the over-the-counter market without first requiring a prescription. Additionally, people are growing more at ease self-diagnosing and taking over-the-counter drugs. The rising number of switched products is one of the main causes of the sharp rise in OTC medicine use (Fincham, 2019).You can buy prescription drugs that are now over-thecounter (OTC) online, at pharmacies, health food stores, supermarkets, convenience stores, and other places. People of all ages often utilize over-the-counter products. Both patients and healthcare professionals shouldBase on the patient's symptoms, underlying medical conditions, and any known interactions with existing medications, carefully read the "Drug Facts" label to decide which medications are appropriate.

It is crucial to remember that certain components in over-the-counter medications have the potential to worsen pre-existing medical disorders or have unfavorable interactions with other prescription drugs. Many powerful over-the-counter substances are present in products that one might not normally expect them to be, such as when caffeine is combined with analgesics (like Advil PM) and antihistamines (like Anacin). Clinicians' misunderstandings regarding the safety and effectiveness of over-the-counter drugs, as well as their ignorance of their contents, can lead to diagnostic ambiguity and possible treatment interference. For example, many over-the-counter products contain sympathomimetics. Including analgesics and allergy, cough, and cold remedies. Patients with hypertension, angina, hyperthyroidism, or type 1 diabetes should avoid these medications or use them with caution (Corelli, 2015).In general, consumers tend to trust others, a tendency influenced by cultural factors such as a natural propensity to trust and the perceived characteristics of a situation (Sekhon et al., 2014). Initial trust beliefs are formed during the navigation process when third parties convey information about a business's goodwill. This information includes endorsements from recognized bodies and outside sources.When these organizational components align, the consumer develops a positive outlook and is receptive to promises made by the business to enhance confidence in its services or products, provided the consumer shows interest in these promises and a willingness to rely on them (Doney& Cannon, 1997).In the lastsyears, scholars have paid close attention to the idea of trust, especially in the fields of marketing and organizational theory. Interpersonal, intergroup, and inter-organizational social interaction levels can all be used to analyze this idea. In the context of marketing, trust plays a crucial role in establishing and preserving relationships between participants in an exchange process, particularly when there is a buyer-seller relationship with the goal of purchasing goods or services.

Numerous studies conducted in a variety of academic disciplines, such as marketing, sociology, economics, and social psychology, highlight the significance of trust in both personal and professional interactions (Pirson& Malhotra, 2008). The concept of trust is intricate and multidimensional. According to a number of studies, trust is essential for building successful customer connections in reciprocal situations (Ranaweera& Prabhu, 2003). Overall, consumers' tendency to trust is shaped by cultural variables and reinforced by situational perceptions. Initial trust beliefs are cultivated through knowledge about the business's goodwill conveyed by third parties. When these elements converge, consumers are more likely to engage positively with businesses that demonstrate trustworthiness.Customer education is crucial for building trust and improving service quality in an array of sectors. According to research, educating customers can help firms stand out from the competition and boost their trust (Eisingerich & Bell, 2008; Eisingerich, 2006).

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1 Customer Awareness:

According to Rogers (2010),Customers go through stages of learning, convincing, choosing, and confirming before they are prepared to embrace a product or service. Different levels of brand awareness include non-recognition and brand recognition, with top-of-mind recall considered the least. An organization's brand awareness can showcase its dedication, presence, and fundamental beliefs. Strong brand awareness means that a brand is continuously in consumers' thoughts, typically due to constant advertising and diverse, attractive products available to various groups of people (Foroudi et al., 2014; Mashur et al., 2020). An effective brand management can create customer value and happiness (Macdonald & Sharp, 2000). According to Ha and Perks (2005), brand awareness is characterized by several well-known indicators, such as the ability to evoke feelings of pride and satisfaction (Aaker, 2010), quick identification (Balmer, 2001), and influence over purchasing decisions (Mashur et al., 2019; Mashur et al., 2020). The capacity of a potential customer to identify or remember that a brand belongs to a specific product category is known as brand awareness. (Rup et al., 2020) and Chaney et al. (2018) emphasize that brand awareness reflects consumers' ability to recognize brands in various contexts, demonstrated by brand recall and reconstruction performance. Previous research indicates that brand awareness significantly influences the likelihood of a brand being chosen by customers during purchases (Lu et al., 2014; Das, 2014; Dabbous & Barakat, 2020).

Therefore, a familiar brand can also influence a consumer's choice to buy again or purchase a product after their first encounter. The importance of brand recognition in influencing consumer purchase intent is highlighted, as certain brands strategically shape consumer perceptions to help them stand out among various choices (Curina et al., 2020). Brand awareness refers to how well a brand is remembered, impacting a customer's capacity to identify its different elements like the brand name, logo, and image in different situations (Stop, 2009). It shows the brand's level of recognition among customers and can be measured by the percentage of the target market familiar with the brand name. Marketers can boost brand recognition by consistently promoting the brand and building its reputation, leading to competitive benefits for the organization. This acknowledgment creates a feeling of closeness with customers and acts as a crucial, continuous advantage for the companyBrand awareness plays a significant role in the purchasing decision-making process for three reasons. First, it represents consumer understanding, increasing the likelihood that the brand will be considered. Second, brand awareness affects brand interest; for example, some consumers adhere to the principle of "buying only well-known brands." Third, brand awareness reinforces brand associations, thereby influencing consumer purchasing decisions (Tuominen, 1999). It is believed that brand awareness evolves from a state of uncertainty regarding the brand's recognition to a belief that it is the only option available within its product category. Research indicates that this progression is evident in various studies (Tuominen, 1999; Moisescu, 2009; Stop, 2009).

Numerous studies have discovered that salesman conduct affects consumer trust as well (Pappas & Flaherty, 2008; Swan, Bowers & Richardson, 1999). Furthermore, when taking into account the company to consumer market, trust development is more appropriate for commerce. Consumers place greater trust in well-known companies, and marketers must place greater focus on organizational individuality when promoting products (Keh&Xie, 2009). Interpersonal trust is also a component of trust within an organization. When evaluating the company to consumer market, trust development is ultimately more appropriate for trade (Wirtz &Lihotzky, 2003). Additionally, it has been discovered that customers are trustworthy when they receive offer attributes and staff support under any dynamic scenario (Ruyter, Moorman &Lemmink, 2001). According to Macintosh (2009), a service provider's awareness and expertise might increase a customer's trust.Customer Trust is defined as the customer's belief that they will find what they need from their trading partners. It involves the willingness to act based on the expectation that the transaction will deliver what is promised (Barnes, 2003). Trust comprises three components: validity, reliability, and closeness. Validity refers to the legitimacy and dependability of representatives; reliability entails delivering services or products within the promised timeframe; and closeness relates to representatives' ethical values (Green in Peppers, 2004). According to Walter et al. (2000), trust in relationships includes three fundamental elements: a) the belief that partners will act in the interest of maintaining the relationship; b) the expectation that partners will be honest with one another; and c) the assurance that parties will act in the benefit of the relationship.

Customer awareness leads to comprehension and acquaintance with a company's offerings by acquiring knowledge and recognition, leading to the development of trust (Bhattacherjee, 2002). As a result, consumer buying habits and loyalty are greatly affected. (Doney& Cannon, 1997)Although there are still gaps in the concept of trust and its acceptance, many experts support its importance. Wilson (1995) notes that trust is a key component influenced by confidence in relational exchanges.According to Ballester and Aleman (2001) noted that brand trust is a crucial concept in marketing since it influences consumers' favorable perceptions and fosters brand loyalty. Additionally, brand trust was found to be an even higher predictor of customers' brand loyalty than overall satisfaction. Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) looked at brand trust and found a direct correlation between it and brand loyalty in terms of purchases and attitudes. According to Morgan and Hunt's (1994) projection, brand trust is based on the commitment-trust theory, which views trust as a crucial factor in creating and preserving long-lasting, highly valued brand relations. After doing research, Jian (2003) found that a consumer's attitude toward a brand was influenced by both brand trust and brand emotion.

His research also demonstrated the beneficial effects of brand trust on customer loyalty. Thomas (2009) expounded on the definition of trust, stating that it is the anticipation of favorable consequences, which are contingent upon the anticipated conduct of a third person. The expectation of the parties in a transaction with any organization throughout a service experience is characterized as trust, and it also pertains to the risks involved with the concerned organization assuming and acting on such expectations. If someone anticipates something to happen, then they have faith that it will.The ability to rely on someone else when things are risky is known as trust.This enthusiasm stems from a prior experience-based comprehension of the other portion. Additionally, it creates an expectation that the other party will produce a favorable result without being influenced by the chance that the effort may result in a disadvantage (Worchel, 1979). Within specific contextual boundaries and constraints, trust is an expectation. According to Lewis and Weigert (1985), trust is confidence in the face of risk as well as predictability.

2.1 **Customer Trust**:

Consumers and brands can be thought of as business partners, and their exchange relationships are greatly influenced by their mutual trust (Singh et al., 2012). According to Delgado-Ballester et al. (2003) and Morgan & Hunt (1994), trust is the conviction that each business partner will act honorably and consistently throughout their interactions. Integrity has long been proposed by researchers (Mayer et al., 1995; Ring & van de Ven, 1992). And reliability (Giffin, 1967) are essential preconditions for trust. Furthermore, attributes such as honesty, generosity, and altruism contribute to the development of trust between business partners (e.g., Larzelere& Huston, 1980; Mayer et al., 1995).Building trust also requires that business partners be perceived as not acting opportunistically. Trust is fundamental to an organization's efforts to foster ongoing customer communication, as it acts as a buffer between the company's products and external threats. Establishing successful relationships with clients necessitates both trust and credibility from the organizations they engage with. Clarifying the enhancement of long-term connections between trade parties is the main goal of the commitment-trust theory (Morgan & Hunt, 1994) (Li et al., 2006). The key idea behind this approach is the simultaneous acceptance of commitment and trust as essential building blocks for establishing and maintaining commercial relationships between trading parties.The concept of trust is interdisciplinary, combining ideas from information systems, organization behavior, psychology, marketing, finance, and strategy. In earlier literature, it has been branded in a variety of ways. Simply said, trust is the consumer's assessment of an online retailer's dependability and ability to keep their word (Gefen, 2000). Trust was defined as confidence in the trade partner by Morgan & Hunt (1994). According to Rousseau et al. (1998), trust is a mental attitude that aims to compare susceptibility based on the elevating aspirations of the expectations.High levels of trust are thought to reduce susceptibility and the sense of risk in a partnership (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). According to (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2002), trust in this research is defined as the average buyer's propensity to depend on a brand's ability to live up to its stated potential.

According to(Almurad&Hasanin,2024)customer experience is significantly improved by customer value co-creation. customers exhibit a sense of co-creation when they reflect on their difficult experiences and, drawing from their own, offer support to other customers going through similar difficulties. Finally, considering how Customer Value Co-creation influences employee engagement and customer experience.Consumers' opinions and convictions that businesses won't let them down and will A customer's opinion of a business's honesty and integrity is known as trust. Working hard to satisfy their needs is part of it (Roman & Ruiz, 2005). Consumers evaluate the seller's performance overall as well as their direct interactions with them (Chen & Mau, 2009). One of the most important components of any long-term relationship is trust, which is the conviction that others will fulfill their obligations (Sirdeshmukh et al., 2002; Watson et al., 2015). (Flavian et al., 2022; Luhmann, 2018). Thus, trust is vital for building long-term relationships, including customer loyalty (Reichheld & Schefter, 2000).If managers can strengthen trust and commitment within both virtual and non-virtual realms, the long-term success and survival of the community can be assured (Casalo et al., 2008). Trust is a core component in creating relationships between companies and consumers, leading to greater organizational commitment and efficiency (Flavian et al., 2019). It has been established that trust positively affects brand loyalty (Liu et al., 2019; Samadi&Arianti, 2018). Additionally, trust enhances customer loyalty, with trusting customers likely to exhibit higher loyalty over time (Idrees et al., 2015). El Naggar and Bandari (2017) also found that brand loyalty increases through trustworthy relationships.Trust refers to "a positive belief about reliability and dependency on anyone or any object" (Soares et al., 2012). It is essential for customer relationships for several reasons. First, trust facilitates transactions with customers, allowing them to feel confident that their interests are being taken care of. With a high level of trust, customers are reassured that their needs are well met. Furthermore, a high level of trust serves as a buffer against negative experiences. Customers tend to "forgive" a negative experience and view it as an exception if they trust the product. Conversely, with low trust, a negative experience may be perceived as proof that the product is unreliable.Trust involves a specific object (person, system, institution) that can be trusted (or not). Personal trust is the trust we have in other individuals. In high-trust societies (Fukuyama, 1995), trust extends beyond immediate social groups, making trusting others a default assumption. Trust relies on the presence of risk and uncertainty regarding outcomes and is closely tied to the interdependence and vulnerability of the actors involved. Trust involves confident expectations about the future behavior of the other party. Some form of trust is likely inherent in most relationships.Customer trust refers to the level of confidence customers have in an organization and its ability to meet their needs and expectations. Several factors can impact customer trust, including:

1. Brand Reputation: The reputation of a brand significantly influences customer trust. Customers are more likely to trust brands with a strong reputation for quality, reliability, and customer service (Siagian et al., 2022).
2. Transparency: Openness about business practices, policies, and procedures enhances customer trust. Organizations that are transparent are more likely to gain customer confidence.
3. Personalization: Tailoring the customer experience to meet individual needs and preferences fosters trust by demonstrating the organization's commitment to understanding and serving its customers (Mian, 2014).

The study hypothesis created for this objective is as follows:

H1: There is no a statistical relationship between customerOTCproducts awareness and customer trust.

2.3. CustomerEducation:

Education has not been extensively studied as a mediating variable in evaluations of customer awareness and trust, primarily due to the challenges in defining it. As a result, its impact on perceptions of over-the-counter (OTC) brand drugs remain underexplored. However, education level has emerged as a significant influence on human behavior and has been employed as a criterion in various classifications, including brand awareness and brand trust. The effects of behavioral changes driven by different levels of education on perceptions of selected OTC brands are still unknown.

2.4The Relationship between Customer Awareness, Customer Trust, and Customer Education

Credibility and trust are closely linked to brand recognition. Customers are more inclined to believe in products and services when they are familiar with a brand and have positive associations with it. Trust is particularly essential when making purchases, especially for new customers who may be hesitant to try unfamiliar brands.Customer awareness promotes understanding and familiarity with a company's products and services through learning and appreciation, thereby enhancing trust (Bhattacherjee, 2002). Consequently, customer spending patterns and loyalty are significantly affected (Doney& Cannon, 1997). While many experts have supported e-commerce, the concept of trust and its acceptability remain unclear. As noted by Wilson (1995), trust plays a crucial role in confidence and relationship exchanges.

According to Genesar (1994), trust fosters partner reciprocity and discourages opportunistic behavior. Doney and Cannon (1997) describe trust as the acceptance of goodness and reliability, alongside the ability to introduce fresh concepts, procedures, and behaviors (Allen & Mayer, 1990). According to(tanveer and et al,2024) green brand knowledge, trust, and social responsibility influence consumers' intentions to make green purchases.Bhattacherjee further explains how trust influences individuals' performance, particularly their ability to learn new skills. Customers who trust a system are likely to take fewer risks. Most studies indicate that a customer's online shopping behavior is heavily influenced by their level of trust. Customers are more likely to commit to new systems (Doney& Cannon, 1997) and to embrace new ideas and practices (Jarvenpaa et al., 2000).

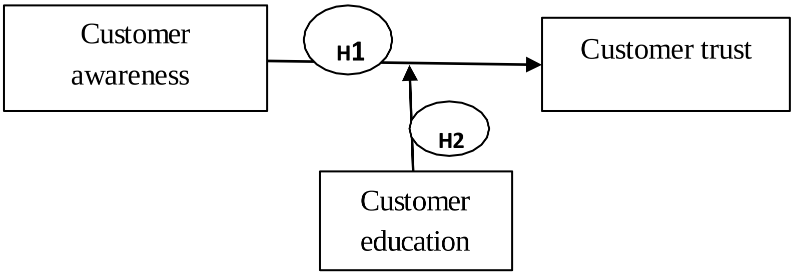
This suggests that consumer awareness affects their trust in potential online merchants, fostering a positive attitude toward and acceptance of online purchasing.Despite this existing literature, the influence of customer awareness, customer trust, and customer education level remains underexplored. This paper aims to establish the nature of the relationship between consumer awareness and trust toward medical products (OTC), as well as its impact on buying and repurchasing behaviors. It seeks to examine the mediating role of customer education level and its relationship to awareness and trust in products, along with the implications for purchasing and repurchasing decisions. Additionally, this study will explore whether the introduction of education as a mediating variable affects the nature of the relationship between the dependent and independent variables.The significance of this study stems from the fact that much research in the field of pharmacology focuses on research and development, often neglecting consumer perspectives, particularly in the realm of over-the-counter drugs.

H.2: The customer education levels moderate the relationship between customer OTC products awareness and customer trust.

3. Proposed research Model

The literature and previous studies in the field of research were reviewed to determine the research gap, and then the research variables were determined, which were confined to three variables. The first is the level of customer education as a median variable; the second is customer awareness as an independent variable, and finally customer trust as a dependent variable. Where the model will be formulated, hypotheses developed, and then tested statistically to clarify the relationship between the variables under study. The research form was formulated in Figure 1.

Figure 1 the Relationship between the variables



4. Research Methodology

4.1Data collection procedure and Measurement Development

The scale was developed based on a theoretical study and a questionnaire that included a five-point Likert scale. The scale of Hair et al. (2014) was used to calculate the sample size which was (397) customers who purchase OTCproductsin Riyadh (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia). Based on the correct responses collected from the study participants (397), more than three-quarters of the analyzed people (78.6%) were males (n = 312) and 21.4% were females (n = 85). In terms of age, people under 20 years of age constituted the largest group (44%, n = 175). According to the participants, 67.3% (n = 267) had a bachelor's degree.

Descriptive statistics for the responses were calculated using the mean and standard deviation. The data were analyzed through the PLS-SEM structural equation modeling approach. Additionally, a pilot survey involving 60 clients was conducted to verify the validity and reliability of the data. Three variables were considered: Customer education (CE), Customer Awareness (CA), and Customer Trust (CT), based on the works of Prashant Tiwari et al. (2021), Paulin W.J. et al. (2016), and Van Raaij (2009).

4.2 Validity and Reliability Analysis

Validity was tested to ensure that the items used in the questionnaire accurately reflected the meanings intended by the researcher. The research tool incorporated variables from a theoretical standpoint. Reliability was assessed to determine the stability of the questionnaire as a data collection tool, using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded a coefficient of 0.84 or higher, indicating high consistency. The structural equation model effectively predicts the relationships among the variables inherent in the model and illustrates the foundational variables underlying the phenomenon under study. This model also reveals the relationships between the variables and the level of error in the equations (Roberts & Grover, 2009).

Table .1Standard loading coefficients, validity coefficients and Convergent stability

Construct	Items code	Factor loading	CR	AVE
Customer awareness	CA1	0.952	0.972	0.922
	CA2	0.954		
	CA3	0.951		
Customer Trust	CT1	0.988	0.987	0.931
	CT2	0.965		
	CT3	0.971		
Customer education	CE1	0.951	0.984	0.917
	CE2	0.980		
	CE3	0.967		

The validity test included basic tests to find out the level of consistency between the items in the same form, as shown in Table 1.On the basis of the approximate validity coefficient, where the statistically acceptable limit is 0.7, it was found through the table that all elements had values greater than 0.7, which indicates that all values are statistically acceptable. (Hair, etal.2017).

1.2 Results and equation modele mpirical

Table .2 VIF Test

Variables	VIF
CA	1.82
CT	1.67
CE	2.071

The Collinearity between two or more variables in the Regression analysis indicates that there is a strong correlation between the variables, as this measure is considered an indicator of the interrelationship between the independent variables in the structural model.(Montgomery, Peck&Vining,2012). The PLS-SEM program calculates the value of VIF, whose value starts from 1, and there is no upper limit for this.If the statistical results indicate that the VIF value is less than 5, it means that the ollinearity is not serious. (Frost, 2020).As shown in Table 3, all VIF values are less than 5, which means that collinearly among the variables is not serious.

Table 3. Fornell-Larcker Criterion

variables	CA	CT	CE
CA	0.921		
CT	0.423	0.973	
CE	0.501	0.522	0.972

The Fornell-Larcker Criterion measures the strength of the independent variable's coefficients with its current point higher than other variables in the same matrix. (Esposito&etal.2010).
Table 4 indicates that the correlation between latent variables is greater than the permissible value.05, which indicates that there is no latent relationship between one variable and other variables.

Table 4 Path coefficient analysis

variables	Std.Beta	Std.error	T.value	P. value	F2	R2	Q2	Gof
CA → CT	0.741	0.104	4.311	0.000	0.171	0.273	0.006	0.380
CT → CE	0.087	0.112	0.712	0.419	0.210			
CA → CE	0.077	0.103	3.211	0.010	0.371			

Table 3 presents the calculated F² as a complementary test for the level of significance (p-value). F² is used to measure the effect size in regression models according to Cohen (1988), who indicated that an F² value greater than 0.35 signifies a significant effect. The results of this study show a medium effect of F² between customer awareness and customer trust, with a value of 0.171. Additionally, F² was 0.210 between customer awareness in marketing and customer trust, indicating a medium effect. Furthermore, F² reached 0.371 between customer education and customer awareness, signifying a high effect.

Table 3 also reveals that the coefficient of determination (R^2) was 0.273, indicating a strong linear relationship between the variables (Chin, 1998). Specifically, R^2 values greater than 0.26 suggest a strong relationship. The Q^2 value in Table 3 was 0.264, indicating satisfactory predictive accuracy. According to Chin (2010), both Q^2 and R^2 can measure predictive relationships in the PLS methodology, which attempts to predict omitted variables. A Q^2 value greater than 0.00 indicates predictive ability (Wold, 1982).Additionally, the Goodness of Fit (GOF) value was 1.732, indicating a high predictive capability of the model, as it exceeds the threshold of 0.36, confirming that the overall performance of the model is strong. Smart-PLS was utilized to calculate the statistical values and the GOF to assess the models' predictive ability.

The results support the acceptance of the research hypotheses, demonstrating a significant effect between customer awareness and customer trust, thus validating the first hypothesis. The findings also indicate a positive relationship between customer education and customer trust, confirming the second hypothesis regarding the connection between customer awareness and customer trust. The results presented in Table 4 indicate that this hypothesis is accepted.

Table 5.Direct and indirect path coefficient

Dependant variable	Moderator Variable	Independent variable	direct path coefficient	Indirect path coefficient
CA	CE	CT	0.017	0.005

4. Discussion

This section discusses the findings related to several key points. First, regarding the relationship between customer awareness and customer trust, the results indicate a significant correlation between these two variables, which aligns with the findings of Tiwari et al. (2021). Customers are likely to notice services that provide the highest value. Therefore, banks must ensure that customers are aware of the availability of these products and clarify how mobile banking services can offer relative advantages over competitors (Safeena et al., 2011).The formation of consumer knowledge about services or products is crucial for the successful implementation of innovative offerings. Research findings suggest that the greater the awareness customers have of the benefits associated with a service, the higher the likelihood they will adopt online banking facilities (Hassan et al., 2021; Pikkarainen et al., 2004). Sathye (1999) further demonstrated that a low level of customer awareness can lead to the non-adoption of online banking services. This logical relationship implies that exposure to various stimuli can enhance customer awareness, thereby influencing their experiences with the product. This is partially supported by Paulin et al. (2016), who noted that the decision to purchase over-the-counter (OTC) products is significantly affected by previous purchase experiences, which in turn impacts customer trust.Secondly, the study found a relationship between customer education and trust in OTC products. Customers who are informed about the active ingredients in medications are better equipped to select appropriate products based on their prior experiences.Finally, regarding the mediating role of customer education between awareness and trust; the results indicated that customer education significantly enhances the relationship between customer awareness and trust in choosing OTC products.

5. Theoretical implications

The study's conclusions have several theoretical implications. First, through presenting an extensive identification and explaining the relationship between the variables, the study's findings constitute a substantial contribution to the literature on OTC products, consumer trust, and customer awareness. Second, despite the fact that awareness has been the subject of lots of studies, brand awareness is crucial to the choice to buy for three reasons: In the first OTC product, it symbolizes consumer comprehension, which raises the possibility that the buyer will give the brand some thought. For instance, some consumers follow the adage "buy only the famous brand" because brand awareness influences the brand of inter Third, by strengthening brand connections, brand awareness influences the level of trust in the brand, consumers' purchasing decision, and increased loyalty.These studies are scarce, particularly when it discusses over-the-counter medications. Additionally, there aren't many researches that connect customer trust and customer awareness. The existence of a link between awreness and trust, but no study examined the inclusion of an intervening substance. As a result, there is still scope for future research that focuses on how awareness impacts a large enough corpus of literature to explain a variety of trust-related difficulties. Last but not least, this study confirms that changes are the most significant predicate of consumer awareness regarding over-the-counter medications. It also examines at the relationship with customer trust, proving its applicability in the scholarly endeavor to comprehend consumer behavior.The particular context of this study and its findings have important ramifications for the use of medicines available over-the-counter. Pharmaceutical companies can profit from this study by increasing their capacity to raise consumer awareness through customer education and trust, which will increase customer satisfaction, intent to purchase, revenue, and reduce brand dilution. Additionally, it reduces the exposure of consumers to other competitors. For pharmaceutical companies hoping to increase sales, building brand trust with consumers is essential.

6. Conclusion

This study and its findings have significant implications for the use of over-the-counter medications. Pharmaceutical companies could benefit from this study by enhancing their ability to educate and trust consumers, which would increase customer satisfaction, purchase intent, and revenue, and reduce brand attrition. It would also reduce customer exposure to competitors. Consumer brand trust is critical for pharmaceutical companies seeking to boost sales. Although there are new findings and directions for further research, this study enhances our understanding of the variables covered in the study. Future studies may investigate the factors that influence people's decisions to purchase over-the-counter products. The current study framework could also be used for prescription drug products. Researchers may also consider comparing studies across different contexts, such as comparing Saudi and foreign consumers purchasing over-the-counter products. Future research could gain more depth by including mediating variables such as customer experience, customer satisfaction, and customer happiness.

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Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: Data from this study can be obtained from the correspondence authors upon request.

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