

# From Doubt to Sales

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## Abstract

*"Amidst the lively markets of Delhi, consumer preferences for everyday products undergo intricate scrutiny. This study delves into the dynamics of consumer skepticism, focusing on doubts surrounding product claims and the materials used in everyday items. Conducted in Delhi, India, the research aims to uncover how consumer skepticism influences the intention to purchase these products. Rooted in a theoretical framework encompassing consumer behavior, attitude, perceived value, and awareness, the study collected and analyzed data from consumers who had previously bought everyday products between April and June 2022. The findings suggest that leveraging social media to promote everyday products can effectively alleviate consumer skepticism. Additionally, consumer value perceptions and general awareness emerge as positive influencers on the intention to purchase. The study underscores the imperative for companies to communicate clearly about their products, addressing consumer doubts and fostering positive attitudes toward mainstream product consumption."*

**Keywords:** *purchase intentions, Scepticism, perceived value, Everyday Products, Advertising*

**JEL Classification:** *M37*

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## Introduction

In the sprawling markets of Delhi, where colors, sounds, and aromas converge to create a bustling tapestry of commerce, consumer choices regarding everyday products become a fascinating exploration. The labyrinthine alleyways host a myriad of options, from traditional household items to modern conveniences, each vying for attention and preference. However, amidst this vibrant commerce, consumer skepticism weaves its subtle threads, casting doubts on the credibility of product claims and the reliability of conventional materials.

Delhi, with its kaleidoscope of cultures, traditions, and economic strata, presents a microcosm of India's dynamic consumer landscape. From the historical bazaars of Old Delhi to the chic boutiques in South Delhi, the city encapsulates a spectrum of consumer preferences and expectations. Everyday products, ranging from time-honored staples to contemporary essentials, play a central role in the daily lives of Delhiites.

Consumer skepticism in Delhi's markets is not a monolithic entity but a nuanced interplay of factors. It is the cautious pause before embracing a product, the raised eyebrow at extravagant claims, and the unspoken question about the origins of materials. In this context, skepticism is not a rejection but a discerning inquiry into the products that weave seamlessly into the fabric of daily life.

Delhi's markets are a vibrant ecosystem where everyday products, such as toiletries, household cleaners, and packaged foods, form the backbone of commerce. These products are not merely commodities but integral components of cultural practices, shaping routines, and reflecting societal values. Understanding consumer attitudes toward these everyday items unveils profound insights into the intricate tapestry of Delhi's markets.

## Reviews

Consumer skepticism has emerged as a critical and pervasive aspect of contemporary consumer behavior, influencing perceptions, attitudes, and decision-making processes across various domains. This literature review provides a comprehensive overview of key studies, findings, and insights related to consumer skepticism, shedding light on its definition, determinants, consequences, and implications for marketers and researchers alike.

Consumer skepticism is commonly understood as the attitude of doubt or disbelief exhibited by consumers towards product claims, advertising messages, and corporate communications. It is rooted in the notion that consumers, faced with incomplete information or perceived inconsistencies, question the veracity of promotional content and corporate assertions (6)(12).

Numerous studies have delved into the factors influencing the development of consumer skepticism. Ercis and Celik (1) and S. K. Khan et al. (2) highlighted the rising skepticism towards green products, emphasizing the impact of misleading environmental information. Newman and Trump (7) and Pomeroy and Johnson (8) contributed to the understanding that skepticism arises from incomplete information, making communication efforts by companies less effective.

Studies such as Rinaldi Bursan et al. (5) and Huang and Darmayanti (3) explored the interplay between consumer values, environmental concern, and skepticism. Environmental values were found to have a significant impact on green purchase behavior, while environmental concern positively affected skepticism levels towards green advertising claims.

The negative impact of consumer skepticism on purchase intentions was highlighted by various studies. Anusree et al. (11) found a high degree of skepticism towards health claims in food ads and labels, impacting consumer trust. Kifaya (17) and Manish et al. (13) demonstrated the adverse association between skepticism and online purchase decisions, emphasizing the need for a nuanced understanding of skepticism in various consumer contexts.

Consumer skepticism extends beyond product claims and advertising to encompass various domains. (9) study focused on skepticism toward sales promotions, indicating its detrimental effect on promotion effectiveness. (15) Persuasion Knowledge Model explained how consumers' skepticism about advertising messages and motives is influenced by factors such as age, education, and socialization.

Research by Obermiller and Spangenberg (10) and Devi and Chanda (14) suggested that consumer skepticism can lead to mistrust, denial of information, and resistance. Strategies to enhance consumer acceptance include providing factual and useful information, transparent ad disclosures (16), and understanding the elements that contribute to customer satisfaction in online interactions (14).

## Hypotheses:

H1: Consumer skepticism negatively influences purchase intentions.

H2: General awareness positively influences purchase intentions.

H3: Perceived value of mainstream products positively influences purchase intentions.

## Methodology:

This research, conducted between April and June 2022 in Delhi, employed online surveys distributed to consumers of everyday products. The study focused on descriptive causality analysis to explore relationships among skepticism, general awareness, perceived value, and the intention to purchase. A sample size of 240 respondents participated, and multiple linear regression was utilized for in-depth data analysis.

To provide context to the study, the research targeted everyday products such as toiletries, household cleaners, and packaged foods. These product categories were chosen due to prevalent consumer skepticism regarding

factors like ingredient authenticity and environmental impact. For instance, doubts surrounding "green" claims on household cleaners or the sourcing of ingredients in packaged foods contributed to heightened skepticism.

The demographic analysis revealed that in the Delhi market, the majority of consumers fell within the age group of 21 to 30 years (45%) and 31 to 40 years (35%), indicating a significant presence of young adults. Professions of consumers favoring mainstream products included entrepreneurs (28%), private employees (22%), and civil servants (18%). Notably, individuals with stable professions were more likely to afford and opt for conventional product options. In terms of education, respondents with Post graduate degrees dominated at 38%, followed by Graduate (23%) and Professional (10%), highlighting a well-educated consumer base with the capacity to critically evaluate information related to mainstream products.

Table 1: Demographic

Age Group	Number	%	Profession	Number	%	Education	Number	%
21 to 30 years	108	45	Entrepreneurs	67	28	Professional	24	10
31 to 40 years	84	35	Private Employees	53	22	Postgraduate	91	38
41 to 50 years	30	12.5	Civil Servants	43	18	Graduate	55	23
51 and above	18	7.5	House wife	29	12	12th	70	29
Total	240	100	Students	48	20	Total	240	100
			Total	240	100			

## Results and Discussion

The study reveals that consumer skepticism negatively impacts purchase intentions, emphasizing the importance of clear communication by companies. On the flip side, general awareness and perceived value positively influence purchase intentions, highlighting the role of awareness and consumer perceptions in shaping purchasing behavior for mainstream products.

Table 2: Hypothesis Testing Results

Variable	$\beta$	t-value	p-value	R	$R^2$	F-value	F-sig
Consumer Skepticism	-0.207	-2.716	0.009	0.674	0.453	26.127	0.000
General Consciousness	0.528	4.220	0.004				
	0.159	2.663	0.017				

Note: Significant at the 0.05 level

All hypotheses were rigorously tested by comparing p-values with the significance level ( $\alpha = 5\%$ ). The regression results, as outlined in Table 1, underscore the significance of consumer skepticism, general awareness, and perceived value in shaping purchase intentions in Delhi's market.

## Findings and Conclusion

In the vibrant markets of Delhi, where the rich tapestry of commerce unfolds with colors, sounds, and aromas, consumer choices become a captivating journey. From traditional household items to modern conveniences, the bustling alleyways offer an array of options, each vying for attention and preference. However, amid this lively commerce, consumer skepticism subtly weaves its threads, casting doubts on product claims and material reliability.

Consumer skepticism poses a significant hurdle that companies must overcome for successful engagement with consumers. The findings reveal a noteworthy negative impact of skepticism on purchase intentions, substantiated by a p-value of 0.009. This underscores the imperative for companies to address skepticism through clear communication strategies, fostering consumer confidence in the reliability and authenticity of their products.

On the positive side, general awareness emerges as a powerful influencer, with higher levels correlating positively with purchase intentions (p-value = 0.004). This suggests that companies can enhance consumer behavior by implementing effective communication and awareness-building strategies. These efforts contribute to an informed consumer base, positively shaping their perceptions and preferences.

Perceived value plays a crucial role, significantly and positively influencing purchase intentions with a p-value of 0.017. Acknowledging and emphasizing the value and benefits of everyday products becomes instrumental in enhancing consumer purchase intentions. By highlighting the positive aspects of their offerings, companies can foster a stronger connection with consumers and contribute to the overall success of their products in the market.

In Delhi's markets, tackling consumer skepticism is a significant hurdle. To overcome this challenge, companies should prioritize clear communication, utilize social media for effective product promotion, and enhance overall awareness. Emphasizing the value and benefits of everyday products can nurture positive connections with consumers. By adopting these strategies, companies not only have the potential to boost sales but also play a role in cultivating a more informed and confident consumer base across Delhi's diverse markets.

## **Implications for Companies**

Effective engagement with consumers demands clear and targeted communication strategies from companies. These strategies should be designed to directly address doubts, emphasizing the authenticity and reliability of their products. Leveraging the expansive reach of social media platforms can be particularly impactful, providing a transparent and informative channel to alleviate consumer skepticism.

In addition to clear communication, promoting awareness emerges as a key factor in shaping positive consumer attitudes. Companies can achieve this by enhancing general awareness regarding the value and benefits associated with mainstream products. Educational campaigns and marketing initiatives that highlight the positive aspects of everyday products play a crucial role in influencing consumer perceptions and can contribute significantly to increased sales. By combining these strategies, companies can build a robust foundation for positive consumer engagement and successful market presence.

## **Acknowledgement**

The author would like to thank to "SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND COMMERCE, The GLOCAL UNIVERSITY".

## **Conflict of Interest**

The author declares no conflict of interest.

## **Funding**

This research received no external funding

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