Investigating the relation among UGC and FGC as independent variables and the consumer Purchase intention in the telecommunications sector in Egypt

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Abstract

The effect of user-generated content (UGC) and firm-generated content (FGC) on consumer purchase intentions within Egypt's telecoms industry is investigated in this paper. The study emphasizes how increasingly digital material is impacting consumer behavior and corporate initiatives. Results show that UGC greatly increases trust and lowers perceived risk, both of which favorably influence purchase intention. On the other hand, FGC has a rather less effect on purchase intention; its main influence comes from perceived usefulness. According to the findings, FGC is still a necessary component in improving perceived value and utility even if UGC mostly shapes customer trust and lowers risk perceptions. For telecom companies,

practical implications include using UGC to establish trust, combining UGC with FGC for maximum involvement, and implementing policies meant to reduce the potential risks. The study notes constraints including sector-specific focus and self-reported data; it advises the next study should investigate cross-industry comparisons, cultural influences, and longitudinal studies. These insights help to better grasp the part that digital content plays in customer decision-making in a fast-changing telecom market

Keywords: User-Generated Content (UGC), Firm-Generated Content (FGC), Consumer Purchase Intention, Telecommunication, telecom, Perceived Trust, Perceived Risk, Perceived Usefulness, perceived value.

المستخلص

يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة تأثير المحتوى الذي ينشئه المستخدمون (UGC) والمحتوى الذي تنشئه الشركات (FGC) على نية الشراء لدى المستهلك في صناعة الاتصالات المصرية. تؤكد الدراسة على كيفية تأثير المحتوى الرقمي المتزايد على سلوك المستهلك ومبادرات الشركات. تظهر النتائج أن المحتوى الذي ينشئه المستخدمون (UGC) يزيد بشكل كبير من الثقة ويقلل من المخاطر المدركة، وكلاهما يؤثر بشكل إيجابي على نية الشراء. من ناحية أخرى، فإن المحتوى الذي يتم إنشاؤه من قبل الشركات (FGC) له تأثير أقل على نية الشراء؛ حيث يأتي تأثيره الرئيسي من الفائدة المدركة. وفقًا للنتائج، لا يزال المحتوى الذي ينشئه الخبراء (FGC) عنصرًا ضروريًا في تحسين القيمة المدركة والفائدة حتى لو كان المحتوى الذي ينشئه المستخدمون (UGC) هو الذي يشكل ثقة العملاء ويقلل من إدراك

المخاطر. بالنسبة لشركات الاتصالات، تشمل الآثار العملية استخدام المحتوى الذي ينشئه المستخدمون (UGC) لبناء الثقة، ودمج المحتوى الذي ينشئه المستخدمون مع المحتوى الذي تنشئه الشركات (FGC) لتحقيق أقصى قدر من المشاركة والتفاعل، وتنفيذ سياسات تهدف إلى تقليل المخاطر المحتملة.وتُشير الدراسة إلى بعض القيود، بما في ذلك التركيز على قطاعات مُحددة والبيانات المُبلغ عنها ذاتيًا؛ وتُوصي الدراسة بأن تبحث الدراسة القادمة في المقارنات بين القطاعات، والتأثيرات الثقافية، والدراسات طويله الأجل. وتساعد هذه الرؤى في فهم الدور الذي يلعبه المحتوى الرقمي في عملية اتخاذ القرارات لدى العملاء في سوق الاتصالات سريع التغير.
الكلمات المفتاحية: المحتوى الذي ينشئه المستخدم (UGC)، المحتوى الذي تنشئه الشركات (FGC)، نية الشراء لدى المستهلك، الاتصالات، ، الثقة المدركة، المخاطر المدركة، الفائدة المدركة، القيمة المدركة.

Introduction

The telecommunications sector in Egypt is largely impacted by user-generated content along with the firm-generated content owing to the rapid emergence of digital platforms and their influence on the consumer buying process. Consumers and firms are now able to interact and exchange information in an entirely new digital space due to user-generated content (Dr. S. Mathur & Singh, 2021). User-generated content has a significant impact on enhancing information credibility and promoting information adoption (Geng & Chen, 2021a).Moreover, user-generated content can have a synergistic effect when combined with other marketing channels such as television advertising and email communication.(Kumar et al., 2016).On the other hand, content created by the firms is vital as it helps in defining the way

customers think and engage with them. Past research notes that firm-generated content in social media positively influences, for instance, customer spending and cross-buying, which increases the profitability for the firm (Kumar et al., 2016).Nonetheless, there is an emerging trend regarding the significance of both user-generated and firm-generated content, and yet, the existing body of work has not thoroughly investigated the multifaceted relationship and the influential combination of these two variables on consumer purchasing intentions in the telecommunications sector of Egypt.

Egypt's telecommunications market stands as one of the most dynamic and rapidly expanding sectors within the country, playing a pivotal role in its economic development. In the fiscal year 2022/2023, the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector achieved a growth rate of 15.2%, outpacing the overall GDP growth rate, and increased its contribution to GDP to 5.1%, up from 4.4% in fiscal year 2019/2020 (*Egypt - Digital Economy*, n.d.).The sector achieved revenues amounting to EGP 315 billion in the current fiscal year, reflecting a growth rate of about 75% (*ITIDA - ITIDA - Egypt's Thriving ICT Sector | Industry Outlook | ITIDA*, n.d.).The mobile market in Egypt is notably competitive, with several key players striving for market share. As of 2023, Vodafone Egypt holds approximately 40% of the market, Etisalat Misr about 26%, and Orange Egypt around 25%. Telecom Egypt, the country's

primary telephone company, maintains a significant presence with a 20% market share. (*TELECOM EGYPT PORTER'S FIVE FORCES – CANVAS, SWOT, PESTEL & BCG Matrix Editable Templates for Startups*, n.d.).The government has been proactive in enhancing the country's ICT infrastructure. Under its ICT 2030 strategy, it has launched initiatives aimed at transforming Egypt into a regional and global telecommunications and technology hub.This includes investments in digital transformation, capacity building, and infrastructure upgrades. Notably, the "Digital Egypt" strategy focuses on developing the ICT infrastructure, fostering digital inclusion, and transitioning to a knowledge-based economy (*Egypt - Digital Economy*, n.d.). In terms of financial performance, the telecom market in Egypt was valued at approximately USD 4.65 billion in 2023, with projections to reach USD 7.28 billion by 2032, exhibiting a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 4.40% during the forecast period (*Egypt Telecom Market Size, Share, Growth, Report, 2032*, n.d.).

Egypt's telecommunications market has demonstrated remarkable growth and resilience, solidifying its position as a key driver of the nation's economic development. In the fiscal year 2023/2024, the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector's contribution to Egypt's GDP increased to 5.8%, up from 5% in the previous fiscal year, with projections to reach 8% by 2030 (*ITIDA - ITIDA - Egypt's Thriving ICT Sector | Industry Outlook | ITIDA*, n.d.)

1.1 Research Problem:

Evaluate how the content that is generated by users and the content that is generated by the firm determine the intention to purchase by the consumer, Analyze how the perceived trust, perceived usefulness, perceived value, and perceived risk act as mediating factors in the relationship between user-generated content, first m-generated content, and consumer purchase intention.

1.2 Research Gap:

The previous studies have concentrated on the separate impacts of user-generated content or firm-generated content on consumer behavior, respectively. There are limited studies that have considered the intervening role of perceived trust, perceived usefulness, perceived value, and perceived risk between user-generated and firm-generated content and consumer purchase intention. On the other hand, the telecommunication industry in Egypt serves as an interesting site for this study as it has undergone significant growth and change in recent years; the relationship between user-generated content, firm-generated content, and consumer purchase intention has not been well studied.

1.3 Research Significance

Understand and elaborate on the mediating role of perceived trust, perceived risk, perceived usefulness, and perceived value in the relationship between user-generated content, firm-generated

content, and consumer purchase intention, thus enriching the conceptual framework to provide telecommunications companies in Egypt with relevant recommendations on the effective use of social media in order to raise user intentions to buy, thus enhancing the prospects of the firm.

1.4 Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to examine the direct influence of user-generated content and firm-generated content on consumer purchase intention in the telecommunications sector in Egypt, and investigate the mediating role of perceived trust, perceived usefulness, perceived value, and perceived risk in the relationship between user-generated content, firm-generated content, and consumer purchase intention.

2 Literature review and Hypotheses development

2.1 User-generated content

User-generated content (UGC) refers to the various forms of content, such as text, images, audio, and video that are created and published by users of online platforms, rather than by the platform owners or professional content creators (Voramontri & Klieb, 2019). This type of content has become increasingly prevalent in the digital landscape, as it allows individuals to actively participate in the creation and dissemination of information (Na et al., 2021; Omar & Dequan, 2020).UGC, also known as the "wisdom of the crowd,"(Colicev et al., 2019).User-

generated content (UGC) is content that is developed by customers and used by businesses to create a sense of authenticity for their brands. UGC can encompass the exchange of information in multiple directions and fulfill diverse purposes ((Agarwal, 2020; Aljarah et al., 2024).UGC, also known as electronic word-of-mouth, or eWOM, functions in the same way as traditional word-of-mouth marketing, but it disseminates information via an online platform. It is more widely used to describe any original content that non-media entities submit to the Internet (Bahtar & Muda, 2016).

There is a lot of UGC found on social media and company websites, mostly in the form of reviews written by customers. Service providers find these reviews to be very important sources of information. This helps eliminate selection and response bias, replacing them with more systematic and scientific investigations into consumer experience (Ray & Bala, 2021)

UGC grew dramatically. From 2001-2006, a number of major social media platforms sprang up, including Wikipedia (2001), LinkedIn (2003), MySpace (2003), Facebook (2004), Yelp (2004), YouTube (2005), and Twitter (2006). UGC now spans a vast swath of the Internet, from user-provided pictures to videos to comments on news stories and blogs.

Table (1) – Popular User-generated Content

Types of User-generated Content	Prominent Platforms
Pictures	Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat, Flickr
Personal Updates and Networking	Twitter, FourSquare, Facebook, LinkedIn
Reviews for Products and Services	Yelp, Rotten Tomatoes, ZocDoc, Amazon
Encyclopedia and Reference Sites	Wikipedia, Wikia
Videos	YouTube, Vine
Comments on News Articles	NY Times Online, WSJ Online
Crowdfunding	Crowdrise, Kickstarter, IndieGoGo
Sharing Platforms	Uber, Airbnb, Couchsurfing
Social Payments	Venmo, Square
Discussion / Question and Answer	Reddit, Quora, StackOverflow
Blogs	Tumblr, WordPress

Table [١] presents an overview of different types of UGC and a sampling of prominent platforms that display it, including the world's largest social network (Facebook) and the world's most trafficked video site (YouTube)(Luca, 2015)

UGC is a fundamental aspect of online consumer behavior, shaping opinion dissemination and content creation. It was found out that UGC has a significant positive direct effect on consumer behavior cross multiple sectors such as hospitality, food services,

bookselling, and electronics. The extent and quality of reviews can determine how much influence UGC has on item demand or sales (Al-Abdallah & Jumaa, 2022).In the digital age, the role of (UGC) has become increasingly influential in shaping consumer behavior and the purchasing process (Bello et al., 2021; Cheong & Morrison, 2008; Goh et al., 2012; Guptaa, 2021). The rise of social media platforms, such as Instagram, has provided a platform for individuals to share their experiences, opinions, and recommendations about products and services (Bello et al., 2021; Benevenuto, 2014). Influencers, particularly on Instagram, have emerged as a powerful force in the marketing landscape (Bello et al., 2021; Pongsakornrungsilp, 2021). They are seen as trusted sources of information by their followers, who often view them as experts in their respective niches (Primasiwi et al., 2021). As a result, the content created by these influencers can have a significant impact on the value perception and purchasing decisions of their followers (Leparoux et al., 2019; Pongsakornrungsilp, 2021).Influencers, who have built a significant following on social media, have emerged as a powerful force in the marketing landscape (Pongsakornrungsilp, 2021). These influencers are able to establish trust with their followers and are perceived as experts in their respective niches (Guptaa, 2021; Primasiwi et al., 2021). Consumers often rely on the recommendations and endorsements of these influencers to guide their purchasing decisions (Leparoux et al., 2019).This

shift in consumer behavior has led companies to adapt their marketing strategies, with many now partnering with influencers to reach their target audiences (Guptaa, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has further accelerated this trend, as social distancing measures have driven consumers to rely even more on online platforms and user-generated content to inform their purchasing decisions (Guptaa, 2021).Consumers have transitioned from passive recipients of information to active participants in creating and sharing content (Z. Wang & Kim, 2017).Social media applications have enabled consumers to easily access vast amounts of product or service information and communicate with other consumers globally. (Mohamed et al., 2023) This creates a more comfortable and instant channel for consumers to exchange information, which can substantially influence their purchase decisions (Mohamed et al., 2023) Social media also provides a public forum that gives individual consumers their own voices, facilitating the proliferation of online product reviews that have a great impact on marketing (KOROMBEL, 2023; X. Wang et al., 2012)Therefore, we suggest the following hypothesis:

H1: There is a statistically significant relationship between User Generated Content and consumers' purchase intention.

2.2 Firm-generated content

Firm-generated content (FGC) is defined as content created by marketers on their official brand pages on social media channels, controlled by the firm's management (Aljarah et al., 2024;

Colicev et al., 2019). It is a form of advertisement controlled by a corporation and aligned with the company's agendas (Negoro & Gunawan Alif, 2020). Including marketer's creations on the company's branded social network page. They may comprise formative brand posts that highlight recent promotions or videos generated by the brand for new product introductions. The examination includes all appropriate aspects of FGC, including vividness, valence, and volume.(Colicev et al., 2019; Hassan Sadek, 2021).Firm-generated content (FGC) boosts consumer engagement and promotes products on social media, especially for restaurants. Research shows that frequent FGC positively impacts customer expenditure, cross-selling, and profitability. (Muhammad et al., 2023).The sentiment, reaction, and motivation matrix that surrounds a customer is often the most direct way a company can build trust and credibility. Businesses keep customers up to date with their products, pricing and promotions and helps in brand reinforcement. The attention and positive outlook of the audience depends on the content and creativity of the messages that is communicated to them. (Osei-Frimpong & McLean, 2018).The FGC enhances brand awareness and loyalty by promoting positive attitudes and buying behavior through engaging social media content, requiring user reactions through likes, shares, or comments (Santiago et al., 2022).The subject of marketing research has shown great interest in the connection between the firm created content and the process of

buying by consumers (Cascio Rizzo et al., 2023; Lovett et al., 2013). FGC is seen as a powerful instrument with which to reach and engage target audiences by business people (Dajah, 2020; Goh et al., 2012; Kumar et al., 2016). Studies have been carried out to show that FGC has a positive effect on such customers' metrics as expenditure, cross-buying rate, and customer profitability (Kumar et al., 2016).One of the most important benefits of FGC lies in its ability to develop trust and encourage conversions through giving consumers information they value (Dajah, 2020). Companies may share informative content with potential clients about their products or services that can help them make better purchasing choices (Goh et al., 2012) firm-created content, such as product reviews, tutorials, and social media posts, can play a crucial role in this process by providing consumers with the information they need to make informed decisions (Dajah, 2020).As companies continue to invest in content marketing and social media strategies, understanding the factors that drive consumer engagement and decision-making will be critical to success. (Cassar et al., 2022; Dessart & Pitardi, 2019; T. Wang & Lee, 2020)Therefore, we suggest the following hypothesis:

H2: There is a statistically significant relationship between Firm Generated Content and consumers' purchase intention.

2.3 Perceived Trust

Trust refers to a state of mind that does not expect hostility from others but instead assumes goodwill based on their actions or motives. Trust means one party being willing to forfeit some control over its actions to another, believing that this person has positive intentions towards the trusting party (X. Zhang & Yu, 2020), In online shopping, trust becomes critical because consumers often feel higher transaction risks in cases where they have no substantial connection with the vendor or products they are about to procure. Accordingly, (Baidoun & Salem, 2024).

Trust is a concept from psychology, sociology, and marketing and is affected by uncertainty, possible harm, and lack of control. It may be an attribute or state and is described as being willing to take risks in social contacts. Involved trust, which includes ability, goodwill, and honesty, rests on such assumptions. Marketing studies trust in the relationships of buyer-seller partners and its consequences. (Büttner & Göritz, 2007).The information consumers have at their fingertips today, from product testimonials to branded content, can significantly affect their purchasing decisions (L. Lin & Lu, 2010; Martínez-López et al., 2020; S. Mathur et al., 2022; Racherla et al., 2012). The trustworthiness of the source of information is a great deal in this process (Ibrahim, 2023; Smith, 2014). User-generated content (UGC) and firm-generated content (FGC) are two main sources of information that customers depend on. Previous studies have

shown that consumer confidence in these sources can be beneficial for purchase decision-making (Martínez-López et al., 2020; Permadani & Hartono, 2022).

2.3.1 The relation between user-generated content and perceived trust

User-generated content has become increasingly prevalent on the web, with platforms like Wikipedia, social media, and online forums allowing individuals to contribute and share information (Dickinger, 2011). Traditional credibility constructs like authoritativeness and expertise may be less important when evaluating user-generated content, while factors like trustworthiness, reliability, accuracy, and completeness remain key considerations (Rieh, 2014).The type of online channel and the nature of the search task can impact perceptions of trustworthiness. User-generated content may be viewed as highly trustworthy in terms of integrity, but not necessarily the most informative or authoritative source (Dickinger, 2011). Furthermore, individual differences in personal relevance, online usage, and the alignment of reader and writer perspectives can all influence credibility assessments(A. X. Zhang et al., 2018)More credibility is associated with reviews that are believed to be more credible, and this has the potential to influence consumers. Factors responsible for this include the expertise, reputation, and identity or affiliation transparency of the person who made the comment in question. Influencers who present information

clearly and fluidly(Ibrahim, 2023)Additionally, consumers who have a positive attitude towards user-generated content, such as reviews and recommendations from influencers, are more likely to purchase the products that have been evaluated (Vukmirović et al., 2020).(Vukmirović et al., 2020).

Therefore, we suggest the following hypothesis:

H3: There is a statistically significant relationship between User Generated Content and Perceived trust of user-generated-content.

H4: There is a statistically significant relationship between Perceived trust of user-generated-content and consumers' purchase intention.

H5: Perceived trust of user-generated-content mediates the relationship between User Generated Content and consumers' purchase intention

2.3.2 The relation between firm-generated content and perceived trust

As the rise of social media has increased the necessity for firms to establish a presence on various platforms, the creation and distribution of firm-generated content has become a crucial aspect of marketing strategies (Sander, 2019). Firms must carefully choose this content to engage consumers and positively influence their perceptions of the brand. The trustworthiness of different online channels can have a significant impact on the perceived value and

influence of the content generated by those channels (Dickinger, 2011), In the context of social media, consumers often perceive user-generated content as more credible and trustworthy than traditional advertisements or firm-generated content (Sander, 2019; Vukmirović et al., 2020). This is because consumers view social media influencers and peers as more relatable and authentic, leading to higher levels of trust in the information they share (D. Y. Kim & Kim, 2021) However, the impact of firm-generated content on perceived trust remains an area that requires further investigation.
Therefore, we suggest the following hypothesis:

H15: There is a statistically significant relationship between Firm Generated Content and Perceived trust of Firm-generated-content.

H16: There is a statistically significant relationship between Perceived trust of Firm-generated-content and consumers' purchase intention.

H17: Perceived trust of firm-generated-content mediates the relationship between Firm Generated Content and consumers' purchase intention.

2.4 Perceived usefulness

Perceived usefulness refers to the overall wealth of usefulness in the message or information shared on social media. The virtual, anonymous, open, and weak group relationship among consumers means that identity recognition and acquaintance

introduction cannot establish perceived usefulness. Only through online interaction can sufficient product information resources be obtained. (Geng & Chen, 2021b).How helpful online customer reviews are is a key determinant of how reviews serve the customer decision-making process. The usefulness of reviews mirrors the supposed diagnosticity or worth they bear in different stages of consumers' making choices. Helpful positive reviews tend to be more helpful than helpful negative ones, yet hurtful comments can undermine brand equity and purchase intentions. (Moloi et al., 2022).Changes in social media platforms have caused a complete transformation in how buyers relate to brands and decide what to buy. Recent studies have shown that user-generated content (UGC) and firm-generated content (FGC) on social media can affect consumer purchase behavior (Bello et al., 2021; Roth & Zawadzki, 2018).

2.4.1 The relation between user-generated content and perceived usefulness

As the prevalence of user-generated content continues to grow, it becomes increasingly crucial to understand its impact on perceived usefulness, a key determinant of technology adoption and usage (van der Heijden, 2003).User-generated content can significantly influence consumer attitudes, behaviors, and purchase intentions (Thomas, 2020; V K Shyni, 2022) . User-generated content can provide valuable information, insights, and reviews that help potential users evaluate the functionality and

benefits of a product or service (J. Kim et al., 2012). Additionally, when UGC conveys positive experiences and highlights the value provided by a product or service, it can enhance the perceived usefulness of the offering in the eyes of prospective users (J. Kim et al., 2012). The perceived usefulness of UGC is dependent on the quality dimensions of UGC, including content, design, and technology(J. Kim et al., 2012).The quality of user-generated content, in terms of its informativeness, relevance, and reliability, can significantly impact its perceived usefulness by consumers (J. Kim et al., 2012). Perceived usefulness of user-generated content can affect consumers' attitudes and intentions to purchase online indirectly (Shaikh, 2022). Shoppers are more likely to consider making a purchase if they find the shared social media content helpful and informative (Kusumo et al., 2021). Therefore, we suggest the following hypothesis:

H6: There is a statistically significant relationship between User Generated Content and Perceived usefulness of user-generated-content.

H7: There is a statistically significant relationship between Perceived usefulness of user-generated-content and consumers' purchase intention.

H8: Perceived usefulness of user-generated-content mediates the relationship between User Generated Content and consumers' purchase intention.

2.4.2 The relation between firm-Generated Content and Perceived Usefulness

The perceived usefulness of a brand is a critical aspect of consumer, as it reflects the extent to which consumers believe the brand can fulfill their needs and enhance their overall experience (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2015). Investigating the impact of firm-generated content on perceived usefulness is important, as it can provide valuable insights for marketers on how to create and curate content that is most meaningful and valuable to consumers (Sander, 2019) The rise of social media has increased the necessity for firms to establish a presence on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, and publishing content that is perceived as valuable by consumers is crucial to achieve a firm's advertising goals. (Li et al., 2021)the perceived usefulness of firm generated content, including marketing activities and product information, can have a big impact on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions (Handra, 2022) . Consequently, consumers are more likely to engage with and trust content they feel is useful and valuable, leading to increased sales and brand loyalty in the long run (Kusumo et al., 2021) .Therefore, we suggest the following hypothesis:

H18: There is a statistically significant relationship between Firm Generated Content and Perceived usefulness of firm-generated-content.

H19: There is a statistically significant relationship between Perceived usefulness of firm-generated-content and consumers' purchase intention.

H20: Perceived usefulness of firm-generated-content mediates the relationship between Firm Generated Content and consumers' purchase intention.

2.5 Perceived Value

. Perceived value refers to estimated benefits or risks a consumer may face that are closely connected with his or her purchase intentions (Putra et al., 2022).Perceived value reinforces such factors as usefulness, ease of use, and quality of the website while reducing the effect caused by perceived risk concerning online shopping (Baidoun & Salem, 2024).

Meanwhile, utilitarian and hedonic values of perceived value have a substantial and positive impact on attitude toward online purchases, with the highest impact being from perceived hedonic values on trust and attitude toward online purchases. However, there is no significant relationship between perceived utilitarian value and attitude towards online purchases (Akinbode et al., 2018).User generated content on Instagram covers wide information about customer perception, which can be used to

understand customer perceived value (CPV) for a product or service. CPV is incurred through consumer judgments based upon things like pre-purchase information, contextual cues, and point-of-purchase considerations. Companies must understand what their customers perceive so as to determine how they add value to their products or services. (Adiningtyas & Auliani, 2024). Consumers' perceived value on such platforms influences their intention to buy, which relies in turn on user-generated content like reviews and recommendations as well as firm-generated content such as product descriptions and brand messaging (B. Lin & Shen, 2023) .

2.5.1 The relation between user-generated content and perceived value

User-generated content has become an integral part of the modern marketing landscape, offering both opportunities and challenges for brands (Christodoulides et al., 2012). the significant impact of UGC on consumer behavior and brand perception (Christodoulides et al., 2012; Dr. S. Mathur & Singh, 2021; Thomas, 2020). UGC can have a profound impact on consumer trust and engagement. Consumers often view UGC as a more authentic and trustworthy source of information compared to traditional marketing messages (Christodoulides et al., 2012) This enhanced trust can lead to increased perceived value, as consumers are more likely to believe the claims and experiences shared by their peers (Dr. S. Mathur & Singh, 2021; S. Mathur et al., 2022) Additionally, UGC can foster a sense of community

and social connection, further enhancing the perceived value of a product or service. (Christodoulides et al., 2012; Davcik et al., 2022) Therefore, we suggest the following hypothesis:

H9: There is a statistically significant relationship between User Generated Content and Perceived value of user-generated-content.

H10: There is a statistically significant relationship between Perceived value of user-generated-content and consumers' purchase intention.

H11: Perceived value of user-generated-content mediates the relationship between User Generated Content and consumers' purchase intention.

2.5.2 The relation between firm-Generated Content and Perceived Value

In the age of social media, the landscape of marketing communications has undergone a paradigm shift. Brands that were once tightly controlled by managers are now increasingly shaped by their consumer markets (Christodoulides et al., 2012). The advent of content marketing has emerged as a significant paradigm shift, allowing enterprises to go beyond adding economic value and contribute intellectual assets to the ecosystem of knowledge. (Dr. S. Mathur & Singh, 2021), Firms are increasingly creating content for their social media platforms to connect with their target audience and influence their

perceptions of the (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2015). However, the challenge lies in understanding what consumers perceive as valuable in this content and how to effectively measure it.(Sander, 2019). Consumers' perceptions of valuable firm-generated content will favorably affect their brand awareness and associations. (Cohen, 2018; Sander, 2019; Schivinski et al., 2013; Vukmirović et al., 2020) Therefore, we suggest the following hypothesis:

H21: There is a statistically significant relationship between Firm Generated Content and Perceived value of firm-generated-content.

H22: There is a statistically significant relationship between Perceived value of firm-generated-content and consumers' purchase intention.

H23: Perceived value of firm-generated-content mediates the relationship between Firm Generated Content and consumers' purchase intention.

2.6 Perceived risk

Perceived risk is an uncertainty that is usually unavoidable unless consumers have prior knowledge and experiences to enable them not to make poor decisions. (Bahtar & Muda, 2016).Perceived risk defined as the possibility of loss in achieving a favorable outcome while consumers do online shopping, indicating individuals feel uncertain about the possibility of negative

outcomes in their online purchases (Ariff et al., 2014). Online shopping is often associated with higher levels of risk than shopping at physical stores. Online shopping risk plays an important role in influencing non-online shoppers' willingness to engage in online shopping. (Mpinganjira, 2015). Online shopping has become an integral part of modern consumer behavior, offering convenience, a wide selection of products, and the ability to compare prices across various vendors. However, the perceived risk associated with online transactions remains a significant barrier to widespread adoption (Forsythe & Shi, 2003; Kamalul Ariffin et al., 2018; Olasanmi, 2019; Ye, 2012). Online shopping has become an inseparable element of contemporary customers' habits, being convenient, offering a wide range of products, and having the ability to compare prices across various vendors. Nevertheless, the perceived risk of online transactions remains a strong obstacle to their wide adoption (Forsythe & Shi, 2003; Kamalul Ariffin et al., 2018; Olasanmi, 2019; Ye, 2012) .

2.6.1 The relation between user-generated content and perceived risk

Perceived social risk associated with online purchases can be mitigated by the presence of user-generated content, such as reviews and ratings (Banyen et al., 2018). User-generated content can provide valuable information to consumers, reducing their uncertainty and perceived risk. Similarly, positive purchase experiences that reduce perceived risk can increase the probability

of purchase on the internet (I. Kim, 2007) Furthermore, consumer trust and online risk perceptions have been shown to be important determinants of purchase decision-making in social commerce platforms (Lăzăroiu et al., 2020). Consumers' perceptions of risk, such as convenience risk, monetary risk, functional risk, and physical risk, can have a significant impact on their willingness to make online purchases. (I. Kim, 2007) . User-generated content, such as reviews and ratings, can play a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions of risk in online purchasing (Kamalul Ariffin et al., 2018). Therefore, we suggest the following hypothesis:

H12: There is a statistically significant relationship between User Generated Content and Perceived risk of user-generated-content.

H13: There is a statistically significant relationship between Perceived risk of user-generated-content and consumers' purchase intention.

H14: Perceived risk of user-generated-content mediates the relationship between User Generated Content and consumers' purchase intention.

2.6.2 The relation between firm-generated content and perceived risk

Firms can leverage their online presence to build trust with consumers, which has been shown to mitigate the negative

effects of perceived risk on online purchasing behavior (Harridge- March, 2006). (Huang & Bai, 2021; Kowalczuk et al., 2021) suggest that constantly using price discounts as a promotional strategy can lead consumers to believe the product quality is low or declining. This aligns with the idea that excessive promotions can increase perceived risk (feeling manipulated or tricked by the constant promotions).Therefore, we suggest the following hypothesis:

H24: There is a statistically significant relationship between Firm Generated Content and Perceived risk of firm-generated-content.

H25: There is a statistically significant relationship between Perceived risk of firm-generated-content and consumers' purchase intention.

H26: Perceived risk of firm-generated-content mediates the relationship between Firm Generated Content and consumers' purchase intention.

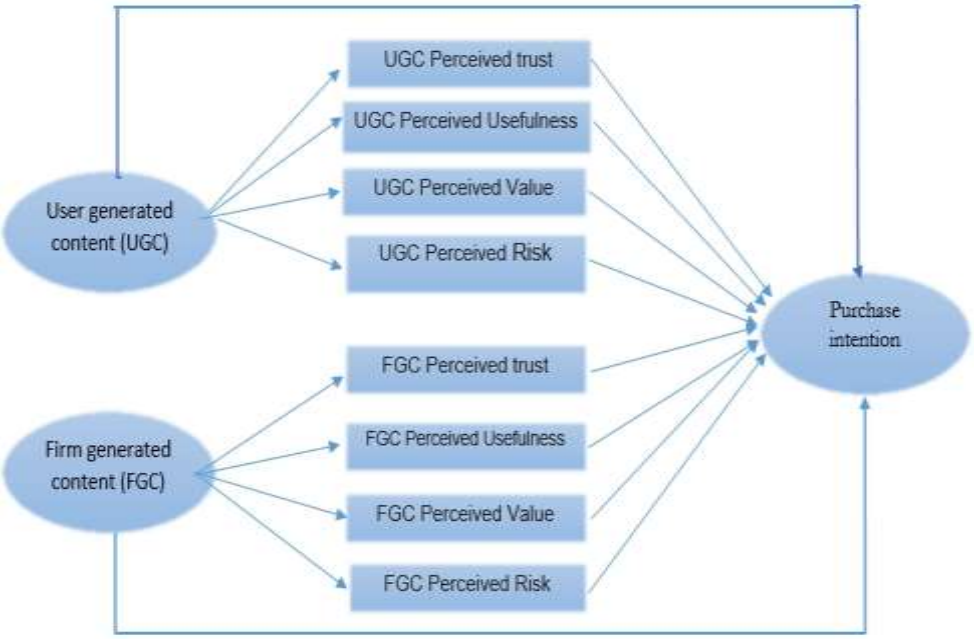
2.7 Purchase intention

The understanding of purchase intention, both in offline and online contexts, has been a topic of significant interest for researchers and marketers alike. Online purchase intention, in particular, has gained increased attention due to the rapid growth of e-commerce and the evolving behavior of consumers (Lim, 2013).Consumers need to not only intend to use the platforms but

also feel confident in obtaining the information they need to complete a purchase (Okoye et al., 2021).Purchase intention is generally defined as the likelihood or probability of a consumer to purchase a product or service (Clarence & Keni, 2022). In the online context, online purchase intention refers to the customer's willingness to make a purchase through a specific website or e-commerce platform. (Okoye et al., 2021; Widodo & Utami, 2021).Purchase intention has been found to be positively correlated with actual buying behavior. (Sarjono et al., 2019). While online purchase transactions may lack physical interaction between the buyer, seller, and payment process, the online purchase intention can still be influenced by various factors, such

as shopping experience, perceived risks, and trust in the e-commerce service provider (Hadining et al., 2020). Online purchase intention has primarily focused on two key

Figure (1): Research Proposed Conceptual Model



perspectives: the technology perspective and the trust perspective. The technology perspective emphasizes the importance of factors such as perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness in shaping consumer attitudes and intentions towards online shopping (Naseri et al., 2020).

3 Research Methodology

Telecommunication business has become an integral part of modern economies that allows instant communication and

information exchange (Medjedel, 2014). The objective of this research is to understand the factors that influence the consumers purchasing decisions of telecom company products and services in Egypt through quantitative survey to analysis the impacts of user-generated-content and firm-generated-content as independent variables on the Purchase intention with the mediating role of Perceived trust, Perceived value, Perceived usefulness and Perceived risk in the telecommunications sector in Egypt.The study is based on quantitative survey questions as the primary data collection method, which is considered one of the best approaches in social sciences research (Popli & Madan, 2013) . The survey questionnaires were administered to a representative sample drawn from the population of interest, which comprises consumers of telecommunications companies in Egypt.

3.1 Research Population and Sample

The population of interest for this research is the consumers of telecommunications companies in Egypt. Due to the lack of accessible records on the total number of mobile telecommunications subscribers and their contact information from the local telecommunications firms in Egypt, the researcher adopted employed a non-probability, convenience, and snowball sampling approach to collect the data(Medjedel, 2014)(Popli & Madan, 2013)(Henry & Quansah, 2013)(Obono, 2016).

3.2 Research Instrument

This article analyzes the impact of user-generated content (UGC) and firm-generated content (FGC) on purchase intention (PI). This study concurrently examines the mediating effects of perceived trust (UGCT), perceived usefulness (UGCU), perceived value (UGCV), and perceived risk (UGCR) derived from user-generated content, as well as the mediating effects of perceived trust (FGCT), perceived usefulness (FGCU), perceived value (FGCV), and perceived risk (FGCR) derived from firm-generated content on the relationship between user-generated content and firm-generated content as independent variables influencing purchase intention.

four predictors for user-generated content were based on (Schivinski et al., 2013), and four predictors for firm-generated content were also derived from the same source. Additionally, four predictors for purchase intention were adapted from the mediating variables were sourced as follows: perceived trust was adapted from (geng & chen, 2021), perceived value was derived from (abbasi et al., 2023), perceived usefulness was also from (geng & chen, 2021), and perceived risk was adapted from (cabeza-ramírez et al., 2022), The questionnaire was distributed by using Google Forms A total of 388 electronic questionnaires responses were collected.

4 Data Analysis

4.1 Sample Description

The research sample encompassed 388 individuals, exhibiting a slightly skewed gender distribution with 59.0% males and 41.0% females. A summary of respondents Demographic characteristics is shown in Table ٢.

Table (2): Demographic characteristics

Total	Age											
٣٨٨	Less 18		18: less 24		24: less 30		30: less 40		40: less 50		50 and Older	
	39	10.1%	83	21.4%	86	22.2%	98	25.3%	73	18.9%	8	2.1%
	Gender											
	Male						Female					
	224		57.9%				163		42.1%			
	Education											
	High School				Bachelor's				Diploma		Postgraduate studies	
	64	16.5%			205	53 %			34	8.8%	84	21.7%
	Operator											
	WE				Vodafone				Orange		Etisalat	
	122	31.5%			134	34.6%			50	12.9%	81	20.9%
	Period											
	Less 1 year				Less 3 years				3: less5			
	12	3.1%			49	12.7%			53	13.7%		
	5: less8				8 and more							
	74	19.1%			199	514%						
	Time											
	Less 1 hour				1: less 2				2: less4			
	19	4.9%			100	25.8%			139	35.9%		
	4: less 6				6 and more							
	74	19.1%			55	14.2%						

4.2 Descriptive statistics

The Summary of descriptive analysis of the study variables and their items appearing in the survey list is presented as follows:

Table (3): Summary of descriptive statistics

Items of	Mean		Std. Deviation		Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Lowest	Highest	Lowest	Highest	Lowest	Highest	Lowest	Highest
UGT	3.1649	3.2010	.87208	.91091	.542	.632	.735	.386
FGT	3.1289	3.1804	.93920	.96438	.401	.520	.378	.611
UGCT	3.1649	3.1907	.83646	.89996	.439	.577	.814	1.292
FGCT	3.1598	3.1701	.81772	.84670	.518	.760	1.008	1.301
UGCV	3.0979	3.1546	.82949	.84254	.689	.762	1.361	1.518
FGCV	3.1495	3.2526	.78968	.83410	.874	.931	1.073	1.781
UGCU	3.2062	3.2371	.81887	.86434	.643	.933	.981	1.252
FGCU	3.2113	3.2371	.91594	.94032	.448	.542	.653	.822
UGCR	2.4794	2.5258	.88752	.95501	.152	.381	.423	.596
FGCR	2.4897	2.5000	.89933	.91075	.330	.386	.670	.781
PI	3.2062	3.2629	1.03583	1.07018	.191	.224	-.036	.159

Table [3] shows that the sample generally agreed with the items pertaining to the variables in the questionnaire. Mean scores ranged from 3.0979 to 3.2629, exceeding the neutral midpoint of 3 and exhibiting a narrow range, suggesting a consistent level of agreement across these variables. Conversely, the sample tended to disagree with the items related to the perceived risk of both user-generated and firm-generated content. Mean scores for these variables fell below the neutral midpoint, ranging from 2.4794 to 2.5258, indicating a consistent level of disagreement. Furthermore, low standard deviation values across all items suggest a relatively low variability in responses. Additionally, skewness and kurtosis

values for each item fell within the acceptable range of -2.58 to 2.58, indicating a normal distribution of responses for each variable.

4.3 Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

An Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted to investigate the underlying factor structure of the measurement items. Utilizing SPSS V25, the Principal Components Method was employed for factor extraction, followed by Varimax rotation for optimal factor interpretability. A minimum factor loading of 0.3 was established as the criterion for item inclusion. Importantly, all items met this criterion, with the lowest factor loading observed for item FGCT3 at 0.503 indicating a strong relationship between the items and their respective factors. The factor loadings for each item are presented in Table [4]

Table (4): Loadings and Reliability

Variable	Items	Loading	Cronbach's alpha (α)
User-generated content	UGC1	.733	.973
	UGC2	.722	
	UGC3	.739	
	UGC4	.722	
Firm-generated content	FGC1	.796	.961
	FGC2	.817	
	FGC3	.818	
	FGC4	.797	

Trust UGC	UGCT1	.650	.933
	UGCT2	.603	
	UGCT3	.594	
Trust FGC	FGCT1	.509	.933
	FGCT2	.584	
	FGCT3	.503	
Value UGC	UGCV1	.648	.897
	UGCV2	.751	
	UGCV3	.725	
Value FGC	FGCV1	.787	.913
	FGCV2	.814	
	FGCV3	.800	
Usefulness UGC	UGCU1	.721	.927
	UGCU2	.704	
	UGCU3	.642	
Usefulness FGC	FGCU1	.736	.970
	FGCU2	.715	
	FGCU3	.733	
Risk UGC	UGCR1	.822	.925
	UGCR2	.754	
	UGCR3	.787	
Risk FGC	FGCR1	.766	.952
	FGCR2	.790	
	FGCR3	.818	
Purchase intention	PI1	.771	.975
	PI2	.799	
	PI3	.782	
	PI4	.811	

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was found to be .932, indicating that the data was suitable for factor analysis. This value, according to (Kaiser & Rice, 1974), suggests that the proportion of variance among variables that might be common variance is high, making factor analysis

appropriate. Furthermore, Bartlett's test of sphericity yielded a statistically significant result ($\chi^2 = 20169.511$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix, thus supporting the suitability of the data for factor analysis.

4.4 Reliability Analysis:

Cronbach's alpha (α) was employed to evaluate the internal consistency of the scale using SPSS V25 software. As detailed in Table [4]. , all variables demonstrated both satisfactory reliability ($\alpha > 0.5$) according to (Jum C. Nunnally, 1978) and strong reliability ($\alpha > 0.7$) based on the criteria established by (Ketchen, 2006)

4.5 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

A Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted utilizing AMOS v26 to assess and refine the measurement model. The study employed a first-order factor model, wherein each study variable (User-Generated Content (UGC), Firm-Generated Content (FGC), Trust in UGC (UGCT), Trust in FGC (FGCT), Perceived Value of UGC (UCCV), Perceived Value of FGC (FCCV), Perceived Usefulness of UGC (UGCU), Perceived Usefulness of FGC (UGCF), Perceived Risk of UGC (UGCR), Perceived Risk of FGC (FGCR), and Purchase Intention (PI)) was operationalized as a first-order latent construct measured by its respective observed indicators (items).

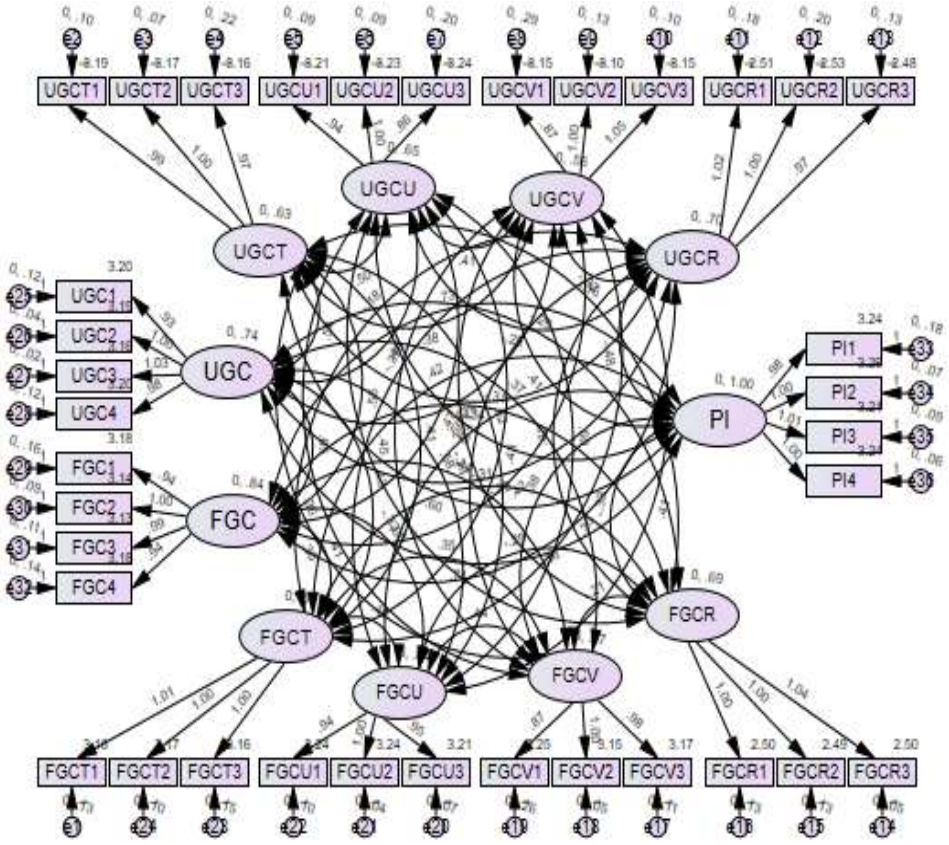


Figure (2): Start of the CFA

The initial unadjusted first-order confirmatory factor analysis of the measurement model yielded

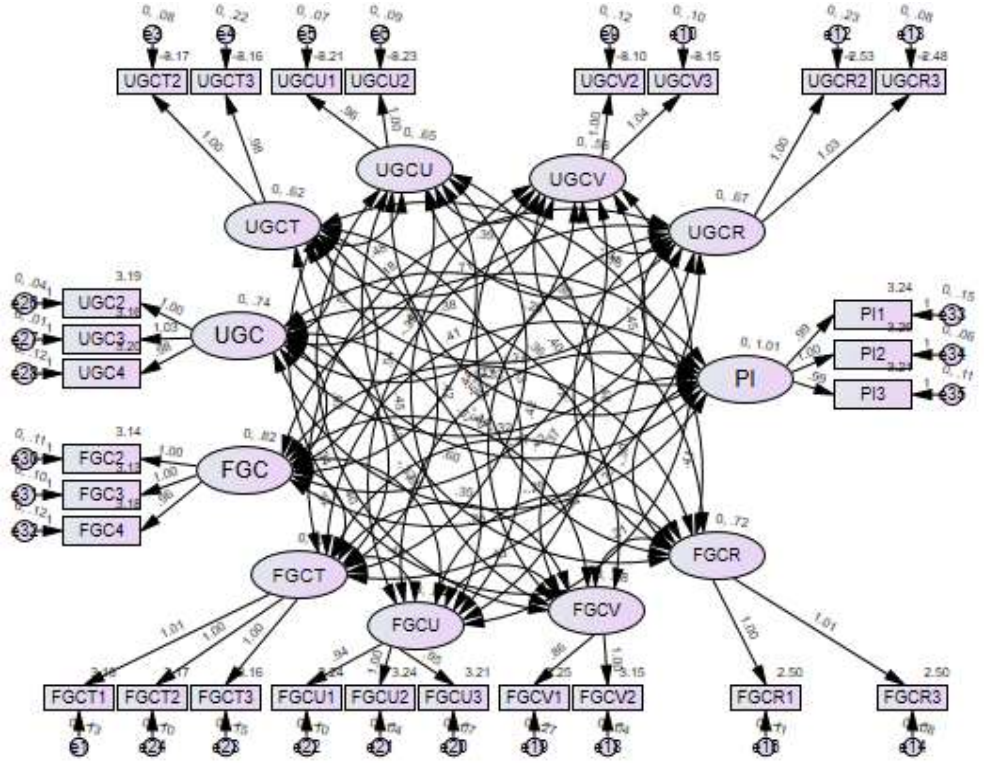
a statistically significant chi-square statistic (CMIN/DF = 4.863, DF = 539, p = 0.00). However, fit indices did not meet conventional thresholds for acceptable model fit based on the guidelines of (Browne & Cudeck, 1992; Hu & Bentler, 1999).

Table (5): Model Modifications and Fit Measures

Model Modifications	PCMIN/D	NFI	RFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
	< 3 or <5	≥ 0.9	≥ 0.9	≥ 0.9	≥ 0.9	≥ 0.9	< 0.08
NO modifications	4.863	.874	.853	.898	.880	.897	.100
eliminating FGC1	4.728	.881	.860	.904	.886	.903	.098
+ eliminating UGC1	4.707	.884	.862	.907	.888	.906	.098
+ eliminating PI4	4.562	.889	.866	.911	.893	.910	.096
+ eliminating UGCU3	4.384	.897	.875	.918	.901	.918	.094
+ eliminating UGCV1	4.068	.908	.888	.929	.913	.929	.089
+ eliminating FGCR2	4.015	.913	.891	.933	.916	.933	.088
+ eliminating FGCV3	3.645	.923	.903	.943	.928	.943	.083
+ eliminating UGCT1	3.532	.928	.908	.947	.932	.947	.081
+ eliminating UGCR1	3.427	.934	.913	.952	.937	.952	.079

Notes: CMIN/DF = discrepancy divided by degree of freedom; CFI = Comparative Fit Index; IFI = Incremental Fit Index; NFI = Normed Fit Index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis coefficient; RFI = Relative Fit Index; RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation

To improve model fit, modification indices were consulted, and a series of adjustments were implemented (detailed in Table [5]. These modifications primarily involved removing specific items. Following these refinements, the revised model achieved satisfactory fit indices (CMIN/DF = 3.427, CFI = 0.952, IFI = 0. 952, NFI = 0.934, TLI = 0.937, RFI = 0.913, and RMSEA = 0.079).



4.6 Convergent Validity and Discriminant Validity

(Ketchen, 2006) reported that Composite Reliability (CR) is an indicator of internal consistency, it can be used in addition to Cronbach's Alpha to assess reliability of a measurement scale. (David de Vaus, 2002) suggested that Cronbach's Alpha and CR should both be equal to or greater than 0.70 for acceptable reliability of research variables.

Table (6): Indicators of internal consistency and validity

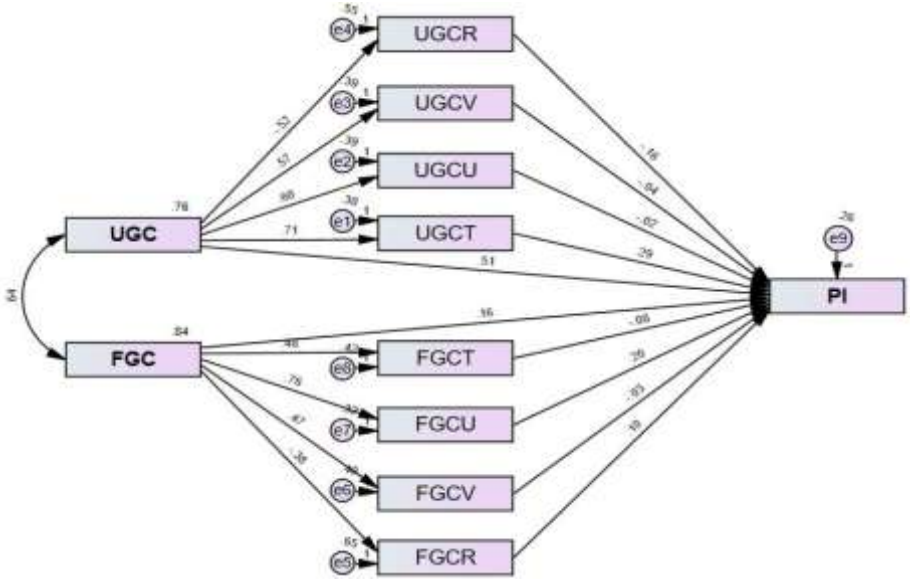
	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	UGCT	UGCU	UGCV	UGCR	FGCR	FGCV	FGCU	FGCT	UGC	FGC	PI
UGCT	0.895	0.811	0.637	0.915	**0.900**										
UGCU	0.937	0.881	0.575	0.937	0.758***	**0.939**									
UGCV	0.915	0.844	0.625	0.917	0.638***	0.648***	**0.919**								
UGCR	0.901	0.820	0.344	0.921	-0.505***	-0.395***	-0.210***	**0.906**							
FGCR	0.940	0.887	0.344	0.942	-0.508***	-0.462***	-0.357***	0.587***	**0.942**						
FGCV	0.872	0.775	0.625	0.940	0.533***	0.551***	0.790***	-0.186***	-0.320***	**0.880**					
FGCU	0.970	0.916	0.631	0.975	0.726***	0.646***	0.594***	-0.473***	-0.370***	0.619***	**0.957**				
FGCT	0.933	0.822	0.496	0.934	0.704***	0.682***	0.617***	-0.284***	-0.493***	0.600***	0.644***	**0.907**			
UGC	0.974	0.927	0.663	0.989	0.798***	0.657***	0.648***	-0.526***	-0.409***	0.553***	0.719***	0.663***	**0.963**		
FGC	0.957	0.880	0.661	0.957	0.759***	0.609***	0.618***	-0.457***	-0.409***	0.636***	0.794***	0.592***	0.813***	**0.938**	
PI	0.965	0.901	0.663	0.969	0.763***	0.587***	0.530***	-0.552***	-0.357***	0.484***	0.731***	0.546***	0.814***	0.785***	**0.949**

Source: prepared by the researcher

Table [6] showed that, all Variables' CR values were above 0.70, and their Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values were higher than 0.50 and less than (CR), which is in line with the recommendations of (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Ketchen, 2006). This indicates that the convergent validity of all constructs was satisfactory.According to (Hair et al., 2017), discriminant validity can be achieved when the square root of the Average Variance Extracted for each variable was greater than its correlation with other variables. Table [6] presents the results related to discriminant validity for all constructs. In each model, the square root of AVE values for each variable is higher than

correlations between the variable and other variables. This confirms that all constructs used in the study are unique and distinctive, meeting (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) criteria for acceptable validity. Overall, these results indicated that validity of these variables were acceptable.

Figure (4): Path analysis



4.7 Hypothesis testing

Based on the results of confirmatory factor analysis, the variables were computed and then path analysis was conducted Figure (4) to test the hypothesized relationships. AMOS v26 software was used for all analyses and results are summarized in Table [7].. This method was chosen due to its statistical efficiency and comprehensive ability to evaluate relationships (Hair et al., 2017)

Table (7): Results of Hypothesis testing

H. No	Path	Estimate	P	Remarks
H1	User Generated Content → purchase intention	0.511	. ***	Supported
H2	Firm Generated Content → purchase intention	0.164	0.013	Supported
H3	User Generated Content → trust UGC	0.707	***	Supported
H4	trust UGC → purchase intention	0.292	***	Supported
H5	User Generated Content → trust UGC → purchase intention	0.207	0.004	Supported
H6	User Generated Content → usefulness UGC	0.601	***	Supported
H7	usefulness UGC → purchase intention	-0.019	0.645	Not Supported
H8	User Generated Content → usefulness UGC → purchase intention	-0.012	0.771	Not Supported
H9	User Generated Content → value UGC	0.572	***	Supported
H10	value UGC → purchase intention	-0.041	0.318	Not Supported
H11	User Generated Content → value UGC → purchase intention	-0.024	0.544	Not Supported
H12	User Generated Content → risk UGC	-0.525	***	Supported
H13	risk UGC → purchase intention	-0.156	***	Supported
H14	User Generated Content → risk UGC → purchase intention	0.082	0.003	Supported

H15	Firm Generated Content → trust FGC	0.481	***	Supported
H16	trust FGC → purchase intention	-0.083	0.139	Not Supported
H17	Firm Generated Content → trust FGC → purchase intention	-0.04	0.071	Not Supported
H18	Firm Generated Content → usefulness FGC	0.76	***	Supported
H19	usefulness FGC → purchase intention	0.199	***	Supported
H20	Firm Generated Content → usefulness FGC → purchase intention	0.151	0.009	Supported
H21	Firm Generated Content → value FGC	0.466	***	Supported
H22	value FGC → purchase intention	-0.029	0.49	Not Supported
H23	Firm Generated Content → value FGC → purchase intention	-0.013	0.754	Not Supported
H24	Firm Generated Content → risk FGC	-0.377	***	Supported
H25	risk FGC → purchase intention	0.099	0.082	Not Supported
H26	Firm Generated Content → risk FGC → purchase intention	-0.037	0.057	Not Supported

5 Discussion and Conclusion, Practical Implications, Limitation and Recommendation for future

5.1 Discussion and Conclusion

User-Generated Content (UGC) significantly influences consumer purchase intention in the telecommunications sector, including customer reviews, authentic testimonials, and shared user experiences, significantly enhances trust, which in turn positively influences purchase intention. However, UGC's perceived usefulness and value do not significantly influence purchase intention, suggesting that these perceptions alone are insufficient to drive purchase behavior in Egypt's telecom sector. UGC also negatively impacts perceived risk, reducing purchase intention.

Firm-Generated Content (FGC) also positively influences purchase intention, but its impact is smaller than UGC. FGC significantly enhances trust, but trust does not significantly influence purchase intention. FGC significantly influences perceived usefulness, which positively impacts purchase intention, and positively influences perceived value. However, neither perceived value nor risk significantly affect purchase intention, suggesting these factors are less relevant mediators for FGC in this context.

5.2 Practical Implications

By encouraging genuine user-generated content (UGC) and user-generated content (FGC), the study indicates Egyptian telecom companies can improve their marketing tactics and customer involvement to foster confidence and lower perceived risk. Content that is educational and useful, such tutorials and FAQs, should be produced by them in line with consumer need to inspire buying desire. Strategically combining UGC and FGC will improve credibility and involvement. Companies should also emphasize risk management, stressing warranties, return policies, and outstanding customer service. Dealing with unfavorable comments and reviews shows openness and dedication to client satisfaction. Consumer interactions can be tracked using data analytics, which can then be utilized to modify material plans to maximum impact. Telecom firms in Egypt may use this strategy to use UGC and FGC to increase consumer buying intents and promote expansion in a competitive environment.

5.3 Limitation:

The research focused solely on the telecommunications sector in Egypt, and the findings may not be directly generalizable to other industries or geographic regions. This study is based on self-reported data collected through a questionnaire survey, which may be subject to potential biases associated with that research method. The self-reported nature of the data should be considered as a limitation, as respondents' answers may be influenced by factors such as social desirability, recall errors, or misunderstandings. This may result in inaccurate or incomplete information being provided.

5.4 Future Research Recommendations

Future research that addresses this limitation will be crucial in advancing the understanding of the relationship between UGC, FGC, and purchase intention. This might include thorough interviews, observational data verification, and statistical analysis methods. Combining several data sources and approaches can improve the strength of findings. Comparative research in the Middle East and North Africa can highlight cultural and contextual elements affecting UGC and FGC dynamics. Studying platform features and longitudinal data can help one understand how UGC and FGC change consumer purchasing intents and long-term business implications.

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