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Analysis of repurchase intention in online channels among the Centennial generation: The impact of satisfaction, website reputation, and word of mouth (WOM)

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ABSTRACT

Satisfaction, website reputation, and word of mouth (WOM) are widely recognised as key drivers of consumer behaviour in digital commerce; however, their combined effects on repurchase intention remain underexplored, particularly among young consumers in emerging markets. This study addresses this gap by examining the direct and mediated relationships among these constructs in the context of Centennial consumers in Colombia. Using a quantitative approach and structural equation modelling (SEM), data were collected from 283 respondents. The findings reveal a mediated mechanism through which satisfaction and website reputation jointly influence repurchase intention, highlighting satisfaction as a central driver of both WOM and repeat purchase behaviour, while website reputation exerts only indirect effects. Overall, the results suggest that digital loyalty among Centennial consumers is primarily shaped by experiential and socially mediated cues, rather than by institutional signals alone.

1. Introduction

E-commerce has experienced sustained growth worldwide. In 2023, global online sales generated approximately USD 5.8 trillion, an increase of over USD 400 billion compared to the previous year, with projections exceeding USD 8 trillion by 2027 (Orús, 2024). In Latin America, online retail sales reached USD 104 billion in 2022, representing a 22.4% increase from 2021, with Brazil and Mexico leading the market, followed by Argentina, Peru, and Colombia (Orús, 2024). In Colombia, online sales amounted to COP 55.17 trillion (approximately USD 1.373 billion) in 2022, reflecting a 38.4% growth (Cámara Colombiana de Comercio Electrónico [CCCE], 2023). This expansion has been partly driven by the Centennial generation—individuals born between 1997 and 2012—who, due to their familiarity with digital technologies, have assumed a central role in the digital ecosystem (Demirbaş et al., 2022; Patro, 2023). However, despite this sustained growth and the strategic relevance of these consumers, firms continue to face persistent

challenges in fostering loyalty in online markets characterised by high uncertainty, frequent platform switching, and a strong reliance on social validation mechanisms (Gulati et al., 2023).

Although prior research has increasingly examined individual drivers of online loyalty, existing studies have predominantly analysed satisfaction, website reputation, and word of mouth (WOM) as separate constructs. Consequently, prevailing models remain theoretically insufficient to explain how digitally native consumers form repurchase intentions in digital environments characterised by information asymmetry and reputational uncertainty. This fragmented perspective limits understanding of how these factors interact, particularly in contexts marked by heightened consumer scepticism. As a result, prior models have struggled to explain why certain drivers—such as website reputation—tend to lose direct explanatory power once experiential and social mechanisms are considered, while others—such as satisfaction and WOM—operate mainly through indirect or conditional pathways (Blut, 2016; Ha et al., 2010; Jin et al., 2008; Patro, 2023). Accordingly, a

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clear theoretical gap remains in modelling the joint and mediating effects of these variables, especially among young digital natives such as Centennial consumers.

This challenge is heightened by the high expectations of consumers regarding the shopping experience and service personalisation (Theodorakopoulos & Theodoropoulou, 2024). For Centennial consumers, whose decision-making processes are strongly shaped by social validation, platform credibility, and post-purchase experience sharing, traditional linear explanations of loyalty are theoretically insufficient. Unlike previous generations, their loyalty to a digital platform is not solely built on traditional factors such as price or product availability but also depends on variables such as perceived satisfaction, website reputation, and word of mouth (WOM) (Phan-Tan, 2024; Yang et al., 2024), among others. Satisfaction, understood as the alignment between consumer expectations and their experience, is a key determinant of repurchase intention, as it fosters trust and strengthens the consumer-platform relationship (Patro, 2023; Rao & Patro, 2017). Simultaneously, electronic word of mouth (eWOM) has taken on a prominent role in this generation's decision-making process, as online reviews and shared opinions significantly influence their purchasing choices (Ha et al., 2010; Katta & Patro, 2016, 2020). Accordingly, the managerial challenge extends beyond delivering satisfactory experiences to actively managing platform reputation and social perception in order to foster consumer loyalty.

Website reputation also plays a relevant role in shaping repurchase intention by reinforcing consumer trust and reducing perceived uncertainty in digital environments (Ahmad et al., 2017; Tandon et al., 2020). A strong reputation enhances perceived credibility and mitigates the risk associated with online purchases, which is particularly salient for Centennial consumers, known for their selectivity in digital commerce (Qalati et al., 2021; Sharma & Lijuan, 2015). However, despite growing interest in these variables, existing literature continues to examine satisfaction, website reputation, and WOM largely in isolation, limiting understanding of their joint and mediated effects on repurchase intention—especially among Centennial consumers. In particular, the mediating role of WOM between reputation, satisfaction, and repurchase intention remains insufficiently explored, especially in emerging digital markets such as Latin America (Demirbaş et al., 2022; Jin et al., 2008; Patro, 2023). Furthermore, most empirical evidence has been generated in economic and cultural contexts different from Latin America, underscoring the need to validate these relationships in markets such as Colombia, where platform trust and perceived risk may operate differently (Bailey et al., 2022; Correa et al., 2022).

To address a central theoretical gap in digital loyalty research—and, secondarily, a contextual gap related to emerging markets—this study investigates the influence of consumer satisfaction, website reputation, and word of mouth (WOM) on repurchase intention in online channels among Centennial consumers in Colombia. The theoretical contribution lies in modelling the joint and mediating effects of these three variables—typically studied in isolation—within a unified framework of digital loyalty formation, an approach increasingly emphasised in recent research on digital consumer behaviour and loyalty formation in online contexts (Amado-Mateus et al., 2025). Contextually, the study focuses on an underrepresented group in e-commerce research: Centennial consumers in emerging markets. In the Colombian digital landscape—characterised by persistent trust issues, regulatory asymmetries, and high dependence on social media influence—these variables acquire particular relevance. Accordingly, this study addresses the following research question: how do customer satisfaction, website reputation, and WOM interact to influence repurchase intention in online channels among Centennial consumers in Colombia?

Unlike previous studies that have focused on consumers in developed markets or examined these predictors in isolation, this research simultaneously explores their interrelations within an emerging economy and a digitally native generational cohort. By adopting an integrative perspective, the study moves beyond linear and additive explanations of

loyalty, offering a more nuanced understanding of how satisfaction, reputation, and social influence jointly shape repurchase intention in digital contexts. Addressing these dynamics contributes not only to advancing theory but also to guiding more effective loyalty-building strategies in regions where digital transformation is unevenly adopted. The findings aim to provide actionable insights for scholars and marketing professionals, offering evidence-based strategies to improve retention and loyalty among young digital consumers in Colombia's rapidly evolving online retail landscape (Blut, 2016).

The structure of the article is as follows: first, a theoretical framework is presented to explore satisfaction, website reputation, and WOM as determinants of repurchase intention. This is followed by the methodology, results, and a discussion of findings considering the existing literature. The article concludes with practical implications, limitations, and recommendations for future research in this field.

1.1. Research objectives

1.1.1. General Objective

To explain the structure of digital loyalty formation by examining the joint and mediated effects of customer satisfaction, website reputation, and electronic word of mouth (WOM) on repurchase intention in digital channels among Centennial consumers in Colombia.

1.1.2. Specific objectives

- To evaluate the impact of customer satisfaction on WOM generation and repurchase intention in e-commerce environments.
- To analyse the relationship between website reputation, satisfaction, WOM, and repurchase intention.
- To determine the mediating role of WOM in the relationship between satisfaction and repurchase intention.
- To examine the mediating effect of satisfaction and WOM in the relationship between website reputation and repurchase intention.

Building on the identified theoretical and contextual gaps, this study adopts an integrative perspective to examine the direct and indirect relationships among satisfaction, website reputation, WOM, and repurchase intention. Accordingly, a set of hypotheses is formulated to empirically test the proposed conceptual framework, with particular attention to the mediating roles of satisfaction and WOM in the formation of repurchase intention in digital environments.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. E-commerce and the Centennial generation

E-commerce has experienced accelerated growth in recent years, driven by advancements in digital technology and the transformation of consumer habits. This phenomenon has been particularly significant in emerging markets due to the increasing internet penetration and widespread access to mobile devices, which have facilitated the commercialisation of products and services through digital platforms (Patel, n.d.). Integrating digital marketing and content marketing has been key to the adoption of e-commerce, as it allows businesses to connect with consumers through personalised strategies and relevant content (Geng et al., 2020). In this context, online purchase intention has been explained through various models, including the Value-based Adoption Model (VAM), which conceptualises consumer decisions as the outcome of a trade-off between perceived benefits—such as satisfaction and convenience—and perceived sacrifices, highlighting the need to examine how these evaluations interact with reputational and social signals in digital environments (Kim et al., 2007).

Studies on digital consumer behaviour have shown that accessibility, trust, and service quality significantly influence online purchasing decisions. Previous experiences and perceived risk are key determinants of

consumers' willingness to purchase goods and services through digital platforms (Coward & Goldsmith, 2007; Hamit-Turan, 2012). Platform trust and the availability of clear and detailed information have been identified as fundamental elements in building long-term relationships with digital consumers (Pappas, 2016; Wang et al., 2013). Customer satisfaction in digital environments depends not only on platform usability but also on how effectively firms manage uncertainty, trust, and information quality, reinforcing satisfaction as a key evaluative mechanism that interacts with reputational cues and peer-generated information in shaping subsequent behavioural intentions (Sharma & Lijuan, 2015).

Moreover, the development of e-commerce has been strongly influenced by the participation of the Centennial generation, a group of consumers who have grown up in a digitalised environment and whose purchasing behaviour—shaped by immediacy, interactivity, and trust in peer content—differs significantly from previous cohorts. Understanding these distinctive traits is crucial for interpreting how Centennials form repurchase intentions in digital environments characterised by high information availability, reputational uncertainty, and strong reliance on peer-generated content. Unlike millennials, who gradually adapted to technology, Centennials have interacted with digital environments from an early age, fostering a preference for immediacy and personalisation in their consumption experiences (Lomelin et al., 2022).

Their inclination toward visual and practical content is one of their main characteristics, as they show greater interest in short videos, tutorials, and interactive images compared to lengthy texts (Flores et al., 2023). Trust in information obtained through Google or other search engines and in user reviews has redefined how they make purchasing decisions, prioritising transparency and security in digital transactions (Lomelin et al., 2022). Rather than prioritising transaction frequency, Centennials tend to value differentiated experiences and products aligned with sustainability and social responsibility, reinforcing the importance of post-purchase evaluations and social validation processes in their loyalty formation (Thangavel et al., 2022).

Omnichannel strategies and brand consistency on social media also influence digital consumption in this generation. The multitude of digital platforms where Centennials interact has led them to expect businesses to maintain an active and coherent presence across their digital channels (Flores et al., 2023). Social media interaction plays a central role in their shopping experience, as peer recommendations and online reviews operate as primary validation mechanisms that shape both satisfaction evaluations and repurchase-related decisions more strongly than traditional advertising (Cabeza-Ramírez et al., 2023). This need for immediacy and simplicity has forced businesses to design optimised digital platforms that ensure an intuitive and efficient navigation process, allowing Centennials to access products and services without technological barriers that could affect their user experience (Sequeira, 2023).

However, e-commerce faces several challenges when targeting this generation, whose high expectations regarding service and accessibility have necessitated innovative strategies. Adapting to a constantly changing digital environment is one of the main challenges for businesses, which must ensure that their online presence remains dynamic and aligned with new market trends (Lomelin et al., 2022). The availability of clear and detailed information has been identified as a key element in Centennials' decision-making process, implying that businesses must optimise the presentation of their products and services to ensure they are easily understandable and appealing (Flores et al., 2023). Transparency and authenticity have become essential in building trust with this generation, characterised by a critical and informed approach to the brands and products they consume (Sequeira, 2023). Competition on specific digital platforms also presents a challenge. Centennials have demonstrated a preference for specific shopping sites and social media networks, requiring businesses to design differentiated strategies to capture their attention and foster loyalty.

In this context, innovation and creativity have become crucial factors

in connecting with the Centennial generation and standing out in a highly competitive market. Adapting content to the formats preferred by these consumers, such as short videos and interactive content, has proven to be an effective strategy for generating brand engagement and trust (Nguyen et al., 2024). The use of advanced digital tools, such as AI-based personalisation and immersive experiences, represents an opportunity to enhance the online shopping experience and offer differentiated value propositions (Bruni et al., 2024). The rapid evolution of technology and changing consumer expectations have created an environment in which repurchase intention among Centennial consumers emerges from the interaction of experiential evaluations, reputational signals, and socially mediated information rather than from isolated drivers. This configuration challenges linear explanations of digital loyalty and supports the need for integrative models that account for mediated and interdependent effects among key determinants (Flores et al., 2023).

Taken together, these characteristics suggest that repurchase intention among Centennial consumers is primarily shaped by three interrelated mechanisms rather than by isolated transactional drivers. First, word of mouth (WOM) functions as a central mechanism of social validation, as peer-generated content plays a decisive role in reducing uncertainty and legitimising purchase decisions. Second, website reputation operates as a key signal of credibility and trustworthiness in digital environments characterised by high information asymmetry. Third, satisfaction reflects the post-purchase evaluative process through which experiential expectations are confirmed or disconfirmed. The interaction among these mechanisms provides a theoretically grounded explanation of digital loyalty formation for this generational cohort, thereby justifying the relevance of an integrated model that examines their joint and mediated effects.

2.2. Satisfaction and word of mouth (WOM)

Consumer satisfaction, defined as the comparison between consumers' prior expectations and their actual shopping experience, plays a central role in generating WOM in e-commerce (Khristianto, 2012; Parasuraman et al., 2005). Key dimensions such as website accessibility, perceived security, and service quality shape satisfaction, which in turn influences loyalty and consumers' propensity to share online reviews (Demirbaş et al., 2022; Patro, 2023; Zeithaml et al., 2002). Elements like website aesthetics, delivery reliability, and platform performance are especially relevant in shaping post-purchase communication in digital environments.

This link between satisfaction and WOM is particularly significant among Centennial consumers, who actively rely on others' experiences and tend to produce content when satisfied with their purchases (Gulati et al., 2023; Ha et al., 2010; Katta & Patro, 2020). Research shows that platform trust, navigation ease, and transaction safety increase the likelihood of online recommendation behavior in this group (Fei & Liat, 2013; Rao & Patro, 2017). Satisfaction thus enhances both the individual experience and collective perception of digital platforms by amplifying WOM and reinforcing platform reputation across networks.

H1. Satisfaction has a positive impact on WOM among Centennial generation consumers.

2.3. Satisfaction, repurchase intention, and word of mouth (WOM)

Positive experiences on digital platforms frequently lead consumers to develop preferences for specific channels and consider future repurchases. This intention is not solely the outcome of a completed transaction but rather a process shaped by trust, usability, and satisfaction (Nuralam et al., 2024). In e-commerce, repurchase intention is reinforced when users perceive that the platform meets their expectations regarding security, efficiency, and service quality (Yang et al., 2024). Website usability, clarity of information, and reliability in

delivery have been consistently identified as critical elements that foster satisfaction and, in turn, increase the likelihood of returning customers (Blut, 2016; Savastano et al., 2024). Moreover, recent studies show that shopping experience significantly influences consumer loyalty, especially among Centennials, who are particularly responsive to service quality and transactional simplicity (Demirbaş et al., 2022; Patro, 2023).

Yet, repurchase decisions rarely occur in isolation. In digital contexts where social validation is fundamental, WOM emerges as a pivotal mechanism—not only as a direct influence but also as a mediator that magnifies satisfaction's impact (Phan-Tan, 2024). Centennials, who habitually rely on peer feedback, are influenced by online reviews and simultaneously engage in WOM when their experience is positive (Ha et al., 2010; Katta & Patro, 2020). In this sense, satisfaction contributes not only to individual loyalty but also to reputational growth, enhancing repurchase likelihood (Gulati et al., 2023). Trust in peer opinions reinforces personal decisions while shaping those of others, generating a feedback loop where WOM fuels both individual and collective consumer loyalty—particularly among digitally native cohorts (Patro, 2023; Rao & Patro, 2017).

H2. Satisfaction positively impacts repurchase intention in online channels among Centennial generation consumers.

H2a. The effect of satisfaction on repurchase intention in online channels is positively mediated by WOM among Centennial generation consumers.

H3. WOM positively impacts repurchase intention in online channels among Centennial generation consumers.

2.4. Website reputation, satisfaction, repurchase intention, and word of mouth (WOM)

Website reputation is a critical element shaping consumer perceptions of reliability and quality in digital commerce. Built upon prior user experiences, transactional transparency, and perceived service quality, a strong reputation directly enhances satisfaction (Flavián & Gurrea, 2008; Hacek, 2017). Consumers tend to associate well-reputed platforms with reduced risk, greater trust, and fulfilment of expectations, leading to more satisfying purchase experiences (Gulati et al., 2023; Olaleye et al., 2018). Key contributors to a strong reputation—such as electronic service quality, aesthetic design, information clarity, and navigability—also improve consumer satisfaction in online settings (Jin et al., 2008; Zeithaml et al., 2002). Among Centennial consumers, who highly value brand perception and digital reliability, website reputation is especially salient as a predictor of satisfaction experience (Ahmad et al., 2017; Demirbaş et al., 2022).

Beyond satisfaction, website reputation also plays a pivotal role in influencing repurchase intention. A platform viewed as reputable promotes trust and perceived value, which encourages consumers to return (Holloway & Beatty, 2008; Schmidt et al., 2008). However, this relationship is often mediated by satisfaction and WOM, as consumers seek validation from peers and prior experiences before making a repeat purchase (Blut, 2016; Patro, 2023). In this context, a reputable website enhances satisfaction, which in turn reinforces repurchase intention—either directly or through peer-generated content such as WOM (Ha et al., 2010; Parasuraman et al., 2005).

Centennial consumers expect consistency between a platform's digital reputation and their actual experiences. Reputation thus serves not only as a quality signal but also as a social validation mechanism in the decision-making process (Gulati et al., 2023; Katta & Patro, 2020). Furthermore, a reputable website stimulates positive WOM: consumers are more likely to share favourable experiences when they perceive the platform as trustworthy and responsive to their expectations (Phan-Tan, 2024; Rita et al., 2019). This feedback loop strengthens platform credibility and appeal, attracting new users (Rao & Patro, 2017; Savastano et al., 2024). For digitally engaged cohorts like Centennials, such

dynamics are particularly influential: trust in user reviews and willingness to contribute content themselves strengthen the platform's positioning (Nuralam et al., 2024; Yang et al., 2024). Ultimately, website reputation, satisfaction, and WOM form an interconnected cycle that amplifies customer loyalty and platform competitiveness in e-commerce (Demirbaş et al., 2022; Ha et al., 2010).

H4. Website reputation positively impacts satisfaction among Centennial generation consumers.

H4a. The effect of website reputation on repurchase intention in online channels is positively mediated by satisfaction and WOM among Centennial generation consumers.

H4b. The effect of website reputation on repurchase intention in online channels is positively mediated by WOM among Centennial generation consumers.

H4c. The effect of website reputation on repurchase intention in online channels is positively mediated by satisfaction among Centennial generation consumers.

H5. Website reputation positively impacts WOM among Centennial generation consumers.

H6. Website reputation positively impacts repurchase intention in online channels among Centennial generation consumers.

The formulation of the hypotheses presented above is directly aligned with the specific research objectives of this study. To enhance clarity and traceability, Table 1 presents a synthesis of the correspondence between each objective and its associated hypotheses, illustrating the logical coherence between the conceptual framework and the empirical model.

Together, these hypotheses are derived from the general objective of the study, which seeks to analyse how satisfaction, website reputation, and WOM influence repurchase intention among Centennial consumers in digital environments.

2.5. Proposed model

The theoretical framework presented provides the basis for developing a model in which website reputation, consumer satisfaction, word of mouth (WOM), and repurchase intention interact as key determinants of purchasing behaviour in digital channels. The literature review shows that website reputation influences both satisfaction and repurchase intention and that WOM may serve as a mediating mechanism between them. Additionally, the role of WOM is highlighted as a critical mechanism for validating consumer experiences, impacting both satisfaction and repurchase intention, particularly among the Centennial generation. Fig. 1 summarises these theoretical relationships, providing a foundation for the empirical validation of the proposed model and enabling a more precise understanding of the factors influencing customer retention and repurchase behaviour in e-commerce.

Table 1
Alignment between research objectives and hypotheses.

Research Objective	Associated Hypotheses
To evaluate the impact of customer satisfaction on WOM generation and repurchase intention in e-commerce environments.	H1, H2, H3
To analyse the relationship between website reputation, satisfaction, WOM, and repurchase intention.	H4, H5, H6
To determine the mediating role of WOM in the relationship between satisfaction and repurchase intention.	H2a
To examine the mediating effect of satisfaction and WOM in the relationship between website reputation and repurchase intention.	H4a, H4b, H4c

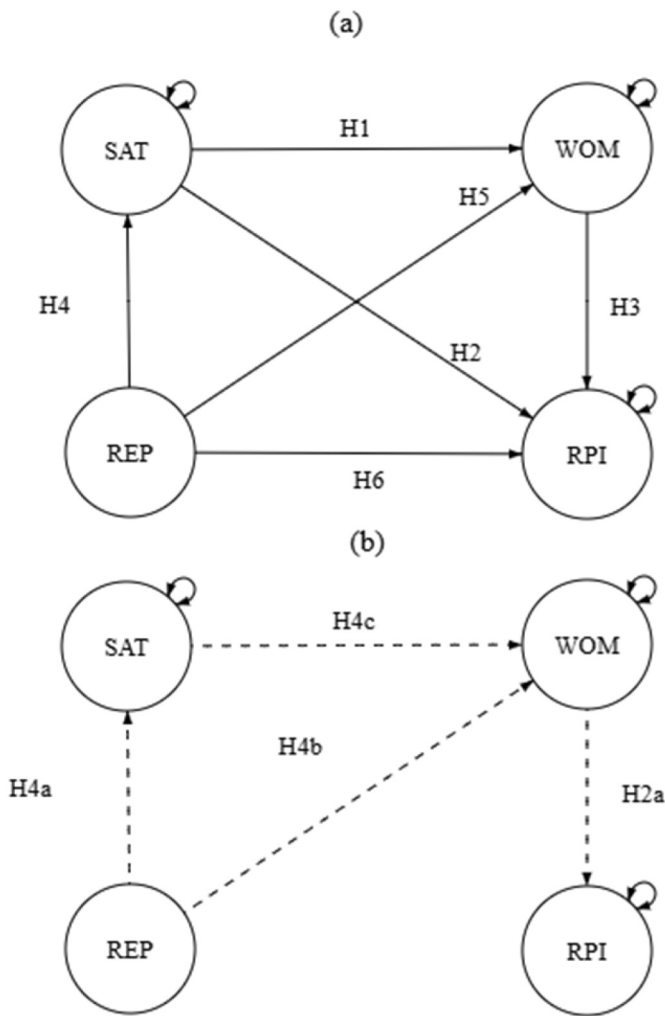


Fig. 1. Theoretical model. (a) Central hypotheses. (b) Indirect effects.

3. Methodology

Building upon the theoretical model outlined in the previous section, this study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional research design aimed at analysing the behavioural patterns of Centennial generation consumers in Colombia. The methodological approach combined three core strengths: the implementation of rigorously validated and contextually adapted measurement scales; the inclusion of a statistically robust sample ($n = 283$); and the use of covariance-based structural equation modelling (CB-SEM) to assess both the measurement and structural components of the model. Together, these methodological decisions reinforced the study's internal consistency, construct validity, and explanatory capacity, establishing a sound empirical basis for evaluating the determinants of repurchase intention in digital commerce.

3.1. Instrument

The instrument designed for this study consisted of a questionnaire divided into three sections. It was designed to evaluate the factors of satisfaction, WOM, website reputation, and repurchase intention in online channels. The first section contained the informed consent, which detailed the study's purpose, data confidentiality, and participants' right to withdraw at any time. The second section included specific items related to the factors of interest (see Table 2), using scales previously validated in academic research. To assess satisfaction and website reputation, the scale proposed by Stoian et al. (2021) was used; for

Table 2
Items used in the study.

Factor	Code	Original Item	Spanish Item
Satisfaction (SAT)	SAT1	I am delighted with this website, in general.	Estoy muy satisfecho con este sitio web, en general.
	SAT2	I am very satisfied with the shopping experience on this website.	Estoy muy satisfecho con la experiencia de compra en este sitio web.
	SAT3	I am very satisfied with the products I have ordered from this website.	Estoy muy satisfecho con los productos que he pedido en este sitio web.
	SAT4	I am very satisfied with the idea of buying from this website.	Estoy muy satisfecho con la idea de comprar en este sitio web.
	SAT5	I am very satisfied with the level of fulfilment of my expectations.	Estoy muy satisfecho con el nivel de cumplimiento de mis expectativas.
Website Reputation (REP)	REP1	The site is well known	El sitio es bien conocido
	REP2	I find many opinions of other customers on this website.	Encuentro muchas opiniones de otros clientes en este sitio web.
	REP3	Brand is very important when I order products.	La marca es muy importante cuando pido productos.
	REP4	The site has a good reputation.	El sitio tiene una buena reputación
Word of Mouth (WOM)	WOM1	How likely would you recommend [company X] to a colleague or friend? ^a	Recomiendo el sitio web de la tienda an un colega o amigo
	WOM2	How likely is it that you would say positive things about [company X] to other people? ^a	Menciono cosas positivas sobre el sitio web de la tienda a otras personas
Repurchase Intention (RPI)	RPI1	I plan to continue using this store to purchase products.	Planeo continuar usando el sitio web de esta tienda para comprar productos.
	RPI2	I consider this store my first choice for transactions in the future.	Considero esta tienda mi primera opción para transacciones en el futuro
	RPI3	It is likely that I will continue purchasing products from this store in the future.	Es probable que continúe comprando productos de esta tienda en el futuro.

^a **Note:** The translation adjusts the items to assess word of mouth (WOM) based on a specific shopping experience, without referring to any particular company, and adapts probability measurement to a seven-point Likert scale.

WOM, the scale by Lazaris et al. (2021) was applied; and finally, to measure repurchase intention in online channels, the scale by Tyrväinen et al. (2020) was adopted.

Given that the original scales were in English, a rigorous process of translation and cultural adaptation was conducted. In the first stage, the translation was carried out by two professional translators with experience in academic research. Subsequently, a back-translation into English was conducted by a third independent translator to verify semantic equivalence between versions. This process confirmed strong linguistic and conceptual equivalence across all items, with no item-level modifications or conceptual adaptations required beyond translation. As a result, all items retained the original theoretical meaning and construct scope defined in the source scales, ensuring the instrument's validity within the Colombian context.

Considering that data analysis was performed using a covariance-based structural equation model (CB-SEM), the next section presents the measurement model used to assess the adequacy and consistency of the adapted scales. All evaluations were carried out using a seven-point Likert scale, designed to accurately capture participants' perceptions,

where 1 represented ‘strongly disagree’ and 7 represented ‘strongly agree’.

Finally, the third section of the questionnaire gathered demographic data from participants, including gender, age range, average monthly income, and socioeconomic status (stratum). The full questionnaire, including all items as administered in Spanish, is available in [Appendix A](#). The instrument was administered electronically through online survey platforms.

To ensure data quality during collection, the questionnaire included mandatory responses, logic checks to prevent inconsistent inputs, and was pre-tested to verify item clarity. In addition, responses were screened for completeness and potential straight-lining patterns before the final dataset was analysed.

Specifically, responses were excluded if they exhibited straight-lining patterns, defined as selecting the same response option across more than 90% of the Likert-type items, or if they showed zero variance across the main constructs. Incomplete questionnaires were also removed prior to the final analysis. These screening criteria were applied consistently before conducting the SEM analyses.

3.2. Approval for instrument implementation

The instrument was approved by the Research Committee of the Corporación Universitaria de Asturias, as stated in Minutes No. 005 of 2023, authorizing its implementation for data collection in 2024. This approval ensured compliance with the ethical and methodological standards required by the institution.

3.3. Sample

The sample was obtained through a non-probability sampling approach based on the criteria outlined by [Hair et al. \(2021\)](#). According to these guidelines, at least ten participants per item were recommended, resulting in a minimum required sample of 140 participants. In total, data were collected from 283 Colombian Centennial consumers, which represented a significant advantage in terms of statistical robustness and reliability by exceeding the minimum required sample size.

Participants were primarily contacted through social media platforms (e.g., Instagram and Facebook), institutional academic platforms, and university email groups associated with Colombian institutions offering virtual, blended, or face-to-face learning programmes. This strategy enabled effective access to Centennial consumers familiar with e-commerce, ensuring that the sample profile was relevant to the study's objective. Participation was restricted to individuals who met the generational criterion (18–25 years) and reported prior experience with online purchasing. Responses that did not meet these eligibility criteria or that were identified as duplicate entries were excluded during the screening process. [Table 3](#) presents the sample characteristics.

Table 3
Sociodemographic characteristics of the participants (n = 283).

Variable	Category	Frequency
Gender	Male	136
	Female	145
	Prefer not to answer	2
Age (years)	18–21	214
	22–25	69
Socioeconomic status	Stratum 1 (very low)	6
	Stratum 2 (low)	20
	Stratum 3 (lower-middle)	78
	Stratum 4 (middle)	86
	Stratum 5 (upper-middle)	55
	Stratum 6 (high)	38

3.4. Data analysis

A SEM was implemented to analyse the collected data. This methodological approach was structured in two main phases: the first involved evaluating the measurement model, and the second assessed the structural relationships hypothesized. Although the literature acknowledges that PLS-SEM is suitable for exploratory contexts or small samples, the choice of CB-SEM in this study was guided by the confirmatory nature of the research design and the strong theoretical foundation of the proposed model. According to [Hair et al. \(2021\)](#), the choice between CB-SEM and PLS-SEM should not be based solely on sample size but rather on the study's orientation—exploratory or confirmatory.

More specifically, in this study, the relationships among latent variables—satisfaction, website reputation, WOM, and repurchase intention—have been extensively validated in previous studies with other generations or technological contexts, justifying a confirmatory approach. Therefore, CB-SEM was employed to rigorously assess the overall model fit and construct validity, both of which are essential when testing a structural model derived from theory in a new cultural or geographic context ([Hair et al., 2021](#)). This decision enabled the empirical validation of the theoretical model's suitability for the population of centennial consumers in Colombia, maximizing both the explanatory power of the model and the statistical rigour of the inferences.

Although sociodemographic variables such as gender, age range, and socioeconomic status were collected and descriptively reported, they were not incorporated as control variables in the structural model. This decision was grounded in the primary objective of the study, which focuses on examining the relational and mediating structure among satisfaction, website reputation, WOM, and repurchase intention within a theory-driven confirmatory framework. Incorporating demographic controls was not expected to alter the theoretical structure of the proposed model, as prior research has consistently shown these relationships to be robust across basic demographic segments in digital consumption contexts. Nevertheless, future research may explicitly integrate demographic controls to explore potential moderating effects and further refine the generalisability of the findings.

3.4.1. Measurement model

The measurement model was based on a first-order Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). To this end, the bootstrap method was applied with 2000 samples and a 95% confidence interval, as widely recommended in methodological literature for handling non-normal data and highly complex models ([Efron & Tibshirani, 1994](#)), thereby ensuring the validity and reliability of the results.

The model fit was evaluated using various indicators: Chi-square (χ^2), the minimum discrepancy index (χ^2/df), the Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI), the Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI), the Normed Fit Index (NFI), the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA).

The criteria established for interpreting these indicators were based on the standards used by [Useche et al. \(2021\)](#), [Escobedo et al. \(2016\)](#), and [Amado-Mateus et al. \(2023\)](#):

- Chi-square (χ^2): p-value >0.05, indicating no significant discrepancy between the model and the observed data.
- χ^2/df Values below 5 are considered indicative of an acceptable fit.
- GFI and AGFI: Values above 0.8, reflecting a good model fit to the data.
- NFI, TLI, and CFI: Values above 0.9, indicating a strong explanatory capacity of the model.
- RMSEA: Values below 0.08, suggesting an acceptable approximation error between the proposed model and the population.

If the CFA did not demonstrate a good fit—particularly if RMSEA exceeded acceptable thresholds—the model was refined by identifying

and addressing problematic variables. Specifically, variables with standardised regression weights below 0.60 were considered for elimination, as they contributed minimally to construct measurement. Additionally, modification indices were examined, focusing on the covariances among error terms. Priority was given to adjusting the highest modification indices, provided that they aligned with theoretical justification and improved model parsimony.

A comprehensive analysis of convergent and discriminant validity was conducted for each factor in the instrument. Regarding convergent validity, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was calculated, and reliability was assessed using Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha [α]. The following standards were set for acceptability: AVE > 0.50, CR > 0.70, and α > 0.80.

On the other hand, discriminant validity was determined using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) matrix. This criterion helped identify whether the factors were conceptually distinct from each other. HTMT values below 0.90 were considered acceptable (Hair et al., 2021), ensuring that latent variables measured unique aspects.

3.4.2. Structural model

The goodness-of-fit of the proposed model was assessed using the same statistical criteria and thresholds established at the measurement model stage. Hypotheses were tested using the fitted model and were considered accepted when the p-value of the estimated beta coefficient (β) was less than 0.05, indicating statistical significance. Additionally, a comprehensive assessment of the coefficient of determination (R^2) was performed to determine the degree to which the independent variables explained the variability of the dependent variable. Effect size was also calculated using f^2 analysis, following the criteria established by Cohen (2013), classified as small ($f^2 \geq 0.02$), moderate ($f^2 \geq 0.15$) or large ($f^2 \geq 0.35$), as appropriate.

3.4.3. Software and parametrization

The structural equation modelling analysis was conducted using SmartPLS 4 (version 4.1.16), which allows for the estimation of both variance-based and covariance-based models (CB-SEM). The applied configuration included a maximum number of 1000 iterations, a stop criterion for the gradient of 10^{-6} , and an objective function criterion of 10^{-9} , ensuring high precision in the estimated results. Default initialisation values were applied (default strategy), with no additional assumptions or mean structures specified. To estimate standard errors and assess the significance of the parameters, the bootstrap resampling procedure was employed with 5000 subsamples, parallel processing, and percentile-based confidence intervals, using a two-tailed test at a significance level of 0.05. The random number generator was configured with a fixed seed to ensure the reproducibility of the analysis.

With the model estimation process completed and all psychometric criteria satisfied, the next section presents the results derived from the hypothesis testing, including direct and mediating effects. These results provide the empirical basis for evaluating the predictive power of the theoretical model and its implications for Centennial consumers in digital commerce.

4. Results

This section presents the results obtained through the structural equation modelling procedure, following the analytical strategy outlined in the previous section. The analysis begins with descriptive statistics for the observed items that constitute the latent constructs, offering an overview of Centennial consumers' perceptions regarding satisfaction, website reputation, WOM, and repurchase intention (see Table 4). These initial results provide the empirical foundation for the subsequent evaluation of the measurement and structural models. All estimated effects were further supported by confidence intervals that excluded zero, reinforcing the robustness and stability of the reported relationships. The descriptive statistics indicate moderately positive

Table 4
Descriptive statistics.

Factor	Item	Mean	Std. deviation
Sat	SAT1	5.166	1.674
	SAT2	5.152	1.711
	SAT3	5.272	1.681
	SAT4	5.170	1.741
	SAT5	5.223	1.703
REP	REP1	5.318	1.781
	REP2	4.876	1.815
	REP3	5.304	1.783
	REP4	5.385	1.699
WOM	WOM1	5.025	1.764
	WOM2	4.961	1.766
RPI	RPI1	5.131	1.764
	RPI2	4.753	1.768
	RPI3	5.049	1.806

Note: The mean values correspond to scores obtained on a 7-point Likert scale, where 1 = "Strongly disagree" and 7 = "Strongly agree." Therefore, higher values reflect a more positive perception regarding the evaluated item.

evaluations across all constructs, supporting the empirical relevance of the proposed model for Centennial consumers in the Colombian online context.

No factor loadings of less than 0.6 were observed for the CFA; however, the goodness-of-fit of the initial measurement model was not adequate ($\chi^2 = 241.018$ with p-value less than 0.01, $\chi^2/df = 3.39$, GFI = 0.88, AGFI = 0.82, NFI = 0.95, CFI = 0.97, TLI = 0.96 and RMSEA = 0.09), so the errors of the SAT1 and SAT2 items were covaried. The decision to correlate error terms was not solely based on improving statistical fit, but also on conceptual proximity. Both items assess closely related aspects of overall satisfaction with the website, which may result in shared variance not captured by the latent construct. Such residual covariance is expected when items have similar wording or address overlapping experiences, making the adjustment both theoretically justified and methodologically appropriate. Once this was done, the CFA presented an improvement in its goodness of fit ($\chi^2 = 195.062$ with p-value less than 0.01, $\chi^2/df = 2.78$, GFI = 0.89, AGFI = 0.84, NFI = 0.96, CFI = 0.97, TLI = 0.97 and the RMSEA = 0.07). The factor loadings of the items are presented in Table 5. Taken together, these results indicate that the measurement model satisfies all recommended psychometric criteria, providing a sound basis for the subsequent assessment of the structural relationships.

The AVE values for the four factors were all above 0.50, indicating that each construct explains more than 50% of the variance in its associated items. Similarly, both Cronbach's alpha (α) and composite reliability (CR) exceeded 0.70, demonstrating acceptable internal consistency and construct reliability. These results support the convergent validity of the model. Regarding discriminant validity, the HTMT

Table 5
Factor loadings of the instrument and bootstrap method results.

Factor	Item	Factorial loading	95% CI lower bound	95% CI upper bound	p-value
Sat	SAT1	0.93	0.908	0.961	<0.01
	SAT2	0.94	0.907	0.965	<0.01
	SAT3	0.94	0.919	0.970	<0.01
	SAT4	0.94	0.920	0.969	<0.01
	SAT5	0.94	0.920	0.966	<0.01
REP	REP1	0.92	0.894	0.953	<0.01
	REP2	0.80	0.728	0.865	<0.01
	REP3	0.90	0.84	0.94	<0.01
	REP4	0.96	0.94	0.98	<0.01
WOM	WOM1	0.94	0.91	0.97	<0.01
	WOM2	0.96	0.93	0.98	<0.01
RPI	RPI1	0.95	0.92	0.97	<0.01
	RPI2	0.90	0.86	0.93	<0.01
	RPI3	0.94	0.91	0.96	<0.01

matrix showed values below 0.90 for all construct comparisons, confirming that the latent variables were sufficiently distinct from one another. Table 6 presents the results.

Regarding the structural model fit, the results indicated an acceptable goodness-of-fit ($\chi^2 = 195.062$, $p\text{-value} < 0.01$, $\chi^2/df = 2.78$, $GFI = 0.89$, $AGFI = 0.84$, $NFI = 0.96$, $CFI = 0.97$, $TLI = 0.97$, and $RMSEA = 0.07$). Concerning the main hypotheses of the model (see Fig. 2a), sufficient statistical evidence was found to confirm H1, H2, H3, H4, and H5, as the estimated beta coefficients associated with these hypotheses were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), and the relationship values were consistent with theoretical expectations.

On the other hand, H6 was not supported, as the corresponding beta coefficient did not reach the required level of statistical significance ($p \geq 0.05$), suggesting that no significant relationship existed between the variables involved in this hypothesis.

The results of the structural model hypothesis testing are summarized in Table 7. The table presents the standardised path coefficients, associated standard errors, t-values, and significance levels for each direct relationship tested.

Now, regarding the secondary hypotheses or indirect effects (see Table 8 for confidence intervals and Fig. 2b), it was observed that WOM mediates the relationship between satisfaction and repurchase intention in online channels (H2a: $\beta = 0.20$, $p\text{-value} < 0.01$). For the case of website reputation and repurchase intention in online channels, mediation through satisfaction and WOM was confirmed (H4a: $\beta = 0.17$, $p\text{-value} < 0.01$). Additionally, the influence of website reputation on repurchase intention in online channels was found to be mediated by WOM (H4b: $\beta = 0.23$, $p\text{-value} < 0.01$). Finally, the mediating role of satisfaction in the relationship between website reputation and repurchase intention in online channels was confirmed (H4c: $\beta = 0.25$, $p\text{-value} < 0.01$).

The R^2 values for the latent variables in the structural model reflected a high level of explained variance in the dependent constructs. Specifically, repurchase intention in online channels exhibited an R^2 value of 0.77, indicating that a substantial proportion of its variance is jointly explained by satisfaction, word of mouth (WOM), and website reputation within the proposed mediated framework. WOM presented an R^2 of 0.72, suggesting that satisfaction and website reputation account for a large share of variance in consumers' propensity to engage in recommendation behaviors. Finally, satisfaction reached an R^2 value of 0.73, indicating that website reputation constitutes a strong explanatory driver of consumers' evaluative responses in digital environments.

Regarding the effect sizes (f^2) associated with the hypotheses involving direct relationships with repurchase intention (H2, H3, and H4), different levels of practical influence were identified within the structural model, allowing for an assessment beyond statistical significance alone. For H2 (satisfaction $\rightarrow$ repurchase intention), the f^2 value was 0.08, indicating that although satisfaction significantly influenced repurchase intention, its explanatory contribution was modest relative to other predictors in the model. For H3 (WOM $\rightarrow$ repurchase intention), an f^2 value of 0.004 was obtained, corresponding to a small effect size. While this relationship was statistically significant, its limited explanatory power suggests that WOM plays a secondary and context-dependent role in directly shaping repurchase intention, potentially operating more strongly through mediated or interactive mechanisms. In contrast, H4 (website reputation $\rightarrow$ satisfaction) yielded an f^2 value of 0.261,

reflecting a moderate effect and indicating that website reputation exerted a substantial influence on consumer satisfaction, representing the relationship with the greatest explanatory capacity within the model. Accordingly, statistical significance was interpreted alongside effect sizes and explained variance, so that paths with marginal explanatory power were treated as theoretically informative but practically limited within the overall loyalty-formation mechanism.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study offer empirical evidence on the roles of satisfaction, website reputation, and word of mouth (WOM) in shaping repurchase intention among the Centennial generation in online channels, particularly in the context of an emerging market such as Colombia. The statistical support for hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H4, and H5 is largely consistent with prior literature, indicating that these factors remain relevant drivers of digital consumer loyalty, while also revealing nuances in their relative strength and modes of influence (Blut, 2016; Nuralam et al., 2024; Savastano et al., 2024; Yang et al., 2024). Specifically, satisfaction emerges as a pivotal determinant of both WOM and repurchase intention, corroborating the notion that a positive shopping experience and trust in the platform are essential for customer retention (Blut, 2016; Savastano et al., 2024). Additionally, the fundamental role of WOM in driving repurchase intention underscores the importance of social validation in the decision-making process of Centennials, a finding consistent with prior studies highlighting the impact of peer recommendations (Ha et al., 2010; Katta & Patro, 2020).

Although some of the estimated paths exhibit small effect sizes, their relevance should be interpreted within the context of digital consumer behaviour and mediation-based models. In online environments, behavioural outcomes such as repurchase intention are rarely driven by single dominant factors; rather, they emerge from the accumulation of multiple interrelated influences, each contributing incrementally to the decision-making process. From a theoretical perspective, small but significant effects are particularly meaningful in generational studies and mediated frameworks, as they reflect subtle yet systematic mechanisms through which satisfaction, reputation, and WOM jointly shape loyalty formation. Accordingly, the contribution of these effects lies not in their isolated magnitude, but in their role within an integrated explanatory structure.

At the same time, alternative interpretations of these findings should be considered. The relatively modest direct effects observed may also reflect the fragmented and experience-driven nature of digital consumption in contemporary online environments, particularly among Centennial users, where behavioural intentions are shaped less by isolated predictors and more by contextual, experiential, and social cues acting in combination. From this perspective, the explanatory strength of the model resides not in the dominance of single variables, but in its capacity to capture cumulative and indirect mechanisms that jointly influence repurchase intention.

Website reputation significantly influences consumer satisfaction and the generation of WOM, enhancing trust and increasing the likelihood of platform recommendations (Ahmad et al., 2017; Qalati et al., 2021; Sharma & Lijuan, 2015; Tandon et al., 2020). The indirect effect of reputation on repurchase intention, mediated by satisfaction and WOM, further emphasises the need for a strong digital presence to foster loyalty (Flavián & Gurrea, 2008; Gulati et al., 2023). These results highlight the importance of reputation management in digital environments, as a positive perception of the website enhances the shopping experience and contributes to building a loyal customer base (Holloway & Beatty, 2008; Schmidt et al., 2008).

However, the lack of support for H6 suggests that website reputation does not directly influence repurchase intention among Centennial consumers. This finding aligns with recent studies indicating that younger digital consumers prioritise WOM and social validation over general perceptions of website reputation (Arratia-Mendoza et al., 2024;

Table 6
Convergent and discriminant validity.

Factor	Convergent validity			Discriminant validity - HTMT matrix			
	AVE	α	CR	RPI	REP	SAT	WOM
RPI	0.87	0.95	0.95	0.93			
REP	0.81	0.94	0.94	0.80	0.90		
SAT	0.89	0.97	0.97	0.81	0.86	0.94	
WOM	0.90	0.95	0.95	0.85	0.83	0.81	0.94

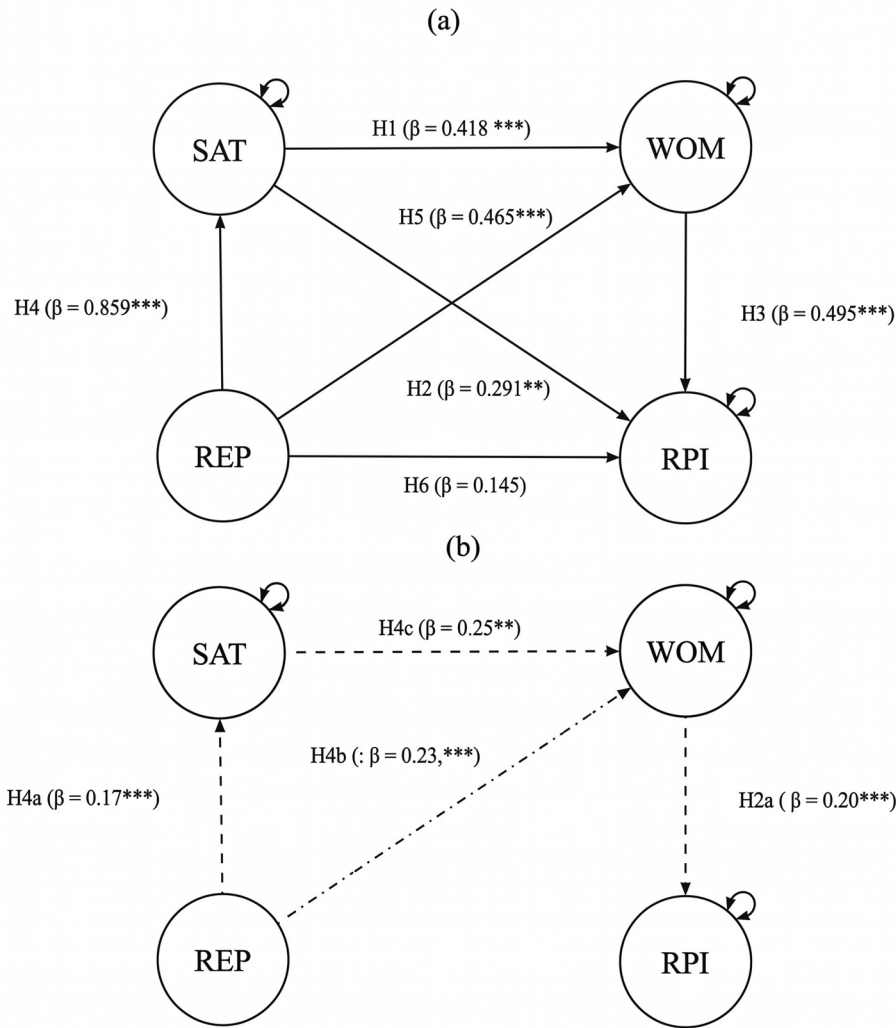


Fig. 2. Results of the structural model. (a) Central hypotheses. (b) Indirect effects. Note: ** p-value <0.01 and *** p-value <0.001.

Table 7
Summary of hypothesis testing results.

Hypothesis	Parameter estimates	Standard errors	T values	P values	C.I. [2.5%, 97.5%]
H1	0.418	0.080	5.571	<0.01	[0.206-0.602]
H2	0.291	0.079	3.958	<0.01	[0.064-0.533]
H3	0.495	0.069	7.266	<0.01	[0.283-0.716]
H4	0.895	0.041	19.999	<0.01	[0.790-0.913]
H5	0.465	0.077	6.094	<0.01	[0.279-0.676]
H6	0.145	0.078	1.902	0.140	[-0.044-0.347]

Table 8
Confidence intervals for indirect effects.

Hypothesis	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	C.I. [2.5%, 97.5%]
H2a	0.207	0.205	[0.079, 0.355]
H4a	0.250	0.249	[0.055, 0.465]
H4b	0.230	0.232	[0.113, 0.389]
H4c	0.359	0.353	[0.179, 0.517]

Flores et al., 2023). Unlike earlier research that established a direct link between reputation and repurchase intention (Aparicio et al., 2021; Lujun et al., 2016), this study suggests that Centennials' purchasing decisions are more heavily influenced by authenticity in recommendations and social media interactions (Izquierdo-Yusta et al., 2020; Pinna et al., 2023). A plausible explanation is that while website reputation fosters trust, its impact on repurchase intention is contingent upon a positive shopping experience and social validation, with WOM acting as a critical mediator (Phan-Tan, 2024; Rita et al., 2019).

The confirmed mediating effects (H2a, H4a, H4b, H4c) highlight the multidimensional nature of repurchase intention, driven by the interplay of satisfaction, reputation, and WOM (Nuralam et al., 2024; Yang et al., 2024). Building on these results, this study provides empirical support for two key theoretical perspectives. First, in line with Expectation Confirmation Theory (Oliver, 1980), the data provide empirical support for satisfaction functioning as a significant mediator in the relationship between perceived website reputation and both WOM and repurchase intention, highlighting the critical role of expectation fulfilment in digital commerce. This mediated mechanism is consistent with the view that satisfaction translates prior expectations into loyalty-related outcomes, although its strength may depend on contextual conditions such as perceived risk and trust in digital transactions. Taken together, the configuration of direct and mediated effects observed in the model reinforces its analytical robustness, as it captures not isolated relationships but a coherent system of cumulative and

conditional mechanisms underlying repurchase intention in digital environments.

Second, the results nuance the Consumer-Based Brand Equity Theory (Aaker, 1991) by showing that brand-related perceptions (i.e., website reputation) enhance satisfaction and WOM, but do not directly lead to repurchase intention. This implies that, for Centennial consumers, brand equity must be operationalized through experiential and social mechanisms to exert a meaningful influence on behavioral intentions, particularly in environments where platform credibility is negotiated through experience and peer signals. These theoretical contributions advance the understanding of how brand value and expectation management interact to shape e-loyalty in emerging digital markets.

The model exhibits high levels of explained variance, with R^2 values of 0.77 for repurchase intention, 0.73 for satisfaction, and 0.72 for WOM, indicating a strong capacity to account for key determinants of loyalty within the proposed theoretical framework. The methodological rigor, evidenced by validated measurement scales, high factor loadings (>0.80), strong convergent validity (AVE >0.80), and reliable internal consistency (CR and $\alpha > 0.70$ and 0.80 , respectively), further supports the validity of these findings. While these values indicate a strong explanatory capacity within the analysed sample, they should be interpreted in light of the model's theory-driven specification and the use of a non-probabilistic sample, which may contribute to higher explained variance without implying unrestricted generalisability.

From a theoretical perspective, this study enriches the literature on consumer behavior in digital environments by providing empirical evidence on the interplay of satisfaction, reputation, and WOM in an emerging market context. It also offers a novel contribution by focusing on Centennial consumers in Colombia, addressing a gap in the literature that predominantly examines developed economies. The findings highlight unique socio-economic and cultural factors that shape e-commerce behaviours in Latin American markets, where trust is critical due to perceived risks and institutional instability (Mejía-Delgado & Paredes, 2023; Ventre & Kolbe, 2020). This contextual focus advances a nuanced understanding of loyalty formation in non-Western settings.

Nonetheless, while these findings provide meaningful insights into digital consumer loyalty, it is important to recognize that certain methodological limitations—such as sample representativeness, platform heterogeneity, and contextual particularities—may influence the scope of generalisation. These considerations are elaborated in the Limitations section to guide the interpretation and future refinement of the model. From a practical standpoint, the results suggest that loyalty-building among Centennial consumers requires coordinated investments in customer experience management, reputation signalling, and mechanisms that stimulate credible eWOM; from a research perspective, future studies could test the model longitudinally, incorporate platform-level controls, and replicate the framework across other emerging markets to further strengthen external validity.

6. Conclusion and key contributions

This study provides empirical evidence that satisfaction, website reputation, and word of mouth (WOM) play a central role in shaping repurchase intention among Centennial consumers in online channels within an emerging market context. Taken together, the findings delineate the mechanisms through which digital loyalty is configured among this cohort, rather than isolating singular causal effects. Satisfaction emerges as a key driver influencing both WOM and repurchase intention, underscoring the importance of positive post-purchase experiences in fostering continued engagement. WOM, in turn, reflects the relevance of social validation and peer influence in digital decision-making processes, while website reputation contributes indirectly by strengthening satisfaction and stimulating positive WOM, rather than exerting a direct effect on repurchase intention.

The confirmed mediating roles of satisfaction and WOM highlight the multidimensional nature of repurchase intention and reinforce the

idea that loyalty formation in digital environments is shaped by the interaction of experiential, reputational, and social mechanisms. These results suggest that repurchase intention among Centennial consumers is better understood as the outcome of cumulative and interrelated processes rather than the dominance of isolated predictors. Importantly, these conclusions should be interpreted within the context of digitally active Centennial consumers in Colombia and should not be assumed to generalize unconditionally to other generational cohorts or market environments.

Beyond its empirical contributions, this study advances theory by clarifying how loyalty formation in digital contexts operates as an integrated, experience-driven process. By empirically linking satisfaction, website reputation, and WOM within a mediated explanatory structure, the findings extend Expectation Confirmation Theory and Consumer-Based Brand Equity Theory into emerging digital markets, where trust, social validation, and experiential cues jointly shape behavioural intentions. In this sense, the study reframes repurchase intention among Centennial consumers as a relational and cumulative phenomenon, offering a more nuanced theoretical understanding of e-loyalty formation under conditions of digital uncertainty.

7. Recommendations

The findings of this study highlight the importance of understanding the factors that influence Centennial generation loyalty in e-commerce and provide various implications for business management and future academic research. Competitiveness in the digital environment, particularly in emerging markets, requires companies to adapt their strategies to attract new customers and ensure their loyalty through satisfactory experiences, reputation strategies, and the optimisation of WOM, especially in the electronic sphere, as a recommendation and social validation mechanism.

From a business perspective, improving the user experience on digital platforms becomes a priority to encourage repurchase intention. Customer satisfaction has been identified as a key factor in this process; therefore, businesses must ensure efficient purchasing processes, secure payment methods, and after-sales services that reinforce consumer trust (Yang et al., 2024). Additionally, WOM plays a crucial role in Centennials' purchasing decisions, implying that businesses should implement strategies to encourage the generation of reviews and positive feedback. Previous research has shown that consumers who actively share their experiences help strengthen brand image and build trust among new buyers (Gulati et al., 2023; Patro, 2023). Social media engagement, loyalty programs, and customer testimonials can be key tools to leverage this effect.

Active website reputation management remains a critical aspect of building consumer loyalty. Although the study results did not evidence a direct relationship between reputation and repurchase intention, its influence on satisfaction and WOM suggests that it should be addressed strategically (Ahmad et al., 2017; Fei & Liat, 2013). The reputation of an e-commerce platform acts as an uncertainty reduction mechanism, influencing consumers' perception of credibility and trust, indirectly impacting their repurchase decision (Sharma & Lijuan, 2015). To maximise this effect, it is recommended that companies reinforce transparency in their service policies, ensure transaction security and improve the perceived trustworthiness of the site through branding and digital communication strategies. Implementing advanced online reputation monitoring tools -such as social media sentiment analysis and artificial intelligence-to identify trends in consumer feedback can strengthen brand trust and mitigate the impact of negative comments. Furthermore, establishing rapid response systems to user concerns and complaints can improve the perceptions of the company's commitment to the customer experience and generate a positive cycle of recommendations that reinforce the platform's positioning in the digital marketplace.

From an academic perspective, the results of this study open up new

avenues for research on the relationship between website reputation and repurchase intention, particularly in emerging markets. While the literature has explored reputation as a key factor in consumer trust, its direct impact on repurchase intention remains debated, suggesting the need to consider mediators such as trust and perceived security (Izquierdo-Yusta et al., 2020; Pinna et al., 2023). Additionally, most studies have focused on developed markets, so future research could examine these relationships in different sociocultural and economic contexts to assess their generalisation. Incorporating longitudinal methodologies would allow researchers to understand how perceptions of reputation evolve over time and their effect on consumer loyalty.

Moreover, it is important to analyse the impact of moderating factors on repurchase intention. Elements such as product category, purchase frequency, and user engagement on social media may influence how satisfaction and reputation affect consumer loyalty. Future studies could integrate these factors into structural equation models to provide a more comprehensive view of the repurchase process in digital environments (Savastano et al., 2024). Finally, longitudinal methodologies would enable researchers to evaluate how consumer loyalty evolves over time. In this regard, future research could analyse how perceptions of reputation, satisfaction, and WOM fluctuate and their impact on repurchase behaviour, providing more detailed insights into the sustainability of customer retention in e-commerce (Blut, 2016; Phan-Tan, 2024).

8. Limitations

Despite the methodological rigor of this study, several limitations must be acknowledged to properly contextualise the findings and delimit the scope of their interpretation. First, the use of a non-random, convenience-based sampling strategy, while common and methodologically acceptable in theory-driven and confirmatory SEM research, limits population-level inference and external generalisability. Although covariance-based SEM remains appropriate for testing theoretically specified relationships within a defined sample, the estimated parameters should be interpreted with caution beyond the studied context. In particular, non-probabilistic sampling may affect parameter stability and contribute to higher levels of explained variance within the analysed sample, without necessarily implying equivalent explanatory power at the population level. As participants were self-selected and primarily composed of digitally active Centennial consumers, the sample may not fully represent the diversity of preferences, behaviours, and attitudes present within the broader population of young consumers in Colombia. The lack of control over participants' socio-economic distribution and differential access to internet resources may further bias the results, potentially overrepresenting more affluent or tech-savvy users. These factors affect sample representativeness and constrain the generalisability of the findings to other generational cohorts or consumer segments.

Second, the study relies on self-reported data collected through a single survey instrument, which introduces the potential risk of common method bias and social desirability effects. Although this approach is standard in consumer behaviour research and suitable for capturing perceptual constructs such as satisfaction, reputation, and WOM, it may inflate observed relationships due to shared measurement variance. While the theoretical model was carefully specified and the constructs were conceptually distinct, future research could strengthen methodological robustness by incorporating procedural remedies (e.g., temporal or source separation) or statistical controls to explicitly assess and mitigate common method bias.

Third, the study did not differentiate between specific e-commerce platforms or product categories, resulting in an aggregated analysis of digital consumption experiences. Given that platform characteristics—such as interface design, service quality, transaction security, and brand positioning—may vary substantially across contexts, this aggregation may limit the interpretability of satisfaction, reputation, and WOM across heterogeneous digital environments.

Consequently, the strength and configuration of the observed relationships may differ across platforms or categories. Future studies could enhance explanatory precision by incorporating platform-level controls or conducting comparative analyses across distinct e-commerce settings.

Fourth, the cross-sectional nature of the research design precludes any inference of causal relationships. Although the structural model provides evidence of statistically significant associations between variables, these relationships should not be interpreted as causal pathways without validation through longitudinal or experimental designs. Moreover, the absence of temporal ordering inherent to cross-sectional data prevents establishing the directionality of effects, and the observed relationships should therefore be understood as associational rather than causal.

Fifth, while the study explicitly focuses on the Colombian context as an emerging digital market, this contextual specificity also represents a boundary condition for external validity. Cultural norms, institutional trust, regulatory environments, and levels of digital maturity may influence how satisfaction, reputation, and WOM are interpreted and enacted by consumers. As a result, the meaning and behavioural implications of these constructs may not fully translate to other national or cultural contexts. Replicating the model in different institutional and cultural settings would allow for a more nuanced assessment of its generalisability.

Finally, although the model demonstrates strong explanatory power, as reflected in relatively high R^2 values, these results should be interpreted in light of the theory-driven specification of the model and the characteristics of the analysed sample. High levels of explained variance may partially reflect model parsimony and sample homogeneity rather than unrestricted generalisability. Collectively, these limitations define the analytical boundaries of the study and underscore the need for cautious interpretation of the findings, particularly with respect to generalisation and theoretical extension beyond the examined context.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Marelby Amado Mateus: Writing – review & editing, Conceptualization. **Germán Mauricio Rojas Sánchez:** Investigation, Data curation. **Alfredo Guzmán Rincón:** Visualization, Validation, Software, Methodology, Formal analysis.

Data availability statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Ethical statement

This study was conducted in strict adherence to ethical principles governing research involving human participants. All participants provided informed consent before their participation. The research design and procedures were reviewed and approved by the Research Committee of Corporación Universitaria de Asturias, as documented in Minutes No. 005 of 2023, authorizing data collection during 2024 and ensuring compliance with ethical standards. Participants were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses, and all data were handled in accordance with applicable data protection regulations. The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Declaration of the use of AI assisted technologies

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The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Appendix A. Supplementary data

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