

CITY UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
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**Effects of Initial Trust in Doctor, Country of Origin,
Word-of-mouth and Price Sensitivity on Medication
Purchase Intention of Chronic Disease Patients in
Mainland China**

中國慢性病患者對醫生的初始信任、
藥物來源地、口碑及價格敏感度
對藥物選購傾向的影響

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to investigate the influence of initial trust in doctor (ITID) and its corresponding ascendants namely, hospital institutional trust, trusting beliefs, trust propensity of patients, marketing factors such as country of origin (COO), face to face and online word of mouth (F2FWOM and OWOM), and price sensitivity (PS) on the medication purchase intention of chronic disease patients in Mainland China.

Design/methodology/approach – Cross city surveys were conducted. 1500 self-administrated questionnaires were distributed to patient groups in 24 hospitals located in 20 cities spread across 14 provinces. 994 effective questionnaires were collected to test the hypotheses.

Findings –This research supports the hypothesized positive effect of ITID and the major sequential effects of the corresponding ascendants of initial trust on medication purchase intention of chronic disease patients. This research also supports COO as an influential marketing factor in altering the medication purchase intention of chronic disease patients in China. Different degrees of the moderating effect of F2FWOM and PS on ITID are verified and discussed.

Originality/value – This research not only credits the validity of initial trust model proposed by Mcknight et al in 1998, it in fact extends the knowledge about the influence of initial trust on medication purchase intention of healthcare services in China. It also reveals the main mediating and moderating effects of marketing factors and ITID on the medication purchase intention. It may be one of the first empirical researches which describes the impact of ITID and related marketing factors on chronic patients' medication purchase intention in China. Practical suggestions about how to foster ITID and the handling of marketing factors for effective marketing are proposed based on the insights from the research findings and the practitioners' point of view.