

The Factors Affecting Consumer Purchase Intention through Social Commerce – A Concept Paper

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Abstract: Emerging economies are not excluded, where the emergence of e-commerce has now advanced towards a new branch of social commerce as a platform for business transactions as well as in attracting, creating, and maintaining customer relationships. E-commerce on social media platforms offers a practical means for businesses to connect with and sell to consumers. Major social networking sites have been actively developing their e-commerce features, allowing users to make purchases without leaving the site. Major social networking sites have been actively developing their e-commerce features, allowing users to make purchases without leaving the site. Social commerce has become popular due to its importance in e-commerce. The research in this area is still limited, especially on the factors that influence purchase intentions when using social commerce platforms. The purpose of this study is to examine the contribution and significance of affordance and trust theories among Malaysian users that underpin purchase intentions on social commerce platforms. This paper establishes a conceptual framework for consumers' purchase intentions based on the SOR model. Social media platforms can be used by businesses to interact with customers and increase sales once they recognize their potential. PLS-SEM (Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling) will be used to examine the data.

Keywords: *Purchase Intention, social commerce, affordance, trust.*

1. Introduction and Background

Social commerce has evolved to incorporate the power of social media platforms with purchasing, as businesses and consumers continue to benefit from the growing trend of social network usage and ICT development (Kim et al., 2019; Vahedi and Zannella, 2021). Social commerce is expanding as a result of the adoption of novel applications that enhance consumer participation and economic value (Mutambik, 2023). Moreover, social media platforms have grown into important distribution channels for online businesses (Ho et al., 2022). By utilizing Web 2.0 technologies that enhance the online shopping experience (such as effective product search, customized recommendations, and reviews), this new sort of e-commerce is developing in a distinctive way. Users are able to scroll, add items to shopping carts, and purchase things in a single social media application, which is a unique concept in e-commerce (Zhang, 2020). Customers are increasingly using social commerce to learn about products and participate in social media-enabled business activities like posting, commenting, suggesting, and discussing products (Bungshan, 2020).

Since Web 2.0's wider audience and increasingly individualized touch, social commerce is possibly more significant than conventional e-commerce (Huang, 2013). It has been identified as a significant growth area in practice for social e-commerce, and it has since started to expand quickly to offer services to consumers (Peng, et al., 2019). Social commerce integrates online purchasing and social networking, enabling users to shop directly from their news feeds (Ko, 2020). As a result of the incorporation of shoppable posts, product labelling, and user-generated content, social media platforms have become effective sales channels, (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2019). According to a report (2023) published by Rakuten Insight, 57% of social media users in Malaysia purchased within the last 12 months. Meanwhile, 78% of social media users are impacted by social media recommendations. According to all these statistics, social commerce is becoming more popular in Malaysia. People increasingly use social media to perform product research, make purchases, and be influenced by their social media choices.

2. Literature Review

Purchase Intention: Purchase intention on online social media platforms describes a consumer's willingness or tendency to make purchases as a result of their interactions and exposure to items or services on social media platforms (Xiao, 2019). According to Lou (2019), it is the consumer's subjective evaluation of the

possibility of completing a purchase transaction after being impacted by a variety of variables such as social media advertising, ratings from others, influencers, recommendations, and brand presence on social media. Online social media platforms help businesses experiment with their products, increase brand attention, provide opportunities to engage with potential customers, and ultimately influence purchasing intent (Dabbous, 2020).

This is an excellent chance for businesses to reach a larger audience and increase sales. According to Adam et al. (2016), social media marketing is successful in influencing the purchase intentions of young Malaysian customers. According to the survey, social media platforms enable businesses to reach a large audience, tailor their advertisements to specific groups, and develop interesting content that can influence consumers' buying decisions. According to the study (Ismail, 2022), the social media marketing dimensions directly encourage purchase intention among consumers. The complexity and difficulty of purchasing intentions today are greater than they were in the past (Lakshika & Ahzan, 2021). As a result, advertising, social media, and online word-of-mouth have helped consumers today become more knowledgeable and savvy (Santiago & Pimenta, 2021).

Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Model: The S-O-R perspective will be utilized for this study, which was created in the field of environmental psychology and introduced by Mehrabian and Russell (1974). S-O-R, which stands for stimuli that represent factors that can influence the individual's condition, makes the concept influential. Then the organism refers to how individual attitudes or user behavior can respond to environmental stimuli and then activate the response as a viewpoint. The viewpoint and response are examples of internal cognitive and emotive dynamics. This model illustrates the communication process, and according to Chang and Chen (2008), the model of consumer behavior is determined by using this model.

In the context of online mobile applications, Chopdar (2022) discovered that the stimulus, the mobile commerce application, can elicit a range of reactions based on the unique traits of the customer (the organism). According to the study, the environment (the response) can have an impact on how a consumer reacts to mobile commerce applications. In recent years, it has come to light that a significant number of researchers employ this S-O-R model in the context of online contextual studies to quantify purchase intention, such as Kuhn (2018), Suparno (2020), Yin (2021), and Zhou (2022). In this paper, the researcher examines from the perspective of how the IT affordances of meta voicing and guided shopping serve as stimuli within the S-O-R paradigm, with trust serving as the organism that reacts to the stimuli and in the end, influences a customer's decision to purchase through social media.

Metavoicing: Majchrzak et al. (2013) originally used the word "metavoicing" to describe the act of "trying to respond online to another person's presence, identities, content, and actions. Consumers can interact with sellers and write a comment in conversations or on bullet screens, which show real-time remarks from viewers as bullets fly across the screen while shopping in a live stream situation (Sun, 2018). Another recent study conducted by Xie (2021) found that metavoicing plays an important role in buying decisions, where customers may get helpful target product information such as reviews and comments by using metavoicing affordance. Referring to the context of the S-O-R paradigm, meta-voicing is the act of engaging the capability of customers to express their thoughts and worries. Customers are able to engage actively and express themselves in the interactive setting that is created.

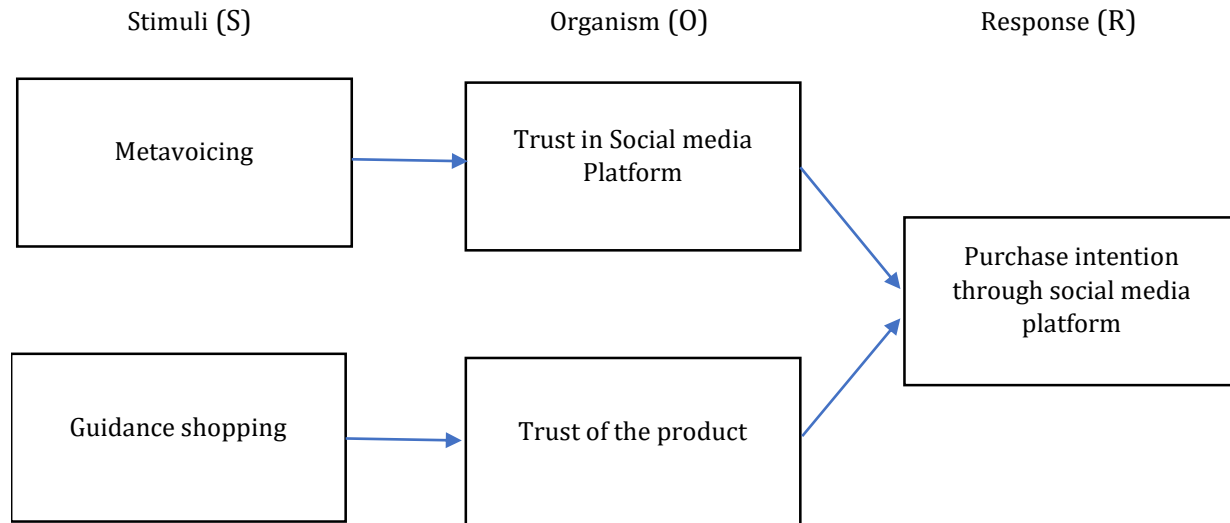
Building trust between buyers and sellers in social commerce is important. Numerous studies pinpoint causal factors, including social media's core features such as Fang (2020). Trust in the platform may be described as web presence, perception, and engagement with vendors, as stated by Lu (2016). In this context, the trust in the platform acts as the organism that impacts the consumer's reactions or behaviors. There have been a number of studies that identify causal factors, including social media attributes involving trust in social commerce, which can be fostered by the use of techniques such as those proposed by Fang (2020), Nosi (2022), and Leong (2020) to improve service and customer orientation, as well as social support and social presence. Customers consider this data shared on the social commerce platform to be trustworthy. The relationship between trust as an organism and purchase intention as a response may be characterized in the following way: once customers have a high level of confidence in the shopping platform (Wang, 2020), users are able to develop a good mindset and perception towards the items or services that are being shown. This

in turn increases the possibility that they will make a purchase. In conclusion, metavoicing operates as a stimulus that affects the consumer's trust (organism), and trust impacts the consumer's reactions or behaviors.

Guidance Shopping: The term "decisional guidance" refers to "the degree to which and how a system helps to guide its users in establishing and executing decision-making processes" (Silver, 1990). Two types of advice fall under this umbrella: suggestive advice and informative advice (Silver, 1990). According to Dong and Wang's (2018) guidance purchasing affordance, it provides tailored services to assist consumers in rectifying issues. Customer decision-making is aided by guiding shopping since it provides personalized services. Guidance shopping refers to vendors' or sellers' capacity to assist and guide consumers throughout the purchasing experience (Dong, 2016). Guidance purchasing can be viewed as a stimulus; this stimulation consists of individualized suggestions, product demos, addressing customer queries, and offering information to assist customers in making directed purchase decisions. The trust of the product as an organism symbolizes the customer's characteristic or internal condition. When a customer has trust in a product, they believe it will fulfill their demands (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020). It includes the customer's view of the product brands or the seller's trustworthiness, credibility, and dependability during the buying experience (Mohammed & Al-Ekam, 2016). Customers' attitudes, confidence, and belief in the product offered are influenced by trust (Zhang et al., 2018). This chance for consumers to interact, as well as the guidance offered by sellers, helps to create trust, eliminate uncertainty, and improve the whole shopping experience, eventually leading to a higher intention in purchasing (Chandruangphen et al., 2022).

This concept is related to how these components interact with one another. This incentive entails offering individualized advice and product demonstrations, responding to any concerns that consumers may have, and supplying them with information that will assist them in making wise choices about their purchases (Zhang, 2020). In summary, seller shopping assistance operates as a stimulant inside the S-O-R structure, influencing the customer's trust in the product as an organism. Customers' buying intentions are influenced by their trust in the products they are purchasing. The more productive the seller's advice, the greater the customer's trust in the product and, therefore, the greater the customer's desire to interact and make purchases. Based on the literature reviewed, the conceptual framework shown in Figure 1 is proposed.

Figure 1: Proposed Conceptual Framework for Predicting the Factors that Influence Social Commerce Purchase Intention



3. Research Methodology

Using the S-O-R model, the proposed study will develop the conceptual framework shown in Figure 1, where the information technology (IT) Affordance component serves as the stimulus, the trust component as the organism, and the purchase intention on the social media platform as the response. This study will look at

how consumers develop the intention to buy using social media platforms, with aspects of IT affordance having the biggest impact on trust. Purposive sampling will be used to determine the intended sampled respondents for this proposed study's sampling technique. The respondents will be eligible to take part in this study provided they have a social media account that they can use to buy products or services from the platform. Purposive sampling, according to Babbie (2013), is employed when a study concentrates on a specific geographic area with certain expertise and subject domains. To ensure the validity of the proposed study's findings, all respondents must be familiar with social media platforms to make purchases on the platform. To analyze the data PLS-SEM (Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling) will be used to utilize.

4. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to obtain a more comprehensive look at the elements that influence Malaysian consumers' willingness to participate in social commerce. The S-O-R model was used to explain the relationship between these factors and purchase intention. The S-O-R model, a psychological theory, explains how a person's environment and personality qualities influence their behavior. The social commerce platform served as the study's setting, while the variables affecting purchase intention were personal characteristics. As was previously mentioned, there are still gaps in studies where trust also plays a part in relationship continuity, even if some studies have revealed the characteristics that influence purchase intention among customers from the aspect of IT affordance. Finally, this article presented a conceptual framework that focused on the SOR model from a perspective viewpoint. This study's findings will give businesses important details concerning strategies to boost purchase intent through social commerce. Entrepreneurs may develop and expand social commerce platforms that have a greater opportunity to be successful by determining the aspects that will affect users' intent to make a purchase.

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