The Role of Social Commerce Attributes and Trust on Purchase Intention in Social Commerce Platforms

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ABSTRACT

Now, social media (SM) has become a popular trend that has attracted a large number of people. Every company is taking advantage as a best opportunity to showcase their own products and brands. The custom of social media presence highly impact on customer buying behavior. Because social media allows users to adopt a variety of lifestyles, customers have a lot of options. Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and WhatsApp have all had a significant effect on customer purchase behavior. The aim of the study was to examine which factors influence on customer preference in social media marketing. In this study the data were collected according to convenience sampling from the customer who are bought a product through social media platforms in an around Chennai. Data were analyzed to verify the developed hypotheses using regression and Percentage analysis in SPSS. In addition, it examines customer preference impact on customer buying decision on social media marketing underlying mechanism that affect the product preference and purchase intention. This research will contribute to behavioral research in emerging economies.

Key words: Customer preference, Social Media Marketing, Purchase decision

Type: Research paper

INTRODUCTION

At present digital natives likes to purchase product and services through online for a reason which is convenient, saves time, and provides evidence on the goods and services. The evolution of Web 2.0 technology gained attraction from people. The wide range of people use social media platforms like Instagram, WhatsApp, and Facebook in the digital era (**Chen and Qasim, 2021**). The extensive consumption of the internet and the rise in digital media, new startups are looking for new ways to engage with their customers. According to **Tracy Tuten** and **Micheal Solomon**, Social publishing, social community, social entertainment and social commerce are components of Social media marketing (SMM) zones. The help of SM and social networks to encourage a product or service is recommended to as social media marketing. Many businesses use social media to raise public knowledge around their own product and services. Since SM platform helps products to engage with their target audiences in order to enhance sales and brand awareness. According to **T. L. Tuten, (2020)** defines "*social media marketing as the use of social media technology, platforms, and software to produce, communicate, deliver, and share business-related offerings*". Famous brands use SM to communicate their durable presence and better customer relationships (**Murugesan, 2012**). According to some research **IBM** has over a hundred different blogs that are used to promote the brand to a great extent.

Customer purchasing preference refers actions and attitudes of customers toward a product, brand, or service. Purchasing decision refer to the choice-making methods and actions of individuals who

are tangled in the purchase and usage of things **(M. K. Sharma 2014)**. Social influences, personal considerations, cultural issues, psychological factors, and economic factors all have an impact on a customer's purchasing preferences **(Ali, S. M. et.al 2016).**

Now, SMM is gaining popularity, and it has an impact on a variety of customer groups. "Over 80% of people use social media sites such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. People are quickly adapting to the new lifestyle" (**L. Klieb and D. Voramontri, 2019**), and they conduct all of their activities online. As a result, social media has an impact on individuals, changing their preferences for acquiring products or companies. Social media is used by everyone. When they receive a product recommendation, more than 59 % of customers choose Facebook, 37% use Twitter as their social media platform (**Forbes, Lukas P 2013).** The main determination of this study is to recognize the influence of SM on customer buying preference. Furthermore, few researches have been undertaken to investigate how these characteristics influence a social media features visibility and aid to understanding of customer preference through persuading them to make a purchase. As of a theoretical standpoint, the results of this research help us gain a well knowledge of the purchasing decision process.

The existing researchers studied that social commerce constructs were impact the purchase intention in social commerce platforms. This research addresses the knowledge gap on how social commerce attributes such as interactivity and informativeness affect the social commerce purchase intention, at the same time it associated with the theory of reasoned action theory. The main purpose of this research is to identify the path way between the social commerce attributes and social commerce intention. Finally, the research tries to answer the following research questions:

1. Do social commerce attributes affect the social commerce intention?
2. What are social commerce attributes affect the consumer social commerce intention?

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Social media

According to the study **(Paquette, H. 2013)**, social media gives small businesses with global opportunities through direct engagement and the ability to supply customers with more information about products and brands. Because each commercial has their own SM marketing sides like Instagram and Facebook, social media is a wide range communication feature that connects people worldwide. According to **Vipin (2019)**, "most top businesses are willing to spend 15-20 percent of their budgets on social media ads. Because of the rapid growth of social media marketing. According to poll results, more than 258.27 million people use social media platforms in 2019".

Some of the most recent advancements in social media marketing include multimedia platforms, established a relationship between online and offline advertising, and giving different communication possibilities. (**Vivek Bajpai, et. al 2012**) with these approaches, even micro businesses could interaction with a widespread range of communities, and SM platforms provide profession opportunities for businesses. According to the study, about 75% of unicorns utilized SM to increase the consciousness of brand then interface through customers via internet (**Bansal, R et.al 2014**). Digital marketing and social media marketing have been adopted by many industries and businesses. Because of the traditional marketing method, values have decreased from 22 billion in 2018 to 18 billion in 2020. (**Kiran, K. U., & Arumugam, T. 2020).**

According to (**Sajid, S. I. 2016**) the research paper, "75% of organisations have their own websites, with 69% of them using it to reveal their growth rate, 57% of them using LinkedIn to establish their contact range, 54% of them using LinkedIn to receive their reviews and develop themselves, 39% of organisations maintain their own weblog, and 26% tweet their skill and knowledge in specific areas. The range of promotion price of social media investment increases from 3.5% in 2009 - 17.7% in 2010.

BACKGROUND OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Digital era, the world wide web evolution of the new version of technology through Web 2.0 which is user-centric web technologies like blogs, platforms, media sharing, and social networks. Now, it has made it rapid and easier for users to communicate their opinions, preference, feedbacks and discuss their view about the use or experiences towards specific products. In 1997 the first social media was introduced by the name of Six degrees. In early 2000, "*Myspace*" was most used social media because user can setup their profile and make more friends from it. Myspace was connected more than 100 million people; it was the first stepping stone for all other social media. ***Mark Zuckerberg*** founded Facebook in 2004, and it quickly became a SM phenomenon that raised the all other SM services. "*Text messaging*" became extremely famous on SM in 2006, prompting "*Jack Dorsey*, *Biz Stone*, *Noah Glass*, and *Evan Williams*" to introduced twitter, a link of websites with the exclusive feature of permitting users to send "tweets of 140 characters". The future of SM is tough toward foretell, now Twitter has more than 500 million users (**Oumayma, B. 2019**). The phrase "social media" became widespread after the introduction of social networking sites in the early 2000s.

Haenlein and Kaplan (2010) define "*social media as a collection of internet-based apps that expand on the conceptual and technological origins of web 2.0, facilitating the creation and exchange of user-generated content*". Social media is used to expand and enhance communication activities. Social networking is a new channel the facilitate to customers' convenience, and analyses evidence about the customer fulfilment component through straight chat with customers (**Gómez, J. M. 2011**), "social media marketing expands the customer relationship. It is also the cheapest way to promote the business in an effective manner". Another study (**Maxwell Gollin 2021**) discusses "the costs of promotion on social media platforms such as Facebook (2021) The lowest click cost is $0.38 on Twitter, the highest is $5.26 on LinkedIn, and the lowest is $3.56 on Instagram".

According to **Irfan Ahmad, (2018)** people spent more than 135 minutes on social media, it will be exploited for profit-oriented in company. The study figures (**Greenwood, S., et.al 2016**) out that majority of online insides have 'Facebook' (79%), "*32% use Instagram, 24 percent use Twitter, 29% use LinkedIn, and 31 percent use Pinterest*" in 2016. According to (**Auxier, B., & Anderson, M. 2021**) the survey, "*81 percent of people use YouTube, 69% use Facebook, 40 percent use Instagram, 31 percent use Pinterest, 28 percent use LinkedIn, 25 percent use Snapchat, 23 percent use Twitter, and 23 percent use WhatsApp in 2021*". The review study identifies the elements that influence customer preferences, including: external cues such as self-service technologies, sales marketing, social media channels, and family and peer presence (**Bhakat, R. S. 2013 et.al**). Fashion, emotion, enjoyment, and self-identity are examples of internal stimuli. Situational issues such as financial and time constraints. Age, education, income, and gender are all demographic and socio-cultural determinants. The purpose of this study was to extract certain

interpersonal variables related to the research environment & to construct the research model to analysing hypothesised associations.

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Interactivity

Interactivity, recommendation, and feedback are three characteristics of social media. Social interaction, according to **Daugherty, Eastin, and Bright (2008**), benefits marketers in establishing user-inspired themes. Customers can contribute their ideas while also having a forum to discuss them through social media participation. **Ransbotham and Gallaugher (2010**), as well as **Haenlein and Kaplan (2010**), suggest that "social media platform-based interaction is fundamentally changing how brands interact with their customers." Owners/users of such brands communicate with others who personal or practice similar things or brands via SM platforms (**Martn-Consuegra et al. 2019**) (**Muntinga, Smit, & Moorman 2011**). This initiate to the hypothesis:

H1: Interactivity in social Media platforms positively affect the consumer social commerce intention.

Information Literacy

According to the study (**Kian, T. P., et.al 2017**), it allows customers to learn about a specific brand and product, as well as the purchasing procedure, without complication, encouraging them to buy and providing great satisfaction. The "*Uses and Gratifications Theory*" (UGT) seeks to "understand why people utilise media and lists a variety of reasons for doing so, including entertainment, information diversion, making new relationships, and sharing media" (**Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974**). Social media, notably Facebook is exploited as per a medium for source sighting and articulation of one's info demand, according to Scale (2008). (2008). It can be seen in the "Top Story," 'Most Recent, "Trending," and "News" sections. In Facebook's "Most Shared" features, users are exposed to serendipitous information from their social and public networks. The most important social media component is entertainment, according to the report, and customers are more attracted to exciting events such as event-drive formats with celebrities (**Anuradha, A.at. el).** The people encourage to use Facebook as a source of information because they want to be kept up to date on new products and services which is build the positive public relation (**Knowles, 2014**). Hence posit:

H2: Information literacy from social Media platforms positively affect the consumer social commerce intention.

Trust

Lee and Phang, (2015) stated that SM to promote their products and services in Asian countries. In social media transactions, trust is crucial. **(Nadeem, 2015)** As a large figure of people are active on SM and continuously share their opinions on the product provided by various online stores. As a result of trust, "customers and sellers form emotional attachments, which impacts the interaction between various variables and behavioural intents" (**Tan & Hashim, 2015**). An effect of trust on their shopping preferences may alter, impacting the customer's selection for a product**. (Tan & Hashim, 2015**): Trust promotes interaction between the marketers and customers involved in a relationship and assists customers in taking well-informed choices". (**Wang et al., 2015**) Trust is

key in lowering scepticism and facilitating actual purchases as a powerful force behind client vitual purchase intents. As a result of trust, customers and merchants form emotional relationships. The changing aspects of online trust are distinct from those of traditional (offline) trust **(Bhardwaj & Vohra, 2019).** In virtual mood, trust takes the place of experience indications like physical items and salespeople. (**Verma and colleagues, 2016**). (**Min, Q., Wang, Y., & Han, S. 2016**) When customers order a product on social media, they are willing to take a chance and trust the platform. To justify that the effect of trust SM environment is critical since it might be changing the customers buying preference and influence the purchasing decisions. We posit:

H3: Trust on social Media platforms positively affect the consumer social commerce intention.

Social Commerce Intention

One of the best models for forecasting a person's intention to utilise a system is the technology acceptance model (TAM), which includes a component called intention to buy **(Pavlou, 2003**). To measure and forecast a person's intention to use information technologies, there are two main theories **(Mathieson, 1991).** Ajzen's TAM and the notion of planned behaviour (**1989).** In the current study, "intention to buy" refers to a customer's desire to make an online purchase through a social networking site. According to Martins, Oliveira, and Popovic (**2014)** as well as Park, Roman, **Lee, and Chung (2009**), TAM is a fundamental theory in e-commerce studies (**Hsiao & Yang, 2011).**

Research model

The research model proposed the customer of SMM and their effect on Purchase decision is influence according to proposed educated guess. The research frame representing users of SMM and their impact on customer preference was created based on the proposed assumptions. Five constructs make up the SMM antecedents: (1) Trust (2) Information literacy (3) Interactivity. These three constructs are independent variables for social commerce intention. Social commerce intention affects the buying behavior of the customers. The conceptual framework is presented as follow:
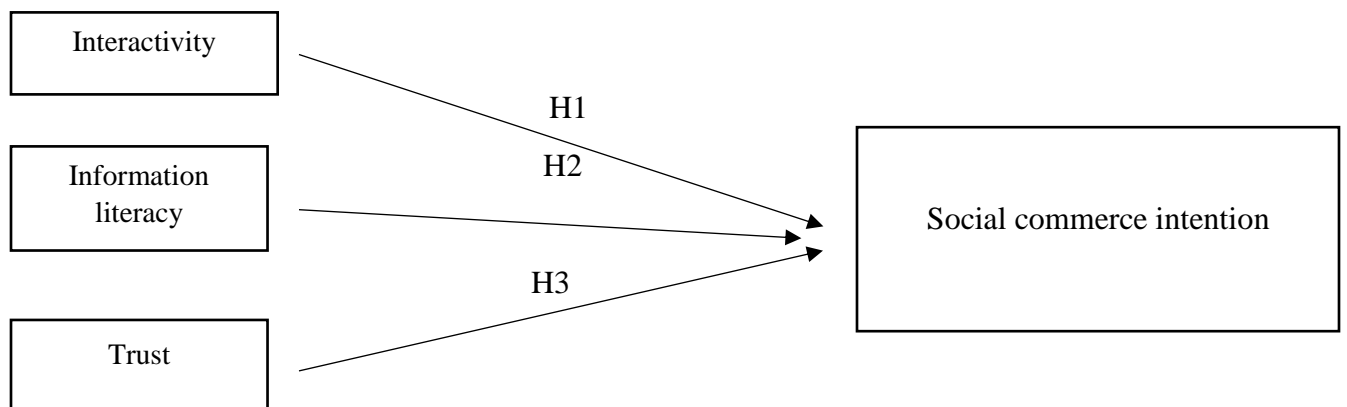

Figure 1 Proposed research model

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The aims of this paper to assess the impact of SMM on customers purchase preference in Chennai. Recent study looked into the aspects that stimulus customer attitudes to SMM and usage (**Sohail and Al-Jabri 2017**). In India, Sum of e-commerce revenues are forecast to increase to "*US$ 67-84 billion by 2021, up from US$ 52.57 billion in 2020*". "*By 2030, the Indian e-commerce market is anticipated to be worth US$ 350 billion*". "*By 2024, India's e-commerce business is predicted to be worth US$ 111 billion, and by 2026, it would be worth US$ 200 billion*" (*e-commerce industry report 2022*). "*In India, there will be 840 million total Internet users (60% of population) by 2022 (cisco 2022)*". According to **Helal (2017**), the favourable influence of SM on the growth of businesses in the country, particularly in terms of customer and professional partner communication this will lead the customer behaviour. The authors were not to lo a comprehensive study that looked at the brand-related and social motivations for using SM, as well as the impact on customer preference and purchase decision. By expanding contextual knowledge of digital customer behaviour, this study provides value for both to constructing theory and management practise. This research is useful for globalising service organisations targeting the Indian market and other emerging countries to design effective entrance and expansion strategies.

Data collection and measurement scale

The study empirically collects quantitative data from customer. The data collected on the basic of convenience sampling. The data were collected from the questionnaire through google forms. The questionnaire was circulated using SM platforms like WhatsApp messenger, Facebook, Instagram, linked in and YouTube. To conform that the sample respondents only from around Chennai. More than 150 responses we collect, but 104 only valid. The study response only takes the people who are purchase the product through social media platforms. To respondents were asked if they used social media. When the online system received a negative response, it automatically quit producing further questions for the participants to answer and thanked them for their time. The questionnaire includes the demographic information and the scales of constructs. The research adopts 5-point Likert-scale. Each construct adapted the scales from previous studies, for example scale for Trust (2 items) were adapted from research conducted (**Van Der Heijden, H. et.al 2003**) measurements of brand community (3 items), were adapted from **Baldus, B. J., Voorhees, C., & Calantone, R. (2015)** and Information literacy (3 items) was measured based on **Asghar, H. M. (2015).** Items to measure social media ads (3 items) were adapted from a study conducted by **Duffett, R. G. (2015)**; the measurement of Interactivity (2 items) was based on **Zhang, K. Z., Benyoucef, M., & Zhao, S. J. (2016)** the measurement of Buying decision (3 items) was based on **Bostan, S., & Durmuş, İ. (2017).** In addition, each participant was asked to respond to questions about trust, brand community, information literacy, social media ads, and interactivity.

Table 1 Demographic Information

PARTICULARS	RESPONSE FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Gender		
Male	48	53.8
Female	56	46.2
Age		
Above 40	19	21.2

31-40	29	32.7
21-30	34	27.9
Below 20	22	18.3
Marital Status		
Unmarried	59	43.3
Married	45	56.7
Level of education		
School or Under	17	16.3
Under graduation	23	22.1
Post-graduation	64	65.5
Most used social media		
Facebook	17	16.3
WhatsApp	23	22.1
Instagram	32	30.8
LinkedIn	8	7.7
Twitter	6	5.8
You tube	13	12.5
Others	5	4.8
Frequency of social media usage		
Less than 1 hr p/d	14	13.5
2-5 hrs p/d	56	53.8
6-9 hrs p/d	15	14.4
More than 10 hrs p/d	6	5.8
Once a week	7	6.7
Not often	6	5.8
Device		
Laptop	39	37.5
Phone	32	30.8
Both	33	31.7

Demographic profile - Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 described the respondents' demographic profile. The final sample had 104 completed and valid responses, as previously stated. The respondents were almost same portion gender male 53.8% and female 46.2%. age of the respondents from 21 to 30 years were 32.7%. Almost 28% of respondents were aged 31-40. That means more than 50% of the respondents age group from 21 to 40.

Among the respondents 56.7 % were unmarried and rest of them were married. On qualification status, 65.5% of them are post graduated, 22.1% are under graduated and the rest of them are school or under school. Further highest percentage of participants used Instagram (30.8%) and WhatsApp (22.1%). Among the all respondents, 53.8% used up 2 to 5 hours per day on SM. Among the respondents 37.5% of them used social media through their mobile device.

Table 2 Mean and standard deviation

Constructs	Items	Mean	Standard deviation
Trust	TF1	3.46	1.246
	TF2	3.55	1.148
Brand community	BC1	3.44	1.156
	BC2	3.23	1.264
	BC3	3.69	.893
Information literacy	IL1	3.61	1.226
	IL2	3.40	1.203
	IL3	2.26	1.435
Social media Ads	SA1	3.22	1.149
	SA2	2.97	1.424
	SA2	2.95	1.202
Interactivity	IA1	3.26	1.231
	IA2	3.45	1.140
Purchase Decision	PD1	3.44	1.173
	PD2	3.01	1.266

For data analysis SPSS software were used. The table 2 shows that Mean and Standard deviation value for each construct. To determine the impact of (CMB) common method bias, the unmeasured latent method factor test (**Podsakoff et al., 2012**) was used. The measuring model featured a common method factor whose indicators incorporated all of the main constructs' indicators and calculated the total score. The percentage of variance explained by each indicator's main construct. All of the constructs were neutral and agreed according to mean and standard deviation

Table 3 Coefficient for constructs

Hypothesis	St. Coefficient beta	Sig.	Result
H1: Interactivity→ *social commerce intention*	0.134	0.000*	Accepted
H2: Information Literacy→ social commerce intention	0.454	0.000*	Accepted
H3: Trust → social commerce intention	0.339	0.004*	Accepted

Significant <p=0.05

Hypotheses Testing

Table 3 shows that H1. H2. and H3 analyses the impact of trust, , information literacy, and interactivity positively affect the social commerce intention. Thus, accepted H1.H2. and H3. The result shows that social media attributes have significant positive effect on social commerce intention and purchase decision.

The result showed that trust(β=0.339), information literacy (β=.454), and interactivity (β=0.134) in social media were positively impact the social commerce intention in social media platform.

DISCUSSION

The main goal of this research was to look into the customers of SMM and their impact on social commerce intention, as well as looked at the role of social media features like interactivity, recommendation and feedback in modifying the link between SMM antecedents and their intentions. SMM's antecedents and buying preference trust, its comments, interaction, and information literacy all have a strong positive impact on consumer social commerce intention, according to the study results. (**Laroche et al. 2012**) SMM favorably promotes brand purchasing behavior and builds good relationship between shopper and customers, according to prior studies.

Utilize SM to influence customer purchasing decisions then build best brand. A few research (**Fournier and Avery 2011**) have determined that SM-based branding and marketing is not an ideal technique for reaching customers. According to this study, having a social presence on social media can assist marketers in connecting and interacting with their brand community, thereby increasing trust, awareness of brand and ultimately influencing purchase decisions. The findings have theoretical as well as managerial consequences.

Previous research (**Laroche, Habibi, and Richard 2013**) has mostly attentive on a few aspects of SM-features based, such as brand community and (**Hutter et al. 2013**) information literacy. The favorable impacts of internet users of SM-based customer involvement on social commerce intention and purchase decision provide compelling evidence for employing social media to manage to understand the customer needs and desire. So, the marketing platforms can customize their portals and provide most favorable products to their customer. At this point they will be change as regular customer for that particular product, it will increase the customer satisfaction and loyalty towards the product or company. The study empirically shown that trust, interaction, and information, are antecedents of social commerce intention and contribute to customer purchasing decision. SMM has an impact on these variables, thus including SMM into your strategy is the greatest option. Furthermore, the findings revealed that the most important indicator of customers' social commerce intention is the information literacy and interactivity with their peers.

LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The research is conducted in a single cultural and socioeconomic location (Chennai). Even within the Urban area, countries' values and lives alter, therefore the results may vary outside of Chennai. As a result, it is advised that future research will be multi-cultural in nature may be carried out in order to improve generalizability of conclusions by investigating the effect empirically SMM's impact on purchase preference even around the globe. Secondly, to understand the formation mechanism of customer purchase decision, this study only used five factors as antecedents of customer preference. Because purchase decision experiences are multidimensional concepts, other dimensions such as brand practice and brand attitude should be investigated (**Hsiao and Chen 2018**). Future study will be able to look at some of the intriguing questions that have been raised. To conclude, the study only shows on the view of social media marketing, further future study will be analyses the concept in social commerce aspect, because these is the new trend in our economic environment.

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