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Investigate the Influence of Social Network Sites on Consumers behaviour: Applying the Technology Acceptance Model

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Abstract

This study is aiming to investigate the factors that affect consumers' online purchase intention through social network sites (SNSs). Theory of reasoned action (TRA) and the technology acceptance model (TAM) were utilized to develop the conceptual framework. Two constructs namely perceived usefulness and behavior intention in addition to the relevant literature on social media and trust was tested. particularly, this study examines i) effects of social media (SM) on trust; ii) effects of trust on perceived usefulness; iii) effects of perceived usefulness and trust on purchase intentions.

Data were gathered from 42 graduates and undergraduate students using the stratified sampling method were analyzed using structural equation modeling and partial least square method. The data obtained from the questionnaire show that social media facilitates social interaction between consumers, which increases the trust level and intention to purchase. The results also revealed that trust was the most dominant construct had a statistically significant effect ($\alpha=0.05$) on behavioral intention to purchase on the Internet, followed by perceived usefulness of a website. For this study, results, along with practical implications and recommended future research directions were discussed.

Keywords: Social media, Trust, TAM, e – commerce

Introduction

In this section the background of the research is described. The research problem and purpose are discussed. The limitations and research questions are defined and finally, the outline of the research is presented.

Background

Since the beginning of the "Internet Era," the primary objective of the World Wide Web (www) creators was to give people the opportunity to gain an easy access and exchange information quickly. The recent years the www gained new form and evolved to "Web 2.0" (1), which gave developers the capability to design and implement new standardized platforms to host, not only information but also "real time" social interactions among their users.

The development of online social networks around the world has created a new opportunity for interaction and communication between people. Individuals can share their knowledge, opinions, and experiences with one other due to the online social networks provided features and may have an impact on people's behavior in terms of communication and purchasing (2). The human being by nature is a social creature, and these days' consumers are participating effectively in a variety of activities, from consuming content to sharing knowledge, opinions, experiences, and involved in a discussion online with other consumers (3).

With the development of Internet, and the emergence of virtual communities these days, online social networks have become important communication channels between people. During past decade, the online world has become a new type of social communication that connecting individuals to a variety of online communities. Groups

that may never meet in the physical world but nevertheless they are able to affect behavior including purchasing decisions (4). The Internet today is not only just an information access tool; but also has become an interaction tool, and it has become a social place where created new forum for consumers. Moreover, virtual communities, blog, and social networking sites (SNSs) provide a platform to impact on consumers' purchase decisions (5).

People are purchasing things that are related to their needs and requirements, and they are making a purchase decision on a daily basis. Consumer's behavior is defined as "*the activities people undertake when obtaining, consuming, and disposing of products and service through the internet using several social media s*" (6). Of course, consumers' behavior is influenced by several personal and environmental factors. A central part of consumer behavior is consumers' purchasing decision that included several steps. Generally, social networks such as groups or individuals who own the power over consumers can affect consumers' purchase decision (7).

Social networking tools like Twitter, Facebook, Flickr and Blogs have facilitated creation and exchange of ideas so quickly and widely than the conventional media. In light of these considerations, the aim of this research study is to explore the influence of social media on consumers' behavior to purchase online. TAM is an approach to such studies on drivers of social media usage behavior and intention to use. In this study, two constructs: perceived usefulness (PU) and behavioral intention to use were adapted from a well-known Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis (1989), one of the most effective extensions of Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) by Ajzen and Fishbein's [(8); (9)], and relevant literature on trust and social media to develop an integrated model. TAM has been proven to be suitable as a theoretical basis for the adoption of e-commerce by many researchers [(10); (11); (12)].

Today, with the expansion of social media and SNSs, a study of consumer behaviour on these platforms is a research agenda because social media are likely to develop marketing strategies in firms through trust-building mechanisms and affecting customers' intention to purchase online products. This research study is aiming to investigate the role of social media and how they can affect consumer's intention to purchase and user's trust in social commerce environment. To these ends, theorizing and investigating the consumer's behavior in online shopping environment is substantial for developing future understandings.

Problem Discussion

In terms of adoption and usage levels, the social media achieved an exceptional success. They have caused paradigm transformations on how people connect and communicate with each other, how they express and share ideas, and even how they interact with products, services, trademarks, and businesses. Over and above, social media became important networks of consumer knowledge. In behavior intention to purchase, its impacts already have been described as an enormous, this is primarily due to the experimental nature of products and services provided and trust in the websites. Purchases through social media environment are considered risky, thus decision-making process is not an easy matter.

Although Social interactions are a crucial issue in understanding consumers behavior, the relationship between social and commerce networks has not been examined on a large scale.

Obviously, there is still a lack of empirical studies regarding the connection between SNSs and consumer's purchasing decision in the areas of social commerce. Trust is another issue that affects consumer's intention to purchase. In the physical world, more shared social connections are a good predictor of trust between individuals. Physical clues in the traditional shopping environment and direct communicate with sellers that affect consumer's sense of trust are absent in online environment. This lack of physical clues and physical interaction in this virtual environment, make it more difficult to build trust in a social commerce and, therefore, influence the consumer's intention to purchase. So, this constitutes a major challenge and concern for organizations that engage e-commerce by SNSs.

Aim and objectives

The research aim of this thesis is to investigate the role of social media and how they can influence the consumer's intention to purchase and impact on a user's trust in a social commerce environment. To achieve this aim, the following objectives of this study have been formulated: *First*, to investigate how SNSs can affect trust? , *Second*, to examine the relationship between trust and Consumers' online purchase intention through SNSs; and; *third*, to test the relationship between trust and PU of SNSs on consumer's intention to purchase. In sum, this paper examines the direct and indirect effect of social media on both consumers' trust and intention to purchase. To achieve the objectives, the following research questions have been formulated: *First*, do social media affect the user's trust? *Second*, do PU and trust affect user's intention to purchase? *Third*, Perceived usefulness or trust? Which factor is more important in determining the user's intention to purchase?

Outline

Section 2 provides a theoretical framework on TAM, social media, trust and e-commerce. Section 3, presents a literature review on the relation between a study variables and how each one affects the other. Section 4 describes the research methodology and design. Section 5 presents the data analysis and findings. Conclusion and discussion around the research findings offers in sections 6 and 7 respectively. Section 8 provides implication and suggestions for future studies.

Theoretical Framework

In this section the theoretical framework is presented. The section starts with some background of information about TAM, social media and trust issue in online environment. Literature review also included.

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

Technology Acceptance Model was first created by (8) based on the theory of reasoned action (TRA) (9) in psychology research. TRA posits that one's behavior is directly influenced by behavioral intention that is a function of his /her attitudes and subjective norms toward the behavior [(8); (13)].

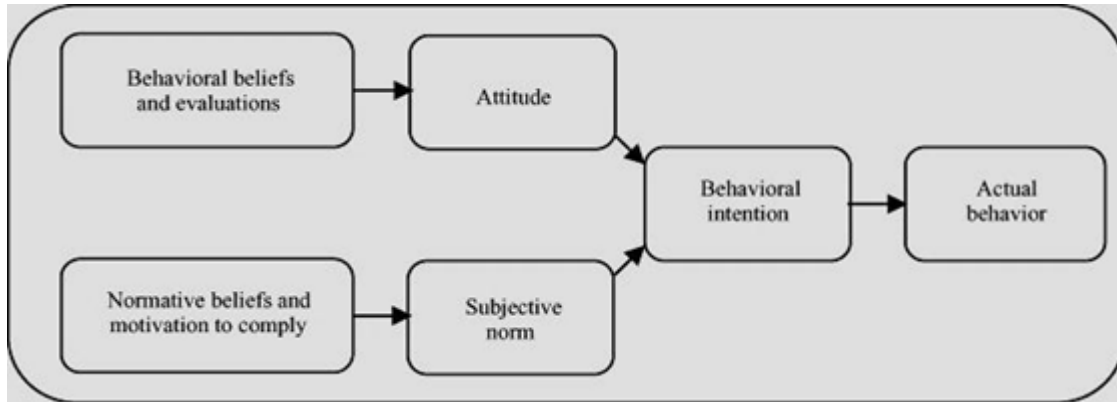


Fig. 1: Theory of Reasoned Action

TAM is one of the most popular research models to predict use and acceptance of information systems and technology by individual users'. TAM aims to understand and explain user acceptance of a new technology (8). The model has been widely utilized by different research fields to understand and predict user behaviors. It provides a theoretical model to assist in explaining the relationships among external variables, perceived usefulness, and perceived ease of use, attitude, intention to use, and actual use (14). Attitudes and behavioral intentions toward the online environment have been widely supported by the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (8).

TAM has not only been used in information system research, but also has been used in other fields. Many researchers have supported that TAM model is proven suitable for measuring the adoption of e-commerce [(12); (11); (15)]. Hence, TAM was used as the basis of the

theoretical framework in this study. Two variables in TAM, i.e. perceived usefulness (PU), and behavioral intention to use were included in this study's research model.

PU was adapted into the research model because it has been well documented and consistently supported by many empirical studies to have an impact on the behavioral intention to adopt technological products (8). It is defined as *the degree to which an individual believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance*"

(8). Behavioral intention to use is the second construct into the proposed research model. In the context of purchasing intention in social media settings; this means that a person can be influenced by someone who is important to him or her who think he or she should perform or not to perform the transaction online (8).

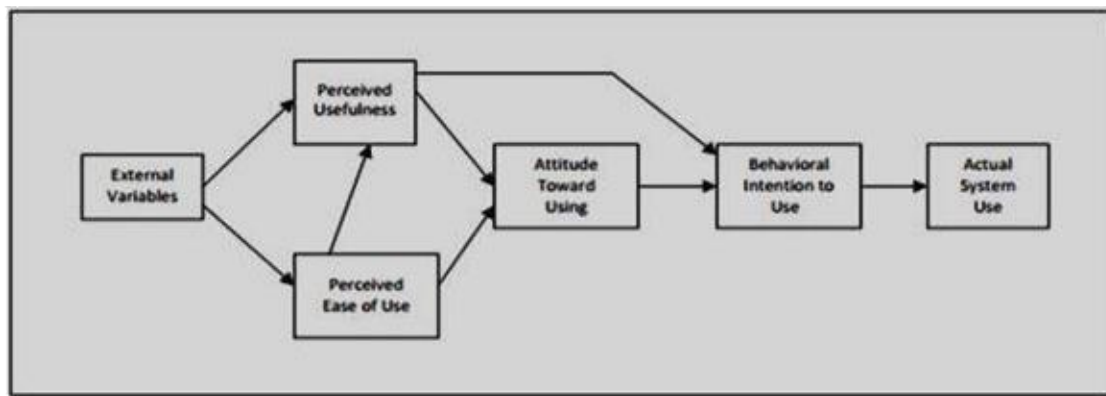


Fig. 2: Original TAM

Social Media

During the last two decades, People's way of shopping has significantly changed and improved. This has been facilitated by Web 2.0 applications [(16); (1)]. Web 2.0 is a new advancement, which has transferred the internet to a social environment by introducing social media, where individuals can interact and generate content online (17). There are several definitions of social networking. It is "the relationship that exists between networks of people (18). Social Media (SM) are web-based services which are also known as "Social Networking Sites (SNSs)" refer to network of relationships and interactions among different users (groups or individuals) (19). "Social media refer to the "online platforms and tools that people use to share opinions and experiences including photos, videos, music, insights and perceptions with each other" (20).

Social media have changed the way of people think about businesses and marketing, and Consumers have a direct influence through communication and interaction. Nowadays, the methods of interaction among consumers and companies have been varied, and the authority switched from companies to consumers due to SNSs. The SNSs have become an influential primary side in individuals' communication and interaction and impact numerous ways in people's behavior and attitudes. The participation and discussion over the Internet have made consumers an influential factor in product, service, and brand. Through social influences, changes occur in behavior and action. The main role of social networks lies in distributing information, opinions, and influences between their members (19); facilitating word-of-

mouth(WOM) communication (21);offers different values to firms, such as enhanced brand popularity (22);increasing sales (23);sharing information in a business context (24);and generating social support for consumers(25).

Trust

Trust has been conceptualized by many previous researchers. In this paper, we only discuss the concept of trust through Internet shopping (or e-commerce context) because the concept of "trust" is quite broad. We, now, briefly discuss several previous research studies dealing with the conceptualization of trust in an e-commerce context. In e-commerce contexts, uncertainty exists all the time because of both parties' unpredictable action and opportunistic behavior, where neither the seller nor buyer can be face-to-face. Consequently, to avoid this opportunistic behavior is the key to removing this kind of uncertainty and making a successful economic transaction. On line shopping requires more trust, since it is more complex than shopping in a traditional environment. On a public network, like Internet, it is not easy to establish trust between the buyer and seller. In most social interactions involving uncertainty and dependency, trust is generally an important factor. One group of researchers finds that "*online transactions and exchange relationships are not only characterized by uncertainty, but also by anonymity, lack of control and potential opportunism, making risk, and trust is a crucial elements of electronic commerce*" (26). Trust viewed as a mental shortcut that consumers can use while trying to minimize the complexity and uncertainty of transactions and the relationships in electronic markets environment. Trust is a cornerstone in improving e-commerce and plays an influential role in it. In a business-to-consumer (B2C) relationship, trust in the e-vendors is very important in assessing risk in the transactions. Several definitions of trust which are based on various dimensions of integrity, ability, benevolence, empathy, and competence (27). The Credibility and benevolence of the website are the two main dimensions of trust (28) on which this research study is based. Credibility-based trust refers to the belief that the other party in a transaction is reliable and relies on reputation information, while benevolence refers to repeated seller-buyer relationships (28). Therefore, in this research; trust is viewed in the context of transactions over the internet through SNSs and online communities. Trust in peers on the network and trust in the SNSs themselves will also be considered. In the context of online communities, trust can facilitate the interaction of individuals and encourage them to stick to their current network.

E – Commerce

The emergence of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has led to major changes in the global market structure. ICTs has generated a platform for the digital economy and emerged what so-called electronic commerce (e-commerce). Furthermore, the internet has made it possible for consumers to purchase products and services online, from national and international markets alike. E – Commerce includes" business communications transactions over networks and through computers, specifically, selling and purchasing of products and services and the transfer of funds through digital communications (29). E – Commerce is a way to do business in particular markets and for selected customers,

which can lower costs, provide more real – time information to customers, and increase sales volume (29). Briefly, it constitutes a medium of selling and purchasing products, services, information and others via the Internet. Understanding how SNSs are used and how they shape purchasing decisions is one of the essential interests of e-commerce.

Social Media for E-Commerce

As a result of the enormous increase in the number of participants in social networks, what known as an electronic commerce (e-commerce) has emerged. The enormous increase in the number of participants in social networks has led to the rise and strengthening of e-commerce. This development prompting many businesses to use it as a platform for conducting e-commerce. According (4), social network sites is blooming nowadays, thus, companies should participate in it because numerous people all over the world are connecting to each other and discussing the company's products and services over this media. He also indicated that if companies choose to ignore customers comments through this media and not to participate effectively, that will be a loss for companies. This shows the increasing importance of social networking for individuals and companies alike, due to its future's dominant role. Thence, individuals and companies should start using social media in their businesses and they should be able to know how to use it or else they will be out of this market. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Bloggers are the four popular social media tools used by people worldwide that are available for the businesses and individuals to use as a medium for them to participate (30). Each of the tools has its own function in conducting e-commerce. Facebook is a new face of e-commerce in the twenty-first century by providing new value of services to Internet users to express themselves and network with others (31). Twitter is another social media tool used by most people nowadays. It has become a place where companies conduct e-commerce, send information to customers and create communities with the customers and to sell goods and services for individuals (32). At Twitter, companies can quickly react and respond to the customers' needs. YouTube is another primary type of social media network. It gives free services to community to watch and share video via the web (20). Blog is a place where Internet users' blog about their interests or anything that they would like to talk, it is another famous type of social media tool among Internet users (30).

Literature Review and Hypotheses development

This section presents the previous literature related to the research model which maps out the theoretical basis of the research in general. Also hypotheses were developed.

Influence of Social Media on Trust

Communication between consumers through social media such as online communities, recommendations, and reviews is likely to build trust in e – commerce [(16); (11)]. Directly by social interactions among consumers, and indirectly by supporting product involvement, consumer socialization happens through SNSs. The social relationships of consumers created through social media significantly impact the perceived consumer's trust (33). The interactions on these platforms generate social support, which in turn

influences trust [(34); (11)]. In addition, (28), indicated that more positive comments, feedback, and higher ratings lead to a higher trust level in a vendor.

Reviews are perceived to be beneficial and affect both attitude and intention to purchase through the impression generated about service or product (35). The results of the previous related research show that the quantity and quality of information created by customer reviews influence intention to purchase through increased trust (36). In addition, the networking of individuals through social media provides shared values, leading to a positive impact on trust (37). Social media has a positive effect on trust: Most of the studies we found show that social media has a positive effect on trust [(38); (16); (11)].

Influence of trust on Perceived usefulness and intention to Purchase

One of the most frequent reasons for consumers not to shop through social media is the lack of trust, and negatively affects purchase intention. The salesperson with the consumer trust being dependent on the salesperson’s expertise, likeability, and similarity to the customer the most salient source of trust in a retail setting is the salesperson according to (39). In purchasing online, consumers cannot physically check the quality of a product or monitor the security and safety of sending sensitive personal and financial information with mistrust (40). Consequently, lack of trust in the online environment negatively affects purchase intention [(16); (11)]. According to [(41); (16); (11)], trust in SNSs plays an important role in attitudes towards online shopping. Members of SNSs can assure each other through their information exchange and experience, then increasing trust and, therefore, willingness to purchase (42). [(43); (10)], confirmed that the non-technological related construct of trust on a website affects the intention to visit a commercial website again.

Trust in the transaction and network influence the online purchaser (44), and promotes intention to buy [(24); (45); (11)].This, in turn, confirms that trust plays an important role in our proposed research model. The relationship between trust and PU is also positive, as well, trust increases certain features of PU [(46); (10)]. Previous research shows that trust will positively affect PU [(46); (16); (11)]. Many studies indicated that trust represents a cornerstone in determining the actual behavior and behavioral intentions of the consumer [(47); (46); (45); (11)].However, the emergence of Web 2.0 and Social media can aid customers to minimize risk and increase

social trust. According to (48) seemingly, interactions between the connected users in SNSs increase trust, and trust is an important determinant in considering a consumer’s intention to purchase [(49); (11); (16); (10); (46)].Indeed, the more trust consumers are, the more likely they are to purchase (43). Thence, trust is likely to influence the intention to transact [(50); (46); (11); (26)].

Influence of Perceived Usefulness on intention to purchase

This section focuses on the degree to which the participants believed that utilizing SNSs and the related apps would be free of effort. By applying the definition of PU in the context of e- commerce, usefulness refers to the degree to which consumers' believe that utilizing the Internet as a medium will improve their performance or productivity, and therefore enhancing the outcome of their purchasing experience. Easy access, speed, and detailed information about products and services, as well as the availability of inexpensive and convincing purchases, are mostly main benefits that affect consumers' intention to purchase[(51), (52)]. The accessibility and speed of purchasing may be really beneficial features for experienced Internet users. PU impacts users’ intentions to utilize the e-commerce (53). It is clear that PU plays a vital role in e-commerce and it is likely also to have a positive influence on the social commerce environment [(16); (10); (42); (11)]. In SNSs, the user’s perceived value and usefulness of online connection have also a significant positive impact on their willingness in attracting other new members to the web. The results of (41) research on shopping through SNSs, indicates that the more consumers shop in SNSs that they perceive to be useful, the more intention they have to purchase through SNSs. Previous study indicated that PU positively affects the online purchase intention [(12); (16); (11); (10)].

Research Model and Hypotheses

The research proposes an integrated model to examine the relationships between the constructs of this research, namely: perceived usefulness (PU), social media(SM), trust (T), and intention to purchase (INTP) in SNSs. The theoretical model used here is presented in Figure 3 (which represents a causal relationship schema). In this figure, the boxes represent the constructs which were measured by a set of item; the arrows represent the hypotheses 1 to 4 as mentioned below, and the ‘+’ sign besides the hypotheses indicates the expected influence to be positive.

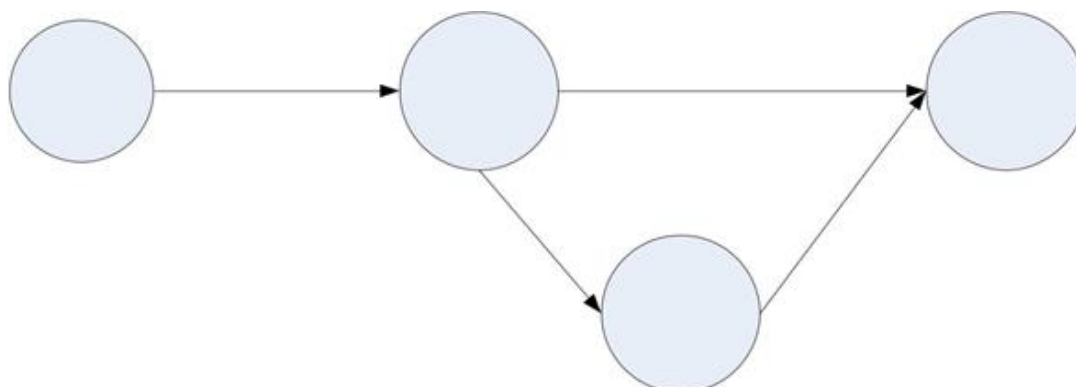


Fig. 3: Research Model

In accordance with the previously stated objectives and consistent with related literature, the following hypotheses were proposed by the researchers of this research study based on the above research model.

Hypothesis One (H1): Social media will have a strong positive effect on consumers' trust.

Hypothesis Two (H2): Trust has a significant positive effect on perceived usefulness.

Hypothesis Three (H3): Trust has a significant positive effect on consumers' intention to purchase.

Hypothesis Four (H4): The SNSs' perceived usefulness has a significant positive effect on the user's intention to purchase.

Methodology

Choice of Methodology

Our purpose is get better understanding of the influence of social media on consumers' behavior. Conducting a survey, in form of questionnaire, seemed like the most appropriate method. We used questionnaire as the research instrument for this study. Using the questionnaire enables us to collect standardized data, which allows for easy comparison. This data can be expressed in numbers and quantitatively analyzed, by using a software program SPSS.

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire was divided into two sections, the first section requested information on respondents' demographic data (gender, age, occupation). The second section was related to the motivation constructs that influence online purchase intention through SNSs. These constructs are: social media, trust, perceived usefulness, and purchase intention, and measured by 16 items, each item has a five-point Likert-type scale with anchors from "Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree". Trust measures trust in SNSs and peers in these networks (15). Social interaction measures the activity of individuals through online communities, forums, ratings, reviews and recommendations [(16); (10); (11)].

Perceived usefulness was measured by the effectiveness of a site's technology. The dependent variable of this study is intention to purchase. This construct measures the user's willingness to purchase on SNSs and their intention to

purchase through SNSs. To increase the validity of the study, the items in the questionnaire was adopted from related studies [(16); (15); (10); (11)]. Trust, one of the key constructs of the model, has been investigated in many previous research papers [(15); (16); (11)].

Statistical procedure

The current research study utilized structural equation modeling (SEM); it is the most common approach in social sciences generally. In SEM, we use a partial least square method (PLS) - as an effective way of managing complex data in a low-structure situation. PLS is very appropriate when theoretical information is low [(54); (55)], as in the areas of social media and social commerce. SEM-PLS is a good method to assess the validity and reliability of constructs (56). PLS is also suitable for testing a new model (57). This research proposes a new model to develop a theoretical foundation for social commerce through social media.

Data Analysis

Participants

We conducted this study at one of the big malls in Amman City, Jordan. A total of 50 questionnaires were distributed. 42 questionnaires were returned and used for the analysis.

Table 1 shows the respondents' demographic profile frequency and percentage. Among respondents, 64.286 % (27) were male and 35.714 % (15) were female.

Table 1: Summary of Respondents' Profile

Demographic	Frequency (n= 42)	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	27	64.286
Female	15	35.714
Age		
< 20	03	7.143
21 – 30	15	35.714
31- 40	13	30.952
41 - 50	06	14.286
>51	05	11.905
Job		
Student	11	26.190
Employee	25	59.524
Other	06	14.286
Total	42	100.0

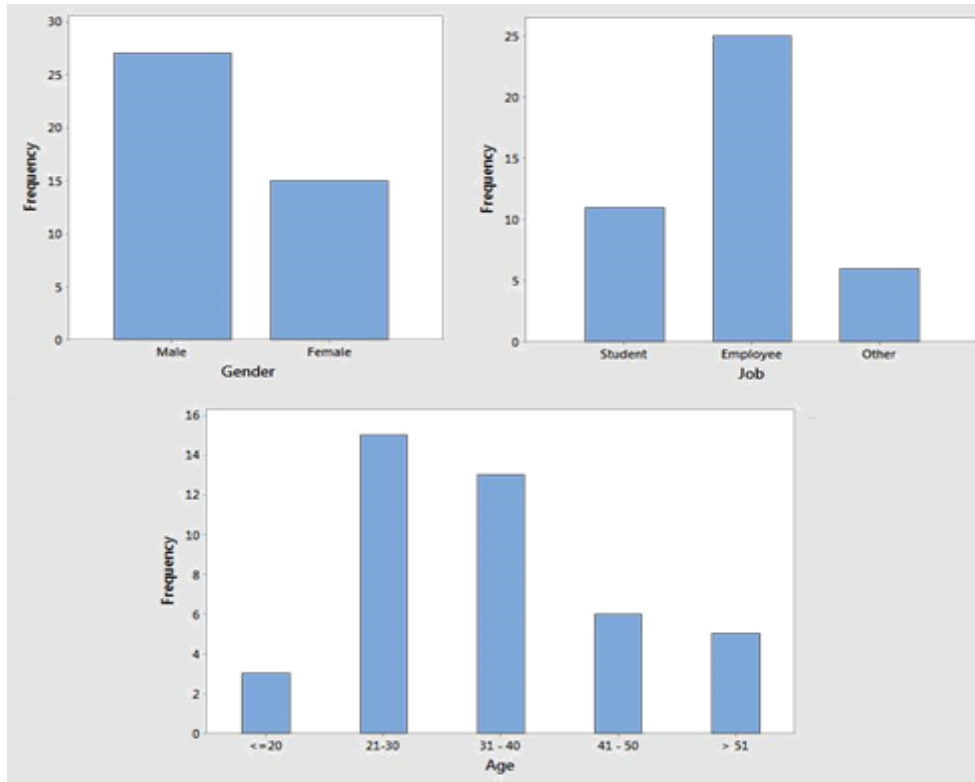


Fig. 4: Respondents' profile

Reliability analysis

Reliability refers to "the extent to which your data collection techniques or analysis procedure will yield consistent findings" (58). Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis was conducted to evaluate internal consistency and reliability of variables in this study. A Cronbach's alpha value of greater than 0.7 is considered an acceptable reliability level [(56); (59)]. All Cronbach's alpha values in this study were above 0.7, which demonstrated a high internal consistency and reliability. Table 2 shows the results of reliability tests.

Table2: Constructs and reliability tests

Constructs	Items in Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Social Media	4	0.852	0.896
Trust	4	0.804	0.878
PU	4	0.893	0.908
Intension to purchase	4	0.738	0.884

Validity analysis

Validity is "concerned with whether the findings are really about what they appear to be about" (59). It was important for us to get right information from the questionnaire. The research tests the validity through both content validity and construct validity. In content validity the study has checked face validity by asking scholars to check the questionnaire items. Recommendations by these scholars have been taken into account. The research has also covered a substantial

literature review [(47); (51); (11); (10); (15)]. Perceived usefulness, trust and intention to purchase are constructs that have frequently been used in information systems (IS), and marketing disciplines, and the questionnaire items were adopted from the existing literature, which increases the content validity of the research. Convergent validity can be ensured by assessing discriminant and convergent validity (60). The average variance extracted (AVE) is a criterion to measure convergent validity and should be more than 0.50 (56). AVE is a good test of convergent validity (59). Table 3 shows the results of AVE.

Table 3: Results of AVE

Constructs	Composite reliability	AVE	R2
Social Media	0.907	0.659	-----
Trust	0.871	0.571	0.186
PU	0.929	0.811	0.314
Intension to purchase	0.889	0.889	0.367

For the discriminant validity, PLS is a good way to ensure the extent to which a given construct of the model is different from other constructs (56). The square of the correlations among the variables has been compared with the AVE to assess the discriminant validity (60). Table 4 shows the square of correlation between latent variables, ensuring the research's discriminant validity.

Table 4: correlation between latent variables

Constructs	Intention to purchase	Perceived usefulness	Social media	Trust
Intention to purchase	0.889			
Perceived usefulness	0.569	0.901		
Social media	0.421	0.395	0.810	
Trust	0.482	0.560	0.429	0.770

Finally, examining the factor loadings of each indicator gives a two-fold result for convergent validity and discriminant validity (56). This has been achieved by looking at factor loadings of an indicator, which should be greater than the construct of it than on any other factor

[(56); (60)]. The cross-loading is presented in Table 5, which shows that the factor loading of all indicators is greater than the construct of them on any other factors. Therefore, the validity of the research has been achieved to a satisfactory level.

Table 5: Cross - loadings result

Items	SM	T	PU	INTP
SM1	0.756	0.303	0.258	0.335
SM2	0.770	0.373	0.266	0.338
SM3	0.871	0.411	0.418	0.380
SM4	0.780	0.259	0.293	0.321
T1	0.330	0.814	0.250	0.518
T2	0.180	0.741	0.431	0.346
T3	0.430	0.733	0.256	0.210
T4	0.221	0.710	0.330	0.322
PU1	0.306	0.460	0.884	0.549
PU2	0.302	0.497	0.916	0.447
PU3	0.445	0.554	0.903	0.538
PU4	0.344	0.475	0.783	0.497
INTP1	0.419	0.426	0.568	0.813
INTP2	0.335	0.419	0.498	0.740
INTP3	0.410	0.457	0.468	0.731
INTP4	0.356	0.425	0.495	0.710

Note. T= Trust; SM = Social Media; PU = Perceived usefulness; INTP = Intention to Purchase

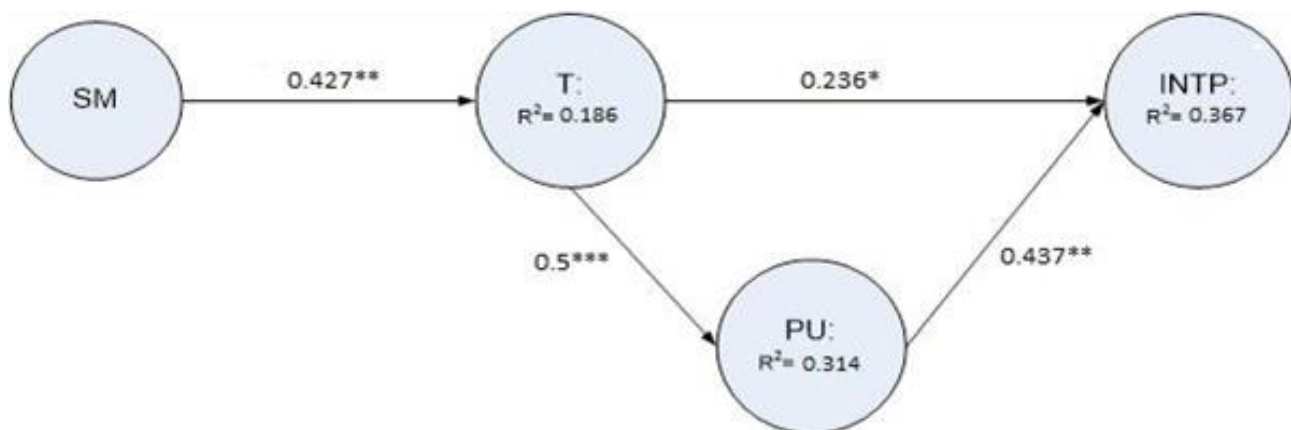
Structural model

Hypotheses' testing was conducted within the context of the structural model. The general structural model was used to test the simple bivariate relationships between the constructs included in the model. This research study utilized the (PLS) approach to multiple indicators SEM analysis to analyze both; the measurement model and structural model. The structural model and hypotheses were examined by testing the path coefficients and their significance level. The validity of the study model was assessed through structural paths and R – squares (R2s), while the path coefficients in the research model are positively significant at the level of $\alpha=0.05$.

The R2 of INTP shows that nearly 36.7 % of the variance in the INTP was accounted for by T and PU based on the results shown in Figure 5. This means that INTP was influenced by SM and PU. The R2 for T means that nearly 18.6% of the variance in T was accounted for by SM. Moreover, the R2 for PU means that nearly 31.4% of the

variance in this construct was accounted for by T. The results of path coefficients show that T (0.236) and PU (0.437) both have a significant impact on INTP. Therefore, hypothesis three (H3): (trust has a significant positive effect on consumers' intention to purchase), and hypothesis four (H4): (the SNSs' perceived usefulness has a significant positive effect on the user's intention to purchase) are supported.

The effect of PU on INTP is higher than T. This result indicates that the PU of a social network websites promotes consumers to purchase. SM also has a significant influence on T, and this impact is strong. Consequently, this supports hypothesis one (H1): (social media will have a strong positive effect on consumers' trust), and shows that interconnection of individuals through SM create trust in e-commerce. Finally; T has a significant impact on PU. Thus, the results support hypothesis two (H2): (trust has a significant positive effect on perceived usefulness). Figure 5 illustrates the P-value of study constructs.



*p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001

Fig. 5: Results of the PLS analysis

Conclusion

Authors concluded this study by answering the research questions with proper and relevant information findings. *First research question: do social media affect the user's trust?* Findings indicating that social media increase the trust level in consumers and indirectly encourage intention to purchase through SNSs. Social networking sites provide support for consumers from their peers. As a result, these interactions generate trust in the networks usage. Most of the studies we found show that social media has a positive effect on trust [(11); (16); (10); (15)]. The results of this study indicate that trust had a statistically significant effect on behavioral intention to purchase through SNSs. This is consistent with previous research indicating the role of trust on influencing consumer attitudes towards purchasing behaviour [(16); (11); (38)]. Communication through social networking sites supports the mechanisms of building trust in e-commerce as well as the adoption of social commerce, which would push consumers for purchasing. *Second research question, do PU and trust affect user's intention to purchase?* The results of data analysis reveal that SM enables participants to create content through online communities, recommendations, and reviews. As well, the results show that trust supported by social media significantly impacts intention to purchase. When potential consumers' are encouraged to build a trust in e-vendors by their peers, along with trust in social networks, they are, of course, more likely to purchase through SNSs. In addition, perceived usefulness affects intention to purchase. This is supported by [(16); (10); (11); (38)]. When participants experience high levels of system quality or information quality, they are more likely to purchase through SNSs. This confirms the relevant hypothesis and answers the second research question.

Third Research question: Perceived usefulness or trust? Which factor is more important in determining the user's intention to purchase? Data analysis shows that perceived usefulness has more effect than trust on intention to purchase through SNSs. Accordingly, improving the quality of the websites will enhance perceived usefulness in their consumers. The other data revealed by analysis confirms that trust has a positive and significant effect on perceived usefulness. This result is supported by many previous studies on the same subject [(16); (11)]. Once participants accepted trust, not only had they more intention to buy, but they also found increased perceived usefulness in the site. This highlights the mediating role of trust in social commerce adoption. Therefore, trust has a significant role in e-commerce by directly influencing intention to buy and indirectly influencing perceived usefulness. In conclusion, this research study found that proposed factors affecting purchase intention are significant.

Discussion

The evolution of online social networks all over the world has generated a new environment of communication and interaction among people. Individuals can share their opinions, knowledge, and experiences with one other due to the features provided by social networks and may have an effect on consumers' behavior in terms of communication and purchasing. The present research study adopted perceived usefulness and behavioral intention to purchase from the TAM and merges them with social media and trust

to suggest an integrated model to explore the role of social media in e-commerce and the adoption of social commerce. The study model has been validated through a structural equation modeling (SEM) - partial least square method (PLS) method. This research shows that advancements in the internet and the emergence of Web 2.0 along with social media have empowered customers. In this climate, consumers create added value through collaboration and social interactions on the internet. They support business through the co-creation of value via their social interactions. Now, consumers can create content through social media, and share information and experiences with other consumers and have an easy access to each other's information.

That value can be beneficial to the adoption of e-commerce and the intentions of purchasing through social media websites. Social interactions for consumers create online social support, and thus promoting the adoption of e-commerce to build trust and consequently, impact users' intention to purchase. Indeed, social factors facilitated by social media promote a climate that attracts, in turn, a large number of individuals to participate online and take part in social interactions. This research study is an attempt from researchers to highlight the role of social media and its impact on building trust in e-commerce. Also, the research presented how social media and social factors impact on trust and consumers' intention to purchase through SNSs.

Implications, limitations, and Recommendations for Further Studies

One of the most important theoretical implications of this research study is: the combining of the technology acceptance model (TAM) a well-known theory in information systems, and one of the most influential extensions of Ajzen and Fishbein's Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) with relevant literatures on social media and trust as a theoretical foundation to develop and integrated model for the adoption of e-commerce. This research study model can therefore be used as a new concept in the field of e-commerce and social commerce and opens up more prospects for further studies.

Studying and analyzing the effect of social media on consumers' behavior is a significant issue because purchasing is an important process for consumers and businesses alike. This research study assists businesses to understand their consumers' expectation, orientation, satisfaction, requirements, and interests toward using a certain Social Media. Furthermore, e-vendors will understand what type of information should be provided for a specific product or service to meet consumers' requirement. As well as, they will recognize which SNSs are frequently utilized by consumers.

The research study also provides some implications for managerial applications for e-vendors to enhance the quality of their websites, as this research shows that improving a website's quality will enhance perceived usefulness in consumers. E-vendors may encourage consumers to come online and use social media to develop trust. Also, it has shown the essential role of trust in the environment of e-commerce and social commerce alike. The major managerial implication of this study is building and maintaining trust through social media. The findings and discussions in this study can be used as guidelines for businesses and individuals who plan to conduct online

business through social media.

We must acknowledge that there are some limitations in this research study. First, the sample size is relatively small, which may restrict this study from reaching convincing results, particularly from a quantitative analysis viewpoint, and, therefore, cannot be generalized. Second, the research study did not examine the full original technology acceptance model (TAM); only, two constructs were examined in the TAM application. Third, this research study did not consider other important aspects of consumer's behavior such as social effect, prior experience in purchasing through the internet, income, risk, psychological and cultural factors. What follows are several recommendations for future studies to deal with the limitations.

Future researchers are suggested to set a larger sample size of respondents in order to acquire more reliable information and ensure generalizability of the findings. Second, additional dimensions for independent variables can be added into the research model for the purpose of identifying the other dominant factors that affect online purchase intention such as perceived ease of use and perceived costs. Third, additional important aspects of consumer's behavior such as social effect, prior experience in purchasing through the internet, income, risk, psychological and cultural factors.

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