

DRIVERS OF TRUST AND PURCHASE INTENTION IN SOCIAL COMMERCE: A COMPREHENSIVE LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The rapid expansion of social networking platforms and Web 2.0 technologies has transformed electronic commerce into social commerce, creating new opportunities for businesses and consumers. Social commerce integrates online shopping with social interactions, enabling trust-building mechanisms such as reviews, ratings, and recommendations. This study conducts a comprehensive literature review to examine the drivers of trust and their influence on purchase intention in social commerce. An extensive analysis of existing research highlights five key determinants of trust—perceived reputation, perceived size, economic benefit, service quality, and social commerce constructs. Findings suggest that trust is a critical factor in shaping consumer behaviour and remains a cornerstone of purchase intention in social commerce. The study further identifies challenges such as privacy concerns and information authenticity while outlining avenues for future research on cultural variations, consumer loyalty, and technological innovations.

Keywords: Social Commerce, Trust, Purchase Intention, Electronic Commerce, Social Media, Online Consumer Behaviour

1. INTRODUCTION

When Web 2.0 first surfaced in the early 2000s, the internet transitioned from static web pages to dynamic platforms that allowed for interactive experiences and user-generated content (O'Reilly, 2005). Early social networking sites (SNS) like SixDegrees.com were launched in 1997 as a result of this evolution, and they were essential for developing online social relationships and laying the groundwork for later platforms like Facebook and Instagram (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Social media and Web 2.0 technologies have revolutionized business and communication practices as well as how individuals interact with one another in daily life. Social networking sites have grown rapidly around the world in recent years, mostly due to its capacity to connect people quickly and easily and to make it easier for people to share and exchange a variety of content (Bortoli et al., 2011). Social technologies and platforms, such as social networking sites (SNSs), have become increasingly popular, which has led to major developments in this field (Liang & Turban, 2011). Social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter have become essential components of the digital world, providing new e-commerce prospects, especially in the business-to-business (B2B) sector. These advancements drive individuals to go online and engage with their peers via social platforms such as online communities. E-commerce has

evolved into social commerce as an outcome of people's online social connections and interactions, especially on social networking sites that mainly revolve around these interactions (Fue et al., 2009). Social network activities and the advancement of Web 2.0 technologies are the foundations of social commerce (Yang et al. 2013). When social commerce was first launched in 2005 on the Yahoo website, it represented a blend of shopping done over social media and social networking (Wang & Zhang, 2012). It was different from other online buying experiences in the sense that it provided a more dynamic setting, where customers could receive information from other consumers not only from the vendor. Social commerce may have greater influence than traditional e-commerce because of the increased accessibility and personalized touch offered by these Web 2.0 technologies. People started looking for alternative methods to complete their everyday tasks as a result of the development of online platforms during the past three decades. Research on social commerce has grown dramatically over the last ten years, demonstrating the widespread use of social commerce tactics and strategies. This is particularly crucial since consumers are still looking for simpler ways to make purchases, especially on social media platforms—a concept known as "social commerce." In a nutshell, social commerce brings together e-commerce with social networking sites (SNSs), deploying Web 2.0 technology to improve purchasing and selling relationships among shoppers and organizations. S-commerce is defined as a subset of e-commerce that functions as an online open market based on group and interpersonal dynamics (Stephen and Toubia ,2010). Furthermore, s-commerce is described as combination of e-commerce and social networking sites which simplify the purchasing and selling of goods and services using various internet technologies (Marsden,2010). Social media mediates social commerce (Hajli, 2014a). S-commerce research is still in its infancy, despite the fact that the topic has gained widespread interest in numerous studies since 2010(Wang & Zhang, 2012).Further, it is believed that understanding of s-commerce is dispersed and restricted(Wang & Zhang, 2012).

In light of this dynamic, comprehending the connection between trust and purchase intention has emerged as a crucial field of study in SC, attracting significant attention from academics and business experts alike. Although earlier research has made significant progress in examining how trust affects purchase intention, results are still mixed. This link has been empirically evaluated using a variety of analytical techniques, such as structural equation modeling (Irshad et al., 2020) and the hierarchical linear model (Hung et al., 2021). Therefore, trust in the social network is likely to be considered a critical factor by consumers contemplating social commerce for their purchases. Extensive studies have been conducted on trust in typical online purchases, but unique characteristics are possessed by social commerce compared to traditional transactions. In the social commerce environment, researchers consider the identification of relevant trust elements and their antecedents to be a crucial area of study. Consumer trust has been pointed out as a significant challenge in e-commerce. Trust is also acknowledged to be an important aspect in creating and maintaining long-term connections, and it therefore acts as a fundamental driver of people's desire to purchase through social commerce (Sharma, et al., 2019; Lu et al.,2016). Therefore, it is crucial to comprehend trust in this area. This demonstrates the importance of including trust in the study and further investigating its significance as an indicator of purchase intention through social commerce. In order to determine the elements impacting purchasing decisions among particular customer groups, strategists and business professionals must have a thorough understanding of purchase intention (Halim & Hamed, 2005). Before delving deeper into its impact, a clear understanding of social commerce platforms is essential.

2. SOCIAL COMMERCE PLATFORMS

This section introduces and describes several social commerce (s-commerce) platforms using a structured taxonomy. Numerous influencers use social media sites these days to talk about or promote their preferred goods (Weinand, 2021). Social networking sites are the perfect place for businesses to reach potential clients because these influencers frequently have sizable and constantly growing followings. The pool of potential customers increases in tandem with the daily influx of new users on these platforms (Geyser, 2021).

The following s-commerce platforms are discussed:

Facebook

Facebook, which has more than 2.6 billion active users, is still a major and powerful social commerce network. With more than 140 million businesses using Facebook applications each month, the platform's potential keeps growing every year (Iqbal, 2017). Facebook Shops and Marketplace are free online stores where companies can advertise their products. Facebook Marketplace and groups are used by many users to purchase and sell goods directly. Additionally,

Facebook's livestreaming capability is being used by marketers more and more to engage with consumers by showing products in real time (Geyser, 2021). In addition to other social commerce capabilities, Facebook allows users to buy straight from livestreams (Rheude, 2020a).

Instagram

Instagram has shown itself to be a really effective medium with a lot of social selling potential. Instagram is frequently used by users to find and interact with brands and items that are relevant to their interests. About 60% of consumers find new things on Instagram, therefore this involvement frequently results in sales. According to Gotter (2020), more than 200 million Instagram users view at least one company profile per day. Sellers can increase visibility and revenues by tagging products in posts or stories using Instagram Shopping Ads. Users can now make purchases straight from the app's checkout functionality without leaving the platform thanks to the addition of improved "shoppable posts" (Geyser, 2021).

YouTube

Every day, billions of videos are seen on YouTube, one of the most popular platforms for sharing videos. YouTube offers an ideal setting for brand promotion and sales generation, with around 5 billion videos viewed daily and over 6 billion hours watched yearly (Samsukha, 2020). YouTube videos incorporate integrated Google shopping adverts to draw viewers and send them to store websites to make purchases (Rheude, 2020a).

Pinterest

Pinterest works similarly to Instagram, except it focuses on creating visually appealing material to draw users in. The eye-catching product images promote user interaction, which frequently results in sales. Product Pins and Rich Pins on Pinterest give customers comprehensive product details, improving the shopping experience and increasing the possibility of purchases (Rheude, 2020a).

PayPal

PayPal owns Venmo, a mobile payment app that makes it simple for Americans to divide bills or send money to friends (Venmo, 2021). Venmo formerly required Facebook profiles in order to register customers, but it has since changed to provide options for contacting individuals by name or phone number. Users can complete transactions and even interact with public transactions by liking them by connecting their Venmo accounts to their bank, credit, or debit accounts.

Snapchat

Snapchat provides a variety of methods for marketers to sell their products and services, including 'Story Ads,' 'Snap Ads,' and 'Dynamic Ads' with a 'swipe up to purchase' function (Ferrandez, 2021). Snapchat's Augmented Reality (AR) feature, which lets users visually test on items before buying them, became popular during the COVID-19 epidemic (Geyser, 2021).

TikTok

Social commerce opportunities are being investigated by TikTok, a quickly expanding social media network that specializes in short-form video content (Geyser, 2021). Because of its collaboration with Shopify, vendors may use the Shopify dashboard to handle marketing campaigns. With the help of TikTok's new shopping button, sellers can make shareable videos into shoppable advertisements by connecting them to their Shopify shopfronts.

LinkedIn

The largest professional networking site in the world, LinkedIn, gives companies a platform to advertise their goods, build their brands, and increase website traffic. Businesses utilize LinkedIn to expand their professional networks, share content, and advertise (Zantal-Wiener, 2021).

Twitter

Retailers can now easily display products on their business profiles thanks to Twitter's "Shop Module" functionality. Within the Twitter app, users can browse these accounts and click on things to be taken to the actual company website, where they can easily make purchases (Perez, 2021).

Google

Customers may quickly explore and compare products by looking at other people's reviews and ratings on Google's 'Shopping' tab. Both buyers and sellers gain from this feature's simplified buying experience.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. SOCIAL COMMERCE

Social media platforms which incorporates blogs, online communities, forums, and social networks have been made practical by the advent of Web 2.0 technologies, which have transformed the structure of the web. According to Lai and Turban (2008), these technologies concentrate user interaction and content exchange. Platforms that leverage user-generated content, in which users are in charge of generating all the content, are commonly referred to as Web 2.0. Globally, the rate of social penetration has reached 45%; the United States and East Asia have the greatest rates, at 70% and 67%, respectively (Clement, 2019). The prospects for social commerce have elevated in recent years owing to the growing use of social technology (Liang & Turban, 2011; Marsden, 2010). By incorporating customer social interactions, social commerce allows business entities to access larger markets (Hargadon & Bechky, 2006). Businesses can strengthen their ties with customers through web-based interactions (Ridings & Gefen, 2004). This strengthens marketing strategies and boosts value for consumers (Liang & Turban, 2011).

In the late 1990s, early e-commerce pioneers such as Amazon and eBay originated tools that allowed customers to put forth product reviews and assess merchants' performance (Curty & Zhang, 2011). This is when the idea of social commerce (s-commerce) became apparent (Friedrich, 2015). According to Wang and Zhang (2012), Yahoo originated the phrase "social commerce" in 2005 to refer to a collaborative shopping tool on its platform that enables users to make, share, and comment on product lists. E-commerce businesses began to incorporate new technologies into their websites as Web 2.0 and social media gained popularity in order to provide customers with a more socially and interactively engaging buying experience (Curty & Zhang, 2011; Friedrich, 2015). Customers have grown increasingly involved in online communities as a result of the extensive adoption of social media technologies (Cheung et al., 2014). Consumers actively share their experiences and opinions on products and brands with other consumers and friends. In scholarly writing, the phrase "social commerce" was initially used in 2007. However, the first Facebook store was officially launched by flowers.com in 2009, marking the official beginning of social commerce (Bansal et al., 2011). The term "social commerce" describes how social media affects online business transactions (Khan et al., 2017). According to Yadav et al. (2013), social commerce involves activities that fulfil needs related to self-esteem, purchasing, usage, and repurchasing, all facilitated through technology platforms influenced by social media networks. Social commerce is defined by some scholars as a business activity that blends aspects of offline and online settings and is carried out using social media platforms (Al-Adwan & Kokash, 2019). Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and other social networking sites have become increasingly popular, which has contributed to the growth of social commerce (Ahmad & Laroche, 2017). One of the key strengths of social commerce is its ability to provide users with valuable information about products and services and help them secure the best prices by sharing reliable recommendations and reviews (Al-Adwan & Kokash, 2019).

The definition of social commerce (s-commerce) has been articulated differently by a number of authors. According to Liang et al. (2011), s-commerce is the utilisation of Web 2.0 technologies to facilitate social media buying and selling. Sociologically speaking, s-commerce is associated with firms' usage of online social groups, emphasising the influence of social media on customer relationships (Kim & Srivastava, 2007). According to Marsden (2009), s-commerce is the psychological impact of information produced inside a network community on people's online purchasing and selling patterns. Stephen and Toubia (2010) define social commerce as "forms of Internet-based social media that allow people to participate actively in the marketing and selling of products and services in online marketplaces and communities". Other social commerce literature (e.g. Liang et al. 2011; Zhou et al., 2013) offers notions that are identical. Social media technology, community-level associations, and business operations are the three primary features of social commerce. Social commerce is defined as "exchange-related activities that take place within or are influenced by an individual's social network in online social environments, covering needs related to recognition, pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase stages of an exchange" (Yadav et al., 2013, p. 312). Customers have been recognised by researchers as the main driving force behind the social commerce motion. These consumers want more individualised, academic and interactive buying experiences (Zhou et al., 2013), and they are usually opinion seekers (Kang and Johnson, 2013). According to Zhou et al. (2013), social commerce is a broad umbrella for the use of online media to facilitate the buying, selling, comparing, and sharing of information about goods and services inside online communities and markets. According to some definitions, social commerce is an advancement of Web 2.0 in online

According to a review of the literature, social commerce has blossomed in two main ways: first, through e-commerce carried out via social network platforms, and second, by incorporating social media elements into e-commerce websites

(Huang & Benyoucef, 2013). Additionally, social commerce is frequently regarded as a subcategory of the typical e-commerce. Social commerce is a subset of e-commerce that utilises the social networks to facilitate online purchasing and selling of goods and services (Liang & Turban, 2011). IBM describes social commerce as a word-of-mouth idea for e-commerce which incorporates product offerings and consumer interactions (Dennison et al., 2009). According to these viewpoints, social media acts as an intermediate between buyers and sellers of goods in online marketplaces, and we characterise social commerce as a novel idea evolved from e-commerce (Li, 2019).

Even while social commerce, or s-commerce, is a subset of e-commerce, it has distinctive features that help to establish trustworthiness. According to Linda (2010), as these elements are created by customers themselves, characteristics like communication, word-of-mouth (WOM) impacts, and the quality of the information are essential for establishing the credibility of s-commerce. Key s-commerce features like user suggestions, discussion forums, consumer ratings and reviews, and referrals all take these aspects consideration (Stratmann, 2010). When making decisions about what to buy, customers frequently rely on social ratings, which are user-shared information. Therefore, the creation of trustworthy s-commerce platforms depends on the quality of information, user-seller communication, and word-of-mouth communication. The significant role of trust in s-commerce has been emphasised by earlier studies. For example, gaining the trust of customers is essential for s-commerce success, according to Kim et al., (2005). They highlighted the importance of factors including site reputation, size, safety precautions, and cost benefits in fostering trust. Furthermore, from the standpoint of the customer, safety measures and competitive price are important components in building confidence (Hsiao et al., 2010). Social networking sites (SNSs) and s-commerce have grown quickly, but little is known about the attitudes and actions of s-commerce users. In particular, there is a shortage of knowledge about how s-commerce features affect trust and how it relates to performance outcomes. Empirical research has investigated a number of factors influencing customer trust in and adoption of social networking sites (SNSs) and e-commerce, in addition to descriptive studies and expert opinions. For instance, Hsiao et al. (2010) investigated the elements that impact trust in social commerce and put forth a thorough framework to evaluate how customers' intents to buy are affected by two important facets of trust: confidence in websites and trust in product recommendations. According to their research, trust in social commerce is greatly influenced by factors including a website's quality, reputation, and institutional assurance. In order to explain why people continue to use social networking sites (SNSs), Lin and Lu (2011) developed an integrated theoretical model that blends network externalities and motivation theory. They opened up new avenues for future research by proposing that the distinctive features of social commerce are important indicators of users' sustained participation. In order to examine the relationship between trust and website type (e-commerce versus social commerce), Bansal and Chen (2011) developed a model that additionally takes into account the moderating effects of privacy and security concerns. They discovered that consumers are more inclined to trust e-commerce websites than social media platforms. Furthermore, it was discovered that, aside from situations involving high levels of inappropriate access, which significantly weakened trust, privacy concerns—such as the likelihood of unauthorised access—and security concerns—such as those regarding data collection and security—had little effect on the relationship of trust. While the impact of trust on purchase intention in social commerce has been explored in earlier studies, many of these studies have concentrated on just one aspect of trust or a single source of recommendations. The purpose of this study of the literature is to investigate the elements that influence consumer choices in social commerce settings.

3.2. TRUST

The growth of social media platforms, as well as growing interconnection among users across platforms, has generated a demand for trust between online suppliers and customers in order to mitigate transaction risks (Hajli and Lin, 2016). Nowadays, trust (T) plays a crucial role in the majority of business dealings, especially those conducted online where there is more ambiguity (Pavlou, 2003).

Numerous academic fields, including psychology, sociology, and economics, have explored trust. Sociologists tend to emphasise institutional components of trust, whereas psychologists tend to emphasise personal traits (Das & Teng, 2004). According to Beldad et al. (2010), trust in economics has been analysed from two primary angles: as the anticipation of interactions and as the acceptance of fragility in trades. Trust has been characterised in a broad range of ways due to its analysis in a variety of domains (McKnight et al., 2002). According to Schurr and Ozanne (1985), trust is the belief in an exchange partner's capacity, readiness, and observance of relationship rules and commercial agreements. Expectations in contexts of ambiguity, vulnerability, and dependency are largely what define trust (Ganesan, 1994).

Regardless of the consumers' switching costs, it affects both industrial and individual consumers (Schurr and Ozanne, 1985). In an interdisciplinary model, McKnight and Chervany (2002) classified trust into three categories: interpersonal, institutional, and dispositional. Institutional trust is best understood from a sociological perspective, interpersonal trust from a social psychology and economics perspective, and dispositional trust from a psychological and economic perspective. Trust is defined by Mayer et al. (1995) as faith in the trade partner's behaviour. According to Ba and Pavlou (2002), trust is the belief that a transaction will go exactly as intended. Trust, according to Moorman et al. (1993), is the readiness to depend on an exchange partner that one has faith in. Other definitions of trust emphasise how people are more vulnerable to the other party's activities because they expect them to perform in a specific manner (Mayer et al., 1995). While some authors see trust as the mindset between the trustee and the trustor (Yoon, 2002), Droege et al. (2003) define trust as a sense of confidence. According to Ganguly et al. (2010), trust is the customer's perception of an online store's honesty and kindness. Trust, according to Kramer (1999), is a complex notion to grasp since people are frequently unaware of the motives and intentions of others. According to Kimery and McCard (2002), trust is the degree to which consumers are prepared to overlook certain flaws in an online transaction because they have high aspirations for the future behaviour of the online retailer. Barber (1983) defines trust as the expectation of individuals' behaviour within their society or the institution that governs them. A person, an item (like a product), an organisation (like a corporation), an institution (like the government), or a role (like a professional) can all be trusted.

In business, trust is the belief that one party has in another's competence and readiness to maintain the business connection, follow established standards, and keep commitments (Hajli et al., 2017). Since humans are inherently curious about the "what," "where," "why," and "how" of other people's actions, trust is essential to comprehending social circumstances. Because of this, trust is essential in many business dealings (Leong et al., 2020). In business dealings, trust is essential for adopting technology and building long-lasting relationships between customers and companies (Hajli et al., 2017). Trust helps reduce the psychological obstacles related to internet shopping (Pavlou & Fygenson, 2006) and enhances financial transactions (Everard & Galletta, 2005). Online shoppers are less inclined to do business with a supplier they don't trust (Gefen, 2002). Trust can be increased, for instance, by using symbols like Visa or VeriSign. Customers feel reassured that online transactions are secure when third-party credentials are displayed on a website, indicating its quality and security (Shankar et al., 2002). Maintaining the security acquired is the major goal of the last step in the trust creation process. The brand and the site's search features are now of more importance to customers, which strengthens intrinsic trust and further affects their decision to buy. Businesses need trust in order to develop relationships with their customers (Gefen et al., 2003).

Trust is widely recognised as an important aspect in the success of electronic commerce (Hajli et al., 2017). It is essential to social commerce (N. Hajli & Lin, 2016; Featherman & Hajli, 2016) as well as e-commerce (McKnight et al., 2002; Gefen, 2002). There are notable differences in how trust is established in these two situations. Trust among consumers is frequently shaped by prior online encounters, and the online buying experience and platform dependability play a significant role in e-commerce trust. However, trust has multiple dimensions in social commerce (s-commerce), where social interactions between customers and vendors, as well as between customers, are crucial for building trust and enabling transactions (Shi & Chow, 2015). Trust in social commerce is of the utmost importance for building an encouraging mindset towards purchasing behaviour, which in turn facilitates buy intentions (Hajli, 2013). In contrast to traditional business, social commerce is closely linked to trust. Therefore, building consumer trust is essential in social commerce. Nevertheless, a lack of trust makes it difficult for many firms to establish enduring relationships with customers, which ultimately results in customer attrition (Kim & Park, 2013).

Customers frequently rely on trust to lessen uncertainty in settings like e-commerce, where circumstances are more dynamic and unpredictable (Gefen, 2000). One of the many elements influencing customers' intentions to purchase from online sellers is trust (Flavián & Guinalú, 2006). Shin (2010) and Han & Windsor (2011) also highlight the importance of trust in influencing consumers' intentions to make purchases. Purchase intentions are positively impacted by trust, according to research by Kuan and Bock (2007), which also uncovered a number of characteristics that influence online trust performance within e-commerce. According to Ganguly et al. (2010), trust in an online retailer is an important variable that can favourably impact purchase intention through an array of independent variables. One of the most prominent outcomes of trust is purchase intention (Ganguly et al., 2010). According to earlier research, one of the most significant barriers to internet shopping is a lack of trust (Grabner-Kräuter and Kaluscha, 2003). It is commonly acknowledged that trust is essential to social commerce's success (Nadeem et al., 2020). Building customer trust in social commerce is a significant challenge, as users often struggle to verify the authenticity of content. The trust between

individuals and businesses is crucial for the success of social commerce (Sherchan et al., 2013). Understanding trust in social commerce is essential, yet there is limited research on this topic, especially in the context of online environments. More studies are needed to explore the key factors that influence trust in social commerce, particularly how buyer trust in sellers affects purchasing behaviour (Tuncer, 2021). In this regard, an extensive review of the literature highlights several antecedents that play a crucial role in shaping trust, as discussed below.

Antecedents of Trust:

Table 2.1: Classification of Papers Studying Factor Affecting Trust in Social Commerce

Research Study	Type of Paper (Conceptual/Empirical)	Variables Considered	Sample Size & Methodology	Findings and Comments
Jarvenpaa et al. (2000)	Empirical	Firm size, reputation, trust, risk, willingness to buy	Survey of 705 respondents; Structural Equation Modeling	Larger firm size and better reputation positively influence consumer trust and reduce perceived risk, enhancing willingness to buy.
Zeithaml et al. (2002)	Conceptual	Service quality dimensions, customer satisfaction, behavioural intentions	Literature review; Development of conceptual model	High service quality delivery through websites is essential for customer satisfaction and influences behavioral intentions.
Kim et al. (2008)	Empirical	Trust, satisfaction, expectation, post-expectation	Survey of online consumers; Structural Equation Modeling	Trust and satisfaction significantly influence consumers' expectations and post-expectations in e-commerce transactions.
Hajli (2015)	Empirical	Social commerce constructs (e.g., recommendations, reviews), trust, purchase intention	Survey of 243 participants; Structural Equation Modeling	Social commerce constructs positively impact trust, which in turn influences purchase intention.
Ba & Pavlou (2002)	Empirical	Feedback mechanisms, trust, price premiums, buyer behaviour	Experimental study; Analysis of buyer behaviour	Effective online feedback mechanisms can build trust and lead to price premiums in electronic markets.
Yoon (2002)	Empirical	Transaction security, website properties, search functionality, economic benefits	Survey of online consumers; Regression analysis	Transaction security and website properties are key factors in building online consumer trust.
Kim & Park (2013)	Empirical	Social commerce characteristics (e.g., reputation, size, information quality), trust	Survey of 371 online shoppers; Structural Equation Modeling	Reputation, size, and information quality in social commerce positively affect consumer trust and trust performance.
Dabbous et al. (2020)	Empirical	Social interactions, perceived economic benefit, trust, purchase intention	Survey of 500 respondents; Structural Equation Modeling	Social interactions and perceived economic benefits positively impact trust, which mediates the relationship with purchase intention.

Source Author

Trust in social commerce is influenced by multiple drivers, including perceived reputation, perceived size, economic benefit, service quality, and social commerce constructs. Perceived reputation plays a central role, as reputation is built over time through consistent delivery of promises, customer reviews, and word-of-mouth communication, which shape

consumer perceptions about the trustworthiness of vendors (Herbig & Milewicz, 1995; Jarvenpaa & Tractinsky, 1999). Positive reputation reduces uncertainty and risk, encouraging consumers to engage in online transactions (McKnight et al., 2002). In social commerce, reputation is amplified through ratings, recommendations, and user-generated content, which reinforce trust and purchase intentions (Yahia et al., 2018). As Kim and Peterson (2017) noted, a favourable reputation not only enhances trust but also positively affects consumers' willingness to buy. Perceived size is another important determinant, as larger firms are often viewed as more reliable and trustworthy due to their established presence and extensive customer base. Jarvenpaa et al. (2000) found that consumers perceive larger online vendors as more credible and capable of fulfilling transactions efficiently, while Doney and Cannon (1997) suggested that perceived size reflects financial stability, which enhances trust. Koufaris and Hampton-Sosa (2004) and Teo and Pian (2003) further emphasized that firm size signals legitimacy and long-term commitment, reducing perceived risks in online shopping. Economic benefit also serves as a driver of trust, as consumers expect financial advantages such as discounts, price savings, and convenience when engaging in social commerce. Kim et al. (2008) argued that economic benefits are critical in motivating online purchases, while Escobar-Rodríguez and Carvajal-Trujillo (2013) highlighted that cost savings and time efficiency encourage repeat usage. Yahia et al. (2018) and Zhou et al. (2013) supported the idea that perceived economic value enhances trust, since consumers feel they are gaining tangible rewards from their online interactions. Service quality has been widely studied as another critical determinant of trust, particularly in online environments where direct interaction is limited. Parasuraman et al. (1985) defined service quality as the gap between customer expectations and perceptions of actual service, while Zeithaml et al. (2002) extended this to include website design, responsiveness, security, and reliability in e-commerce. High service quality reduces perceived risk, builds consumer confidence, and leads to stronger trust in vendors (Kim & Park, 2013; Ladhari, 2009). In the context of social commerce, prompt responses, secure transactions, and smooth functionality are essential for sustaining consumer trust. Finally, social commerce constructs (SCCs), such as ratings, reviews, referrals, likes, and recommendations, provide social proof that shapes consumer trust and purchase intention. Hajli (2015) highlighted that SCCs enhance trust by facilitating user engagement and interaction, while Bagozzi and Dholakia (2002) emphasized the role of virtual communities in influencing consumer behavior. Al-Dwairi et al. (2018) demonstrated that electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) significantly impacts trust formation, while Stouthuysen et al. (2018) and Al-adwan (2019) confirmed that social interactions, referrals, and peer recommendations increase consumer confidence in online transactions. Collectively, these five drivers—perceived reputation, perceived size, economic benefit, service quality, and social commerce constructs—form the foundation for understanding how trust develops and influences purchase intention in social commerce.

3.3. PURCHASE INTENTION

The term "intention" was first used in psychology to describe a person's subjective drive to carry out a particular action. Purchase intention is defined in the context of consumer behaviour as the willingness and choice made by customers throughout the actual purchasing process. According to the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), a person's intentions to behave have a direct effect on their behaviour (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980; Bagozzi, 1981; Ajzen, 1985). In such a scenario, a person's intention is shaped by their attitude towards the behaviour. Online purchase intention, which can be explained by TRA, is a determinant of the actual behaviour of making online purchases. Consequently, this study makes the claim that the intention to buy from a certain website is a trustworthy indicator of actual buying behaviour. According to research by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), one way to comprehend a consumer's behaviour is to define purchase intention as their purchasing behaviour. Purchase intention, according to Lloyd and Luk (2010), incorporates a customer's propensity to make a purchase with their level of interest in a brand or product. Understanding the reasons behind a consumer's decision to purchase a specific brand is the main goal of this decision-making process, according to Shah et al. (2012). Balakrishnan et al. (2014) propose that purchase intention consists of three components: the consumer's readiness to consider a purchase, the intention to buy in the future, and the likelihood of repurchase. Furthermore, according to Huang and Su (2010), it is considered as a component of a consumer's cognitive behaviour, signalling how they should interact with a certain brand. Accordingly, it is believed that buying intention naturally precedes actual purchase behaviour (De Magistris and Gracia, 2008).

Purchase intention for shoppers who shop online is the ultimate stage in the decision-making process after many factors have influenced their behaviour. The intention to utilise a website to complete a purchase is the last phase of an online transaction, according to Pavlou (2003). According to Richardson et al. (1996), purchase intentions are first

described as the probability of carrying out a future purchase of a good or service. Purchase intention is therefore a significant variable in determining how consumers engage online. According to Raza et al.(2014), a customer's purchase intention indicates when they are geared up to interact with a the vendor. Purchase intention, according to McCarthy and William (2002), is the motivation behind a person's decision to purchase products or services in order to meet what they want. Customers' propensity to purchase, use, or concentrate on particular brands can also be evaluated and predicted using this method (Imari et al.,2008). According to Hapque et al.(2015), predicting a customer's actual purchasing behaviour can be aided by knowing their purchase intention. Last but not least, Yong et al. (2017) define purchase intention as a customer's individualised viewpoint on the merchandise they want to purchase.

In the context of social commerce, purchase intention refers to a consumer's intent to make online purchases from e-vendors on social networking sites (SNSs) such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Yahoo, as well as websites such as Amazon and Apple. "The strength of one's intentions to perform a specific behaviour" is the definition of intentions, which are regarded as important behavioural factors (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975, p. 288). Customers' perceptions of trust have a significant impact on their purchase intentions, according to previous research (Kang and Johnson, 2013). Trust has a significant favourable impact on consumers' intents to make purchases in online settings, according to Everard and Galletta (2005). Customers are more inclined to make purchases from social commerce platforms if they have trust in them (Kim and Park, 2013). According to Hajli et al. (2017a), as levels of commitment, trust, and satisfaction climb, so does consumer loyalty to a brand. According to Shareef et al. (2018), customers' intentions to make purchases when they buy online can be greatly influenced by both operational performance and trust. According to Robinson (2017), marketers can influence consumer decisions by providing benefits, building trust, and lowering perceived risks. Trust, privacy concerns, emotional factors, and prior experiences all work together to predict consumers' purchase intentions, according to Pappas (2018). According to Pee et al. (2018), website usability enhances both initial and recurrent purchase intentions by acting as a persistent signal. Prior studies have often emphasised on two important factors for assessing trust performance: intentions to buy and intentions to spread the word (WOM). For instance, Yoon (2002) investigated the associations among trust antecedents (like transaction security, website features, and search functions), trust consequences (purchase intentions), and a mediating variable (website awareness). The study came to the conclusion that online purchase intentions are greatly influenced by trust in a website. Numerous research explore the association between consumers' buy intentions and trust. Zhao et al. (2019) looked into how continuous purchasing intentions in consumer-to-consumer (C2C) social commerce are impacted by sellers' trust. Furthermore, customers' intents to buy from e-vendors are positively influenced by their trust in social commerce platforms, according to research (Hajli et al., 2017). On top of that, purchase intention and member trust are positively interrelated (Farivar et al., 2017). According to earlier research, trust is a multifaceted concept that includes elements like disposition, seller, member, and site trust. In this regard, an extensive review of the literature highlights trust that play a crucial role in purchase intention.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE WORK

This paper presents the outcomes of an extensive literature review on social commerce. The review was conducted using leading digital libraries commonly referenced in the field of computer science. The analysis shows that interest in this area is steadily growing within the academic community. The findings also indicate that firms should develop social commerce platforms with technological features that support customer interaction and personalized product recommendations, as these contribute to business growth. Moreover, businesses are encouraged to prioritize transparent reputation systems, secure and efficient services, and active engagement through reviews and ratings to enhance consumer trust. Nevertheless, issues such as privacy risks and the reliability of online content remain significant challenges that may undermine confidence. From a research perspective, this study highlights the need to examine cultural variations, customer loyalty, and the role of emerging platforms. Trust continues to be the cornerstone of sustainable social commerce, strongly influencing purchase intention and long-term success. Future work could involve extending the scope of this review to include a broader range of studies. Comparative studies across cultures, longitudinal investigations into trust and loyalty, and the integration of factors like data protection, influencer reliability, and technological innovations (e.g., AI-based chatbots and virtual try-on tools) are also suggested avenues for further exploration.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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