Chapter 7
Antecedents of Social Commerce Adoption in Developing Countries:
An Empirical Study

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ABSTRACT

The emergence Web 2.0 technologies has transformed e-commerce into social commerce. The benefits associated with social commerce are well known. However, for businesses to reap such benefits, the factors that influence user intention to use social commerce must be understood. However, existing studies draw samples from developed countries. Given that geography and cultural factors affect technology adoption, findings from existing studies may not apply in the developing country context. This study therefore investigates the factors that influence user intention to use social commerce in developing countries. A survey questionnaire was used to gathered responses from 614 students in Ghanaian universities and analyzed using PLS-SEM. The results indicate that information quality, system quality, and service quality have significant influence on user intention to use social commerce. The findings point out the need to provide relevant support to users and ensure accurate and reliable information on social commerce platforms.

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of new Web 2.0 technologies has transformed many aspects of our society. The pervasiveness and ubiquitous use of Social Networking Sites (SNSs) have been the main driver of this transformation. SNSs enable cost-effective yet efficient ways for online interaction and communication. This has evolved traditional e-commerce into social commerce (Hajli, 2015). Social commerce is a new e-commerce development that enables the use of Web 2.0 technologies to support online interactions where the contributions of people can be used in the acquisition of goods and services (Liang and Turban, 2011). It has transformed consumers from passive receivers to co-creators (Hajli and Sims, 2015). Indeed, social commerce was found to have increased sales from 5 billion dollars to 15 billion dollars in 2014 (Morrison, 2014). Thus, the significance of social commerce cannot be undermined.

Yet, social commerce research is scarce in Africa. Many of the existing studies on social commerce drew samples from developing countries. However, socio-cultural characteristics affect technology adoption and use (Apau, Koranteng and Adu, 2019). Since developed countries possess different characteristics compared to developing countries, existing findings may not be applicable (Wiafe et al., 2019). People in developing countries are hesitant to adopt new technologies. To add, many of these people lack the required skills to use ICT tools appropriately. Moreover, relevant research indicates that Web 2.0 technologies are widely regarded as entertainment tools (Koranteng, Wiafe & Kuada, 2019). This suggests that users may not perceive such tools as useful for commerce. Additionally, more research that delve into facet of consumer behavior in the digital economy is deemed necessary (Ling Chang, Ling Tam, & Suki, 2016; Nathan, Fook Chiun, & Suki, 2016; Suki, 2013a; 2013b; Suki, 2016; Suki & Abang Sulaiman, 2016). Therefore, there is the need to uncover which factors influence users in such areas to adopt social commerce.

This chapter, therefore, implements the Information Systems (IS) Success Model (DeLone and McLean, 2002) as a theoretical lens to understand the factors that affect users Intention to Use Social Commerce in developing countries. The next sections present a review of relevant literature and research methods. This is followed by a summary of the analysis. Then the results are discussed. Finally, conclusions and directions for future work are drawn.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The rise of Web 2.0 technologies has given birth to a new stream of e-commerce called social commerce. Social commerce is essentially the delivery of e-commerce via Social Networking Sites (SNSs) (Liang and Turban, 2011). This new technological advancement offers online shoppers the ability to interact with other shoppers and systems in profound ways such as sharing product experiences, recommendations, rating products and reviews (Hajli and Sims, 2015). Some scholars, however, believe that this has changed the structure of many business models. Nowadays, there is much focus on customer-oriented business (Zhang and Benyoucef, 2016) where marketing strategies have shifted from attracting customers' awareness of products to bonding with them after their purchases (Edelman, 2010).

For businesses to be able to harness the power of social commerce, factors that influence user behavior on these platforms must be understood. Consequently, a stream of researchers has explored user motives and behavior in social commerce context. Scholars have found that perceived effectiveness, entertainment, enjoyment, and information-seeking gratifications affects consumers' intention to adopt social

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