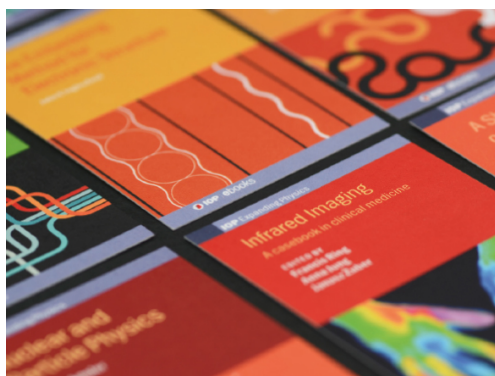


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Follower's Quality Factor in Social Commerce

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Abstract. Social commerce (SC) is about consumers shopping online and sharing their experience through social networking platform. The consumers are involved in transactional activities through online platforms using their network equipment such as mobile and laptop devices. SC is an extension of e-commerce platform where its success mostly depend on social factors that can influence consumers purchase intention. These factors include review and rating, recommendations and referrals, feedback, trust, forum and communities, communication, word of mouth, and follower. Followership in SC is one of the important factors in influencing purchase intention. However, less attention has been given in understanding the role of follower in SC. Therefore, the follower's factors whether for support or non-support follower has been identified in this paper such as self-presentation, social interaction, self-confidence, self-expressive and sharing brand content. The identification of these factors would result in a better management of followership in SC.

1. Introduction

Social commerce (SC) is a subset of electronic commerce that involves social media as a base platform to assist online buying of selling products and services. Moreover, SC is an online marketing model that use online social network to support social interaction, thereby encouraging users to buy products [1]. SC allows marketers to easily sell their brand by posting photos and encouraging consumers to share experiences.

In social media, the users can be followed or follow any account that they want which is referred to as followers [2]. Followers are important and highly effective in social media because they can be influenced in their purchase decisions. It is believe when the seller have a higher number of followers, it will increase the trust of online shoppers to the legitimacy of the sellers. People tend to trust merchants with millions of followers because it is perceived as a sign of good reputation and trustworthy than those with fewer followers.

Followers are those users that can see their principal posts in their content feed every day. However, there is still less of study about the followers. Getting more followers is a benefit for influencing customer purchase but that depends on the follower's quality. Quality of followers needs to be ascertained as merchants can induce consumers in order to command large followership [3]. Thus, there is a need to know followers background as well as their details in media account.

The follower's quality is one of the key factors that influence purchase intention. Therefore, it is important for consumers to know the features of followers. Consumer only knows the number of followers but don't know what the quality of that followership is. Consumer need to know and identify



the follower's quality before making purchase online. This is because consumer needs to know who actually the follower is.

This paper is set to achieve the following objectives which are to identify follower's quality factors that can influence other followers purchase intention in SC.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Social Commerce

Social commerce or SC is defined as a variety of commercial activities that can assist customer's shopping decisions and purchase behaviors. Then, SC also has facilitated new channels that improve the communications between the sellers and customers to attract more buyers of products and turn them into loyal customers. SC is an online shopping that has two types of environment which is online and offline. Online SC can influence customer to purchase the products with online payment, can share their opinion or review, easy to communicate with other users, and establish the links with their friends. Customers always buy products through online SC because they are influenced by the online product's brands. Offline environment is about activities of customers to buy products through online and receive it at specific physical location [4].

Social media is defined as a SC platform for online communications channel that allow the users to communicate with each other. It also allows users to share information which can influence purchasing decisions and interact with the brands they consider to purchase. Examples of social media that can be used as SC platforms are Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Facebook is also known as F-commerce where it stands for Facebook Commerce [4]. Facebook also has 'buy' buttons which enable users to make a purchase directly from a business without log out the Facebook. Instagram platform is a mobile and video capturing and sharing services. Instagram users mostly like to make a purchase influenced by the content seen in the Instagram platform. Moreover, users also can view the photos of items on the social network before make a decision to purchase it. Twitter is an online social media where many young people use it nowadays to communicate with other people using short message called "tweets". Some other people use Twitter to find interesting product or brand and follow them to get new information. Twitter also provides a share button for their follower to share the tweets which called "retweets" about the brands for make other people also can read and view the brand's photos.

2.2. Followers in Social Commerce

Follower is SC users that follow other personal or brands account to get updated about the latest information. In SC, users will view the number of followers before they make their purchase decisions from a brand or company to know how much people buy from the seller. Followers are important in SC because it is an efficient way of social networking between consumers, which helps them to easily share content with their followers. Having large followers in social media can increase engagement with other people to influence them to purchase. The role of followers can increase the user engagement by like a bunch of pictures in the brand's content post [5]. When the followers start liking the photos of the brand, it will appear at the explorer of other followers and it will attract the people to view and look at the photos. If they feel interested with the photos, they will search and look at the brands account to know more about the products in detail.

Follower in SC is classified into support and non-support follower. Support follower is defined as positive or real follower. If the brand has a lot of social media real followers, it will be an advantage to influence customer's purchase intention. It can convince people to make a decision when they want to purchase. Fake followers or non-support followers are followers that are inactive social media users that follow the brands but do not take part in any activity such as likes or comments on other people's photos. Customers need to be careful and take precautions before purchasing products by just looking at the number of followers, but they must look deeper in order to ascertain the veracity of the followership. Disadvantages of fake followers are likes or comments given by them is not real because actually they are not interested with the brand content but they are paid to do that [3].

Moreover, they just give a comment on the brand's photos to make the brand look trustworthy to the customer that can influence customer to purchase.

2.3. Quality of Followers in Social Commerce

Quality of follower is important in SC. Followers' quality factors are identified based on the personal characteristics or online behaviour of followers in SC. The quality of follower behaviours can increase engagement with other users in SC which means that many users in SC follow and view the photos of the brand that they post in their social media account. This will make the brand's post achieve a high view from follower and also highly relevant for those people who search about the products [5]. This can influence the decision on intention to purchase in SC.

There are many followers factor in SC that can influence other followers from literatures such as self-expressive, self-presentation, interaction, sharing, trend hunter and passion. If the follower is self-expressive, the follower can act as display their image and identity includes interest, ideas and feelings. For self-presentation follower, they can choose what type of image they want to present by upload different photos and videos. For interaction, follower can interact with other follower or brand seller by communication activity such as liking and commenting other photos. As for sharing, follower can share the brand content on personal profile by press share button. Trend hunter follower is type of follower that interest with high end product but just purchase counterfeit product. Follower that has passion is a follower who will purchase the product for self-satisfaction.

These followers' factors are based on the personal characteristics or online behaviour of followers in SC. But not all of the factors can influence other followers to purchase in SC. Therefore, this follower's quality factors need to be identified in order to find the right quality of follower factors that can contribute in influence other follower to purchase in SC.

3. Methodology

In this section, the researcher describes the methodology that will be used to investigate the follower's quality factor that can influence purchase intention of other followers in SC.

For phase of problem analysis which is to identify the problem or gap of follower factors from literature review that can influence purchasing decisions in SC. The problem is identified because there is still less study about follower and people always view the number of follower before purchase but actually don't know who is the follower that follow the brand seller.

For the literature review phase, it is to review the previous literature in the research area about the followers and the significant follower's factor in SC.

Then, follower's quality factors analysis phase is to analyse the follower's quality factors that can influence purchase intention of other follower in SC. The selection of the factors is been done by looking at the personal characteristics and online behaviour of follower in SC that can influence other followers purchase intention.

4. Follower's Quality Factors That Influence Purchase Intention

Follower's factors that influence purchase intention are defined as a distinctive attributes or characteristics possessed by someone. Five (5) follower's factors have been identified through reviewing literature. Details explanations about the follower's factors are present in the paragraph below.

4.1. Self-presentation

Self-presentation is about how people show themselves online through SC [13]. Users on social media can decide what type of image they want to show by uploading different photos or videos that highlight the characteristics of them to maintain impression in front of others. Self-presentation is used to enhance the interpersonal attraction of an individual to achieve their goal of being liked and to influence other people [7]. Besides, self-presentation includes intention to present themselves to other

people and also want to manage their information to show their particular persona. Jae Min Kim said self-presentation can be defined as a desire to show positive persona and it can influence other followers to purchase [8]. Other type of self-presentation is the followers present themselves as likeable and attractive person on social networking platforms to influence other followers in their purchase decisions.

4.2. Social Interaction

Online social interaction is facilitated by social media has ability to connect with more people and may build positive social relationship [14]. Followers need to get involved in social interaction via social media where it is an involvement with other followers and with the social media platform [1]. When the followers interact with the brands account, it can influence other consumer purchase intention and also give a positive effect on consumer's attitudes towards the brands. Besides, social interaction with other consumers can influence information seeking, communication, information sharing and also purchasing intention in SC. Social interaction can allow people to spread information via diffusion actions which is share, retweet, and reply [9]. Furthermore, when followers like the items in the social media post, then it will make the platform notify their online social interactions that can make them inspired to engage with the item. It also can reflect the followers fashion tastes and signals their online identity to other users in the online environment [10]. Other activity of social interaction is the followers can always stay updated about the brand activities and interact with other people through activities such as liking and commenting on other photos.

4.3. Self-confidence

Self-confidence is defining the perception of social media users to use and manage their personal profile with effective manner [15]. Self-confidence of the followers gives significant positive effects on purchase intention during shopping online [11]. When the followers have their self-confidence, they can reduce the risks occur during purchasing with strategies. They also have ability to process the received information and making claims about the defective products. They are very concern about the quality, price, and variety of the products that sold in SC to ensure this entire category is satisfying for them to purchase. Therefore, it shows how the followers have a high confidence of their choice to make decision to purchase the items from SC and will use it for their personal things. Followers also familiar and well informed about the products details leads to the development of their self-confidence.

4.4. Self-expressive

Self-expressiveness is realized in the followers when they have an online shopping experience to share with other consumers. Self-expressiveness is to present that the brands followers have potential and high effort through shopping online in SC. Moreover, consumer will understand on how self-expressiveness in shopping will give impact to the life satisfaction when people get to purchase the items that they really want. This self-expressiveness will affect consumers which can lead them to have better understanding of the implications of shopping activity [12]. Besides, self-expressiveness also can influence consumer shopping activity which is an important part of their life that makes them have potential through shopping online. Followers that have self-expressiveness will like to always create online content about the brands to get high level of engagement with other followers that can influence purchasing behaviour.

4.5. Social Sharing

Social sharing is depends on the followers' self-interest itself to share the content of commercial messages on their own personal profile via social media using a share button. Some followers love to share and post the brands content on their personal social media account. Majority of followers will share the brands content on their social media account if they feel empathy with the brands content or just want to get involved with the brands post like [6]. The content that full with information and

interactivity will generate a higher readers, viewers and likes in social media. Other incentives of share content are sharing the fun with friends; receive information about the brand experiences and also potential prize winning [6]. Most of the followers have not share about their bad experiences when online shopping in their personal social media profiles. But, majority of brand followers only share about their positive experiences which is they feel satisfy with the brand products or services. Summary of follower’s quality factors can view in the table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Follower’s quality Factors in SC

Follower Factors	Description
Self-presentation	Decide what type of image they want to show in their profile
Social interaction	Allow people to interact with others through activities such as liking and commenting on photos
Self-confidence	Ability to process the received information and making claims about the defective products
Self-expressive	Present that the brands followers have potential and high effort through shopping online
Social Sharing	Share the brands content on their social media account

5. Conclusion

The aim for this paper is to explore the follower’s quality factor that can influence other follower’s purchase intention in SC. The quality factors are identified based on the follower’s characteristics or how they interact with other people by previous studies. These quality factors are identified in order to extend our understanding of the most significant factor that can influence people to purchase items through online shopping. In the future, this follower’s quality factor will be validated for better understanding and clear representation of the follower’s quality that can influence other followers to purchase in SC.

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