

Analyzing the Factors that Influence Consumers' Adoption of Social Commerce – A Literature Review

Full Papers

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Abstract

Social commerce, the use of social media in e-commerce, has become an attractive means for companies to generate business value from consumers' online social interactions. However, many e-commerce companies today are still trying to understand which factors drive consumers to participate in social commerce. While first empirical studies have examined one or more factors that influence consumers' adoption of social commerce, the findings of these studies are scattered across the literature base, sometimes not transparent, and not straightforwardly comparable. To synthesize these findings, we conduct a systematic literature review. After analyzing 38 academic publications, we contribute a comprehensive and structured list of factors that influence consumers' adoption of social commerce. The results of our work provide implications for future research to develop a more complete understanding of consumers' adoption of social commerce. Practitioners can use our results to improve the effectiveness of their social commerce initiatives.

Keywords

Social commerce, adoption, e-commerce, social media, literature review.

Introduction

In recent years, the increasing popularity of social media and social networking sites has given rise to a new stream of electronic commerce (e-commerce), called social commerce (Wang and Zhang 2012; Zhou et al. 2013). By combining e-commerce activities with social media, social commerce enables consumers to participate, communicate, and interact in the online selling and buying of products and services (Curty and Zhang 2011; Zhou et al. 2013). In this way, consumers can share their shopping experiences, get advice from trusted peers, and collaborate online to custom-design products or receive price discounts (Leitner and Grechenig 2009). For companies, social commerce provides the potential to generate business value from consumers' online social interactions (Stephen and Toubia 2010). However, many e-commerce companies today are still trying to find out which factors influence consumers to participate in social commerce (Turban et al. 2010; Zhou et al. 2013).

Together with its growing potential for practice, social commerce has received increasing interest in research during the last decade (Wang and Zhang 2012; Zhou et al. 2013). So far, research on social commerce has focused on the theoretical foundations, for example, the concept itself and its historical evolution (Wang and Zhang 2012; Zhou et al. 2013), its activities (Saundage and Lee 2011; Turban et al. 2010), business models (Leitner and Grechenig 2007b; Leitner and Grechenig 2008), technological features (Curty and Zhang 2013; Huang et al. 2012), and design principles (Huang and Benyoucef 2013). First empirical studies have also explored factors that influence consumers' adoption of social commerce. However, understanding the results of these studies is difficult due to the following reasons: First, the examined factors, such as trust, have been conceptualized in different ways – for example, trust in company (Chow and Shi 2014), trust towards community (Chen et al. 2014), or trust in website (Hsiao et al. 2010). Second, different impact directions have been identified between the same factors, such as trust positively affects perceived usefulness (Hajli 2014), or perceived usefulness positively affects trust (Hajli

2012d). Third, different outcome variables, such as consumers' sharing intention (Chen et al. 2014; Liu et al. 2013a), buying intention (Kwahk and Ge 2012; Lu and Fan 2014), or continuance intention (Jang et al. 2013; Liang et al. 2011), have been used to explain consumers' adoption of social commerce. As a consequence, the current social commerce literature does not provide a clear understanding of what factors influence consumers to adopt to social commerce. Therefore, researchers investigating this topic first have to synthesize the various conceptions in the literature. A glance at the number of existing social commerce publications (see Appendix) indicates that this task can easily become cumbersome and time-consuming, however. Moreover, there is a risk that already existing conceptualizations are overlooked and reinvented, which will make the understanding of social commerce adoption even more complicated.

In the present paper, we consequently aim to synthesize the different conceptions in the social commerce literature and contribute to a better understanding of consumers' adoption of social commerce. We address the following research question:

What factors influence consumers' adoption of social commerce?

To identify these factors, we systematically review the literature on social commerce adoption. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first literature review on this topic. With the review, we contribute to the social commerce literature by synthesizing past research to provide a comprehensive and structured list of factors and their potential impact on consumers' adoption of social commerce. Researchers can use the list as a starting point to verify the importance of the identified factors and to explore additional factors. For practitioners, the list serves as a guideline to determine which factors may drive the success of their social commerce initiatives.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: First, we briefly explain the concept of social commerce and illustrate the basic theories behind social commerce adoption. Second, we describe our research approach to systematically review the literature on social commerce adoption. Third, we present the identified factors and their potential impact on consumers' adoption of social commerce. In the subsequent section, we discuss the implications and limitations of our results. Finally, we conclude our findings and highlight the contribution.

Theoretical Background

In this section, we provide background information on the concept of social commerce and on the basic theories behind social commerce adoption.

Concept of Social Commerce

Historically, the roots of social commerce can be traced back to the late 1990s (Curty and Zhang 2011; Wang and Zhang 2012). At this time, e-commerce pioneers, such as Amazon and eBay, introduced features on their websites that enabled consumers to write reviews on products or rate the performance of sellers, which is then made publicly available (Saundage and Lee 2011). With the emergence of web 2.0 and social media, e-commerce companies began to integrate new technologies into their websites to provide consumers with a more social and interactive shopping experience (Curty and Zhang 2013; Ickler et al. 2009). In 2005, Yahoo! introduced the term social commerce to describe a new collaborative shopping feature on its shopping platform that allowed consumers to create, share and comment on product lists (Wang and Zhang 2012). In 2007, first academic articles appeared that explicitly used the term social commerce (e.g., Leitner and Grechenig 2007a; Leitner and Grechenig 2007b).

By combining business, informational, technological, and social aspects (Wang and Zhang 2012), social commerce involves multiple disciplines, such as marketing, computer science, sociology, and psychology (Huang and Benyoucef 2013). As a result, various definitions of social commerce have been proposed (Wang and Zhang 2012). From a marketing perspective, for example, social commerce is defined as "the concept of word-of-mouth, applied to e-commerce" (Dennis et al. 2009, p. 2). From an e-commerce perspective, Liang and Turban (2011, p. 6) define social commerce as "a subset of e-commerce that involves using social media to assist in e-commerce transactions and activities". In a similar way, Wang and Zhang (2012, p. 106) describe social commerce as "a form of commerce that is mediated by social media and is converging both online and offline environments".

Comparing social commerce with e-commerce, social commerce is defined as a subset of e-commerce, which builds on consumers' interactions and relationships while e-commerce focuses on efficiency and transactions (Wang and Zhang 2012). Conceptually similar to social commerce are the terms "social shopping", "collaborative shopping" and "collaborative commerce". In research, all three terms have been used interchangeably with social commerce or treated as a subset of social commerce (Hsiao et al. 2010; Olbrich and Holsing 2012; Wang and Zhang 2012; Zhou et al. 2013).

Basic Theories behind Social Commerce Adoption

Since social commerce is closely related to e-commerce, basic theories used to explain e-commerce adoption are also used to explain consumers' adoption of social commerce (Liang et al. 2011; Shen 2012a; Wang and Zhang 2012). Drawing on the e-commerce literature, an individual consumer's adoption of e-commerce is defined as the "the consumer's engagement in online exchange relationships with Web vendors" (Pavlou and Fygenson 2006, pp. 115-116). To explain consumers' e-commerce adoption, two well-known and frequently applied theories are the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Grandón et al. 2011). Originated in social psychology, TRA, proposed by Fishbein and Icek (1975), posits that an individual's behavior is predicted by his or her intention to perform the behavior. Behavioral intention, in turn, depends on the individual's attitudes and subjective norms concerning the behavior. As an extension of TRA, TPB introduces a third element that influences an individual's behavioral intention (Ajzen 1985). Perceived behavioral control is an individual's perceived ease or difficulty of performing the particular behavior (Ajzen 1991).

To engage in e-commerce, consumers typically have to interact with information technology (IT), such as a commercial website (Koufaris 2002). On this basis, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which explains the user's acceptance of an IT system, has also been widely applied in the context of e-commerce adoption (Gefen et al. 2003; Gefen and Straub 2000). Building upon the TRA, TAM defines that the user's actual system use is predicted by the user's behavioral intention to use the system (Davis 1989). The user's behavioral intention, on the one hand, depends on the user's attitude towards using the system, which is determined by the user's perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use concerning the system. On the other hand, the user's behavioral intention is also directly influenced by perceived usefulness.

In line with the TRA, TPB, and TAM, we focus in our research on factors that influence consumers' intentions and/or behaviors towards social commerce.

Research Methodology

To identify the factors that influence consumers' adoption of social commerce, we conducted a systematic literature review that follows the recommendations of Webster and Watson (2002). Two fundamental steps to conduct a literature review are (1) identifying the relevant literature and (2) structuring the review (Webster and Watson 2002). We use this section to document how we performed these steps.

Identification of Relevant Literature

First, we specified our literature search process. In general, a literature search comprises the querying of scholarly literature databases and conducting backward and/or forward searches (Webster and Watson 2002). Figure 1 illustrates our literature search process.

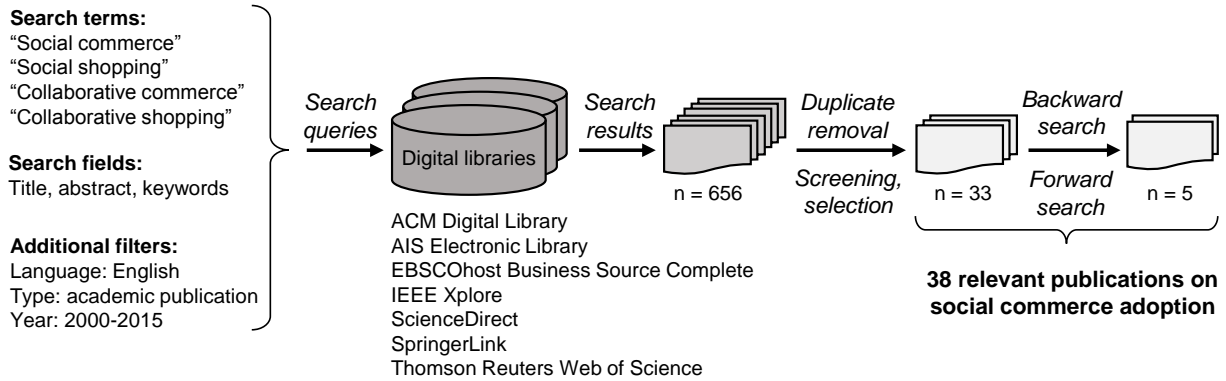


Figure 1. Literature search process (adapted from Rickenberg et al. 2012)

For the search, we used the following digital libraries: ACM Digital Library, AIS Electronic Library, EBSCOhost Business Source Complete, IEEE Xplore, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, and Thomson Reuters Web of Science. In this way, our literature search covered a broad range of academic publications, including high-quality IS journals and conference proceedings. Following the methodology of Webster and Watson (2002), we did not limit our search to a specific set of journals because we wanted to obtain a complete picture of the social commerce knowledge base. Regarding the search terms, we followed the procedure of Zhou et al. (2013), who conducted a bibliometric study on social commerce, and used the phrases "social commerce" and the conceptually similar phrases "social shopping", "collaborative commerce", and "collaborative shopping" (exact phrase as search term). We did not add "adoption" to these phrases because not all publications addressing social commerce adoption explicitly mention this term. As search fields, we used title, abstract, and keywords were applicable. Since social commerce emerged during the last decade (Zhou et al. 2013), we restricted our search to the time period between 2000 and 2015. To ensure a certain quality level, we only considered peer-reviewed academic publications (including journal articles, conference papers, and book sections). Reports, whitepapers, and other types of literature were excluded. Additionally, we only focused on publications written in English.

By following the above described procedure, we identified 656 publications related to the concept of social commerce (see Appendix for detailed database search results). After removing duplicate entries, we obtained 442 unique publications. We then screened these publications on their relevance to our research question. The screening based on the publications titles, abstracts, and, if necessary, on the full texts. Consequently, publications that examine one or more factors influencing consumers' intentions and/or behaviors towards social commerce were classified as relevant. Furthermore, relevant publications must provide empirical evidence about the impacts of the identified factors. Conceptual studies and research proposals were excluded. In this way, we reduced the list of relevant publications to 33. As recommended by Webster and Watson (2002), we performed backward and forward searches on these publications. By doing so, we additionally identified 5 relevant publications. Finally, our list consisted of 38 relevant publications.

Structuring the Review

To synthesize our results, we followed Webster and Watson (2002) to take a concept-centric approach. While carefully reading each article, we first captured all examined influence factors and outcome variables. Furthermore, we captured all empirically observed impacts between the factors and outcome variables. Next, we filtered out factors which did not have a direct impact on any of the outcome variables. For example, the collectivism factors examined by Noh et al. (2013) have only been reported with an impact on perceived usefulness and thus were excluded. A complete list of the excluded factors can be found in the Appendix. Subsequently, we grouped conceptually similar factors together; for example, trust-related factors such as "Trust in members" or "Trust in company" were grouped under the factor "Trust". Conceptually different factors that had only been examined in one article were grouped under "Others". In the same way, we grouped the outcome variables, for example, "Intention to purchase products", "Intention to buy" and "Buying behavior" were grouped under the variable "Buying

intention/behavior". The result of this procedure was a classification scheme that covers the frequently examined influence factors and outcome variables on social commerce adoption (see Figure 2).



Figure 2. Classification of literature review results

In the following sections, we will focus on the influence factors that have been empirically examined in more than one publication.

Results

In this section, we describe the results of our literature review. According to our developed classification scheme, we concentrate on the frequently examined factors influencing consumers' adoption of social commerce. For each factor, we illustrate the conceptualizations used in the literature and we list the factor's impact on other factors and on the adoption-related outcome variables.

According to the empirical data provided in the relevant publications, we differentiate between significant positive, significant negative, and non-significant impacts. Impacts of the same type are counted together, which corresponds to the vote-counting method developed by Light and Smith (1971). Vote-counting is a simple meta-analysis technique in which the number of significant positive, significant negative and non-significant findings is compared and the category with the largest number is used to determine the direction of a relationship (Cooper 1998). However, vote-counting has several drawbacks; for example, differences in sample sizes, impact weights, or data analysis approaches are not taken into account. The illustrated impact numbers should therefore be interpreted with caution. Nevertheless, we use vote-counting for the following reasons: First, vote-counting allows us to provide a brief summary of the reported impacts. Second, vote-counting supports us in identifying under-researched relationships. Third, the limitations of vote-counting are appropriate for our context since not all of the relevant publications provide information about the sample size or the applied data analysis approach.

Table 1, Table 2, and Table 3 list the results of our concept-centric classification. Factors are ordered descending by the number of publications (n). Numbers in square brackets refer to the relevant references, which can be found at the end of Table 3. Studies examining different impacts for one factor have been counted separately. For example, Kwahk and Ge (2012) identify a significant positive impact of informational social influence and a significant negative impact of normative social influence on consumers' buying intention/behavior. Accordingly, we counted one positive and one negative impact of social influence on the buying intention/behavior.

| Trust (n = 17) | | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Conceptualizations | Trust ^[1,7,8,9,10,11,13,22,28,30,32,34] , trust towards community ^[3] /members ^[3,28] , information-based trust ^[5] , identification-based trust ^[5] , company trust ^[5,28] , trust in product recommendation ^[12] , trust in website ^[12] , trustworthiness of SNSs ^[15] , trust in sellers ^[25] | | | |
| | | Impact | | |
| Influence on ... | Factor | Positive | Negative | Non-significant |
| | Usefulness | 1 ^[9] | | |
| | Commitment | 1 ^[3] | | |
| | Value | 1 ^[1] | | |
| | Uncertainty | | 1 ^[13] | |
| | Outcome variable | | | |
| | Using intention/behavior | 4 ^[7,28,32,34] | | 1 ^[30] |
| | Buying intention/behavior | 6 ^[3,8,9,12,15,25] | | |
| Sharing intention/behavior | 3 ^[3,5,22] | | 2 ^[3,5] | |
| Usefulness (n = 11) | | | | |
| Conceptualizations | Perceived usefulness ^[7,8,9,19,26,29,30,31,32,34] , performance expectancy ^[6] | | | |
| Influence on ... | Factor | Positive | Negative | Non-significant |
| | Trust | 1 ^[8] | | |
| | Outcome variable | | | |
| | Using intention/behavior | 7 ^[6,7,26,29,30,31,32] | | |
| | Buying intention/behavior | 3 ^[8,9,19] | | 1 ^[34] |
| Social presence (n = 7) | | | | |
| Conceptualizations | Social presence ^[7,13,21,28,29,31] , social presence of web ^[25] , social presence of interaction ^[25] | | | |
| Influence on ... | Factor | Positive | Negative | Non-significant |
| | Trust | 3 ^[7,13,25] | | 1 ^[25] |
| | Usefulness | 2 ^[29,31] | | |
| | Enjoyment | 2 ^[29,31] | | |
| | Uncertainty | | 1 ^[13] | |
| | Outcome variable | | | |
| | Buying intention/behavior | | | 1 ^[28] |
| | Sharing intention/behavior | 1 ^[21] | | |
| Social influence (n = 6) | | | | |
| Conceptualizations | Social influence ^[6] , informational social influence ^[17] , normative social influence ^[17] , subjective norm ^[21,28,32] , conformity motivation ^[15] | | | |
| Influence on ... | Factor | Positive | Negative | Non-significant |
| | Trust | 1 ^[15] | | |
| | Opinion-seeking in SNSs | 1 ^[15] | | |
| | Outcome variable | | | |
| | Using intention/behavior | 4 ^[6,15,28,32] | | |
| | Buying intention/behavior | 1 ^[17] | 1 ^[17] | |
| | Sharing intention/behavior | 1 ^[21] | | |
| | Visiting intention/behavior | 1 ^[17] | | |
| Social commerce components (n = 6) | | | | |
| Conceptualizations | Social commerce components ^[7] , recommendations & referrals ^[8] , forums & communities ^[8] , ratings & reviews ^[8] , social media ^[9] , social commerce constructs ^[10,11,35] | | | |
| Influence on ... | Factor | Positive | Negative | Non-significant |
| | Trust | 4 ^[8,9,10,11] | | 1 ^[8] |
| | Social presence | 1 ^[7] | | |
| | Ease of use | 1 ^[7] | | |
| | Social support | 1 ^[35] | | |
| | Relationship quality | 1 ^[35] | | |
| | Familiarity | 1 ^[7] | | |
| | Outcome variable | | | |
| | Sharing intention/behavior | 1 ^[35] | | |

Table 1. Factors and impacts (I/III)

[...] = reference (see Table 3)
n = number of publications

| Website quality (n = 6) | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|----------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Conceptualizations | Website quality ^[20] , perceived web quality ^[12] , information quality ^[2,28] , system quality ^[2] , online service quality ^[1,18] | | | |
| | | Impact | | |
| Influence on ... | Factor | Positive | Negative | Non-significant |
| | Trust | 1 ^[12] | | |
| | Value | 2 ^[1,18] | | 1 ^[18] |
| | Satisfaction | 1 ^[2] | | |
| | Relationship quality | 1 ^[20] | | |
| | Psychological empowerment | 1 ^[2] | | |
| | Outcome variable | | | |
| | Using intention/behavior | 2 ^[20,28] | | |
| Continuance intention/behavior | 2 ^[18,20] | | | 1 ^[18] |
| Ease of use (n = 5) | | | | |
| Conceptualizations | Perceived ease of use ^[7,19,26,34] , effort expectancy ^[6] | | | |
| Influence on ... | Factor | Positive | Negative | Non-significant |
| | Usefulness | 3 ^[7,26,34] | | |
| | Learning & training | 1 ^[7] | | |
| | Outcome variable | | | |
| | Using intention/behavior | 3 ^[6,7,26] | | |
| Buying intention/behavior | 1 ^[19] | | | |
| Value (n = 5) | | | | |
| Conceptualizations | Perceived value ^[4,18] , hedonic value ^[37,38] , utilitarian value ^[37] , information value ^[1,38] , social value ^[1,38] | | | |
| Influence on ... | Factor | Positive | Negative | Non-significant |
| | Satisfaction | 2 ^[1,38] | | |
| | Outcome variable | | | |
| | Using intention/behavior | 2 ^[37,38] | | |
| | Buying intention/behavior | 1 ^[4] | | |
| Continuance intention/behavior | 1 ^[18] | | | |
| Centrality (n = 5) | | | | |
| Conceptualizations | Centrality ^[23] , indegree centrality ^[22] , outdegree centrality ^[22] , network centrality ^[27] , social ties ^[21] , social media interaction ties ^[17] | | | |
| Influence on ... | Factor | Positive | Negative | Non-significant |
| | Social influence | 1 ^[17] | | |
| | Affective/cognitive involvement | 1 ^[27] | | |
| | Outcome variable | | | |
| | Sharing intention/behavior | 3 ^[21,22,23] | | |
| Social support (n = 4) | | | | |
| Conceptualizations | Social support ^[19,20,32,35] | | | |
| Influence on ... | Factor | Positive | Negative | Non-significant |
| | Relationship quality | 3 ^[20,32,35] | | |
| | Outcome variable | | | |
| | Using intention/behavior | 1 ^[20] | | |
| | Buying intention/behavior | 1 ^[19] | | |
| Continuance intention/behavior | 1 ^[20] | | | |
| Enjoyment (n = 4) | | | | |
| Conceptualizations | Perceived enjoyment ^[28,29,31,32] | | | |
| Influence on ... | Outcome variable | Positive | Negative | Non-significant |
| | Using intention/behavior | 4 ^[28,29,31,32] | | |
| Satisfaction (n = 4) | | | | |
| Conceptualizations | Customer satisfaction ^[1,2,38] , site satisfaction ^[14] , coupon satisfaction ^[14] | | | |
| Influence on ... | Outcome variable | Positive | Negative | Non-significant |
| | Using intention/behavior | 1 ^[38] | | |
| | Continuance intention/behavior | 1 ^[14] | | |

Table 2. Factors and impacts (II/III)

[...] = reference (see Table 3)
n = number of publications

| Commitment (n = 3) | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|-----------------|
| Conceptualizations | Commitment ^[21] , community commitment ^[3] , social media commitment ^[17] | | | |
| | | Impact | | |
| Influence on ... | Factor | Positive | Negative | Non-significant |
| | Social influence | 1 ^[17] | | |
| | Outcome variable | | | |
| | Buying intention/behavior | 1 ^[3] | | |
| | Sharing intention/behavior | 2 ^[3,21] | | |
| Familiarity (n = 3) | | | | |
| Conceptualizations | Familiarity ^[7,28] , vendor familiarity ^[34] | | | |
| Influence on ... | Factor | Positive | Negative | Non-significant |
| | Trust | 2 ^[7,34] | | |
| | Outcome variable | | | |
| | Using intention/behavior | 1 ^[28] | | |
| Relationship quality (n = 2) | | | | |
| Conceptualizations | Relationship quality (combination of trust, satisfaction, and commitment) ^[20,35] | | | |
| Influence on ... | Outcome variable | Positive | Negative | Non-significant |
| | Using intention/behavior | 1 ^[20] | | |
| | Sharing intention/behavior | 1 ^[35] | | |
| | Continuance intention/behavior | 1 ^[20] | | |
| Others (n = 1/per factor) | | | | |
| Factors | Ability ^[33] Affective/cognitive involvement ^[27] Anticipated extrinsic rewards ^[24] Anticipated reciprocal relationships ^[24] Consumer knowledge ^[19] Consumer self-confidence ^[15] Consumption emotion ^[37] Cool & new trend ^[28] Customer expertise ^[23] | Enjoyment in helping others ^[24] Extraversion ^[37] Facilitating conditions ^[6] Identification ^[22] Interactivity ^[21] Knowledge self-efficacy ^[24] Learning & training ^[7] Motivation ^[33] Openness to experience ^[37] Opinion-seeking in SNSs ^[15] Opportunity ^[33] Outcome expectations ^[21] | Parasocial interaction ^[36] Perceived risk control ^[19] Price fairness perception ^[16] Privacy risk ^[21] Psychological empowerment ^[2] Reciprocity ^[23] Reputation ^[23] Shared language ^[22] Shared vision ^[22] Sociability ^[15] Uncertainty ^[13] | |
| References | 1 = Alshibly (2014a); 2 = Alshibly (2014b) 3 = Chen et al. (2014) 4 = Cho et al. (2012) 5 = Chow and Shi (2014) 6 = Gatautis and Medziasiene (2014) 7 = Hajli (2012a) 8 = Hajli (2012d) 9 = Hajli (2014) 10 = Hajli et al. (2013) 11 = Hajli et al. (2014) 12 = Hsiao et al. (2010) 13 = Hwang et al. (2014) | 14 = Jang et al. (2013) 15 = Kang and Johnson (2013) 16 = Kim et al. (2013) 17 = Kwahk and Ge (2012) 18 = Lee et al. (2012) 19 = Li et al. (2014) 20 = Liang et al. (2011) 21 = Lin et al. (2013) 22 = Liu et al. (2013a) 23 = Liu et al. (2013d) 24 = Liu et al. (2014) 25 = Lu and Fan (2014) 26 = Noh et al. (2013) | 27 = Park et al. (2014) 28 = Sharma and Crossler (2014) 29 = Shen (2012a) 30 = Shen (2012d) 31 = Shen and Eder (2009) 32 = Shin (2013) 33 = Teh and Ahmed (2011) 34 = Teh and Ahmed (2012) 35 = Wang and Hajli (2014) 36 = Xiang et al. (2014) 37 = Yang and Woo (2013) 38 = Yen (2013) | |

Table 3. Factors and impacts (III/III)

[...] = reference
n = number of publications

To interpret the results, we first provide details on the identified outcome variables. As illustrated in our classification scheme (see Figure 2), consumers' adoption of social commerce is predicted by different intentions and/or behaviors. Most studies (14) focus on consumers' intention/behavior to generally use a social commerce website. 11 studies address consumers' intention/behavior to buy from a social commerce website, while 7 studies observe consumers' intention/behavior to share information. To measure costumers' loyalty, 4 studies examine the intention/behavior to continue using (and returning to) a social commerce website. Finally, 1 study targets consumers' intention/behavior to visit a social commerce website.

Referring to the influence factors, trust has received the most attention in the literature on social commerce adoption ($n = 17$). However, comparing the results is difficult because trust has been conceptualized in different ways. Most studies address trust in general, while others conceptualize it as trust towards community/members, company trust, trust in product recommendation, or trust in website. Some of these differences can be traced back to the e-commerce literature, which has produced a variety of trust conceptualizations (Gefen et al. 2003). Looking at the impacts of trust, studies demonstrate that trust has a positive impact on consumers' using (4/5), buying (6/6), and sharing (3/3) intention/behavior. Also trust may positively affect the consumers' commitment, the perceived value, and the usefulness of a website. However, each of these impacts has only been examined in one study. Furthermore, evidence is given that trust is influenced by many other factors. For example, trust is positively influenced by social presence (3/3), social influence (1/1), social commerce components (4/5), usefulness (1/1), website quality (1/1), and familiarity (2/2).

In line with the Technology Acceptance Model (see section 2), studies demonstrate that both the usefulness and ease of use of a website play an important role in consumers' adoption of social commerce. Positive impacts of usefulness and ease of use have been examined on consumers' using (7/7; 3/4) and buying (3/4; 1/1) intention/behavior. Besides these utilitarian-related factors, it has also been demonstrated that consumers' enjoyment plays a significant role in social commerce adoption. 4/4 studies confirm a positive impact of enjoyment on consumers' using intention/behavior. These findings underpin the proposition of Wang and Zhang (2012) that social commerce is both utilitarian and hedonic.

To facilitate consumers' social interactions, an effective social commerce platform should provide users with features to represent themselves, for example, by creating a personal profile with real name and picture (Huang and Benyoucef 2013). In this context, studies have shown that the factor social presence positively influences trust (3/3), usefulness (2/2), and enjoyment (2/2). However, the role of social presence on consumers' intentions/behaviors has only been examined by two studies with varying results (1 positive impact on sharing and 1 non-significant impact on buying intention/behavior).

In contrast to social presence, it seems that the factor social influence has a clearer impact on consumers' intentions/behaviors in social commerce. 4/4 studies address a positive impact of social influence on the using, 1/1 on the sharing, and 1/1 on the visiting intention/behavior. As already explained in the counting procedure above Table 1, one study identifies a positive impact of informational social influence and a negative impact of normative social influence on the consumers' buying intention/behavior.

Attention has also been given to the components of social commerce, such as, ratings and reviews, forums and communities, or recommendations and referrals. Evidence is given that these components primarily influence other factors in a positive way, such as trust (4/5), social presence (1/1), ease of use (1/1), social support (1/1), relationship quality (1/1), and familiarity (1/1). 1/1 study observes a positive impact of these components on consumers' sharing intention/behavior. As demonstrated by Hajli (2012d), impacts can vary for each component. For example, forums and communities can have a significant positive impact on trust, while ratings and reviews may not have any significant impact (Hajli 2012d).

Despite its importance to e-commerce (DeLone and McLean 2004), the factor website quality, which comprises system quality, information quality, and service quality (Jiang et al. 2008), also seems to play a critical role in consumers' adoption of social commerce. Positive impacts of website quality have been reported on trust (1/1), value (2/3), satisfaction (1/1), relationship quality (1/1), customers' psychological empowerment (1/1), and on the using (2/2) and continuance (2/3) intention/behavior.

Centrality, also described as social ties, is used in the social commerce literature to define the total number of connections between one focal consumer and the other consumers (Lin et al. 2013; Liu et al. 2013a; Liu et al. 2013d). Studies have demonstrated that consumers with a higher centrality (i.e., a higher number of connections) have a significant higher sharing intention/behavior (3/3).

In the marketing literature, the concept of value is used to describe the consumers' overall assessment of benefits and costs when purchasing a product or service (Zeithaml 1988). In the social commerce literature, different forms of value have been examined, such as perceived value, hedonic value, utilitarian value, information value, and social value. In general, value has a positive impact on satisfaction (2/2) and on the using (2/2), buying (1/1), and continuance (1/1) intention/behavior. Also derived from marketing literature, the factor satisfaction has been confirmed with a positive impact on consumers' using (1/1) and continuance (1/1) intention/behavior.

A factor that has generally been associated with the establishment of a long-term relationship is commitment (Li et al. 2006). However, the relationship between commitment and consumers' continuance intention/behavior has not been examined so far in the social commerce literature. Instead, commitment has been associated with a positive impact on social influence (1/1) and on the buying (1/1) and sharing (2/2) intention/behavior.

In the social commerce literature, little attention has been given to the factor familiarity ($n = 3$). Besides its positive influence on trust (2/2), one study provides evidence that familiarity positively influences consumers' using intention/behavior (1/1).

Relationship quality is used as a combination of trust, commitment, and satisfaction (Liang et al. 2011; Wang and Hajli 2014). According to Liang and Turban (2011), relationship quality is critical in affecting customers' loyalty which results in an increased continuance intention/behavior. However, in the social commerce literature, only one study examines the influence of relationship quality on consumers' continuance intention/behavior (demonstrating a positive impact). A factor that clearly seems to positively influence relationship quality is social support (3/3). Additionally, social support is associated with a positive impact on the using (1/1), buying (1/1), and continuance intention (1/1).

Factors that have only been examined in one publication are listed in Table 3. The factors perceived risk control (Li et al. 2014) and privacy risk (Lin et al. 2013) were not grouped together because they point in different directions.

Discussion

In this section, we discuss the implications and limitations of our literature review.

Implications

Our results demonstrate that research on social commerce adoption so far has examined a broad variety of factors. However, most factors have only been examined in one study (see Table 3), which makes it difficult to assess their importance. Further investigations on these factors are necessary. Besides, researchers should be careful when defining their own factors. To facilitate a comparison, established conceptualizations in the literature should be preferred whenever possible. When looking at the frequently examined factors, about half of the impacts have only been evaluated by one study and highlight need for further empirical evaluation. Many impacts have not yet been explored in context of social commerce, such as the impact of trust on consumers' continuance intention/behavior, the impact of centrality on consumers' buying intention/behavior, or the impact of enjoyment on consumers' sharing intention.

As illustrated by the identified outcome variables (see Figure 2), consumers' adoption of social commerce has been explained with different intentions/behaviors. However, looking at consumers' activities in social commerce (Ickler et al. 2009; Rad and Benyoucef 2010; Saundage and Lee 2011), there is room for research to investigate additional behaviors. For example, examining consumers' intention/behavior to collaborate online or to support other consumers. Future research on social commerce adoption should also consider to examine more than one consumer intention/behavior, such as demonstrated by Chen et al. (2014), Hsiao et al. (2010), Kwahk and Ge (2012), and Liang and Turban (2011). By combining the identified influence factors and outcome variables, researchers may develop a more complete understanding of consumers' behaviors in social commerce.

For practice, our results suggest that a variety of factors influence consumers to participate in social commerce. Moreover, there exist different side effects between these factors. Practitioners can therefore use the results of our literature review as a guideline to determine which factors may be critical for their social commerce initiatives. For example, if a company wants to increase consumers' intention/behavior to return to a social commerce website, special attention should be given to the factors trust, website quality, commitment, satisfaction, and relationship quality.

Limitations

Nevertheless, our research is subject to several limitations. Regarding our literature search, we only concentrated on academic publications written in English. Moreover, some studies were excluded because the full text was not available due to access restrictions. Furthermore, the search process can be improved by including additional digital libraries.

In terms of influence factors, we excluded all factors that did not have a direct impact on consumers' adoption of social commerce (see Appendix). Additionally, we only concentrated on factors that have been examined in more than one publication. When counting the impacts, we did not differentiate between impacts that have been reported by the same researchers and impacts that have been reported by different researchers. For example, the positive impact of social commerce components on trust (4/5) refers to Hajli (2012c), Hajli (2014), Hajli et al. (2013), Hajli et al. (2014). Moreover, we did not consider differences in the sample sizes, contexts, impact weights, or data analysis approaches. To derive additional information about the weights and directions of the impacts, further meta-analysis techniques, such as a sign test (Cooper 1998), can be applied.

Conclusion

In this paper, we examined the factors that influence consumers' adoption of social commerce. By conducting a systematic literature review, we summarized and synthesized the results of 38 academic publications on social commerce adoption. To present the results in a concept-centric way, we developed a classification scheme that covers the frequently examined factors and consumer intentions/behaviors addressed in the social commerce adoption literature. On the basis of this scheme, we presented a comprehensive and structured list of factors and their potential impacts on consumers' adoption of social commerce. Several implications for research and practice were discussed. Main implications for research are: use our list to (1) examine the importance of the factors which have only been analyzed in one study; (2) verify the consolidated impacts of the frequently examined factors and explore new impacts; (3) combine the identified influence factors and outcome variables to develop a better understanding of social commerce adoption. By pointing out the limitations of our work, we also highlighted room for improvements.

The results of our literature review demonstrate that research on social commerce adoption is still in an early stage. To support companies in their social commerce initiatives, it is necessary for research to further explore the factors that influence consumers to adopt to social commerce.

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Appendix

Table 4 illustrates the results of our literature search in the digital libraries.

| <i>Digital library</i> | <i>Search fields</i> | <i>Additional filters</i> | <i>Search terms</i> | <i>Hits</i> | <i>Relevant</i> |
|------------------------------------|---|--|------------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| ACM Digital Library | Title, abstract, keywords | Published since 2000 | Social commerce | 19 | 0 |
| | | | Social shopping | 6 | 0 |
| | | | Collaborative commerce | 3 | 0 |
| | | | Collaborative shopping | 1 | 0 |
| AIS Electronic Library | Title, abstract, keywords | Date range: 01/01/2000-31/01/2015 | Social commerce | 42 | 6 |
| | | | Social shopping | 16 | 4 |
| | | | Collaborative commerce | 9 | 0 |
| | | | Collaborative shopping | 4 | 0 |
| EBSCOhost Business Source Complete | Title, abstract, subject terms | Lang.: EN Pub. type: acad. journal, conf. paper/proceeding Year: 2000-2015 | Social commerce | 45 | 2 |
| | | | Social shopping | 23 | 0 |
| | | | Collaborative commerce | 73 | 0 |
| | | | Collaborative shopping | 2 | 0 |
| IEEE Xplore | Title text, abstract, indexing terms | Year range: 2000-present | Social commerce | 24 | 5 |
| | | | Social shopping | 13 | 3 |
| | | | Collaborative commerce | 59 | 0 |
| | | | Collaborative shopping | 8 | 0 |
| ScienceDirect | Title, abstract, keywords | Year: 2000-present | Social commerce | 29 | 1 |
| | | | Social shopping | 5 | 0 |
| | | | Collaborative commerce | 13 | 0 |
| | | | Collaborative shopping | 1 | 0 |
| SpringerLink | Title only (other fields n/a) | Language: EN Between 2000-2015 | Social commerce | 9 | 0 |
| | | | Social shopping | 3 | 1 |
| | | | Collaborative commerce | 7 | 0 |
| | | | Collaborative shopping | 1 | 0 |
| Thomson Reuters Web of Science | Topic (incl. title, abstract, keywords) | Language: EN From 2000 to 2015 | Social commerce | 85 | 7 |
| | | | Social shopping | 36 | 4 |
| | | | Collaborative commerce | 107 | 0 |
| | | | Collaborative shopping | 13 | 0 |
| n = | | | | 656 | 33 |

Table 4. Detailed results of the database search

Table 5 lists the factors which were excluded from our literature review because they have not been associated with a direct impact on consumers' adoption of social commerce.

| Excluded from literature review | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| Factors | Contact ^[18] Coupon/site confirmation ^[14] Equity ^[24] Expertise ^[36] Homophily ^[27] Illusion of control ^[16] Information asymmetry ^[13] Information fit to task ^[36] Involvement ^[16] Likeability ^[36] Mobility ^[13] Network density ^[27] Perceived ability ^[12] Perceived benevolence/integrity ^[12] | Perceived critical mass ^[12] Perceived institution assurance ^[12] Perceived privacy ^[28] Perceived security ^[28,33] Perceived source competency ^[28] Perceived web reputation ^[12] Personal value ^[37] Physical attraction ^[36] Price change type ^[16] Price consciousness ^[26] Price reduction ^[4] Prior experience ^[5] Privacy concerns ^[35] Product variety ^[4] | Quantity- & time-limited message ^[4] Required minimum numbers of shoppers ^[4] Responsiveness ^[18] Similarity ^[36] Situational normality ^[33] SNS word of mouth ^[13] Social attraction ^[36] Structural assurance ^[33] Task attraction ^[36] Tendency to social comparison online ^[29,30,31] Tie strength ^[27] User experience ^[7] Visual appeal ^[36] WOM quality ^[28] |
| References | 4 = Cho et al. (2012) 5 = Chow and Shi (2014) 7 = Hajli (2012a) 12 = Hsiao et al. (2010) 13 = Hwang et al. (2014) 14 = Jang et al. (2013) 16 = Kim et al. (2013) | 18 = Lee et al. (2012) 24 = Liu et al. (2014) 26 = Noh et al. (2013) 27 = Park et al. (2014) 28 = Sharma and Crossler (2014) 29 = Shen (2012a) | 30 = Shen (2012d) 31 = Shen and Eder (2009) 33 = Teh and Ahmed (2011) 35 = Wang and Hajli (2014) 36 = Xiang et al. (2014) 37 = Yang and Woo (2013) |

Table 5. Excluded factors

[...] = reference