Customers' Perceived Experiential Value: Case of Social Commerce Context

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Abstract

Recently, variety of mobile devices and services are being spread based on a smartphones and SC (social commerce). In particular, the SC services play an important role in building consumer's shopping experience as well as online shopping mall. Thus, this study examines the effect of perceived experiential value (utilitarian and hedonic value) on emotion, memory, and attitude and loyalty in SC context. In order to achieve these purposes, the author developed several hypotheses. The data was collected from 300 customers who have purchased the products or services in SC and it will be analyzed with SPSS and AMOS.

Keywords: Perceived Experiential Value, Emotion, Memory, Attitude, Loyalty, Social Commerce

1. Introduction

The emergence of the Internet has been regarded as the greatest technological advancement. The rise of the Internet has created opportunities for organizations, and has changed the business landscape of e-commerce. The e-commerce is an online market, which has been growing rapidly and changing business patterns over the past several years. E-commerce has changed the business pattern with manufacturers, distributors, and customers using the Internet as a useful tool for communication. By using the Internet, a form could conduct two-way communication, offer reviews, campaigns, feedbacks, and other relevant content to consumers, connect and engage with them (Gillin, 2009).

These days, the rise of social networking sites (SNSs) and the emergence of Web 2.0 technology have led to a novel electronic commerce known as social commerce (Liang & Turban, 2011). Social commerce has developed the way how individual communicate with their colleagues and friends on social platforms. It has brought new developments to e-commerce. The popularity of social technologies and platforms is one of the main reasons for advancement in this area (Liang& Turban, 2011). These developments attract individuals to come online and have interactions with their peers on social platforms such as online communities. The social connections and interactions of people on the Internet, especially in social networking sites, the main focus of SNSs. The commercial impact of social commerce will soon influence more than half of all retail transactions and is expected to reach $2 trillion in the U.S. alone by 2016, according to a report by Forrester Research (Mulpuru, Sehgal, Evans, Poltermann, & Roberge,2012).

We have witnessed the importance of social media as a platform for making the sale alongside building and conveying an image for the brands. Nearly 40% of social media users had purchased products after sharing or favoring it on social media sites. However, previous studies seek to understand how consumers interact with each other through Web 2.0 technologies in social commerce environment or examined the impact of social capital like cognitive, relational, and structural dimension) on information sharing in online communities. Some empirical studies have compared relationships in social commerce and e-commerce (Huang & Benyoucef, 2013)To date, there has been little research attention paid to the shopper in social commerce compared to online shopper. Additional research efforts are needed to analyze and evaluate social commerce shopping behavior.

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To bridge this gap, this study sets out to answer the following research questions: do social commerce shopping behavior is different from that of online shopping behavior? In this study, we attempt to better understand the consumers' purchase behavior in social commerce. To answer this question, we start by conceptualizing consumers' shopping behavior and then test hypotheses by using social commerce samples. The main goal of this study is to find out the characteristics of social commerce shopper regarding perceived value, emotion, memory, attitude and loyalty.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. The next section begins with a review of the literature and develop conceptual model by presenting testable research hypotheses. The third section is followed by an explanation of the paper's methodology, including the data gathering process, the measure development, and the analytical procedures. The following section presents the results of testing hypotheses and a discussion of the conclusion.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1. Perceived utilitarian and hedonic value

Accordingto Zeithaml (1988), the perceived value could be considered customers' overall assessment of the utility of a product or service based on the perception of what is received and what is given. The values that stimulate consumption behavior are functional, conditional, social, emotional, and perceived usefulness. When shopping online, consumers may seek utilitarian benefits and hedonic benefits (Sheth et al., 1991). Previous studies also suggest that shopping can provide both hedonic and utilitarian value (Babin et al., 1994; Babin & Darden, 1995). In general, utilitarian shopping value reflects the task-related value of a shopping experience while hedonic shopping value reflects the value found in the shopping experience itself independent of task-related activities (Babin & Attaway, 2000). In study of Babin and Attaway (2000), they observe that positive affect associated with a website is related to both hedonic and utilitarian shopping value, impacting share of purchase. Also they insist that a potential customer who has positive feelings about a particular site is both more satisfied and more likely to buy than one who does not. Online shoppers may obtain experiential, or hedonic, value, through stimulation/arousal, playfulness, and positive affect. They may obtain utilitarian value if they are goal-focused and receive convenience, accessibility, selection, availability of information, and no requirement for commitment, features which are associated with perceived ease of use, freedom, and control (Wolfinbarger & Gilly, 2001).

Sheth, Newman and Gross (1991) identified five different types of consumption values that determine consumer choices and eventual satisfaction. These values are functional, social, emotional, epistemic, and conditional value. Holbrook and Corfman (1985) have made a major effort to describe value in the consumption experience. They distinguished eight separate categories of consumer value based on a three dimensional paradigms. They insisted that certain human emotions have been described as fundamental, are thought to comprise the core of value in consumption through the accomplishments of others. In much the same way that certain human emotions have been described as fundamental, these outcomes, taken collectively, are thought to comprise the core of value in consumption.

Previous researches support the notion that successful experience of purchasing activity plays significant role conducing positive emotion (Dawson et al, 1990; Westbrook & Black, 1985). Donovan and Rossiter (1982) measures emotions during the shopping experience and found that pleasure was a significant predictor of extra time spent in store and actual incremental spending. Yuksel (2007) explored the relationships between the shopping environment and emotions, shopping values and behaviors and found hedonic and utilitarian value and positive emotions would affect the shopping activity increase.

2.2. Memory, attitude & loyalty

Memory is described as the process in which information is encoded, stored, and retrieved in Psychology and it influences consumers' decision making process and determines the future retention of the information (Bettman, 1979). Memory has played a major role in decision making and consumer choice (Bettman, 1979), and most studies about consumers' decision making regard memory as a significant factor in shopping (Alba et al., 1991; Kronlund et al., 2008). Beattie (1982) also found that memory, level of processing attained, has implications for brand evaluation and choice. Advertising and psychology academia has systematically investigated about the memory and there are many studies in Marketing about the memory as factors for decision making in consumer behavior (Alba et al., 1991 and Kronlund et al., 2008).Krahmer's study (2004) found that memory influences consumers' shopping decisions by past experience and Loftus and Loftus (1976) insists that consumers who have had previous purchasing experiences would try to remember the situation at that time.

Meanwhile, Nelson (1974) recognized that industry needed to advertise to increase the chances of remembering brand names in his advertising study. Therefore, this study considers memory as a factor to be generated after purchasing behavior of consumers, and defines it as an important factor for future purchase decisions and information processing for shopping.

Many scholars have studied about attitude in consumer behavior study. Each scholar has used their own definition about attitude. Attitude has been viewed as a person's general feeling of favorableness or unfavorableness toward some stimulus object from previous studies (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). In previous studies on attitude, they found that perceived shopping value highly relevant to customers' attitude and behavior. Lee et al (1999) insisted that perceived value of shopping is highly related to customers' attitude. By using the theory of the expectancy-disconfirmation paradigm, Anderson and Sullivan (1993) found that the more people who have experience with shopping, the more accurate the expectation of the performance related to the shopping, so the discrepancy decreases and the attitude and repurchase intention increase. The conception model of that study assumes that perceived quality is an antecedent to satisfaction and perceived value. Tam (2004) also found that increasing customer perception of service quality can result in higher levels of customer satisfaction and perceived value. Previous studies also found that customers' revisit intention is positive influenced by positive emotion (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982; Yoo, Park, &Maclnnis, 1996). Lee et al. (2001) suggested that satisfied purchase experience formed favorable attitude toward the product or service they have experienced. Yoo (1996) studies about the relationship between positive emotion and attitude, andfound that experienced emotional attitude positively influence customers' purchase intention.

Loyalty has been thought of as one of the major driving forces in the competitive market (Dimanche & Havitz, 1994). Customer loyalty is an attitude about an organization and its' service that is manifested by intentions and behaviors of recommendation and re-patronization. Customer loyalty is critical to a company's long- term vitality (Kotler, 2014). Repeat purchases or recommendations to other people are most usually referred to as consumer loyalty in the marketing literature (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). The concept and degree of loyalty is one of the critical indicators used to measure the success of marketing strategy (Flavian, Martinez, & Polo, 2001). Increasing the number of loyal customers by 5% has an increasing effect of 25% up to 80% in the total revenue of the enterprise (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990). Customer loyalty is based on a positive attitude and trust of consumers. It is viewed as the strength of the relationship between an individual's relative attitude and repeat patronage (Dick & Basu, 1994). Customers with high satisfaction are likely to recommend products or services to others and the product that the loyal customer satisfies and uses would lead to recommendation and word of mouth (WOM) to other people (Babin et al., 2008 and Lee & Hong, 2002). Loyalty can be directly influenced by the experience, as well as attitude. Reviewed literature suggests that customers' experienced positive experience is a significant predictor of attitude and attitude have been shown to affect customers' revisit or repurchase of the product. Yoon and Uysal (2005) defined loyalty as repurchase in marketing or recommendation to others. In this sense, repurchase intention and WOM variable were used to measure loyalty.

2.3. Relationship among perceived value, memory and loyalty

Memory refers to a consumer's ability to understand the marketing messages and assign them value and meaning to consumer. Memory is a recollection of the past, formerly influenced by experience and the outcome of experience. Memory can be used in the information of consumers' decision making choices (Bettman, 1979), and most studies on consumers' purchase decisions regard memory as an important factor (Alba et al., 1991; Kronlund et al., 2008). Bettman (1979) found that memory would determine behavior or purchase through information from long-standing memory about the various purchasing methods and processes of consumers.

It is a controlling factor of consumer behavior that not only involves consumer activity, knowledge but purchasing activity to be achieved (Kronlund et al., 2008). Many studies found that memory would influence on the setting of the consumer's purchasing process goal or the determination of the product and service based on the past shopping experience (Gable & Harmon-Jones, 2007; Isen et al., 1987; Levine and Edelstein, 2009). Levine and Edelstein (2009) found that memory is an important factor in consumer buying activities and recall of perceived experiential values would have a favorable effect on memory. Based on the discussion above, the following hypotheses were proposed;

H 1: Perceived value has positive influence on memory
H 2: Perceived value has positive influences on emotion
H 3: Memory has a positive effect on attitude
H 4: Memory has a positive effect on loyalty

2.4. Relationships among perceived value, attitude & loyalty.

Both the utilitarian and hedonic shopping values play an important role in the customer's shopping (Kesari & Atulkar, 2016). Creating and delivering shopping values would efficiently and effectively help in producing satisfaction to consumers and thus, understanding values would be used as a reference in shopping (Kesari & Atulkar, 2016). Perceived value would influence on customer attitude, as the literature widely reports (Zeithaml, 1988; Babin & Darden, 1995). Yang and Peterson (2004) examined the moderating effects of switching costs on customer loyalty through both satisfaction and perceived-value. The study indicated that companies that strive for customer loyalty need to focus on satisfaction and perceived value. The above review suggests that perceived values are critical factors in determining the purchasing activity, attitude determining purchase behavior and influencing repurchase, revisit and positive word-of mouth. It also suggests that attitude and loyalty can be the factors that relates interactively and the favorable attitude would increase the likelihood of repurchase, and favorable experience would influence the attitude, and these could be the precedence factor of loyalty. Previous studies have proved that positive attitudes have a positive effect on re-visit intentions (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982; Yoo, Park & Maclnnis, 1996). If the past purchase experience is satisfactory, it creates a favorable attitude toward the product or service in shopping. It can be seen that consumers who have a positive attitude from past purchasing experience become loyal customers. In this sense, attitude and loyalty can be positive interacting factors and a positive attitude increases the likelihood of repurchase intention, and attitudes can be presented as a leading factor in loyalty. Therefore, the following hypotheses were proposed to confirm the relationship between positive attitude and loyalty in social commerce.

H 5: Emotion has positive influence on attitude
H 6: Emotion has positive influence on loyalty
H 7: Attitude has a positive effect on loyalty

3. Methodology

To analyze those hypotheses, a structured questionnaire was developed based on review of the literature. The survey will be conducted on January, 2018. Even though the variables addressed in the literature are very broad, we focused on those specific factors that have an influence on shopping. The survey is comprised of 25 questions focusing largely on perceived value, emotion, memory, attitude, and loyalty. They were assessed using questions which draw on the literature of other researchers. The survey starts by asking the respondents' experience of shopping through social commerce and e-commerce.

The next section is the questions regarding each variable. First, Perceived value was measured by two different variables – hedonic and utilitarian. Babil et al., (1994) and Griffin et al. (2000) models are used in this study for measuring the perceived value. The questionnaire instrument contained five questions.

The literature on shopping was reviewed earlier in this study to identify measure of *emotion*. The measures of emotion were intended to be broadly representative of the various types of measures that have been used in prior research. The four emotion measures in this study are based on the study of Babin et al. (2008). 'Happy', excited', 'interest' and 'interested' were used for measuring emotion. Four questions were developed to measure the attitude. Allard, Babin, & Chebat (2009) study was used regarding those four variables. Neulinger and Breit (2009) used three variables for measuring memory. Three questions were derived from their study. The loyalty was also measured. The shopping response 'Willing to recommend', 'Willing to do a positive WOM' had been utilized in a number of previous (Garbarino & Johnson, 1999 & Babin et al., 2008). In this study 'loyalty' was used to measure those variables from previous studies. The last section of the survey asked socio-demographic questions. General demographic questions were asked to the respondents regarding occupation, age, education, income, media they used, frequency of shopping, payment method, amount of shopping for both online shopping and social commerce.

4. Results

The demographic profile of the sample is presented in Table 1. The gender distribution of respondents was skewed as more than half of respondents were male (60.7%) compared to 39.3% female respondents. The dominant age group was ages 30-39 (49.7%). Over 50% of respondents were singles (52.3%). In terms of educational levels, this sample was well educated as over 55% of respondents had at least a Bachelor's degree (56%). Correspondingly, household income levels were very high, over 30% of respondents grossed more than $80,000 per year, 33.6% grossed between $60,000 and $79,999; and 25.1% grossed between $40,000 and $59,999. Almost half of the respondents (47.3%) have professional or executive jobs.

This is consistent with the previous findings that online respondents are more likely to be professionals, and report higher incomes and education (McDonald & Adam, 2003). Over 70% of respondents purchased Apparel products, and almost 7% purchased beauty products. Regarding the amount they spent on each shopping, 50% of respondents spent between $30 to 50. Less than $30 was 15.3% and 8.7% of the respondents spent over $100 on online shopping. Table 1 provides a summary of the demographic statistics for this study.

Table 1. Profile of Respondents

Characteristic	Online Shopping Mall (n=300)	
	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Female	118	39.30
Male	182	60.70
Age		
20 to 29	164	39.60
30 to 39	79	19.10
40 to 49	88	21.30
50 to 59	66	15.90
Over 6	17	4.10
Education		
High school	29	7.00
Some college	105	25.40
College graduate	169	40.80
Post graduate	111	26.80
Occupation		
Owner/ self-employed	47	11.40
Manager/ executive	66	15.90
Professional/ technical	130	31.40
Clerical/Sales	50	12.10
Military	5	1.20
Homemaker	19	4.60
Retired	41	9.90
Students	16	3.90
Others	40	9.70
Annual household income		
Less than 20,000	9	2.20
20,000 to 39,999	36	8.60
40,000 to 59,999	104	25.10
60,000 to 79,999	139	33.6
80,000 to 99,999	106	25.60
Over 100,000	20	4.80
Marital status		
Single	143	47.7
Married	157	52.3
Access medium		
Computer	166	55.3
Smartphone	18	6.0
Both	116	38.7
Planned purchase		
Planned	72	24
Unplanned	228	76
Purchased expense		
Under $30	46	15.3
$30 – 50	150	50
$50 – 70	45	15
$70 – 100	33	11
Over $100	20	8.7
Purchased product category		
Food	11	3.7
Beauty	20	6.7
Concert	7	2.3
Travel	5	1.7
Leisure	7	2.3
Apparel	221	73.7
Health	7	2.3
Others	22	7.3

First of all, in order to identify the main components of perceived value, memory, emotion, attitude and loyalty, the average values of the items of the questionnaire were obtained from previous literature. Those five components scale includes 19 items. Both the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett's test of sphericity tests indicated that it was appropriate to perform a factor analysis. The result of the principle component factor analysis indicated that there are four underlying dimensions (factors). To detect scale dimensionality, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with a principal component method was conducted for brand extension scale. A value of .60 or above from the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy test indicates that the data is adequate for exploratory factor analysis. In order to make sure that each factor identified by EFA had only one dimension and each attribute loaded only on one factor, attributes that had factor loadings of lower than .40 were eliminated from the analysis. Table 2 shows the items and the factors that remained after the elimination. As presented in this table, the EFA generated four unidimensional factors. The results were somewhat consistent with the previous involvement research in online shopping study. Measure validation was initially examined for reliability analysis by computing Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each construct. All measures had high levels of reliability; as shown in Table 2, the values for all constructs exceeds 0.70. The discriminant and convergent validity of the principal constructs were examined using factor analysis procedure based on partial least squares (PLS). The congruent validity was assessed using the average variance extracted (AVE) and indicator loadings. The AVE values far exceeded the recommended level of 0.5, and loading scores were all above the desired threshold of 0.7. As shown in Table 3, all AVE values met this criterion (greater than the off-diagonal numbers), showing acceptable discriminant validity. Table 3 shows the correlation among the remaining variables in this study.

Table 2. Means, Standard Deviations, and Coefficient Alphas of Scales

Latent variables	Observed variables of items	Factor loading	%	Cronbach's alpha
Perceived utilitarian value				.859
	I've found the product that I wanted from this social commerce	.755		
	I was able to purchase the product due to the advertising in social commerce	.804	13.302	
	I got what I want from this social commerce	.787		
Perceived hedonic value				.835
	Thissocial commerce shopping provides interest, joy and pleasure to me	.677	12.283	
	I enjoy spending time on this social commerce shopping	.762		
Positive emotion				.884
	This social commerce shopping makes me happy	.700		
	Thissocial commerce shopping makes me getting excited	.673	13.403	
	This social commerce shopping makes me to get interested in shopping	.783		
	Thissocial commerce shopping makes me fell enthusiastic	-		
Attitude				.896
	I prefer to doingsocial commerce shopping	.702		
	I like social commerce shopping	.747	12.671	
	I generally in favor of social commerce shopping	.773		
Memory				.823
	I have good memory about social commerce	.683		
	I would remember the good thing about social commerce	.677	12.027	
	I will never forget about the social commerce experience	.816		
Loyalty				.901
	I would recommend using social commerce to my friend	.798		
	I would do positive word-of mouse to my friends	.853		
	I would recommend social commerce if my friend needs to shop	.823	15.188	
	I would revisit the social commerce for repurchase	-		

Table 3. Squares of the correlation between constructs

		1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	S.D.
1.	Utilitarian value	1						4.490	.894
2.	Hedonic value	.914	1					4.518	.877
3.	Attitude	.528	.579	1				4.572	.887
4.	Emotion	.615	.637	.676	1			4.733	.940
5.	Memory	.490	.560	.635	.630	1		4.776	.966
6.	Loyalty	.402	.473	.495	.544	.687	1	4.554	1.010

A separate set of structural equation model (SEMs) was run to assess the associations between the dimensions. AMOS 18 was used to test the measurement and structural models. AMOS 18 produces several fit indices to help determine the degree of goodness of fit of the conceptual model with the available data. Some commonly used fit indices generated by AMOS 7 include the Chi-square test ($\chi 2$), the ratio of chi-square to degree of freedom ($\chi 2/df$). In assessing the model, the following goodness-of-fit statistics: chi-square, the degrees of freedom, and the p value are reported. The index of fit for our model is shown in the Table 4.

Table 4. Goodness of fit indices

	Values obtained
Absolute fit measures	
$\chi 2$	112.204
p-level	0.000
Non-centrality parameter (NCP)	979.93
Goodness of fit index (GFI)	0.962
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	0.086
Expected cross validation index (ECVI)	0.849
Incremental fit measures	
Adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI)	0.937
Tucker Lewis index (TLI)	0.911
Normed fit index (NFI)	0.913
Comparative fit index (CFI)	0.932

The path diagram for the SEM model (Figure 1) presented the direction and magnitude of the direct impact through the positive and negative signs of the path coefficients and the absolute value of the standardized coefficients. H1 and H2 describes the relationship between utilitarian value, hedonic value and positive emotion and memory. Hypotheses 1 insists that perceived value affects emotions positively. The results of the path analysis supported five of the proposed relationships. Although perceived value appeared to be the main determinants of consumer memory on online shopping, in the case of social commerce shopping, there is no exact correspondence between perceived value and memory.H2 is a hypothesis that perceived value has a positive effect on emotion. Unlike memory, in the case of emotion, there is a clear influence by perceived value. The path coefficient is .585 (t-value=8.518, p<.001) and H2 was accepted. That result is consistent with previous studies about online shoppingH3 describes the relationship between memory and attitude. H3 is a hypothesis that memory affects attitude positively. First, the path is(T-value = 1.528, ns), indicating that memory and attitude on social commerce had a statistically significant effect. Memory has a positive effect on attitude and H3 was accepted. H5, H6 and H7 describe the relationship between positive emotions, attitudes, and loyalty. H5 is the hypothesis that positive emotions affect attitude. First, the path coefficient was .672(t-value= 8.160, p<.10). As a result of the analysis, which shows that emotions have a positive effect on attitude and loyalty (t-value= 2.365, p<.10). Thus H5 and H6 were accepted. In the relationship between attitude and loyalty, attitude affects loyalty positively. As a result of analyzing H7, the path coefficient was .481 (t-value = 6.459, p <.10) which was statistically significant. Therefore, H7 for the relationship between attitude and loyalty was accepted.
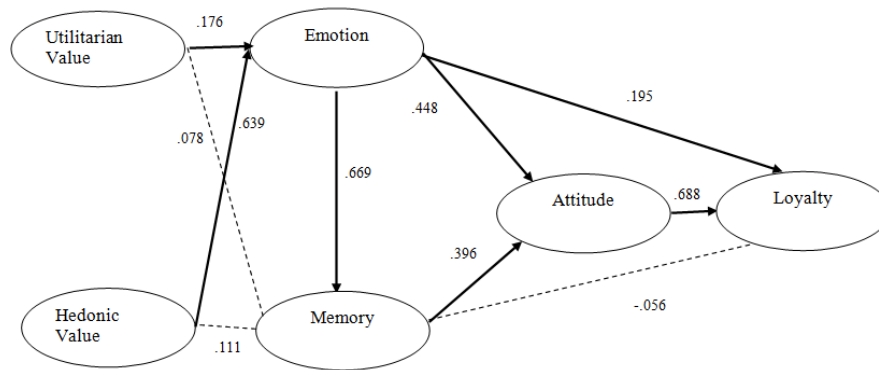
Figure 1. Attitude Model of Social Commerce Shopping

5. Conclusion

Social commerce shopping has become an important part of modern life. Gaining a better understanding of the social commerce shopping will help industry managers improve the effectiveness and efficiency of strategy launches. This study examined empirically the effects of perceived experiential value on positive emotions, memory, attitude, and loyalty of social commerce shopping. According to the empirical analysis, the research model of this paper, which is based on the previous research, is a satisfactory model fit. Among the 8 hypotheses presented in this study, 5 hypotheses showed statistically significant and that result is consistent with previous studies about online shopping behavior. The empirical results of this study are as follows. First, like online shopping mall studies, the perceived value had a positive effect on the positive emotion. However, here is no exact correspondence between perceived value and memory. Second, positive emotions had a significant effect on both memory and attitude. This suggests that customers who have positive emotions in social commerce would have a positive attitude. Third, memory had a significant effect on attitude in social commerce. Finally, this study shows that attitude is an important factor in increasing loyalty. As shown is this study, social commerce needs to find what efforts need to be made to increase customer loyalty, and to establish the strategy to strengthen it. Also, it is necessary to develop a detailed system for consumers' loyalty.

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