
The impact of relationship quality and social support on social media users' selling intention

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Abstract: Social commerce is getting more popular with its sales volume increase rapidly, and drives more consumers to start conducting business in the social media. The main aim of this study was to investigate the role of social support and relationship quality in influencing the consumer selling behaviour. Sample size was 296 respondents collected via survey questionnaire and data was analysed with structured equation modelling. The results showed that user interaction in social media influenced the attitude needed to venture into online business. On the other hand, relationship quality and social support enhanced the consumers' perception on controlling the shopping process. In conclusion, the research findings provide insightful theoretical implications on the selling aspect of social commerce.

Keywords: social commerce; selling intention; relationship quality; social support; online shopping; social media apps.

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1 Introduction

The social media communication has now become so pervasive in our everyday life. Both consumers and companies are using it to great extent in conducting business activities. With the advancement in information and communication technology, a myriad of social media applications is widely available. Social network provides new and innovative tools for both consumer and business to engage in business activities. Its impact on the total online retail sales is growing, especially social driven retail sales and referral traffic which are growing at a fast pace.

Social media is not created for business purpose initially but as a communication mean in connecting people across the networks. However, the social connection links are being leveraged for business purpose (Liang and Turban, 2011; Valenzuela et al., 2016; Weller, 2016). Hence, companies consider social media sites as strategic tools, with some larger companies hired employees to oversee their social media pages.

Once the trust building process is successfully bonded, the social media users are more inclined to engage in business activities (Wu and Li, 2018). For example, they are likely to read about recommendations and shopping experience of other users in their trusted virtual communities. Cheong and Morrison (2008) found out that comment and product reviews by other consumers are one major source for consumers to learn about the products. Hence, there is increasing efforts in using it as business medium due to the high usage of social media. Retailers are having closer collaboration with customers by monitoring constantly and answering Facebook questions posed by their customers (Ransbotham et al., 2012). This provides an avenue for online users who want to penetrate and maximising the value of social commerce.

Many research studies have been devoted to examine the importance of social media as a platform for social commerce based on company and individual retailer perspectives (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2013; Rydén et al., 2015; Yadav et al., 2013). Furthermore, research works conducted on customer's viewpoint were focus on their buying behaviour (Cheong and Morrison, 2008; Chu and Kim, 2011; Daugherty et al., 2008). Young social media users are keen to buy and sell within their virtual communities (Adnan, 2014; Sin et al., 2012). However, there is no research conducted on social media users' intention to sell yet. Hence, there is a need to examine the convenience of social media provided to sell products by individual user to have complete understanding of the use of social media for business. The importance of social media to promote and cultivate the initial entrepreneur intention among young online users was the intention of this study. Hence, this is an exploratory study on the effect of social networking usage on cultivating selling intention for avid young social media users.

2 Theoretical background and hypothesis development

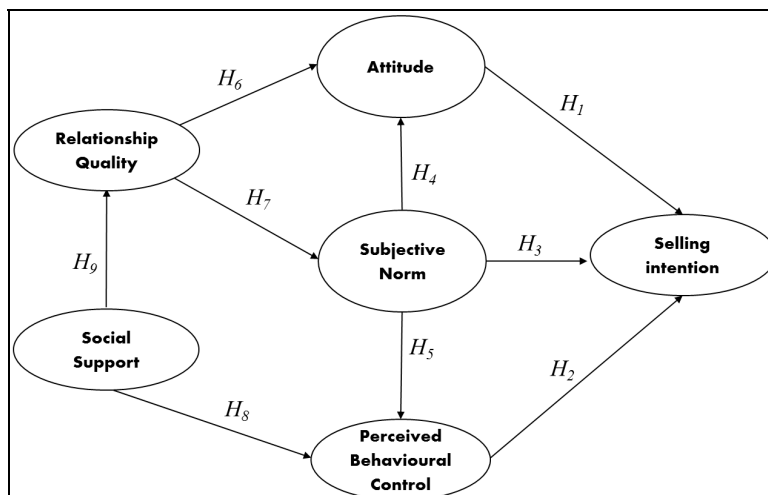
2.1 Social commerce

Social commerce is a subset of online business, which uses social media in assisting buying and selling in the Internet. Social commerce is referred as a form of commerce mediated by social media which permits both consumers and sellers to communicate within social network communities (Stephen and Galak, 2012; Wang and Zhang, 2012). Hence, social networking site is often regarded as both social as well as advertising channel because it ensured that the marketer reaches a retailer's specific target market (Duffett, 2015).

It allows consumers to purchase the products with convenience, after the social interaction among the social network users. More people are turning to social media for product recommendation and review. Customers can learn from their peers or friends in their virtual communities. Social media users are both consumer and producer of user-generated contents. The contents are readily available in the social media space. Word of mouth can be generated after they exchange information and feedbacks (Pfeffer et al., 2014). In addition, customers are more likely to share and co-produce contents with people in their social network circle (Chan and Li, 2010; Lu et al., 2010). Apparently, it is a good avenue for retailers to build and improve customer relationship easily. There is an emerging consensus in the extant literature on the importance of doing business via social media apps (Bolton et al., 2013; Huang and Benyoucef, 2013; Liang and Turban, 2011). This is because online users demonstrated social technology competency and shopping with convenience (Stephen and Toubia, 2010).

This study proposes that social interaction among social media users in predicting the selling intention for online shopping-based predominantly on theory of planned behaviour (TPB). The three tenets of TPB, attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control offered the conceptual bridge in the integration of social interaction outcomes into social commerce. The two outcomes identified are social support and relationship quality. The research model developed as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Conceptual framework



2.2 *Theory of planned behaviour*

TPB has been widely applied in electronic commerce studies to explain the behaviour of consumers engaging in business transaction (Bhattacharjee, 2000; Taylor and Todd, 1995). In addition, TPB also been used extensively as the theoretical lens, for mobile consumer behaviour (Aboelmaged and Gebba, 2013; Goyal et al., 2013; Khalifa and Shen, 2008). It explains that people would behave or perform certain behaviour when they consider it as rational action, supported by peers and could be controlled by them. The three main determinants are attitude towards behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991).

TPB has been used to investigate what drive consumers to engage in social commerce from the perspectives of behavioural and technological usage (Hajli et al., 2015). The social interaction between seller and buyers are critical with the use social media apps. College students fit in this well as they are avid social media users who frequently buy online (Rose et al., 2012). Therefore, this study aimed to drive young consumers to explore their intention to sell their goods. On the other hand, social theories explain behaviour from both personal cognitions and social dimensions. This study extended TPB with social interaction among consumers in embarking new venture in social media. Hence, it provides the underpinning theoretical basis in this study.

2.3 *Attitude, subjective norm and behavioural control*

Social networking users are enjoying the list of benefits gained from the publicity of social media apps. The effects are obvious as depicted by the higher number of customers' comments and visits, as well as improving the sales volumes. The comments and rating are important for buyers to weight whether to buy or not. Attitude is the outcome benefited once we conducted the related behaviour (Linan, 2008). In this study, we posited the attitude towards social media has an impact on intention of venturing into social commerce.

Behavioural intention is defined as the possibility to perform certain action or tasks (Ajzen, 1991). The emphasis of behavioural intention relates to the actual behaviour being conducted (Han et al., 2014). Such behaviour and actions are highly depended on social effects and external motivational stimulus. The intention to purchase was treated as the dependent variable which was the common practice in many online commerce studies (Ho and Teo, 2020). This view was theoretically established in the theory of reason action (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1973). With reference to TPB, online users' selling intention is predisposed by their attitudes towards selling products (Ali, 2016). In this study, consumers' attitude towards the socialisation process in social media would enhance their likelihood to sell online. Social media users would want to sell their goods after exchanging ideas with their peers. Hence, we examined the direct impact of their attitude in social media that leads to the hypothesis below:

H₁ Attitude has a direct and positive effect on the intention to sell via social media apps.

Perceived behavioural control rooted from our underlying belief that associated with the level of difficulty to conduct the behaviour. This involves the belief of obtaining the necessary resources in order to carry out such behaviour (Ajzen and Madden, 1986). Perceived behavioural control drives users to be more actively involved in their own social network (Ko, 2018). When the social media users think that they can manage the

related tools, they are more willing to adopt it. The fact is that social media has many distinct features and functionalities which exhibit in many different platforms (Bellman et al., 2006). The importance of control beliefs in handling the technology infrastructure of social media applications cannot be undermined (Venkatesh et al., 2003). Hence, we posit the following hypothesis:

H₂ Perceived behavioural control has direct and positive effect on the intention to sell via social media apps.

Subjective norm is the social factors imposed on one's decision to conduct or not to conduct certain behaviour. The pressures or influences are stem from those people who are close to us. Alternatively, one would perform a task or action based on his/her perception of what others think he/she ought to do (Aboelmaged and Gebba, 2013). Normative belief often guides subjective norms (Schepers and Wetzels, 2007). In social media, users are more inclined to share and write about their shopping experiences and comments.

The pressure and influence from the peer in one's social network led to the actual performance of certain behaviour (Ajzen, 2002). The subjective norm can determine the attitude of knowledge sharing and product experience. Consumers are more motivated to provide their feedback and comments with the social support given by people surrounding them. Yang (2012) further confirmed that mobile users relied on others' feedback when they were uncertain over the use of mobile device as the new sales transaction medium. In addition, customers like to recommend products or services to friends when they feel comfortable in using the communication media. Hence, high level of perceived behavioural control achieved because consumers would be able to manage the shopping process in the controlled environment. Following that, we examine the influence of subjective norm on both attitude and perceived behavioural control.

H₃ Subjective norm has direct and positive effect on the intention to sell via social media apps.

H₄ Subjective norm has a direct and positive effect on the attitude of using social media apps.

H₅ Subjective norm has a direct and positive effect on the perceived behavioural control of using social media apps.

2.4 Relationship quality

Relationship quality is considered as a key construct in building the bond between the sellers and buyers in traditional business platform (Athanasopoulou, 2009). Its main determinants are trust, commitment and customer satisfaction (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2002). Trust is important in building relationship among people in social media networks. The online social exchange process can reduce the barrier between the members of the virtual community (Morrow et al., 2010). Lu et al. (2010) validated that higher trust in virtual community members' integrity and benevolence stimulated the purchase intention.

Commitment led to strong brand equity because loyalty would take effect naturally (Iwasaki and Havitz, 1998; Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Customers would recommend the products and the retailers when they feel connected to them (Fullerton, 2005). In the social network environment, with more conversations among consumers, the more

committed they are to the brand they feel good about. The third determinant, customer satisfaction refers to the customers' total perceived affection of their shopping experience which includes post-purchase evaluation (Keh and Xie, 2009). In conjunction with other business types, users' perceived relational values from Facebook were found to be positively affects the continuance participation intentions in the social media (Al-Debei et al., 2013). This is because strong inter-relationship exists among the intensity of social media use, life satisfaction and social trust existed (Valenzuela et al., 2009).

Compared to traditional electronic commerce platform, social commerce customers are more socially connected due to social media's richness in relationship quality. It allowed users to find the relevant shopping information based on their own needs from reliable users in their own virtual community (Kamtarin, 2012). Consumers consider conversations and recommendations from online social networks more credible than those commercial sources. Apparently, consumers would be more likely to purchase expensive and high-risk items from their good friends (Li et al., 2018). Therefore, higher perceived relationship quality gained from social interaction would influence both the attitude and subjective norm of using social media apps. This led to the formation of the hypotheses below:

H₆ Relationship quality has a direct and positive effect on the attitude of using social media apps.

H₇ Relationship quality has a direct and positive effect on the subjective norm of using social media apps.

2.5 *Social support*

Social support embedded into the social communication among the users in the social media space. It is defined as the assistance and care provided by other people in one's social network (Taylor et al., 2004). Two main types of online social support provided, i.e., information support and emotional support (Liang et al., 2011; Liu et al., 2018). Social support provides trust, respect, loyalty, common experience, and shared social values in building strong bond among the users (Morton et al., 2006). Social commerce customers have frequent interaction and communication among themselves in sharing their shopping experiences (Yahia et al., 2018). Hence, the influence of peers in the social media community is critical to encourage business intention. Peers who are already running their own venture could attract others to follow in his or her business start-up (Bönte et al., 2009). Peer pressure could lead individual user to make use of social networks and social virtual communities. An individual who spends time in socialisation process with other users who are existing online sellers are more likely to sell than those who do not. Hence, social support will generate positive effect on one's entrepreneurial desires (Falck et al., 2012).

Consumers' participation in a brand on social media triggers the retailers to be actively participate in social networking sites. This is congruence with Liang et al.'s (2011) study based on a popular microblogging site in Taiwan. Their study further validated the importance of social support to enhance the relationship quality needed in consumer's use of social commerce. This is consistent with prior studies in associating the need of social support to improve relationship quality (Coulson et al., 2007; Shaw and Gant, 2002; Williams, 2007). Therefore, we posit that relationship quality entails with better social support.

- H₈ Social support has a direct and positive effect on the relationship quality gained from using social media apps.

Subsequently, the active participants in the social media created a significant perception towards favourable selling intention. Facebook encourages consumers to share experiences and create a common knowledge on products and services. In addition, it provides managers a direct channel to communicate with clients (Di Pietro and Pantano, 2012). Online shopping is supported with great deal of assisted functionalities and enables consumers to manage the entire process comfortably (Bellman et al., 2006). Perceived behavioural control indicates our underlying belief in the level of difficulty as well as the belief in accessing the required resources and opportunities to the performance of the behaviour (Arcand et al., 2007; Madden, 1986). Furthermore, these social support values were empirically tested as core support mechanism in entrepreneurship studies (Arinaitwe, 2006; Cook, 2001). Their findings concluded that friends and family provided the necessary inputs, such as role model and emotional support in developing and assisting the new entrepreneurs. Hence, we posited that social support adds explanatory power to unravel the perceived behavioural control required to manage the social media apps.

- H₉ Social support has a direct and positive effect on the perceived behavioural control of using social media apps.

3 Method and data analysis

296 completed responds were collected from a university in Malaysia. Personally administered questionnaire was adopted for data collection in this study. Research assistant distributed the questionnaire and the respondents completed the forms and placed them into paper box located near the exit of the classes. We adopted this method for its high return rate because ambiguities and doubts could be clarified quickly.

We adopted items for the variables from instruments predominantly used in related studies, as depicted in Appendix. Seven-point Likert scale range from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree', was used to administer the item measurement. The questionnaire was pre-tested with a group of 30 students to establish the face validity of the instrument. We dropped few items after the exploratory factor analysis based on the theoretical considerations.

Table 1 demonstrated the sample demographics and the frequency of social media usage. Both exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis were conducted in this study. We used exploratory factor analysis to eliminate redundant scale items for improvement. As a result, we removed few scale items after the correlation matrices transformation.

3.1 Partial least square

We used structural equation modelling (SEM) path analysis for two-stage confirmatory factor analysis in this study. We employed partial least squares (PLS) regression analysis, a variance-based SEM to examine the measurement model and structural model. It was relevant as it could predict small set of the dependent variables based on their relationships with a list of predictors (Henseler et al., 2016, 2015; Henseler and Sarstedt,

2013). In this study, we aimed to examine the relationship among groups of dependent constructs and independent constructs. Hence, it was appropriate to use PLS technique because it was able to test the association of the item measurements for the constructs involved and their hypothesised relationships.

Table 1 Sample characteristics (N = 296)

	<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Gender	Male	140	47.30
	Female	156	52.70
Age	Between 18–20	112	37.84
	Between 21–30	136	45.95
	More than 30	48	16.22
X1: Social media usage per day (hour)	$1 < X1 \leq 2$ hours	112	38.18
	$2 < X1 \leq 6$ hours	128	42.90
	More than 6 hours	56	18.92
X2: No. of years – use of social media	$1 < X2 < 2$ years	8	2.70
	$2 < X2 < 6$ years	120	40.88
	More than 6 years	168	56.42
X3: Social commerce usage per day (hour)	Less than 1 day	16	5.41
	$1 < X1 \leq 2$ days	175	59.12
	$2 < X1 \leq 6$ days	73	24.66
	More than 6 hours	32	10.81
Favourite social media application	Facebook	96	32.43
	Instagram	24	8.11
	Whatsapp	32	10.81
	All of the above	76	25.68
	Others	72	22.97

3.2 *Common method variance*

The use of the single method for data collection in this study could lead to the existence of common method bias (Wixom and Watson, 2001). Podsakoff et al. (2003) described common method variance (CMV) as the variance that caused by the measurement method used instead of the constructs examined. Thus, we examined the correlations among the constructs to avoid the inflated result caused by the biased instruments. With reference to Podsakoff et al.'s (2003) approach, we addressed CMV at both instrument design and data analysis stage. At questionnaire design stage, a panel of three faculty members verified the wording of the items. We also inter-mixed the items of different constructs on the questionnaire. We used two statistical techniques to assess the potential bias of CMV, i.e., Harman's one-factor test and marker-variable technique. The statistical results demonstrated that CMV was not a concern in this study because it was free from CMV threat. Hence, we confirmed the quality of measurement model as it has attained the requirements in the validity and reliability tests.

4 Result

4.1 Measurement model

The procedures of examining the validity and reliability of the measurement model are as follow. The model achieved internal consistency reliability because Cronbach's alpha attained the satisfactory level. The results showed that all the constructs in this study exceeded the threshold value required (Nunally and Bernstein, 1978).

Fornell and Larcker (1981) was used to assess the degree of shared variance between the latent variable of the model. According to this criterion, the convergent validity of the measurement model was achieved by measuring average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR). Similarly, both AVE and CR achieved the required acceptable value for the convergent validity (Henseler et al., 2014). Hence, both convergent validity and internal consistency of the scale validated the measurement model used in this study. The summarised results as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Summary results for measurement model

<i>Construct</i>	<i>Average variance</i>	<i>Composite reliability</i>	<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>
Attitude, ATT	0.735494	0.892736	0.819853
Perceived behavioural control, PBC	0.851341	0.944974	0.912523
Relationship commitment, RCM	0.839380	0.939929	0.903412
Relationship satisfaction, RSA	0.894049	0.961988	0.940595
Relationship quality, RSQ	0.724588	0.959305	0.951794
Relationship trust, RTR	0.764293	0.906719	0.845795
Selling intention, SEI	0.775214	0.932354	0.903009
Social emotional, SEM	0.868423	0.951880	0.923751
Social information, SIF	0.815995	0.929980	0.886366
Social quality, SOQ	0.789336	0.957332	0.946169
Subjective norm, SUB	0.744286	0.897194	0.828750

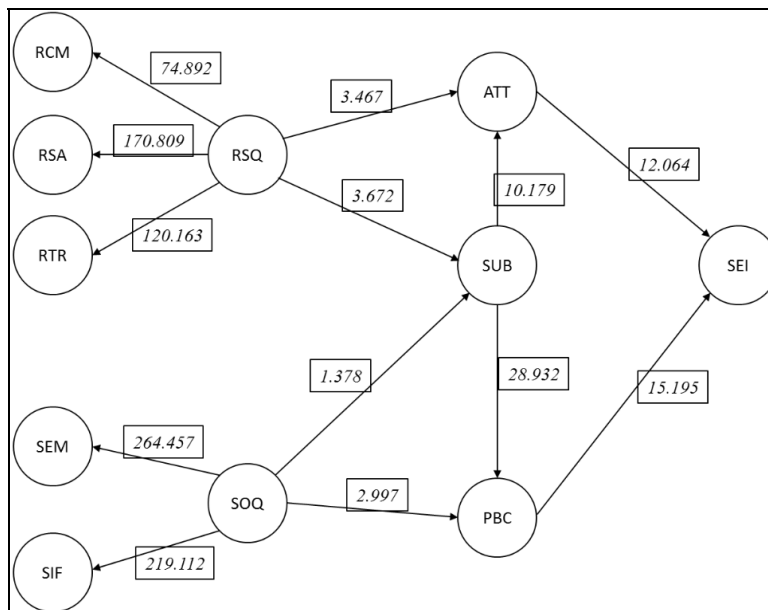
We assessed discriminant validity by comparing the amount of the variance captured by the construct and the shared variance with other constructs. The square root of AVE in each latent variable was calculated and written in bold on the diagonal as shown in Table 3. These values compared with the correlation values recorded for all the variables. Discriminant validity was achieved because the diagonal values for all the constructs were greater than the inter-construct correlation of the constructs (in off diagonal) to their latent variables (Loch et al., 2003). The results demonstrated that the discriminant validity for all the latent variables was well established.

4.2 Structural model

We conducted the re-sampling method of bootstrapping to test the suitability of the structural model. In order to test the goodness of fit, R^2 and predictive relevance Q^2 were obtained via blindfolding method (Chin et al., 2003). R^2 and Q^2 values obtained as tabulated in Table 4. Both the fitness indices were proven to have predictive relevance as their Q^2 values were acceptable (Tenenhaus et al., 2005).

Table 3 Discriminant validity – Fornell-Lacker criterion analysis

	ATT	PBC	RCM	RSA	RSQ	RTR	SEI	SEM	SIF	SOQ	SUB
ATT	0.8576										
PBC	0.6227	0.92269									
RCM	0.3636	0.4599	0.9162								
RSA	0.3968	0.4995	0.7871	0.9455							
RSQ	0.4429	0.5197	0.9055	0.7555	0.8513						
RTR	0.4785	0.4916	0.7539	0.7747	0.7317	0.8742					
SEI	0.7966	0.8260	0.3869	0.3609	0.4370	0.4787	0.88046				
SEM	0.3268	0.4027	0.7582	0.6997	0.7685	0.6977	0.36717	0.9319			
SIF	0.4625	0.4008	0.7760	0.7136	0.7074	0.75033	0.41474	0.74721	0.90332		
SOQ	0.4065	0.4168	0.7928	0.7292	0.6083	0.7469	0.40460	0.7012	0.6612	0.8885	
SUB	0.61237	0.7979	0.3807	0.4434	0.4695	0.4868	0.6126	0.4181	0.4022	0.4247	0.8627

Figure 2 Structural model**Table 4** Blindfolding indexes for constructs

Construct	R^2	Q^2
Attitude	0.405954	0.295524
Perceived behavioural control	0.644020	0.547671
Relationship commitment	0.819936	0.689990
Relationship satisfaction	0.912939	0.813975
Relationship quality	-	0.475400
Relationship trust	0.878285	0.667979
Selling intention	0.812347	0.626024
Social emotional	0.941146	0.816409
Social information	0.933395	0.761980
Social quality	-	0.789339
Subjective norm	0.226343	0.169002

Selling intention, the dependent variable recorded with R^2 value of 0.8123 and verified its contribution to the model. All the exogeneous constructs involved were also achieved sufficient variances. The variances in attitude, subjective norm and behavioural control recorded as 40.60%, 22.63% and 64.40% respectively. Hence, it verified that all of them were significant in stimulating the selling intention for social commerce.

We examined the path, path coefficient, sample mean, standard error, t-value and p-value for hypothesis testing. The list of test results as depicted in Table 5.

As a whole, the t-value and p-value of all the paths were significant in meeting the threshold values. In the first order constructs, ATT (path coefficient = 0.4610, $t = 12.0489$, $p = 0$) exerted influence on SEI at $p < 0.05$. The other TPB construct, SUB

(path coefficient = 0.7693, $t = 31.0643$, $p = 0$) influenced SEI more significantly. As for PBC, its influence is also higher than ATT (path coefficient = 0.5389, $t = 15.1607$, $p = 0$). The predictive relevance of SUB on both ATT (path coefficient = 0.5196, $t = 10.0811$, $p = 0$) and PBC (path coefficient = 0.7574, $t = 28.7325$, $p = 0$) were also achieved accordingly.

Table 5 Test results for structural model

<i>Path</i>	<i>Path coefficient</i>	<i>Sample mean</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p-value (2 tailed)</i>
ATT → SEI	0.461030	0.459013	0.038263	12.048883	0.0000
PBC → SEI	0.538869	0.540475	0.035544	15.160736	0.0000
SUB → ATT	0.519640	0.523163	0.051546	10.081073	0.0000
SUB → PBC	0.757403	0.757030	0.026360	28.732531	0.0000
SUB → SEI	0.769311	0.769982	0.024765	31.064347	0.0000
RSQ → ATT	0.386914	0.386890	0.070018	5.525882	0.0000
RSQ → SUB	0.363779	0.365822	0.097195	3.742764	0.0000
SOQ → PBC	0.416735	0.419267	0.049294	8.454078	0.0000
SOQ → RSQ	0.810382	0.810719	0.021709	37.329507	0.0000

Similarly, RSQ exerted influence on ATT (path coefficient = 0.3869, $t = 5.5259$, $p = 0$) and SUB (path coefficient = 0.3638, $t = 3.7428$). In addition, SOQ exerted its influence on PBC (path coefficient = 0.4168, $t = 8.4541$, $p = 0$) and on RSQ (path coefficient = 0.8104, $t = 37.3295$, $p = 0$) significantly.

Table 6 Summary of hypotheses testing

<i>Hypotheses</i>	<i>Path</i>	<i>Significance</i>
H ₁	ATT → SEI	Supported
H ₂	PBC → SEI	Supported
H ₃	SUB → SEI	Supported
H ₄	SUB → ATT	Supported
H ₅	SUB → PBC	Supported
H ₆	RSQ → ATT	Supported
H ₇	RSQ → SUB	Supported
H ₈	SOQ → RSQ	Supported
H ₉	SOQ → PBC	Supported

Note: Hypotheses are test based on p-value (two-sided).

5 Discussion

5.1 Theoretical contribution

This study proposes and examines a conceptual model to understand how the relationship quality and social quality influence the intentions for consumers to learn about trading in the social media. The findings of this study support that personal attitudes, subjective

norms and perceived behavioural control serve as the mediating roles in linking social support and relationship quality required for business purpose. More specifically, subjective norms, serving as the antecedent of perceived behavioural control, significantly mediate the relationships between relationship quality, social quality and social commerce selling intentions. In this study, the path coefficients also demonstrated that the influence of social support in enhancing the relationship quality. This result is consistent with previous studies, indicating that social emotional, social information and satisfaction having critical effects on the subjective norms (Fu et al., 2019; Hajli, 2014; Liang et al., 2011).

This study confirms that social media has a significant impact on customer attitude towards its use in business. The determinants are social emotional and relationship support gained from customer interaction. Specifically, this reflects that the relationship quality can directly lead to positive attitudes towards the selling intention. Furthermore, the increase of the social support via the social media can enhance the perceived behavioural control required in online shopping (Schepers and Wetzels, 2007).

5.2 Managerial implications

The viable use of social media in facilitating shopping process is taking place in digital market. This study provided another avenue for online retailers to tap into the emerging proficiency of social media users in handling the buying and selling on their own. Online retailers should appreciate that the social emotions and information from the social media apps exerts impact on the online sales. The view of social media apps' role as the communication channel is narrow, as it should be expanded to cater for business transaction purposes (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). In order for online retailers to gain competitive advantage, the welfare and support provided to the customers are importance. Furthermore, this study confirmed that the social support has much higher predictive power over the relationship quality. Online retailers ill-equipped with social media skills or lacked in engaging social support could be hard to maintain their businesses (Rapp et al., 2013). Companies may consider establishing small to medium size social media teams to meet the emerging trend of the social media growth as the key channel of doing business.

Businesses can take advantage of the emerging social media use in sales transaction by paying attention on the current trend and hot items in the digital marketplace among the social media users. In this case, they would know how to position their products in accordance with the right customer segments. In addition, they need to roll out custom-made social media marketing campaign to engage with their customers, retain the customers and promote the brand in the social media channels.

6 Conclusions

The interactive nature of social media has social commerce a preferred platform for many online users. The assimilation of relationship quality and social support among the users is making both buying and selling easier. The research model was able to explain a high proportion of variance in the selling intention among online users. It theorises the suitability of the model in explaining the sales functions within the social media apps.

The emphasis is the usage of social media in facilitating the business communication among virtual communities. Social media is assimilating business transaction process and attracting customers to engage in sales related activities. In addition, social media enriched with strong relationship linkage permits the users to exchange information and enjoyed benefits of shopping. The fact is that social media can be a platform for communication and yet at the same time accessible by many in trading their own goods. Thus, social media is an ideal platform for completing the sales transaction. In particular, we confirmed that relationship quality and social support are the antecedents in shaping customer buying and selling behaviours while they are involved in casual conversations. This is consistent with prior studies that theorised the viability of social commerce in collecting useful sales-related information collaboratively (Curty and Zhang, 2011; Wang and Yu, 2017; Zhang et al., 2014).

The social quality and relationship quality were required to encourage the social media users not just to buy but also to sell. Many studies have confirmed the purchase intention of social media users (Chu and Kim, 2011; Sin et al., 2012). However, empirical result of this study contributed to the effectiveness of social media app in making selling possible for online users. After all, consumers are interested in purchasing products or services from trustworthy firms after a recommendation from their peers (Orth et al., 2013; Zhao et al., 2009).

This study further validated that consumers would collaboratively trade their goods with their peers in controlled environment. Generally, it is clear that social media can be vital in managing the shopping process under socially enriched context, such as group purchase (Bock et al., 2012; Kim and Ahmad, 2013). Hence, social commerce provider should enhance sales infrastructure and tools needed in handling the purchase process.

Social quality is a strong predictor of positive relationship towards social media intentions for sellers to promote their products or services. As for the TPB variables, subjective norms on perceived behaviour control were stronger and observed as significant compared to attitudes. The positive and significant effect of these variables further validate social media as the viable business channel.

In conclusion, the business capability of the social networking can allow online users to act as both seller and buyer. In this respect, the selling intention derived from relationship quality and social support are required in managing the shopping process comfortably. This kind of social support increases consumer awareness towards their brand by engaging them in social media apps (Shankar et al., 2011). Business prospects of the social media depend largely on the peer engagement among the virtual communities. Thus, this study theorises that social media can facilitate a suitable environment for promoting entrepreneurship among young generations.

6.1 Limitation and future research direction

The sample was taken from one university consisted of mainly undergraduate students, based on the logic that they are the more active online users as compared to other age groups. Despite the fact that it is not representative of the entire digital market, the findings are a step towards a better understanding of the behaviours of social media entrepreneurial intentions. This result should attract the attention of other researchers on how broadened socio-demographics could explain the selling intention within social media platform further. According to Ajzen (2002) the use of socio-demographic factors may provide more useful information in behavioural analyses by inspecting their indirect

effects through mediating constructs. Future researches should investigate other social groups for more comprehensive analysis. By widening the sample frame, the generalisability of the findings could further enhanced in reflecting the actual usage of social media.

This paper focuses on the impact of social media in influencing and assisting the online users to trade among themselves. However, online consumer shopping process is often not a standalone but rather comprises a series of processes. It involves a few phases, starting from the search of product information, evaluation of next alternative product and subsequently the after-sales services. Furthermore, Chen et al. (2019) validated that digital market sales were subjective to customers' brand loyalty and stickiness. Hence, it would be worth investigating brand relevance in each of the phases separately to have a full understanding of consumer selling behaviour in social commerce.

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Appendix

Measurement items

Construct		Scale	Source
Personal attitude toward selling in social commerce	ATT1	If I had the opportunity and resources, I would love to sell my stuff in social commerce	Linan (2008)
	ATT2	Amongst various business options, I would rather be a seller in social commerce	
	ATT3	Being able to sell in social commerce would give me great satisfaction	
Subjective norm	SUB1	My friends would approve of my decision to sell via social commerce	Linan (2008)
	SUB2	My immediate family would approve of my decision to selling in social commerce	
	SUB3	I am determined to create a business venture in social commerce in the future	
Perceived behavioural control	BEH1	Starting a social commerce and keeping it viable would be easy for me	Linan (2008)
	BEH2	I am able to control the process of social commerce	
	BEH3	If I tried to start social commerce, I would have a high chance of being successful	
Selling intention in social commerce	SEI1	I am ready to do anything to be a seller in social commerce	Ali (2016)
	SEI2	I will make every effort to sell my stuff in social commerce	
	SEI3	I am determined to create an social commerce venture in the future	
	SEI4	My goal is to be able to sell in social commerce whenever I need to	
Relationship quality satisfaction	RSF1	I am satisfied with using social commerce	Liang et al. (2011)
	RSF2	I am pleased with using social commerce	
	RSF3	I am happy with social commerce	

Measurement items (continued)

<i>Construct</i>		<i>Scale</i>	<i>Source</i>
Relationship quality trust	RTR1	The performance of social commerce always meets my expectations	Liang et al. (2011)
	RTR2	Social commerce can be counted on	
	RTR3	Social commerce is a reliable	
Social support emotional support	SES1	When faced with difficulties, some social commerce users are on my side with me	Liang et al. (2011)
	SES2	When faced with difficulties, some social commerce users comforted and encouraged me	
	SES3	When faced with difficulties, some social commerce users listened to me talk about my private feelings	
	SES4	When faced with difficulties, some social commerce users expressed interest and concern in my well-being	
Social support information support	SIS1	Some social commerce users would offer suggestions when I needed help	Liang et al. (2011)
	SIS2	When I encountered a problem, some social commerce users would give me information to help me overcome the problem	
	SIS3	When faced with difficulties, some social commerce users would help me discover the cause and provide me with suggestions	