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## Article

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Pakistan Journal of Commerce and Social Sciences (PJCSS)

## Provided in Cooperation with:

Johar Education Society, Pakistan (JESPK)

*Suggested Citation:* Shahizan Hassan; Arfan Shahzad (2022) : The impact of social media usage on small and micro social commerce enterprises in Malaysia, Pakistan Journal of Commerce and Social Sciences (PJCSS), ISSN 2309-8619, Johar Education Society, Pakistan (JESPK), Lahore, Vol. 16, Iss. 1, pp. 141-166

This Version is available at:

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# **The Impact of Social Media Usage on Small and Micro Social Commerce Enterprises in Malaysia**

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## **Article History**

Received: 10 Jan 2022      Revised: 25 Mar 2022      Accepted: 29 Mar 2022      Published: 31 Mar 2022

## **Abstract**

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and movement control order (MCO), many small and micro-sized enterprises in Malaysia have been relying on social media platforms to promote and sell their products. Nonetheless, only a few studies were conducted on the success of this practice. The question of whether social media can indeed have an impact on social commerce performance remains unanswered. This study used mediating variables of social media in the relationship among ease of use, satisfaction, trust, perceived usefulness, social commerce performance, and the direct effect of social media use on social commerce performance among small and micro-enterprises in Malaysia. The data were collected from 100 business owners / managers of Malaysian small and micro-enterprises using social media for business. The study uses SPSS and PLS-SEM (partial least square based structural equation modeling) software for the data analysis. The results show that perceived usefulness, ease of use, satisfaction, and trust significantly impact social media use. The result also show that social media use positively impacts social commerce performance. This study consequently suggests that small and micro-enterprise owners / managers in Malaysia should effectively use social media to increase the s-commerce performance for sustainable growth. They should fully utilize the popularity of the use of social media by providing useful and reliable information about their products or services to boost trust among potential buyers.

**Keywords:** perceived usefulness, ease of use, satisfaction, trust, small and micro-enterprises social media use, social commerce enterprises.

## **1. Introduction**

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and movement control order (MCO), many small and micro-sized enterprises in Malaysia use social media platforms for advertising and selling their goods or services. Whether social media can indeed have an impact on social commerce performance remains unanswered. Furthermore, within a month of the outbreak,

the global working environment had been changed. Many industries worldwide will be unable to avoid or control the consequences of a pandemic-19 (Shahzad et al., 2020; Shahzad et al., 2021). Over the last two decades, social media applications' rapid growth has increased the market for small, medium-sized, and large organizations. Several enterprises are operating across social media applications such as Twitter, Facebook, and Pinterest. Based on the current report, many Malaysian small and micro-enterprises use social media websites daily. This has created researchers' opportunities to study new business models for electronic commerce (Prince, 2019). Social commerce allows customers to advertise and sell products to online communities (Kim et al., 2008; Islam & Chitran, 2019; Hussain et al., 2020). The developed concept of social commerce, particularly in developing markets, has changed the entire process of buyer and seller interaction.

Similarly, with this new medium of interaction, both buyer and seller need to build trust from both sides of the interaction process (Gibreel et al., 2018). Additionally, social commerce encourages purchasers to buy online because it gives them the ease of comparing, suggesting, and sharing knowledge among buyers and sellers (Makmor et al., 2019). Likewise, the upward trend of social commerce in Malaysia is due to several pull factors, such as convenience, accessibility, and transaction speed (Othman et al., 2019). Thus, this research explores factors such as trust, satisfaction, perceived ease of use, and perceived usefulness through the usage of social media use in the context of the emerging market of Malaysia. Therefore, the study uses social commerce by analyzing the perceived usefulness and ease of use by extending Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) with social media use.

Most of the studies have examined the factors such as openness, feasibility, and perceived desirability factors to measure Facebook's mediating effect on a firm's performance (Sulaiman et al., 2017). Moreover, Hashim, Nor, and Janor (2017) tested ease of use and perceived usefulness to measure social commerce's impact. Similarly, trust, satisfaction, and customer loyalty have been discussed in the study related to social commerce websites (Alhulail et al., 2018; Qalati et al., 2021). Only a few studies have been conducted on trust and satisfaction in the context of social media performance in the context of social commerce (Moghadamzadeh et al., 2020). As a result, the current study examines the relationship between perceived usefulness, ease of use, trust, and contentment with social media use and the performance of social commerce sites and applications.

TAM theory emphasizes that technology's perceived usefulness will lead to the usage and adoption of technology. Also, perceived usefulness is a vital predictor of technology adoption (Chung et al., 2015). Huang and Benyoucief described that there are two additional types of e-commerce. The first one is related to Alibaba, Gmarket, and Amazon websites, and these websites have one-to-one interactions between buyer and seller. The second type concerns social networking sites (SNSs) such as Twitter, where users view the product (Gibreel et al., 2018). These platforms are increasing usefulness for the customer. Globally, social media's role and usage are growing rapidly, and this usage has reached 2.66 billion users in the year 2018. This drastic change has revolutionized traditional marketing into social media marketing (Gazal et al., 2019). Social media usage increases business exposure, generates sales, and provides potential employees (He et al., 2017).

Therefore, it is acceptable to assume that social media usage has created ease of use for the customer, increasing social commerce performance (Redd & Wu, 2020).

In addition, this research attempts to enhance small and micro-enterprise use of social media to promote goods. The Global Statshot Report (2021) mentions that almost 86 percent of the Malaysian population uses social media. The trend of using social media has increased exponentially as compared to the 2015 year. In Malaysia, all social media platforms are available such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and blogs. From a practical point of view, the developed model would enable small and micro-entrepreneurs to have a more practical approach to customer and supplier relationships, marketing, and reputation management. Indirectly, this would enhance the development of social commerce in Malaysia and indirectly boost the economy. Currently, social media use is growing all over the globe, and perhaps, it has become an interesting choice for businesses due to the reason to go beyond one-to-one conversation (Ahmad et al., 2019). At the same time, many scholars have concluded that the use of social media has numerous advantages for any business. As far as theory is concerned, this study is backed by the TAM, which states that perceived utility and simplicity of use are the two most important factors affecting social media adoption in small and micro-sized businesses.

Additionally, the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory argument is relevant because using social media can provide a competitive advantage to small and medium-sized enterprises, ultimately leading to improved social commerce performance for the latter. As an additional support theory for technology consumption, such as social media usage, the Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) hypothesis is employed. Specifically, the major goal of this research is to suggest a social commerce business model for small and micro-sized firms. As a result, this study aims to examine the influence of perceived utility, ease of use, contentment, and trust on social media usage. Also investigated in this study is the mediating role played by social media use in the link between perceived usefulness, ease of use, satisfaction, trust, and social commerce performance.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1 Theoretical Foundation and Framework*

The modern view of marketing distinguishes social commerce from traditional marketing campaigns, and it has completely transformed user interaction by facilitating social media as useful resources. RBV theory is served as a foundation in numerous previous studies that link social media and value for the firm. Hence, this research considered theoretical explanation through a Resource-Based View (Barney, 1991) to explain social commerce resources to facilitate firm competitive advantage, ultimately leading to performance (Lam, Yeung, Lo, & Cheng, 2019). It is conceptualized that, through RBV, social interactions and user contributions on social media can be considered capabilities that are inimitable, rare, valuable, inimitable and non-substitutable. As the literature suggests, RBV focuses on both tangible and intangible resources. The nature and type of resources of social media usage and s-commerce are leaning more toward intangible resources. Besides, social media has been defined as a web-based resource capability that synergy with other firm resources.

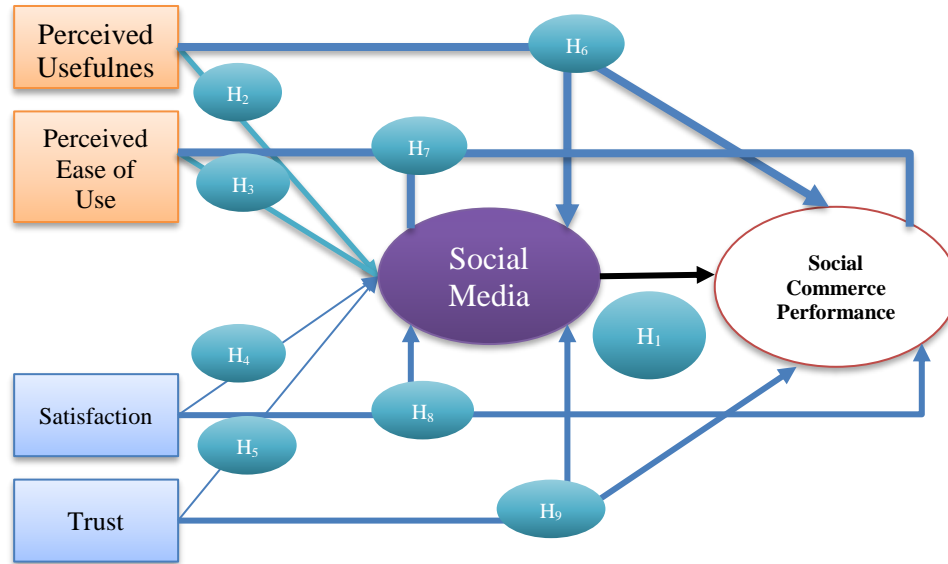
Therefore, RBV acts as an important theoretical lens to explain social commerce in terms of social media adoption to enhance performance.

Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory, innovations are spread across particular channels through time and within a specific social system (Rogers, 2003). It is the adopter who decides whether to adopt an innovation or not. At the organizational level, the innovation adoptions (i.e., adopting enterprise resource planning systems, electronic supply chain management, e-commerce system), the adopter who is involved in decision making is the top management. Adopters are defined as those who have varying degrees of inclination to accept new ideas or technologies. The proportion of the population who adopts innovation is thus usually observed to be approximately regularly distributed over time, as shown in the graph below (Rogers, 2003). Inventiveness and technology, according to Rogers (2003), are equivalent terms, and he defines innovation as "an idea, practice, or project that is viewed as a novel by individuals and other units of the adopting organization" Luong and Wang (2019) extended the In a range of "technology adoption studies", such as e-commerce usage in internationalization (Luong and Wang, 2019) and web 2.0 (Luong & Wang, 2019), the DOI theory has been applied (Luong & Wang, 2019). (Luong and Wang, 2019; Amin et al., 2020; Amin et al., 2020). The prime focus of the DOI theory is to elaborate on the innovation adoption process instead of the IT-based innovation adoption process. Whereas, such critiques did not restrict scholars from using DOI theory to understand the adoption process in the past or the future.

As a result, DOI is one of the most widely cited concepts in the research on disseminating innovation adoption for organizational level adoptions. Through the DOI understanding of technology-related studies, the researchers used social media as technology adoption in the current study. Adopters will be classified into five categories of adopter innovativeness (from earliest to latest adopters) as a result of this adoption: innovators, early adopters, old majority, new majority, and laggards (Rogers, 2003).

The TAM model suggests that when customers are introduced to the latest technology, several factors influence their decision. Particularly, perceived usefulness (PU), as defined by Fred Davis as "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance," is regarded as one of the factors (Davis 1989). Thus, it is difficult to have a positive attitude towards technology adoption because people usually resist change. But if the technology is useful then the difficulties are conquered. At the same time, in literature, commitment trust is used to comprehend the trust in marketing's fundamental issues (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). This study extends trust in the social media context and s-commerce.

Additionally, (Zarmpou et al., 2012) have examined perceived usefulness, trust, ease of use, and user acceptance of mobile phones. Therefore, TAM is considered the supporting theory for variables. The proposed research framework is shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1: Research Framework**

## 2.2 Hypotheses Development

### 2.2.1 Social Commerce

Despite the differences in defining the term "social commerce," most scholars agree that social commerce is either a part of an extension of e-commerce, whereby sellers and customers engage in e-commerce via social media platforms (Liang et al., 2011). Some scholars stated that social commerce is an emerging platform for social media users to conduct shopping activities, share information, comment and review products or services, and connect with sellers (Ali et al., 2021). Social commerce is also a platform for business firms or sellers to reach and get feedback from customers. In the context of this study, social commerce refers to the use of social media by sellers as a platform to promote, sell products or services, and get feedback from customers. There are distinctions between social commerce and e-commerce and between two. Although social commerce is initially considered a division of e-commerce, there are significant distinctions between business strategies, value generation, value chain consumer connections, system interaction, design, and technological platforms.

Diao et al. (2015) E-commerce-oriented, interest-oriented, social network-oriented, and group-buying-oriented social commerce are the four main social commerce, business models. In the context of social commerce, e-commerce platforms like Amazon are used to perform social commerce. Moreover, interest-oriented social commerce is a social commerce platform developed by third-party communities based on a specific topic of interest or theme. Users can get information and read reviews on the registered members' products or services. Social network-oriented social commerce refers to the usage of a social commerce platform by merchants for e-commerce operations such as marketing.

Product launching and awareness, customer relation, and even buying and selling. Examples of social-network social commerce are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, WeChat, and WhatsApp. The fourth is a group buying social commerce, whereby sellers provide a platform for potential buyers to form a group to buy certain products at discounted prices. This study, however, would only focus on social network-oriented social commerce. Nevertheless, the trend shows that this type of social commerce is booming in Malaysian e-commerce development (Hassan et al., 2014).

#### 2.2.2 Social Media Use Relationship with Social Commerce Performance

In the digital era, the emergence of social commerce cannot be ignored, and it has become a challenging issue for businesses. This phenomenon is discussed mostly in blog posts, industry reports, and social media sites (Vlados & Chatzinikolaou, 2019). However, only a few studies focused mainly on social commerce performance (Hashim et al., 2017). Currently, social media use is growing worldwide, and perhaps, it has become an interesting choice for businesses due to the reason to go beyond one-to-one conversation (Ahmad et al., 2019). At the same time, many scholars have concluded that social media has numerous benefits for any business. For example, social media provides a cheap option for businesses to promote their products, helping track customer targets and others. Likewise, social media usage creates benefits specifically for social networking website, which eventually leads to social commerce performance (Hussain et al., 2020). In the following hypothesis, the researcher tries to cover the existing gap.

- **H<sub>1</sub>:** Social Media USE positively impacts social commerce performance.

#### 2.2.3 Perceived Usefulness

PU is described as "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system enhances his or her job performance" (Davis 1989, p.26). In literature, perceived usefulness is considered an essential element in technology adoption (Sugandini et al., 2018). Similarly, it is also concluded that perceived usefulness is a vital measure to understanding technology adoption like social media usage (Barhoumi, 2016). Perceived usefulness has also helped enrich theoretical knowledge, seen in the construction of the TAM model used as an external factor by numerous previous researchers (Amini et al., 2011; Tsai, 2012). With the rapid development and wider usage of technology, it is easier to communicate with your target customer. In this regard, social media networking has become one of the social media sites main activities, like Myspace, Facebook, Friendster, and many more (Elkaseh et al., 2016). Likewise, S commerce is also growing, and such a new online business model may affect consumer purchasing behavior and communication pattern in online purchasing (Kim & Noh, 2012). However, the influence of perceived usefulness on social media use is the missing link in the literature. Therefore, based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

- **H<sub>2</sub>:** Perceived Usefulness has a positive impact on social media use.

#### 2.2.4 Perceived Ease of Use Relationship with Social Media Use

Perceived ease of use is defined as "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free from effort" (Davis, 1989). The existing literature measures perceived ease of use from technology adoption and consumer attitude (Hussain et al.,

2020). At the same time, some studies have concluded that ease of use has a positive relationship with consumer attitude (Gunawan et al., 2019; Widiyanto & Prasilowati, 2015). However, others concluded that there is no direct effect of ease of use on consumer attitude (Aldhmour & Sarayrah, 2016). Likewise, consumers are eager to participate in social platforms to seek advice and information regarding goods and services. These information sources have changed the perception of social commerce websites (Huang & Benyoucef, 2013). People move from e-commerce to social commerce to ease purchasing decisions in modern times. Social commerce is also defined as word of mouth applied to e-commerce (Huang & Benyoucef, 2013). However, the influence of ease of use on social media use is still understudied. Below is the hypothesis developed.

- **H<sub>3</sub>:** Perceived Ease of use has a significant positive impact on social media use.

#### 2.2.5 Relationship between Satisfaction and Social Media Use

In IS literature, the term user satisfaction is described as the linkage of behavior attitude. Also, Doll and Tarkzadeh (1991:6) explain that user satisfaction is an essential construct for technology adoption studies because it covers both the upstream and downstream links of the business's value chain. There are two essential dimensions of user satisfaction used in the IS Success Model: information quality and system quality (DeLone & McLean, 1992). Simultaneously, system and information quality significantly influence the success of social commerce sites, which eventually increases the performance of social commerce sites (Alshibly, 2014). Similarly, the literature suggests that satisfaction positively impacts e-vendors effective performance (Lin et al., 2019). However, there is still a need to study the influence of satisfaction and social media use. Below is the hypothesis developed.

- **H<sub>4</sub>:** Satisfaction has a significant positive impact on social media use.

#### 2.2.6 Relationship between Trust and Social Media Use

The growth of social media has given a new dimension to electronic businesses globally. This change has created a new S-commerce paradigm (Hossain & Kim 2020). When fundamental tools of e-commerce are combined with social networking sites (SNSs), this is known as social commerce or S-commerce (Marsden, 2010). With the increasing popularity of S-commerce and its role in online commerce, there is a need to study consumers' trust in social commerce website performance (Kim & Noh, 2012). In previous literature, trust has been defined in a wide range of fields such as psychology, economics, and sociology (Shahzad et al., 2020). Hence, it is concluded that trust in social commerce can facilitate the interaction between buyer and seller and increase the firm's performance (Kim & Park, 2013). However, the empirical investigation of trust in social media usage still needs further investigation, which is proposed in the following hypothesis:

- **H<sub>5</sub>:** Trust has a significant positive impact on social media use.

#### 2.2.8 Social Media Use Mediates the Relationship between Perceived Usefulness, Ease of Use, Trust, Satisfaction, and Social Commerce Performance

Satisfaction has been studied in the literature in connection to ICT, and these studies were conducted by several scholars (Chiu et al., 2006; Wixom & Todd, 2005). Based on the literature, it was suggested that there is a need to understand the relationship between user



satisfaction and social networking e-commerce site (Shipps, 2013). As of now, social media has become an essential medium for individuals as well as for businesses in terms of the value chain (Salamzadeh et al., 2019, Salamzadeh & Arbatani, 2020). Social media enables firms to communicate with a larger audience and helps them apply customer social habits to eventually increase the firm's sales (Hashim et al., 2017). This connection between firms and the final user has created a sense of satisfaction among the users.

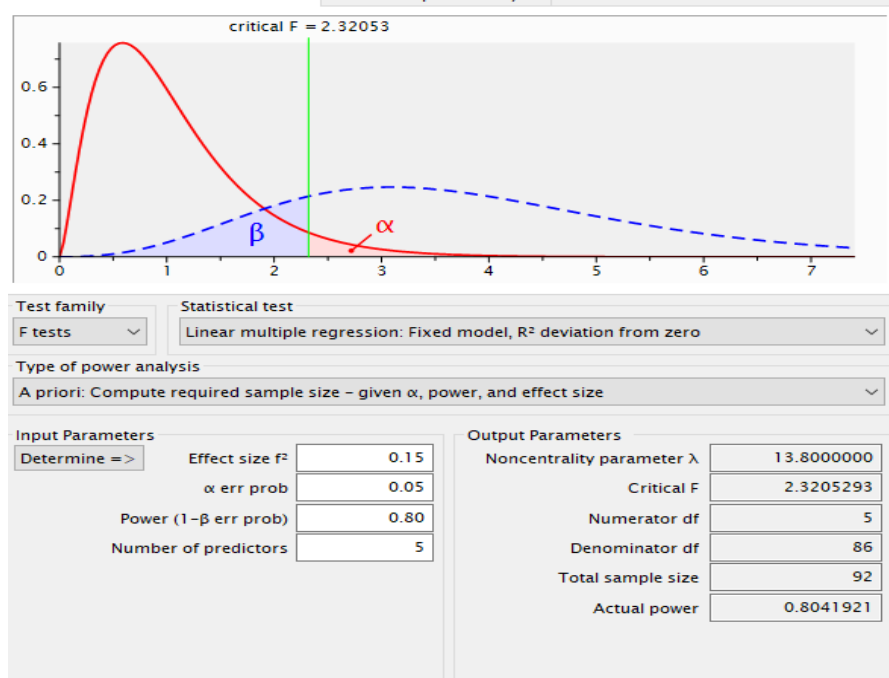
Trust is the influencing factor in s-commerce studies due to uncertainty related to data security (Alshibly, 2015). Despite the importance of social media and social commerce around the globe, users still have concerns regarding the quality of the information provided by social media, particularly in developing countries (Abbasi et al., 2019). Notably, data quality, the reliability of the information, and the quality of information are the key essential elements to building trust in social commerce usage (Kim & Park, 2013). Moreover, social media is considered a platform to connect large customers and increase the number of potential customers across the globe, eventually increasing the firm's sales performance. Therefore, in this study, the researcher used social media use as a platform to build trust among potential customers and ultimately lead to an increase in e-commerce performance. The following hypotheses address the issues mentioned above:

- **H<sub>6</sub>:** Social Media Use mediates the relationship between perceived usefulness and social commerce performance.
- **H<sub>7</sub>:** Social Media Use mediates the relationship between perceived ease of use and social commerce performance.
- **H<sub>8</sub>:** Social Media Use mediates the relationship between satisfaction and social commerce performance.
- **H<sub>9</sub>:** Social Media Use mediates the relationship between trust and social commerce performance.

### **3. Methodology**

#### *3.1 Population and Sample Selection*

This study focuses on the small and micro-enterprises in Malaysia, and these enterprises use social media for social commerce. Prior observation found that the population is currently unknown, selling and operating online social media business (Siddiqi et al., 2015). Therefore, the sample of the study was determined by using G\*Power software. This study focuses on the small and micro-enterprises in Malaysia, and these enterprises use social media for social commerce. Prior observation found that the population is currently unknown, currently selling and operating online social media business. Therefore, the sample of the study was determined by using G\*Power software. In figure 2, G\*Power software was used to calculate an acceptable sample size to collect data. G\*Power analysis revealed that a sample size of 92 respondents is sufficient to get data to have five predictors. However, the census technique was deployed to get maximum response from the respondents. The sample size suggestion in PLS-SEM for statistical power of 80 percent is based on this assumption (Cohen, 1992, Hair et al., 2017).



**Figure 2: GPower Results**

### 3.2 Measurement Constructs

All of the variables and items examined in this present study were modified from earlier studies, including perceived utility, perceived ease of use, pleasure, trust in social commerce performance, and the usage of social media as a mediator of the relationship. The social commerce scale was derived from a precise description from Al-Adwan & Kokash (2019), and Grandon & Pearson (2004) and social media use was analyzed by adapting a questionnaire from Ahmad et al. (2019). The scale for perceived usefulness and ease of use was adapted from Grandon & Pearson (2004), and to measure satisfaction and trust, the scale was adopted from Wang & Hajli (2014).

### 3.3 Data Collection Procedures

The research used the google form (online) to collect the data from the CEO and managers of small and micro-enterprises. The online-administered procedure was used to distribute and retrieve the distributed questionnaires from the respondents. The duration of data collection is around six months through the online google survey (November 2019 to April 2020). The questionnaire's design is open and close-ended, and respondents were expected to select from strongly disagree to agree strongly based on the Likert scale format. Google form link was used to share the questionnaire with CEOs and managers who are online business sellers through social media. 100 CEOs and managers of small and micro-enterprises have participated in the survey. Further, the study used SPSS and SmartPLS 3.2.9 software to analyze data screening and test the hypotheses.

#### **4. Analysis and Findings**

The primary goal of this section is to take the findings of the data analysis. The statistics used in the study are both descriptive and inferential. A descriptive analysis was carried out to define the demographic features of the parts of the data analysis using SPSS. SmartPLS 3.2.9 software was used for further analysis. Cross-loadings, convergent validity, internal consistency reliability, and discriminant validity were all investigated using the measurement model. Finally, the hypotheses were evaluated, and the findings of complementary analyses were examined using PLS-SEM, which indicated the mediating influence of social media usage, which was then presented as a component of the structural model.

##### *4.1 Demographics Analysis*

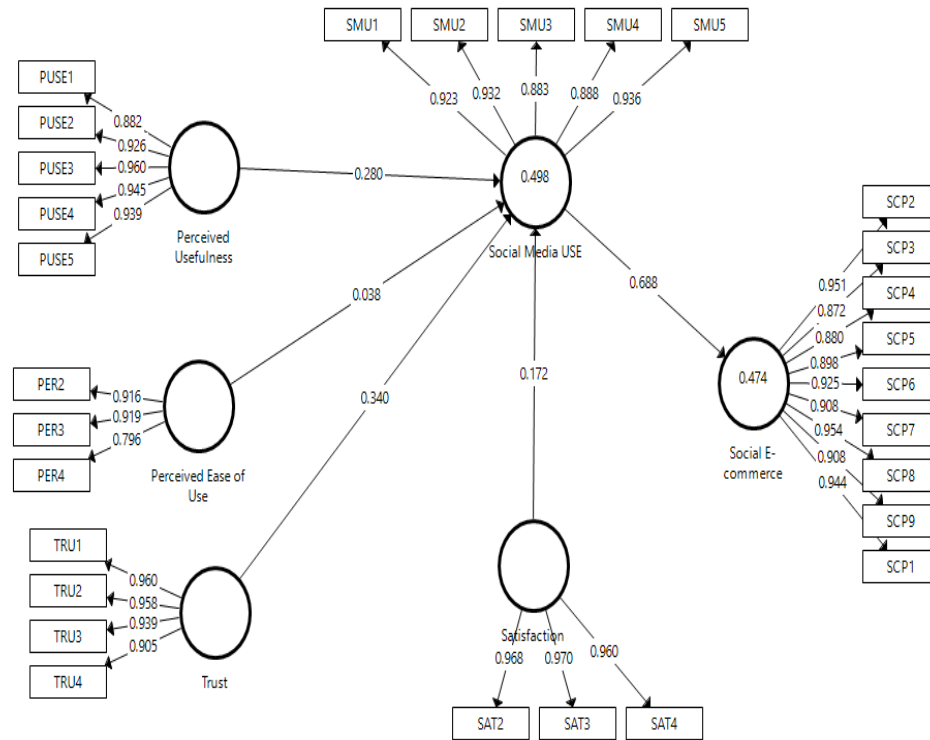
The section includes demographic features such as gender, age, educational level, number of employees, average annual sales, job title, and social media information. In terms of gender, the graph shows that 36 percent of the total responses were male, and female respondents accounted for 64 percent of the total respondents. Therefore, the majority of the respondents are female. The descriptive analysis shows that most of the respondents, or 50 percent of total respondents, belonged to the age range 31-and 40 years, while 39 percent of respondents were between 20-and 30 years, and 8 percent of respondents were between 41-and 50 years old. In terms of educational levels, respondents with Bachelor's education represented 66 percent of the responses, and Master's level education represented 15 percent of the respondents. Finally, the Ph.D. respondents represented 18% of the respondents. The descriptive statistics indicate that the highest number of employees ranges from 1-5 with 55 percent, followed by 11 and above employees, with 28 percent and 6 -10 employees with 17%. Hence, it indicated that most business enterprises have a range of 1-5 employees. Finally, the owners/CEOs represented 45.5 percent of the respondents based on job title types. In comparison, managers represented 14.1 percent of the responses. Lastly, the other positions were represented by 40.4% of the respondents.

##### *4.2 Assessment of PLS-SEM Path Model Results*

PLS-SEM was used in this study, which was accomplished by using the software application Smart-PLS (Hair et al., 2016). Multiple test regressions and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) are important multivariate techniques on which PLS-SEM is predicated, and this research supplies both of them (Hair et al., 2016). It was necessary to discover the causal relationships between the constructs in these theoretical models, and SmartPLS by Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2015) was utilized. The current study was the instrument utilized to analyze the major direct and mediated findings and their interactions.

##### *4.3 Assessment of Measurement Model*

Regarding the Smart-PLS analysis, we have tested the first outer model, the measurement model. Thus, the outer model involves identifying to examining the individual item reliability, checking the internal consistency reliability among the items of the construct, and the discriminant validity of the variables (Hair et al., 2016). Hence, the measurement model was concerned with estimating the goodness of measures, Figure 2.



**Figure 3: PLS Algorithm Measurement Model**

#### 4.4 Individual Items Reliability

The researchers found that assessing the outer model gave them a better result than analyzing the inner model (measurement model) for loading and cross-loading. Furthermore, the latent variables provided a sufficient indication of their validity and dependability. The current study examined the measuring model and presented the final items (29) in Table 1 and Figure 3, found in Table 1. Hair et al. (2014) stated that convergent validity is accomplished when the all factor loading for all items is more than 0.50 (see Figure 1). All 29 items were maintained based on the factor score between 0.796 to 0.90. (Hair et al., 2014). As a result, none of the constructions was deleted, and all constructs had an adequate number of things for each of them

#### 4.5 Internal Consistency Reliability & Convergent Validity

As a result, internal consistency dependability was assessed in the current study by looking at composite reliability (CR). The current study's CR value for all constructs varies from 0.91 to 0.97. CR values range from 0 to 1; the threshold value should not be less than 0.60 in Table 1. (Hair et al., 2017). They define convergent validity as "the extent to which a latent construct explains the variance of its indicators." Furthermore, he said that each

construct should acquire at least a 50% variance (AVE 0.50). As a result, table 1 reveals that the AVE value of all constructs in the current investigation is greater than 0.50.

**Table 1: Internal Consistency Reliability and Convergent Validity**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Loadings</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>AVE</b>
<b>Perceived Ease of Use</b>	PER2	0.916	0.91	0.772
	PER3	0.919		
	PER4	0.796		
<b>Perceived Usefulness</b>	PUSE1	0.882	0.97	0.866
	PUSE2	0.926		
	PUSE3	0.960		
	PUSE4	0.945		
	PUSE5	0.939		
<b>Satisfaction</b>	SAT2	0.968	0.977	0.933
	SAT3	0.970		
	SAT4	0.960		
<b>Social Commerce</b>	SCP1	0.944	0.979	0.839
	SCP2	0.951		
	SCP3	0.872		
	SCP4	0.880		
	SCP5	0.898		
	SCP6	0.925		
	SCP7	0.908		
	SCP8	0.954		
	SCP9	0.908		
<b>Social Media USE</b>	SMU1	0.923	0.961	0.833
	SMU2	0.932		
	SMU3	0.883		
	SMU4	0.888		
	SMU5	0.936		
<b>Trust</b>	TRU1	0.960	0.969	0.885
	TRU2	0.958		
	TRU3	0.939		
	TRU4	0.905		

#### 4.6 Discriminant Validity

Three-way cross-loading, Fornell and Larcker's criteria, and the novel Hetrotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlation were used to assess discriminant validity (HTMT). In other words, discriminant validity assesses the point to which variables in the research are affected. To assess discriminant validity, all three approaches indicated above were applied. The AVE square root on the diagonal must be larger than the correlations between the latent variables to fulfil the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criteria. Table 2 demonstrated that all AVE values were greater than those of the other constructions. However, the square root of AVE of the constructs: Perceived Ease of Use (PEU) = 0.87; Perceived Usefulness (PU) = 0.93; Satisfaction (STF) = 0.96; Social E-commerce (SEC) = 0.91; Social Media USE (SMU) = 0.91 and Trust (TUT) = 0.94 are higher than the other construct. According to Chin (1998), "the loadings of a particular construct's indicators should be higher than the loadings of all other constructs' indicators." Also, Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2015) offered a strict principle of HTMT to measure discriminant validity in variance-based PLS-SEM. Kline (2011) stated certain cut-off values as 0.85 or HTMT.85 and Gold, Malhotra, and Segars (2001) as 0.90 or HTMT.90. If the HTMT value crosses these limits, then there is an issue of discriminant validity. Moreover, Henseler *et al.* (2015) itemized to avoid discriminant validity. There should be no value of 0 between the 90% bootstrap confidence interval of HTMT. In Table 3, all the values are lower than the HTMT.90 (Gold *et al.*, 2001). The results depicted that the confidence intervals did not value 0 on any latent constructs (Henseler *et al.*, 2015), confirming the discriminant validity.

**Table 2: Discriminant Validity Matrix**

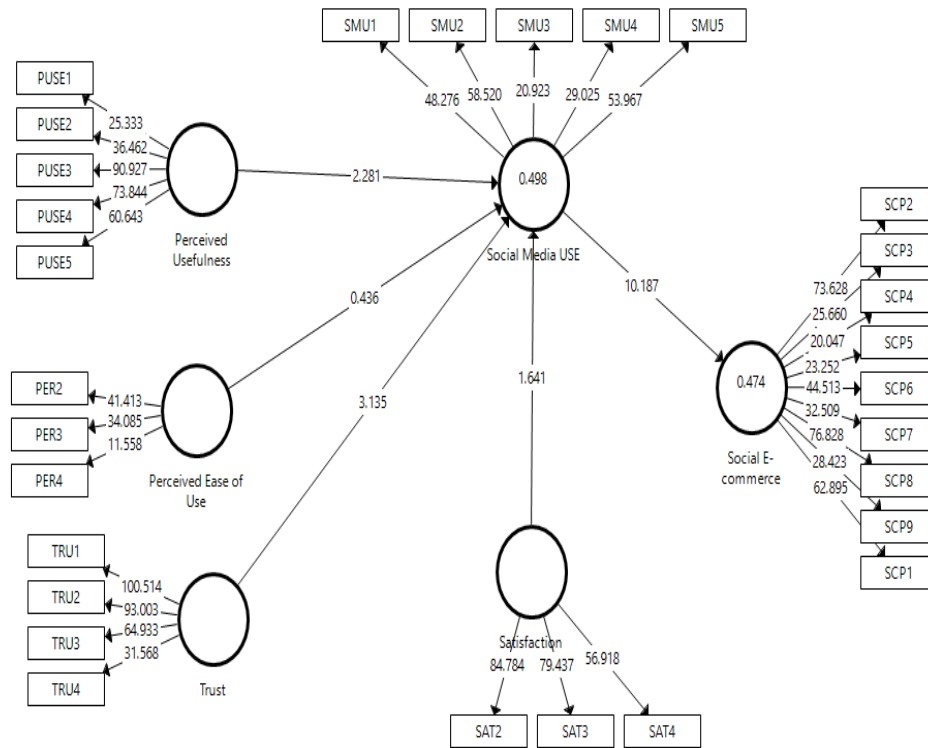
	Perceived Ease of Use	Perceived Usefulness	Satisfaction	Social E- commerce	Social Media USE	Trust
Perceived Ease of Use	<b>0.879</b>					
Perceived Usefulness	0.601	<b>0.931</b>				
Satisfaction	0.615	0.610	<b>0.966</b>			
Social commerce	0.513	0.590	0.584	<b>0.916</b>		
Social Media USE	0.502	0.586	0.596	0.688	<b>0.913</b>	
Trust	0.557	0.522	0.675	0.535	0.624	<b>0.941</b>

**Table 3: Hetrotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlation**

	Perceived Ease of Use	Perceived Usefulness	Satisfaction	Social E-commerce	Social Media USE	Trust
Perceived Ease of Use						
Perceived Usefulness	0.652					
Satisfaction	0.665	0.633				
Social commerce	0.548	0.610	0.602			
Social Media USE	0.541	0.609	0.621	0.713		
Trust	0.615	0.543	0.701	0.553	0.651	-

#### 4.7 Structural Model

Structural model assessments have been elaborated in this research: a direct relationship model and a mediation analysis model. PLS-SEM is a non-parametric technique that does not make any assumptions about data distribution. This section analyses structural modeling for the structural model to build the overall link between the models once they have been created. The current study assessed the structural model to put the theory to the test. The bootstrapping procedure entails taking many subsamples with replacements from the original data sample and computing standard errors, which approximates normality as closely as possible in the data. Moreover, when doing structural path testing, bootstrapping provides a standard error as well as t-values and p-values (Hair et al., 2017).



**Figure 4: Structure Model**

**Table 4: Hypothesis Testing**

NO	Hypothesized Path	Path coefficient	Standard Error	T Value	Decision	F.Si ze	VIF	R Squ are	Q <sup>2</sup>
H <sub>1</sub>	Social Media USE -> Social E-commerce	0.688	0.068	10.187**	Supported	0.901	1.00		
H <sub>2</sub>	Perceived Usefulness -> Social Media USE	0.280	0.123	2.281**	Supported	0.084	1.854	0.498	0.399
H <sub>3</sub>	Perceived Ease of Use -> Social Media USE	0.038	0.087	0.436	Not supported	0.002	1.921	0.474	0.389
H <sub>4</sub>	Satisfaction -> Social Media USE	0.172	0.105	1.641**	Supported	0.025	2.359		
H <sub>5</sub>	Trust -> Social Media USE	0.340	0.108	3.125***	Supported	0.117	1.977		

This study aims to recommend a social commerce business model for small and micro-enterprises. Hence, this present study presented nine (9) hypotheses, which have direct and indirect relationships to be tested; thus, seven (7) predictions were confirmed based on the T-value (1.64) and P-value. Meanwhile, two (2) hypotheses were not supported in the present study. Moreover, figure 3 shows that direct and mediation hypotheses influence



every latent construct on social commerce performance. Providently, table 4 and figure 4 show the hypotheses supported in the present study, which have a T-value greater than 1.64. Therefore, seven (7) out of the nine (9) hypotheses were supported. The hypothesis  $H_1$  is supported, i.e., the direct impact of social media use to social E-commerce is positively significant ( $B = 0.688$ ;  $T = 10.187$ ). The result demonstrates that perceived usefulness positively impacts social media use ( $B = 0.280$ ;  $T = 2.281$ ), and therefore,  $H_2$  is supported. Next, perceived ease of use has no significant direct impact on social media use ( $B = 0.038$ ;  $T = 0.436$ ), and therefore,  $H_3$  is not supported. Satisfaction directly impacts social media use ( $B = 0.172$ ;  $T = 1.641$ ), and therefore,  $H_4$  is supported.  $H_5$  is supported, as trust directly impacts social media use ( $B = 0.340$ ;  $T = 3.135$ ). Therefore, these hypotheses ( $H_1$ ,  $H_2$ ,  $H_4$ , and  $H_5$ ) are supported.

Likewise, to measure the predictive accuracy of the research model, the researcher calculated the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ). The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of the present study are 0.498 and 0.474. The  $R^2$  explained the level of variance in the endogenous variable explained by all the exogenous variables. The threshold values for acceptable  $R^2$  values provided by Hair et al. (2017) define 0.75 as substantial, 0.50 as moderate, and 0.25 as a weak level of predictive accuracy. As shown in the above table, the values showed a substantial level of predictive accuracy. Besides, the acceptance level of  $Q^2$  the value was higher than 0, and it depicts that exogenous variables have predictive relevance for the endogenous variables in the model (Fornell & Cha, 1994; Hair et al., 2017). Thus, as seen in table 4, it can be observed that all the values of  $Q^2 = 0.399$  and  $Q^2 = 0.398$  are greater than 0. That is why the model of the current study has sufficient predictive relevance.

#### 4.8 Mediation

The mediation test was developed in accordance with Hayes and Preacher's findings (2014). Furthermore, the bootstrapping approach is more suited for simple and numerous models, and it is also more effective. As a result, in the current study, bootstrapping (5000 subsamples) was used to calculate the indirect effect of social media usage. Hair et al., (2016). The analysis showed in Table 5, the insignificant indirect relationship between Perceived Ease of Use and Social media use toward the social e-commerce ( $\beta = 0.026$ ,  $t = 0.436$ ) confidence interval value ( $UL = -0.07$  and  $UP = 0.124$ ). Based on the result  $H_6$  hypothesis is rejected; no mediation effect of social media use between perceived ease of use and social commerce performance. On the contrary, hypothesis  $H_7$  ( $\beta = 0.193$ ;  $T = 2.165$ ) empirically proved that perceived usefulness positively impacts social e-commerce through the mediation of social media usage. Likewise,  $H_8$  ( $\beta = 0.119$ ;  $T = 1.573$ ) has shown a significant association between satisfaction and social e-commerce through the mediation of social media usage. Similarly,  $H_9$  ( $\beta = 0.234$ ;  $T = 3.076$ ) statistically predicted that trust also has a significant positive relationship with social e-commerce through the mediation of the use of social media. Therefore, hypotheses  $H_7$ ,  $H_8$ , and  $H_9$  are supported by the mediation of social media use. Out of four (4) hypotheses tested, three (3) were proved mediation supported  $H_7$ ,  $H_8$ ,  $H_9$ . These values indicated mediation, and they are significant with social media use.

**Table 5: Mediation Analysis**

No	Hypothesized Path	Path coefficient	Standard Error	T Value	P-Value	0.025	0.975	Decision
H <sub>6</sub>	Perceived Ease of Use -> Social Media USE -> Social E-commerce	0.026	0.060	0.438	0.331	-0.068	0.127	No-mediation
H <sub>7</sub>	Perceived Usefulness -> Social Media USE -> Social E-commerce	0.193	0.089	2.100*	0.015	0.035	0.328	mediation
H <sub>8</sub>	Satisfaction -> Social Media USE -> Social E-commerce	0.119	0.075	1.573*	0.057	0.011	0.258	mediation
H <sub>9</sub>	Trust -> Social Media USE -> Social E-commerce	0.234	0.076	3.087*	0.001	0.113	0.360	mediation

P > 0.1\*, P > .05\*\*, P > 0.001\*\*\*

## 5. Discussion of Results

The first hypothesis stated that social media use positively impacts social commerce performance among online sellers. This study's finding thereby concurs with several previous studies such as Ahmad et al. (2019), Al-Adwan and Kokash (2019), and Gibreel et al. (2018). Therefore, it can be concluded the higher the volume of social media usage among the sellers to promote their business, the higher the chances it would be for the business to be successful. The hypotheses' results also indicate that perceived usefulness positively impacts social media use among Malaysian small and micro-enterprises. This is in line with previous studies' findings supporting this relationship (Al-Adwan & Kokash, 2019; Hansen, Saridakis, & Benson, 2018). It was found that low perceived usefulness resulted in weak social commerce performance. Therefore, online sellers who facilitate social media usage will improve social commerce performance. The online seller needs to be well prepared and ready to become a real social media user for their business. The report of Global Statshot Report (2021), the number of Malaysian social media users is increasing rapidly. Consequently, it will enhance the opportunities for small businesses to utilize social media actively fully. Social media tools allow Malaysian new small and micro enterprises to advertise their products and services more efficiently.

In this study, satisfaction positively impacts social media use among Malaysian small and micro-enterprises. This result concurs with past studies (e.g. Balbi, Misuraca, & Scepi, 2018; Wang & Hajli, 2014). Therefore, this study's findings imply that the higher the satisfaction, the higher the social commerce performance among online sellers through social media use. It was also hypothesized that trust positively impacts social media use among online sellers. This finding also concurs with several previous studies (Hansen, Saridakis, & Benson, 2018; Hajli, Sims, Zadeh, & Richard, 2017; Wang & Hajli, 2014).

Therefore, the more trust and secure the social media website, the higher the social commerce performance.

Consequently, evidence suggests that perceived ease of use has no impact on social media use among Malaysian small and micro-enterprises. Therefore, perceived ease of use in the case of the present study is not supported. An online seller needs to be well prepared and ready to be trained as a real social media user for their business. Additionally, it was hypothesized that trust positively impacts social media use among online sellers. This finding concurs with previous studies (Hajli et al., 2017; Hansen et al., 2018; Wang & Hajli, 2014). Therefore, the more trust and secure the social media website, the higher the social commerce performance.

The study also examines the mediating role of social media use in the relationship between perceived usefulness, ease of use, satisfaction, trust, and social commerce performance. It was found that social media use has positively mediated the relationship between perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, satisfaction, trust, and social commerce performance among online sellers. Meanwhile, the chi-square result is above the threshold value, and  $H_6$ ,  $H_8$ , and  $H_9$  were supported with 95% confidence. Meanwhile,  $H_7$  was not supported. Thus, the result of this study is also in line with past studies (Ahmad et al., 2019; Al-Adwan & Kokash, 2019; Grandon & Pearson, 2004; Hajli et al., 2017). Regarding the above discussion, the empirical evidence suggests that social media use will enhance social commerce performance for small and micro-enterprises.

Consequently, it was proven that perceived ease of use positively impacts social commerce performance among online sellers, and the hypothesis is supported. Thus, The study was in line with previous studies (Grandon & Pearson, 2004; Hajli et al., 2017; Yahia, Al-Neama, & Kerbache, 2018). Online small and micro-enterprises need to be well prepared and ready to be trained as real social media users for their business. Thus, social commerce will be crucial in bringing forth new and critical concerns and therefore developing the discipline. Using new platforms and algorithms opens up new financial prospects for media entrepreneurs in business marketplaces and raises ethical concerns. Digital technologies will affect entrepreneurship depending on the entrepreneurs' ability to fully harness the digital platforms' opportunities (Dal Zotto & Omid, 2020). Last but not latest, it is strongly recommended that through the use of social media, managers/owners of small and macro enterprises can achieve business growth by expanding their target audience. Also, this effective process can maintain healthy business groups and increases the organization's revenue/sales. Similarly, most respondents strongly recommended that an entrepreneur has a new venture for marketing through social media, reducing monetary cost and eventually speeding up the operational process.

### *5.1 Theoretical Implications*

The social media usage predictor model can enrich the conceptualization of social commerce performance and its relationships in the context of online sellers. This finding substitutes the DOI and RBV theories with perceived usefulness, ease of use, satisfaction, trust, social media use, and social commerce. This study highlights the use of complex analysis techniques for data analysis for methodological contribution. The findings indicated that perceived utility, ease of use, and trust are major determinants of social

media use. These findings add new information for social media's benefit, particularly for small enterprises in emerging markets.

### *5.2 Practical Implications*

Consequently, this study provides better insight for small sellers and micro-enterprises to change employees' mindsets from conducting physical face-to-face to selling their products online. At the same time, the business industry should encourage and promote their products through social media to reach new buyers and experience more comfortable purchases. Thus, social media also will create new opportunities for new business.

This study also provides recommendations for the business community. First, social media have high potential for growth in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and therefore, all small and micro-enterprises must use social media for product promotion. For example, entrepreneurs should use social media for ads purposes. Secondly, social entrepreneurs should use social media to focus on the youth network. Thirdly, entrepreneurs can have a new venture for marketing through social media at a reduced monetary cost, which eventually speeds up the operational process. This effective process will help to expand businesses and maintain good business groups/partnerships. It is also beneficial in achieving targets on time, particularly for manufacturing businesses. Therefore, all social entrepreneurs should learn to better use social media for their marketing and increase sales volume. Nowadays, people can do their business transactions anywhere, as long as they can access the Internet on their smartphone, and business is conducted with just a few taps on the screen.

### *5.3 Limitations and Future Recommendations*

The survey respondents of this present study were online sellers of small and micro-enterprises, and thus, this study is limited to online business sellers through social media. Consequently, this research provides a few recommendations for future study. First, future work may include a larger number of online sellers in Malaysia in the sample. Second, a similar study may employ the qualitative method by interviewing small micro-business owners to reveal a deeper understanding of social media use. Third, the future study can also embark on a case study of several social commerce entrepreneurs to ascertain the important role of social media in business. Finally, future research may integrate other important factors that may also affect social media use and business performance, such as service quality.

## **6. Conclusion**

This research gives a strong indication that social media use significantly impacts small and micro-enterprises. This is especially true during the Covid-19 pandemic, which affects the whole world. To survive, many small and micro-enterprises are shifting their business operation online. Despite the popularity of social media platforms, small and micro-enterprise owners should pay attention to various factors that may affect social commerce performance. The present study has proposed a model of factors that affect social media use and business performance for small and micro-enterprises in Malaysia. This study also examines the mediating role of social media use in the association between perceived usefulness, ease of use, satisfaction, trust, and social commerce performance. The study's

findings depict that social media use influences business performance among online sellers. All the factors studied in this research, except perceived ease of use, equally influence social media use and social commerce performance. This means that factors of customers' or users' perceived usefulness, satisfaction, and trust play a significant role in determining the success of social commerce in Malaysia. Merely establishing a business presence through social media is inadequate for a business. Instead, measures should be taken by small and micro-entrepreneurs to provide rich content, information, and testimonials about their products or services, which can enhance customers' perceived usefulness, satisfaction, and trust. Otherwise, the use of social media for business may fail.

#### **Research Funding**

The authors like to acknowledge that this article is the outcome of a research which was fully funded by Universiti Utara Malaysia under a special research fund (SO Code 14325).

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### Appendix A Social Commerce

No.	Items
1	Using Social commerce is a good idea.
2	Using Social commerce is good for business growth.
3	Using Social commerce helps to reduce the costs of business operations.
4	Using Social commerce helps to improve customer services.
5	Using Social commerce helps to improve distribution channels.
6	Using Social commerce helps to improve the sales of my business.
7	Using Social commerce helps to provide an effective support role to operations.
8	Using Social commerce helps to support linkages with buyers.
9	Using Social commerce allows enhancement of my business productivity.

Source: Al-Adwan & Kokash (2019) and Grandon & Pearson (2004)

### Social Media

No	Items
1	Social media provides new opportunities for my business.
2	Social media allows us to accomplish specific tasks more quickly (e.g. Customer Reach).
3	Social media use allows online selling.
4	Social media tools allow us to learn more about our competitors.
5	Social media tools allow us to advertise better and market our products and services.

Source: Ahmad, Abu Bakar & Ahmad (2019)

**Perceived Usefulness**

No	Items
1	Using social media would enable my business to accomplish a specific task more quickly.
2	Using social media would improve my job performance.
3	Using social media in my job would increase my productivity.
4	Using social media would enhance my effectiveness on the job.
5	Using social media would make it easier to do my job.

Source: Grandon & Pearson (2004).

**Perceived Ease of Use**

No	Items
1	I would find social media to be flexible to interact with.
2	My interaction with social media would be clear and understandable.
3	It would be easy for me to become skilful at using social media.
4	I would find social media easy to use.

Source: Grandon & Pearson (2004).

**Satisfaction**

No	Items
1	I am satisfied with using my preferred social media tool.
2	Overall, I am satisfied with the preferred social media tool.
3	I am happy with my preferred social media tool.
4	I am satisfied with the services provided by social media tool.

Source: Wang & Hajli, (2014).

**Trust**

No	Items
1	The performance of my favourite social media tool always meets my business expectations.
2	My favourite social media tool can be counted on as a good social media tool.
3	My favourite social media tool is a reliable social media tool.
4	Social media that I used is secured for my business transactions.

Source: Wang & Hajli (2014).