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## **Factors Affecting Intentions to Use Social Commerce in Shopping for Fashion Products**

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Factors Affecting Intentions to Use Social Commerce in Shopping for Fashion Products

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Science in Human Environmental Sciences

by

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University of Arkansas  
Bachelor of Science in Human Environmental Sciences  
in Apparel Studies, 2015

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This thesis is approved for recommendation to the Graduate Council.

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine factors affecting millennials' attitudes and intentions to purchase fashion products through social commerce. The current study adopted the technology acceptance model (TAM; Davis, 1989) to develop a theoretical framework. A total of 531 college students completed an online survey at a university. The sample was appropriate because millennials are a highly educated generation (Goodman, 2015) and most college students are social media users (eMarketer, 2015). The sample was predominantly female Caucasian American students (71%) who are daily visiting social media networking sites over four times.

Results of exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation confirmed one factor for each variable. Reliability was supported for all variables based on Cronbach's  $\alpha$  values ( $>.83$ ). Sufficient correlation coefficient range (.60-.79) confirmed discriminant validity of all constructs. Results of confirmatory factor analysis confirmed convergent validity of all constructs based on significant confirmatory factor loadings ( $>.85$ ) and the average variance extracted of each construct ( $>.50$ ). Both measurement and structural models were found to fit to the data well. The proposed paths in the SEM model were positive and statistically significant ( $p \leq .001$ ), except for the path between perceived ease of use and attitudes. Further structural model analysis uncovered that usefulness impacted on enjoyment.

The results confirmed that perceived ease of use, usefulness, and enjoyment of social commerce had a positive impact on millennials' attitudes and intentions to use social commerce in apparel shopping. These findings imply that utilitarian and hedonic benefits are important to augment young consumers' attitudes and intentions to purchase apparel on social media. While both perceived ease of use and usefulness positively influenced enjoyment, usefulness had a

stronger impact than ease of use. Compared to usefulness, enjoyment had much stronger impact on attitudes. These findings suggest that utilitarian benefits from an efficient, time-saving experience may engender positive feelings (e.g., enjoyable, fun, and exciting), which are crucial to increase millennial shoppers' apparel purchasing on social media.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to my parents, brother and sister. Your inspiration and encouragement has made the last two years possible. You have given me the support and strength to achieve my goals. I love you all so much. Here's to the next great adventure!

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## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

The Internet revolution yields a substantial change in communication without space and time constraints (Harris & Rae, 2009). Internet users not only obtain but also disseminate information (e.g., peer reviews) and interact with other Internet users (Harris & Rae, 2009). As the number of global Internet users increased to over 3.2 billion (ICT, 2015), the number of individuals engaging firms through their websites and social networking sites has also grown (Harris & Rae, 2009). Social networking sites are defined as online applications which allow Internet users to create a profile, share the profile with a list of other Internet users, and view the information uploaded by their connections (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Social networking sites are popular, online adults in America are engaging in more than two social media networking sites (Duggan, Ellison, Lampe, Lenhart, & Madden, 2015; Yuksel, Milne, & Miller, 2016). As an increased number of consumers engage in social networking sites (i.e., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube) on a daily basis, social media has become an important part of the marketing strategy for firms (Godey et al., 2016; Kim & Ko, 2012; Liang & Turban, 2011).

In the U.S., Facebook, one of the most popular social media networking sites, has over 166 million users, followed by Instagram with 67.2 million users, Snapchat with 58.6 million users, and Pinterest and Twitter with over 50 million users each (eMarketer, 2016b). Consumers visit a brand's social media site to obtain brand-specific information, exchange information with other users, and interact with the brand (Hudson, Huang, Roth, & Madden, 2016; Kim & Ko, 2012). A recent consumer survey revealed that 72.7 million millennials in the U.S. used social media, in particular, these young consumers spent 70% of their social media time on Facebook (Statista, 2016a; Statista, 2016b). Millennials (birth years 1981 to 2000) have received a great deal of attention from marketers because their generation will soon become the largest

generation in the U.S. (Goodman, 2015). Their annual spending is estimated to be over \$200 billion in 2017 (Solomon, 2015).

Due to rapidly growing consumer interaction with companies through social media, most marketers (96%) engage in social media marketing as part of their digital marketing strategy (Stelzner, 2015). Almost 70% of U.S. marketers increased their budget for social media in 2017 (eMarketer, 2016a). Social advertising and commerce were reported to be the most important strategies for the digital marketing industry over the last 12 months (eMarketer, 2016a).

Research shows that social media advertising and commerce are popular among apparel brands to increase consumer website visits and sales (Touchette, Schanski, & Lee, 2015). Among diverse social networking sites, Facebook and Twitter are the most popular with luxury fashion brands (Kim & Ko, 2012) and apparel brands (Touchette et al., 2015). For instance, Burberry, an English luxury fashion brand, offers a free sample of its fragrance to Facebook fans who sign up for the sample on their Facebook page. Express, the U.S. casual apparel brand, allows consumers to browse products and make efficient transactions on Facebook without moving to their online shopping site (Touchette et al., 2015).

Prior research has investigated consumers' attitudes and intentions toward online and mobile commerce, whereas little research has examined apparel shopping behaviors in social commerce. A few research studies investigated consumer motivations for shopping through Facebook pages (Anderson, Knight, Pookulangara, & Josiam, 2014), the effects of social media marketing efforts of luxury fashion brands on customer equity and purchase intention (Kim & Ko, 2012), and brand equity and consumer response (Godey et al., 2016). Given the rapid growth of millennials' social media use, further investigation is needed to understand the factors associated with young consumers' intentions to use social commerce in apparel shopping.

The technology acceptance model (TAM; Davis, 1989; Davis 1993; Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1992) was adopted to develop a theoretical framework for the present study. The TAM explains that an individual's information technology acceptance behaviors are determined by five variables including perceived ease of use, usefulness, and enjoyment; as well as attitudes and intentions to use information technology. Drawing on the TAM, the purpose of this study was to examine the effects of perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and perceived enjoyment of social commerce on young consumers' attitudes toward social commerce and their intentions to use social commerce when shopping for fashion products. This research contributes to expanding the body of research on digital retailing for fashion products.

## **Definition of Terms**

The following definitions are major terms investigated in the present study.

***Attitude***: An individual's positive or negative response toward using information technology (Davis, 1993).

***Brand equity***: Overall brand assets, which refer to the value of a brand driven from consumer brand-name awareness, perceived brand quality, brand associations, and brand loyalty (Aaker, 1991).

***Intention***: An individual's willingness to use information technology (Davis, 1993).

***Mobile commerce***: The transaction of purchase products and services in exchange for money through mobile devices using the Internet (Keels, 2012; Ko, Kim, & Lee, 2009).

***Online commerce***: The use of websites to engage in buying and selling of products through the Internet (Yoh, Damhorst, Sapp, & Laczniak, 2003).

***Perceived ease of use***: The "degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort" (Davis, 1989, p. 320).

***Perceived enjoyment***: An individual's perception that using information technology is enjoyable (Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1992).

***Perceived usefulness***: The "degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance" (Davis, 1989, p. 320).

***Social media marketing***: A two-way communication that allows brands to interact with consumers (Kim & Ko, 2012).

***Social commerce***: The application of social media platforms that allows individuals to form communities and participate in various activities such as marketing, selling, buying and

sharing of products and services (Hajli, Sims, Zadeh, & Richard, 2017; Menon, Sigurdsson, Larsen, Fagerstrom, & Foxall, 2016).

## CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a theoretical framework and review of literature for the present study. The first section discusses the TAM model, which is used to predict attitudes and intentions toward social commerce in shopping for fashion products. The second section provides background on social media marketing and the multiple dimensions of social media marketing efforts (e.g., entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth). The third section presents a research model and six hypotheses. The proposed model demonstrates that beliefs regarding social commerce (perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and perceived enjoyment) influence consumer attitudes toward social commerce as well as intentions to use social commerce as shown in Figure 2.1.

### **Theoretical Framework**

TAM (Davis, 1989) was adopted to develop a theoretical framework for the present study. The TAM model was originated from Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) theory of reasoned action (TRA), which posits that an individual's intention to perform social behavior is likely to be influenced by the individual's beliefs regarding social pressure and his/her attitude toward that behavior. Individuals are willing to perform particular behaviors when they perceive expectations from other social members who perform that behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Based on the causal link between beliefs, attitudes, and intentions to perform a behavior, Davis (1993) proposed that an individual's information technology acceptance behaviors are determined by perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, attitudes toward using information technology, and intentions to use information technology. Perceived ease of use is defined as, "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort" (Davis, 1989, p.320). Perceived usefulness refers to "the degree to which a person believes that



using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance” (Davis, 1989, p.320).

Individuals who perceive a high level of usefulness for information technology are more likely to use the technology (Davis, 1989). According to Davis (1993), perceived ease of use has a direct impact on perceived usefulness. When individuals perceive using information technology would be easy, they believe the system would be useful and perform their job as they expected. Attitude toward using information technology refers to an individual’s positive or negative response toward using information technology (Davis, 1993). Intentions to use information technology refers to an individual’s willingness to use information technology (Davis, 1993). Davis’ later research (Davis et al., 1992) added perceived enjoyment to the TAM model and suggested potential influence of perceived ease of use on perceived usefulness and enjoyment. Perceived enjoyment is defined as an individual’s perception that using information technology is enjoyable (Davis et al., 1992).

The TAM has been applied to numerous studies that investigate purchase behaviors in the contexts of online commerce (e.g., Ha & Stoel, 2009; Tong, 2010; Yu & Park, 2014) and mobile commerce (e.g., Kim, Ma, & Park, 2009; Ko et al., 2009; Nysveen, Pedersen, & Thorbjornsen, 2005a; Nysveen, Pedersen, & Thorbjornsen, 2005b). Research on online apparel commerce yields mixed results. For instance, Ha and Stoel (2009) found that perceptions of usefulness and enjoyment positively influenced attitudes toward online commerce, whereas perceptions of ease of use did not influence attitudes toward online commerce. However, Davis (1993) and Tong (2010) revealed that perceived ease of use had a strong effect on perceived usefulness of purchasing apparel products online.

Research on mobile apparel commerce consistently provide empirical supports for the relationships between variables in the TAM model. For instance, Kim, Ma, and Park (2009)

reported that perceived ease of use of mobile phones had a significant impact on perceived usefulness and perceived enjoyment. Their results also revealed that consumers' perception of usefulness and enjoyment had a positive influence on attitudes toward communication, which in turn positively influenced attitudes toward mobile commerce (Kim et al., 2009). Ko, Kim, and Lee's (2009) mobile commerce research found that Korean consumers who perceive mobile commerce as useful, easy to use, and enjoyable perceived value in using mobile commerce and showed positive intentions to adopt mobile commerce for fashion products. Nysveen and researchers found that ease of use, usefulness, and enjoyment significantly affected attitudes toward using mobile services, which influenced the intention to use mobile services (Nysveen et al., 2005a). Their mobile service study (Nysveen et al., 2005b) further investigated the moderating effects of gender. Perceived usefulness influenced the intentions to use mobile services more strongly for male than female consumers, whereas perceived enjoyment influenced the intentions more strongly for female consumers (Nysveen et al., 2005b).

### **Social Media Marketing**

Social media is defined as, “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61). As marketing communication through social media has become increasingly important to a brand's success (Phan, Thomas, & Heine, 2011), a growing number of marketers have been incorporating social media into their marketing communication strategies (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). Many luxury fashion brands (e.g., Chanel, Gucci, Hermés, Louis Vuitton, and Ralph Lauren) broadcast their up-to-date fashion styles through social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube (Kim & Ko, 2012). Social media—a two-way communication channel— allows brands to interact with consumers,

which may contribute to optimizing integrated marketing activities (Ashley & Tuten, 2015; Kim & Ko, 2012).

Social media marketing efforts are composed of five different constructs: entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth (WOM) (Kim & Ko, 2012).

*Entertainment* reflects having positive feelings such as pleasure and fun while using social media (Kim & Ko, 2012). Researchers empirically supported that consumers participate in social networks and seek fashion brands' social media channels for entertainment (Godey et al., 2016; Kim & Ko, 2012; Muntinga, Moorman, & Smit, 2011; Park, Kee, & Valenzuela, 2009). Kim and Ko (2012) found that highly educated Korean consumers are entertained by and enjoy using Louis Vuitton's social media sites. *Interaction* relates to information sharing and the exchange of opinions among individuals using social media (Kim & Ko, 2012). Previous research found that consumers used fashion brands' social media platforms to interact with other individuals who have similar thoughts about a specific product or brand (Muntinga et al., 2011). Godey et al. (2016) suggested that luxury brands using social media marketing should focus on content that prompts interaction and engagement. *Trendiness* is represented by the most recent news and fashion-forward characteristics of social media (Kim & Ko, 2012). Consumers are likely to use social media to obtain the latest fashion trend (Godey et al., 2016; Kim & Ko, 2012; Muntinga et al., 2011) because they believe information on social media is more trustworthy and reliable than information on other communication channels. *Customization* reflects the customized information and service on social media and the customized way consumers can share and search for information (Kim & Ko, 2012). By sending personalized messages to individual consumers through social media, a brand targets a specific consumer group (Zhu & Chen, 2015). *WOM* involves consumer intentions to share information through social media (Kim & Ko, 2012).

Consumers tend to believe that WOM generated by consumers is more credible and relevant compared to information generated by marketers (Gruen, Osmonbekov, & Czaplewski, 2006). Consumers may perceive the importance of those five constructs at a different level. Thus, the present study will identify, from young consumers' perspectives, the ranking of the five constructs in social media marketing efforts for fashion brands.

### **Perceived Ease of Use of Social Commerce, Perceived Usefulness of Social Commerce, and Perceived Enjoyment of Social Commerce**

According to Davis et al. (1992), perceived ease of use influenced both perceived usefulness and perceived enjoyment. Empirical supports have been found for the relationship between perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and perceived enjoyment (e.g., Cheema, Rizwan, Jalal, Durrani, & Sohail, 2013; Ha & Stoel, 2009; Kim et al., 2009; Kwon & Chidambaram, 2000; Nysveen et al., 2005a; Nysveen et al., 2005b; Tong, 2010). For instance, two studies (Cheema et al., 2013; Ha & Stoel, 2009) consistently found that perceived ease of use significantly influenced perceived usefulness of online commerce. Tong's (2010) findings confirmed the positive effect of perceived ease of use on perceived usefulness of online commerce not only for the U.S., but also for Chinese consumers. Similarly, Nysveen et al. (2005a) found the positive influence of perceived ease of use on perceived usefulness for adolescents using mobile services (e.g., payment and text messaging). Researchers (Kim et al., 2009; Kwon & Chidambaram, 2000) have found empirical support that perceived ease of use was a significant determinate of perceived enjoyment. Individuals who felt online and mobile commerce was easy to use were more likely to perceive online and mobile commerce as useful and enjoyable. Based on the positive relationships between the three previously studied

variables from previous studies on online and mobile commerce, the following hypotheses were proposed:

*Hypothesis 1:* Perceived ease of use of social commerce positively affects perceived usefulness of social commerce.

*Hypothesis 2:* Perceived ease of use of social commerce positively affects perceived enjoyment of social commerce.

### **Perceived Ease of Use of Social Commerce and Attitudes toward Social Commerce**

Examination of the relationship between perceived ease of use and attitudes toward online commerce yielded mixed results. Empirical support for the positive relationship between perceived ease of use and attitudes toward online commerce was found in previous studies (Chen, Gillenson, & Sherrell, 2002; Chen & Tan, 2004; Lee, Fiore, & Kim, 2006; Moon & Kim, 2001; O’Cass & Fenech, 2003; Vijayasarathy, 2004). For example, Lee et al.’s (2006) findings revealed a significant positive impact of perceived ease of use on attitudes toward image interactivity technology of retail websites. However, researchers (Cho & Fiorito, 2009; Ha & Stoel, 2009; Heijden & Verhagen, 2004; Liu, Tucker, Koh, & Kappelman, 2003) found insignificant effects of perceived ease of use on attitudes toward online commerce. Likewise, perceived ease of use of co-designing shoes had no direct effect on attitudes toward co-designed shoes; however perceived ease of use indirectly influenced attitudes toward co-designed shoes through product performance risk (Yu & Park, 2014). Perceived ease of use was regarded as a utilitarian motivation in online commerce (Childers, Carr, Peck, & Carson, 2001; Lee et al., 2006; Monsuwe, Dellaert, & de Ruyter, 2004) which has been found to have a significant impact on attitudes toward online commerce (Childers et al., 2001). In accordance with these findings, the present study proposed that consumers who perceive social commerce as easy to use may be

likely to exhibit a positive attitudes toward social commerce. Thus, the following hypothesis was proposed:

*Hypothesis 3:* Perceived ease of use of social commerce positively affects attitudes toward social commerce.

### **Perceived Usefulness of Social Commerce and Attitudes toward Social Commerce**

Previous research demonstrated perceived usefulness as a strong determinant of attitudes toward online and mobile commerce (e.g., Ha & Stoel, 2009; Kim, 2012; Lee et al., 2006). Kim (2012) found that perceived usefulness positively influenced attitudes toward online commerce. Two studies (Ha & Stoel, 2009; Lee et al., 2006) found that the effect of perceived usefulness was much stronger than that of perceived ease of use on attitudes toward online commerce. Likewise, research on mobile commerce found perceived usefulness to be a significant indicator of attitudes toward adopting mobile commerce (Yang, 2012). In mobile technology literature, consumers who perceived mobile communication as useful had positive attitudes toward mobile communication (Nysveen et al., 2005a). Based on the positive relationship between perceived usefulness and attitudes toward online and mobile commerce, it is logical to suggest a positive relationship for social commerce. Thus, the following hypothesis was proposed:

*Hypothesis 4:* Perceived usefulness of social commerce positively affects attitudes toward social commerce.

### **Perceived Enjoyment of Social Commerce and Attitudes toward Social Commerce**

Previous research found that perceived enjoyment significantly influenced attitudes toward online and mobile commerce (e.g., Kim et al., 2009; Lee et al., 2006; Yang, 2012; Yu & Park, 2014). For example, Yu & Park's (2014) findings showed that perceived enjoyment of co-designing had a strong and positive influence on attitudes toward online co-design practice.

Compared to the impact of perceived ease of use and usefulness on attitudes, perceived enjoyment had the strongest direct impact on attitudes toward adopting online commerce (Lee et al., 2006) and mobile commerce (Kim et al., 2009). Yang (2012) found that perceived enjoyment positively influenced attitudes toward adoption of mobile commerce. Based on the positive relationship between perceived enjoyment and attitudes toward online and mobile commerce, it was plausible to suggest the positive influence of perceived enjoyment on attitudes toward social commerce. Thus, the following hypothesis was proposed:

*Hypothesis 5: Perceived enjoyment of social commerce positively affects attitudes toward social commerce.*

### **Attitudes toward Social Commerce and Intentions to use Social Commerce**

According to Fishbein & Ajzen (1975), an individual's attitude toward a behavior positively influences the specific behavior. Previous research has found that positive attitudes leads to intentions to use online and mobile commerce (e.g., Lee et al., 2006; Park & Kim, 2007; Yang, 2012; Yoh et al., 2003). Researchers have confirmed that consumers' intentions to use online commerce were determined by positive attitudes toward online commerce (Lee et al., 2006; Park & Kim, 2007; Yoh et al., 2003). Similarly, consumers' intentions to use mobile commerce were influenced by positive attitudes toward mobile commerce (Kim et al., 2009; Yang, 2012). A study on mobile services (Nysveen et al., 2005a) also found the positive relationship between attitudes and intentions to use mobile services. Since the relationship between attitudes and intentions to use online and mobile commerce has been found to be significantly related, it is logical to suggest a positive relationship between attitudes toward social commerce and intentions to use social commerce. Thus, the following hypothesis was proposed:

*Hypothesis 6:* Attitudes toward social commerce positively affects intentions to use social commerce in shopping for fashion products.



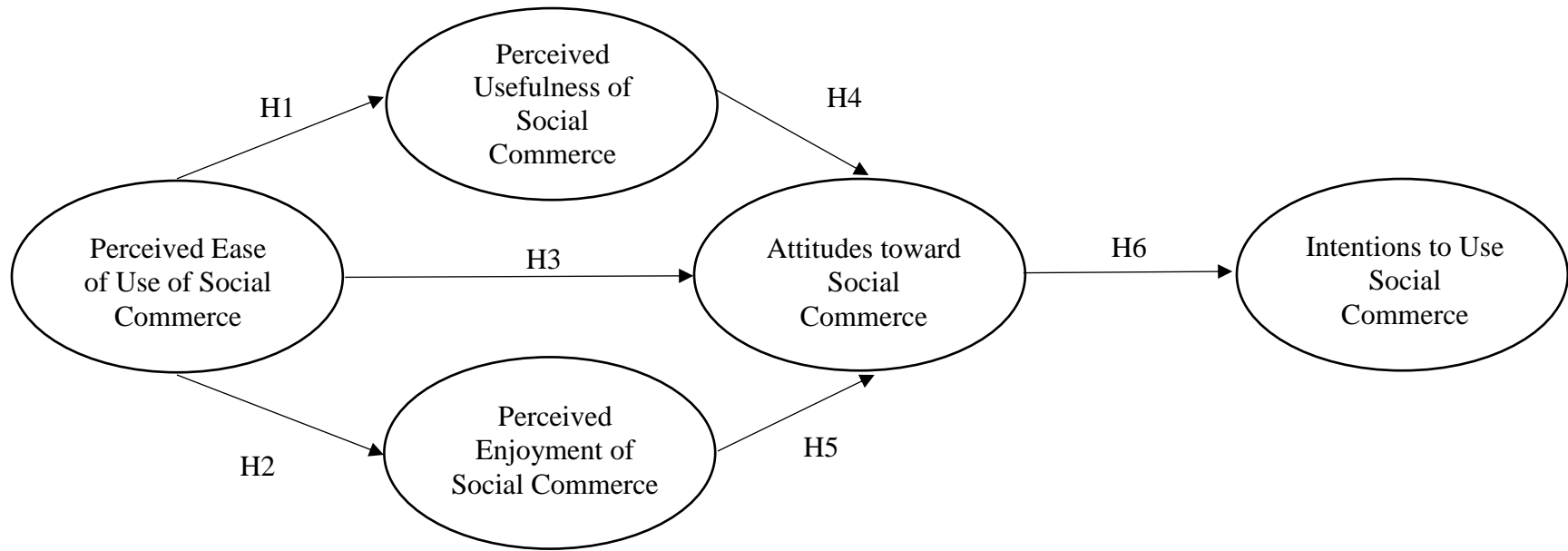


Figure 2.1. A proposed research model showing the hypothesized relationships between the variables.

## **CHAPTER 3. METHOD**

Chapter 3 explains procedures and methods used for data collection and data analysis. A quantitative research was used to examine relationships between variables: (a) perceived ease of use of social commerce and perceived usefulness of social commerce, (b) perceived ease of use of social commerce and perceived enjoyment of social commerce, (c) perceived ease of use of social commerce and attitudes toward social commerce, (d) perceived usefulness of social commerce and attitudes toward social commerce, (e) perceived enjoyment of social commerce and attitudes toward social commerce, and (f) attitudes toward social commerce and intentions to use social commerce. The following section discusses sampling, survey instrument development, data collection procedure, and data analyses.

### **Sample**

A convenience sample of college students over 18 years of age was recruited to conduct an online survey. The sample was drawn from students enrolled in spring 2017 at a major Mid-Southern university. The college student sample was appropriate because millennials are a highly educated generation who often obtain college degrees (Goodman, 2015) and most college students are social media users (eMarketer, 2015). The convenience sample provided relevant information about attitudes toward social commerce and intentions to use social commerce in shopping for fashion products.

### **Survey Instrument**

A self-administered survey was distributed online to test the proposed model (see Figure 2.1.). Reliable and valid scale items were adapted from previous studies and modified to relate to the topic of social commerce as shown in Table 3.1. The questionnaire consisted of five sections: (a) social media marketing efforts, (b) perceived ease of use of social commerce, perceived

usefulness of social commerce, and perceived enjoyment of social commerce, (c) attitudes toward social commerce, (d) intentions to use social commerce, and (e) demographic characteristics including age, gender, ethnicity, and education attainment. All scale items except demographic information were measured using five-point Likert-type scales ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). At the beginning of the survey, participants were asked to indicate their past and current experience of social media use.

An eleven-item social media marketing efforts scale was adopted from Kim and Ko (2012) to reflect entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth. The reliability of the scale ranged from .70 to .94 (Kim & Ko, 2012). Twelve items from two studies (Davis et al., 1992; Kim et al., 2009) were adopted to assess perceived usefulness of social commerce, perceived ease of use of social commerce, and perceived enjoyment of social commerce. A five-item perceived ease of use scale includes “Use of social commerce is clear and understandable” and “Use of social commerce does not require a lot of mental effort.” The Cronbach’s *alpha* value for the scale was .92 (Kim et al., 2009). A five-item perceived usefulness scale includes “Use of social commerce increases my productivity in shopping for fashion products” and “Use of social commerce enhances my effectiveness in shopping for fashion products.” The reliability of the scale was .92 (Kim et al., 2009). A six-item perceived enjoyment scale includes “Use of social commerce is entertaining” and “Use of social commerce is fun.” The reliability of the scale was .95 (Kim et al., 2009). A seven-item attitude scale developed by Spears and Singh (2004) was adopted. The scale includes “When I shop for fashion products, social commerce is good” and “When I shop for fashion products, social commerce is appealing.” The Cronbach’s *alpha* value for the scale was .95 (Spears & Singh, 2004). A five-item intention scale developed by Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard (1995) and Wakefield and

Baker (1998) was adopted from Lee et al. (2006). The scale includes “I would be willing to recommend social commerce to my friends” and “I would be willing to buy apparel through social commerce.” The reliability of the scale was .97 (Lee et al., 2006).

Table 3.1.

*Instruments for Online Survey*

Constructs	Items	Source
Social Media Marketing Efforts	Entertainment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using social media is fun</li> <li>• Content of social media seems interesting</li> </ul> Interaction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social media enables information-sharing with others</li> <li>• Conversation or opinion exchange with others is possible through social media</li> <li>• It is easy to provide my own opinion through social media</li> </ul> Trendiness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content of social media is the newest information</li> <li>• Using social media is very trendy</li> </ul> Customization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social media offers a customized information search</li> <li>• Social media provides customized service</li> </ul> Word of mouth (WOM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I would like to pass information on brand, product, or services from social media to my friends</li> <li>• I would like to upload content from social media on my blog or microblog</li> </ul>	Kim & Ko (2012)
Perceived Ease of Use of Social Commerce	Use of social commerce: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is clear and understandable</li> <li>• Does not require a lot of mental effort</li> <li>• Is easy for me to become skillful at shopping for fashion products</li> <li>• Allows me to shop the way I want to</li> <li>• Is easy to learn</li> </ul>	Davis et al. (1992); Kim et al. (2009)
Perceived Usefulness of Social Commerce	Use of social commerce: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increases my productivity in shopping for fashion products</li> <li>• Enhances my effectiveness in shopping for fashion products</li> <li>• Is useful in shopping for fashion products</li> <li>• Improves my shopping skills for fashion products</li> <li>• Enhances my shopping experience for fashion products</li> </ul>	Davis et al. (1992); Kim et al. (2009)

Table 3.1. (Continued)

Constructs	Items	Source
Perceived Enjoyment of Social Commerce	Shopping for fashion products through social commerce is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entertaining</li> <li>• Enjoyable</li> <li>• Interesting</li> <li>• Fun</li> <li>• Exciting</li> <li>• Appealing</li> </ul>	Kim et al. (2009)
Attitudes toward Social Commerce	When I shop for fashion products, social commerce is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appealing</li> <li>• Good</li> <li>• Pleasant</li> <li>• Favorable</li> <li>• Likeable</li> </ul>	Spears & Singh (2004)
Intentions to Use Social Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I intend to buy fashion products through social commerce</li> <li>• I would be willing to buy fashion products through social commerce</li> <li>• I would be willing to recommend my friends to buy fashion products through social commerce</li> <li>• I would visit social commerce to buy fashion products again</li> <li>• In the future, I would be likely to shop using social commerce for fashion products</li> </ul>	Lee et al. (2006)

### Data Collection

The current study collected data in January 2017 after receiving approval for the use of human subjects from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the university. The online survey was developed using Qualtrics software. Participants were recruited from an announcement in multiple classes at a Mid-Southern university. Potential participants received an email invitation that informed them about the purpose of the study, survey procedures, benefits, confidentiality, and a link to the online survey. As an incentive for participation, students received extra credit points added to their course grade (i.e., 5 points out of 1000). A total of 768 email invitations were sent to the class list by the course instructors.

The first page of the survey included a consent form and description of procedures, benefits, compensation, confidentiality, and participant rights. The participants asked to click “Yes” if they voluntarily agreed to participate in the present study. They moved to the next pages by clicking the “Next” button located on the bottom of the web page. Participants were given seven days to log onto the Website and complete the survey.

### **Data Analyses**

Data was collected from the online survey and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). First, descriptive statistics (e.g. means, variances, and standard deviations) were used to summarize data from demographic variables and social media marketing efforts. Second, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed as data reduction techniques for the five variables (i.e., perceived ease of use of social commerce, perceived usefulness of social commerce, perceived enjoyment of social commerce, attitudes toward social commerce, and intentions to use of social commerce). Third, a Cronbach’s *alpha* coefficient for each of the five measures was calculated to assess reliability as well as test discriminant validity of the constructs. Fourth, a Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated to determine the direction and magnitude of the relationship between variables. Fifth, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to test the measurement model and ensure convergent validity of the constructs. Finally, the hypothesized relationships proposed in the present study were tested through structural equation modeling (SEM).

## CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

Chapter 4 presents the sample description and the results of EFA, reliability, and convergent validity for the variables proposed in Figure 2.1 (see Chapter 2). This chapter discusses correlations between the variables and results of testing the structure of hypothesized model using SEM.

### **Sample Characteristics**

The sample comprised of college students over 18 years of age at a major Mid-Southern university. There were 531 valid and complete responses from 768 online surveys distributed through email invitation, for a 70% response rate. The majority of the sample was female (71%) students between the ages of 18 to 24 years old; the other 29% were male. The students were from diverse majors; including Agricultural, Food, and Life Sciences, Arts and Sciences, Business, Education and Health Professions, and Engineering. The majority of participants were Caucasian or European (84.7%), followed by Hispanic or Latino (5.9%), and African American (2.7%); the remainder were either Asian American (2.3%), two or more races (1.9%), Native American (1.5%), or other (1.2%). Almost 45% of the participants reported more than \$100,000 for annual household income, while the remaining 55% reported less than \$80,000 for annual household income. Students without incomes reported their parents' household income. Participant characteristics of the sample are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1.

*Demographic Characteristics of Participants (n=531)*

Participant characteristics	Frequency	Percent (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	150	28.6
Female	375	71.4
<b>Age</b>		
18-24	516	97
25-29	4	.8
30-34	4	.8
35-39	2	.4
40-44	0	0
45-49	4	.8
50-54	1	.2
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
Native American	8	1.5
Black or African American	14	2.7
Asian American	12	2.3
Hispanic or Latino	31	5.9
Caucasian or European American	447	84.7
Two or more races	10	1.9
Other	6	1
<b>Annual Income</b>		
\$0-24,999	75	14.3
\$25,000-49,999	61	11.6
\$50,000-74,999	69	13.1
\$75,000-99,999	82	15.6
\$100,000 or more	239	45.4
<b>Size of Hometown</b>		
0-5,000	56	10.6
5,000-10,000	47	8.9
10,000-25,000	70	13.2
25,000-50,000	103	19.4
50,000 +	254	47.9
<b>Major within Colleges &amp; School</b>		
College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences	186	35.1
College of Arts and Sciences	41	7.7
College of Business	109	20.6
College of Education and Health Professions	166	31.3
College of Engineering	16	3.0
Undeclared	12	2.3



The majority of participants reported being active users of social media. Instagram was the most preferred and frequently used social networking site followed by Facebook (20.1%) and Twitter (10.5%). More than half of the participants indicated that they have been visiting social media networking sites five or more times a day (64%). Slightly less than 50% of participants indicated that they have purchased fashion products through social commerce. Of those participants who have made a purchase via social commerce, nearly 28% reported having purchased one to ten items over the last year. Interestingly, half of the participants indicated that they prefer to shop in a traditional brick and mortar store. Among other shopping channels, online commerce was found to be more preferred than mobile commerce. Online commerce was the second preferred channel (36%) followed by social commerce (9.2%), and mobile commerce (5.6%). While young consumers were found to shop across multiple channels, they still preferred to shop at brick and mortar stores for fashion products. Table 4.2 shows detailed information regarding respondents' social media experiences in shopping for fashion products.

Table 4.2.

*Social Media Usage Experiences in Shopping for Fashion Products (n=531)*

Shopping experiences	Frequency	Percent (%)
<b>Active Social Media User</b>		
No	26	4.9
Yes	505	95.1
<b>Preferred Social Media Networking Site</b>		
Blogs	2	.4
Facebook	105	20.1
Instagram	270	51.6
Pinterest	18	3.4
Twitter	55	10.5
YouTube	31	5.9
Other	39	7.5
I do not use social media	3	.6
<b>Social Media Use Per Day</b>		
Once	11	2.1
2-3 times	73	13.7
4-5 times	106	20.0
5+	341	64.2
<b>Average time spent on Facebook</b>		
Less than 10 minutes	88	16.6
10-30 minutes	113	21.3
31-60 minutes	121	22.8
1-2 hours	103	19.4
2-3 hours	71	13.4
Longer than 3 hours	35	6.6
<b>Purchased Fashion Products Using Social Media</b>		
Yes	229	43.1
No	302	56.9
<b>Fashion Products Purchased Using Social Media</b>		
0	302	56.9
1-5	96	18.1
2-10	50	9.4
10-15	25	4.7
16-20	37	7.0
20+	21	4.0
<b>Preferred Shopping Channel</b>		
Brick and mortar	237	49.5
Online commerce	171	35.7
Mobile commerce	21	5.6
Shopping through social media	44	9.2

## **Social Media Marketing Efforts**

Frequency was conducted to examine a mean of the five social media marketing dimensions such as entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth. Interaction was reported as the most important social media marketing effort construct and had a mean of 4.23. Entertainment had a mean of 4.13. Trendiness and customization were similar with means of 3.86 and 3.80. The construct that was least important to participants was word of mouth and it had the lowest mean ( $M = 3.15$ ).

## **EFA**

EFA was conducted with varimax rotation to extract one factor each for items assessing perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, perceived enjoyment, attitudes toward social commerce and intentions to use social commerce. An eigenvalue measuring greater than 1.0 determined the number of factors extracted for each construct. Items with factor loadings of .50 or higher on one factor and factor loadings of .30 or lower on the other factor were retained on one factor. Findings shows that each variable had a single factor dimension with high factor loadings (.67-.92). Internal consistency of each measure was tested with a Cronbach's *alpha* value and composite reliability (CR) greater than .70. The results for EFA and reliability tests are summarized in the following section (see Table 4.3).

### **Perceived ease of use of social commerce**

All five of the items for perceived ease of use were retained, based on factor loadings. The items captured participants' thoughts on ease of use of social commerce. The five-item perceived ease of use factor has an eigenvalue of 3.02 and explained 60% of the variance for the items. Cronbach's *alpha* for this factor was .83.

### **Perceived usefulness of social commerce**

Five items were retained for the perceived usefulness factor. Retained items captured participants' perception of usefulness and effectiveness of social commerce. Perceived usefulness factor had an eigenvalue of 3.75 and nearly 76% of variance was explained. The five item factor had a Cronbach's *alpha* coefficient of .92.

### **Perceived enjoyment of social commerce**

The perceived enjoyment factor retained all six items. The items captured the participants' entertainment and excitement of social commerce. The factor had an eigenvalue of 4.68 and explained 78% of the variance for these items. The Cronbach's *alpha* was .94 for the six items.

### **Attitudes toward using social commerce**

All five items measuring attitudes were retained. The items captured participants' beliefs about social commerce. The five-item attitudes factor had an eigenvalue of 3.99 and explained nearly 80% of the variance for these items. The Cronbach's *alpha* for these five items was .94.

### **Intentions to use social commerce**

The intentions to use factor retained all five items. These items captured the willingness of consumers to use social commerce when purchasing fashion products. The factor had an eigenvalue of 3.99 and explained roughly 80% of the variance of these items. The Cronbach's *alpha* for these five items was .94.

Table 4.3.

*Results of EFA and Reliability Test for Variables (n=531)*

Constructs	Scale items	Factor loading
Perceived Ease of Use of Social Commerce	1. Use of social commerce is clear and understandable.	.70
	2. Use of social commerce does not require a lot of mental effort.	.67
	3. Use of social commerce is easy for me to become skillful at shopping for fashion products.	.72
	4. Use of social commerce allows me to shop the way I want to.	.71
	5. Use of social commerce is easy to learn.	.75
Percentage of variance explained =60.29; Eignevalue =3.02 Cronbach's $\alpha$ = .83; Composite Reliability (CR) =.84; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) =.50		
Perceived Usefulness of Social Commerce	1. Use of social commerce increases my productivity in shopping for fashion products.	.84
	2. Use of social commerce enhances my effectiveness in shopping for fashion products.	.88
	3. Use of social commerce is useful in shopping for fashion products.	.81
	4. Use of social commerce improves my shopping skills for fashion products.	.83
	5. Use of social commerce enhances my shopping experience for fashion products.	.78
Percentage of variance explained = 75.90; Eignevalue = 3.75 Cronbach's $\alpha$ = .92; CR =.89; AVE = .69		
Perceived Enjoyment of Social Commerce	1. Shopping for fashion products through social commerce is entertaining.	.86
	2. Shopping for fashion products through social commerce is enjoyable.	.90
	3. Shopping for fashion products through social commerce is interesting.	.81
	4. Shopping for fashion products through social commerce is fun.	.90
	5. Shopping for fashion products through social commerce is exciting.	.85
	6. Shopping for fashion products through social commerce is appealing.	.82
Percentage of variance explained = 77.96; Eignevalue = 4.68 Cronbach's $\alpha$ = .94; CR = .94; AVE = .74		
Attitudes toward Social Commerce	1. When I shop for fashion products, social commerce is appealing.	.87
	2. When I shop for fashion products, social commerce is good.	.88
	3. When I shop for fashion products, social commerce is pleasant.	.87
	4. When I shop for fashion products, social commerce is favorable.	.83
	5. When I shop for fashion products, social commerce is likeable.	.89
Percentage of variance explained =79.89; Eignevalue = 3.99 Cronbach's $\alpha$ = .94; CR = .94; AVE = .75		

Table 4.3. (Continued)

Constructs	Scale Items	Factor loading
Intentions to use Social Commerce	1. I intend to buy fashion products through social commerce.	.80
	2. I would be willing to buy fashion products through social commerce.	.85
	3. I would be willing to recommend my friends to buy fashion products through social commerce.	.86
	4. I would visit social commerce to buy fashion products again.	.92
	5. In the future, I would be very likely to shop using social commerce for fashion products.	.88
Percentage of variance explained = 79.46, Eigenvalue = 3.97		
Cronbach's $\alpha$ = .94; CR = .94; AVE = .74		

### Correlations between the Variables and Discriminant Validity

As predicted, the results of Pearson correlation coefficient showed strong relationships among the variables (see Table 4.4.). Perceived ease of use was highly correlated with perceived usefulness (.65), perceived enjoyment (.66), attitudes toward social commerce (.62) and intentions to use social commerce (.69). Perceived usefulness was highly correlated to perceived enjoyment (.73), attitudes (.67) and intentions to use social commerce (.69). Perceived enjoyment was strongly correlated to attitudes toward social commerce (.79), this may be a result of using positive words to describe attitudes. Attitudes toward social commerce was highly correlated to intentions to use social commerce (.69). Correlation values less than .85 (Kline, 1998) confirmed discriminant validity of the constructs.

Table 4.4.

#### *Results of Correlation Coefficients between the Variables*

Constructs	PE	PU	EJ	AT	IN
Perceived Ease of Use (PE)	1				
Perceived Usefulness (PU)	.65**	1			
Perceived Enjoyment (EJ)	.66**	.73**	1		
Attitudes (AT)	.62**	.67**	.79**	1	
Intentions (IN)	.60**	.68**	.70**	.69**	1
Mean	3.77	3.47	3.63	3.55	3.40
SD	.67	.86	.80	.79	.91

\*\*  $p \leq .000$ .

## **Creating Item Parcels**

Three item parcels were created for each construct to conduct SEM analyses with latent variables. Three item parcels were created based on the sums of responses and the scores were used in latent variable analysis (Russell, Kahn, Spoth, & Altmaier, 1998). The item parcels for each variable were designed to reflect the underlying construct of each variable at an equal level. Items from the scale were divided into three groups or parcels and were averaged together to form three measured variables (Russell et al., 1998). In order to balance average loadings, items were ranked based on their factor loadings and assigned to parcels for each variable (Russell et al., 1998). For example, the perceived ease of use items, “Use of social commerce is clear and understandable” and “Use of social commerce is easy for me to become skillful at shopping for fashion products” were assigned to PE1; “Use of social commerce does not require a lot of mental effort” and “Use of social commerce allows me to shop the way I want to” were assigned to PE2; and “Use of social commerce is easy to learn” to PE3. Using item parcels for research yields a better fit of the measurement model rather than individual items (Russell et al., 1998). Table 4.5 presents the three item parcels for all five variables.

Table 4.5.

*Created Three Item Parcels for Each Construct*

Item parcel		Item and standardized factor loading
Perceived Ease of use	PE1	Use of social commerce is clear and understandable. (.70)
	PE2	Use of social commerce is easy for me to become skillful at shopping for fashion products. (.72)
	PE3	Use of social commerce does not require a lot of mental effort. (.67) Use of social commerce allows me to shop the way I want to. (.71) Use of social commerce is easy to learn. (.75)
Perceived Usefulness	PU1	Use of social commerce increases my productivity in shopping for fashion products. (.84)
	PU2	Use of social commerce enhances my shopping experience for fashion products. (.78) Use of social commerce is useful in shopping for fashion products. (.81) Use of social commerce improves my shopping skills for fashion products. (.83)
	PU3	Use of social commerce enhances my effectiveness in shopping for fashion products. (.88)
Perceived Enjoyment	EJ1	Shopping for fashion products through social commerce is interesting. (.81)
	EJ2	Shopping for fashion products through social commerce is fun. (.90) Shopping for fashion products through social commerce is entertaining. (.86) Shopping for fashion products through social commerce is appealing. (.82)
	EJ3	Shopping for fashion products through social commerce is enjoyable. (.90) Shopping for fashion products through social commerce is exciting. (.85)
Attitudes toward using Social Commerce	AT1	When I shop for fashion products, social commerce is appealing. (.87) When I shop for fashion products, social commerce is pleasant. (.87)
	AT2	When I shop for fashion products, social commerce is good. (.88) When I shop for fashion products, social commerce is favorable. (.83)
	AT3	When I shop for fashion products, social commerce is likeable. (.89)
Intentions to Use Social Commerce	IN1	I intend to buy fashion products through social commerce. (.80) In the future, I would be very likely to shop using social commerce for fashion products. (.88)
	IN2	I would be willing to buy fashion products through social commerce. (.85) I would be willing to recommend my friends to buy fashion products through social commerce. (.86)
	IN3	I would visit social commerce to buy fashion products again. (.92)



### **CFA: Measurement Model Analysis and Convergent Validity**

CFA of the item parcels examined the fit of a five-factor measurement model using a maximum-likelihood estimation procedure in Mplus 7.0. The goodness-of-fit of the measurement model was determined by examining the *chi*-square value, the comparative fit index ( $CFI \geq .95$ ), root mean square error of approximation ( $RMSEA \leq .08$ ), and standardized root mean square residual ( $SRMR \leq .08$ ) (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006; Hu & Bentler, 1999). The results indicated that the five-factor measurement model yields a satisfactory fit to data: [ $\chi^2 = 185.60$  ( $df = 80$ ),  $p < .000$ ],  $CFI = .99$ ,  $RMSEA = .05$ , and  $SRMR = .02$ . As presented in Table 4.6, all confirmatory factor loadings were significant and measured higher than .85 with highly significant *t*-values ranging from 29.28 to 129.86. In addition, the average variance extracted (AVE) of each construct was equal to or above .50, which confirmed convergent validity for the constructs in the measurement model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 4.6.

*Results of the CFA (n=531)*

Variable	Item	Standardized factor loading	<i>t</i> -value
Perceived Ease of Use	PE1	.85	48.57
	PE2	.86	49.65
	PE3	.72	29.28
Perceived Usefulness	PU1	.92	94.72
	PU2	.90	84.02
	PU3	.86	66.14
Perceived Enjoyment	EJ1	.93	122.39
	EJ2	.91	102.85
	EJ3	.94	129.86
Attitudes toward Social Commerce	AT1	.94	123.01
	AT2	.92	103.96
	AT3	.88	77.01
Intentions to Use Social Commerce	IN1	.91	89.49
	IN2	.90	85.77
	IN3	.91	93.33

**Structure Model Analysis and Hypotheses Testing**

A structural model was estimated using the maximum-likelihood estimation procedure in Mplus 7.0. (Muthén & Muthén, 2012). The structural model was found to fit to the data well: [ $\chi^2 = 369.47$  ( $df = 84$ ),  $p < .001$ ], CFI = .96, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .07. As shown in Figure 4.1., five proposed structural paths were statistically significant in the predicted direction ( $p \leq .001$ ), except one path from perceived ease of use of social commerce to attitudes toward social commerce.

**Testing hypotheses**

Hypothesis 1 proposed that perceived ease of use of social commerce positively affects perceived usefulness of social commerce. The results supported Hypothesis 1 ( $\beta = .79$ ,  $t = 34.58$ ,  $p \leq .001$ ). Hypothesis 2 proposed that perceived ease of use of social commerce positively affects

perceived enjoyment of social commerce. The standardized path coefficient between perceived ease of use and perceived enjoyment was .79 ( $t = 35.94, p \leq .001$ ), providing support for Hypothesis 2. Hypothesis 3 posited that perceived ease of use of social commerce positively affects attitudes toward social commerce. The standardized path coefficient was not statistically significant between two perceived ease of use of social commerce and attitudes toward social commerce ( $\beta = .13, t = 1.99$ ). Hypothesis 4 proposed perceived usefulness of social commerce positively affects attitudes toward social commerce. The results supported Hypothesis 4 ( $\beta = .18, t = 3.39, p \leq .05$ ). Hypothesis 5 posited that perceived enjoyment of social commerce positively affects attitudes toward social commerce. The results supported Hypothesis 5 ( $\beta = .62, t = 12.61, p \leq .001$ ). Hypothesis 6 proposed that attitudes toward social commerce positively affects intentions to use social commerce. The standardized path coefficient between attitudes and intentions to use social commerce was .75 ( $t = 33.97, p \leq .001$ ), providing support for Hypothesis 6.

### **Further structural model analysis**

In the structural model, perceived ease of use of social commerce did not have a direct significant impact on attitudes toward social commerce as previous studies found inconsistent results (Chen & Tan, 2004; Hwang, Chung, & Sanders, 2016; Lee et al., 2006). The relationship between perceived usefulness and perceived enjoyment of social commerce was not hypothesized in the structural equation model because a lack of empirical evidence from previous studies. The results found a significant relationship between perceived usefulness and perceived enjoyment of social commerce ( $\beta = .51, t = 10.95, p \leq .001$ ). Both perceived ease of use and usefulness constructs reflect utilitarian benefits of using social commerce. The significant relationship between perceived ease of use and enjoyment yielded a potential relationship

between perceived usefulness and perceived enjoyment of social commerce. For the further structural model analysis, the insignificant path was removed between ease of use and attitudes toward social commerce and potential path was added between perceived usefulness and enjoyment of social commerce. As a result, the structural model showed improved fit to the data: [ $\chi^2 = 283.37$  ( $df = 84$ ),  $p < .001$ ], CFI = .98, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .06. The included path significantly improved the model fit and six structural paths were statistically significant in the adjusted model (see Figure 4.2.,  $p \leq .001$ ). These additional findings suggest when consumers perceive social commerce is useful in apparel shopping, they are likely to enjoy using social commerce.

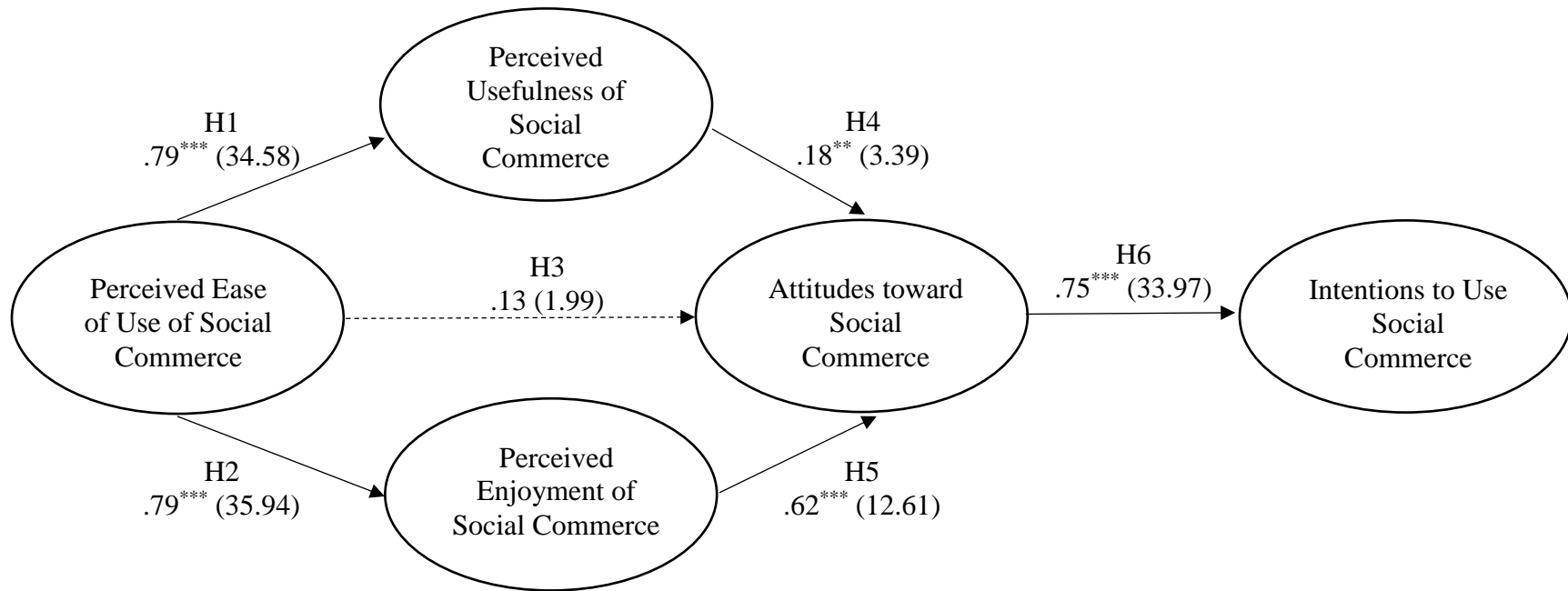


Figure 4.1. The structural equation model showing the relationships among the variables.

Note: [ $\chi^2 = 369.47$  ( $df = 84$ ),  $p < .001$ ], CFI = .96, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .07, \*\*  $p \leq .05$  \*\*\*  $p \leq .001$

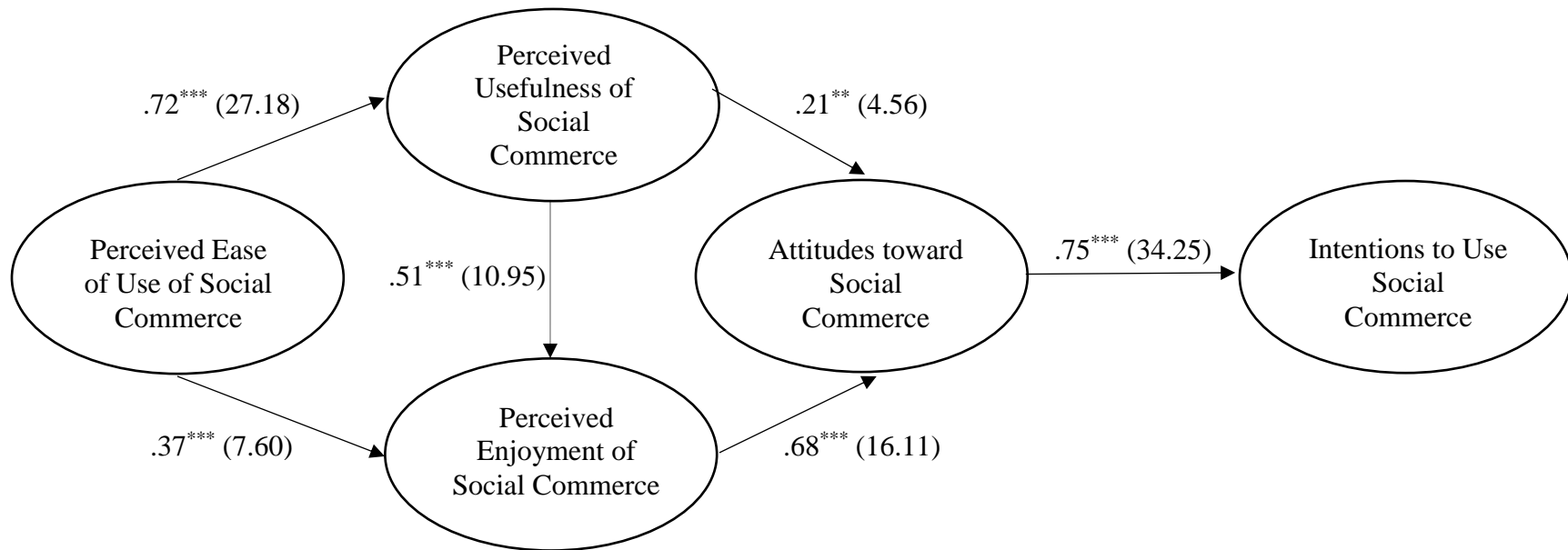


Figure 4.2. The structural equation model adding an additional path between perceived usefulness and enjoyment of social commerce.  
 Note: [ $\chi^2 = 283.37$  ( $df = 84$ ),  $p < .001$ ], CFI = .98, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .06,  $*** p \leq .001$

## **CHAPTER 5. DISUCSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

This chapter discusses a summary of research and interpretations of the findings.

Conclusions and theoretical and practical implications are presented in this chapter.

### **Summary of Research**

Social media has become an integral part of consumers' daily lives. Individuals connect with one another on social networking sites to like, share, and post about information and experiences. As noted earlier, millennials frequently interact with companies through social media. Growth of social media users has led marketers to incorporate social media as part of their digital marketing strategy. Accordingly, an increased number of apparel retailers have been using social media as an advertising tool and a retail channel. Despite the popularity of social media among millennials, empirical findings are limited to reveal factors associated with young consumers' intentions to use social commerce in apparel shopping. Therefore, the need to conduct new research is identified in the context of social commerce. Based on the TAM, the current study developed six hypotheses that examine the effects of perceived ease of use, usefulness, and enjoyment of social commerce on attitudes and intentions to use social commerce when young consumers shop for fashion products.

Students from five different colleges at a Mid-Southern university in the U.S. were recruited to participate in an online survey. To measure the five variables, reliable and valid scale items were adapted from existing literature. For example, scale items measuring three variables (i.e., perceived ease of use, usefulness, and enjoyment) were adapted from Kim et al. (2009). A total of 531 participants completed the survey and the response rate was 70%. The majority of the sample were female Caucasian American students (71%) between the ages of 18 and 24 years old. Overall, the participants were heavy social media users; 84% of the sample reported

visiting social media networking sites over four times a day. Instagram was the most popular social networking site, followed by Facebook and Twitter. SEM was employed in Mplus 7.0 to test the proposed six hypotheses in the theoretical framework.

Frequency was conducted to examine a mean of the five social media marketing dimensions such as entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth. Descriptive statistics, EFA with varimax rotation, and reliability were assessed to ensure internal consistency and single factor of each measure. CFA assessed convergent validity of measures for each variable. SEM was conducted to examine the fit of the measurement and structural models, as well as to test hypothesized relationships among the five variables. The results of this study indicated that five of the six hypotheses were statistically supported; one path between perceived ease of use and attitudes was not significant.

### **Discussion of Findings and Implications**

The present study investigated which social media marketing efforts millennials perceived as important. Findings revealed that interaction (e.g., information sharing and opinion exchange) was the most important to young consumers using social media, followed by entertainment, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth. The findings suggest that fashion brands need to make young consumers feel connected to the brand and other social media users. Results also suggest that marketers should offer a variety of up-to-date content on social media that young consumers can be entertained by and share with other users.

This study examined the effects of the perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and perceived enjoyment of social commerce on young consumers' attitudes toward social commerce and their intentions to use social commerce when shopping for fashion products. Results of the study confirmed the TAM is suitable in explaining millennials' adoption of social commerce in



shopping for fashion products. The study found that perceived ease of use of social commerce influences perceived usefulness and enjoyment of social commerce in agreement with findings from online shopping research (Cheema et al., 2013; Ha & Stoel, 2009; Kim et al., 2009; Tong, 2010). The findings that usefulness and enjoyment of social commerce had a positive impact on millennials' attitudes and intentions to use social commerce in apparel shopping supported previous studies on online shopping (e.g., Ha & Stoel, 2009; Kim, 2012; Yu & Park, 2014). Although the direct path coefficient between perceived ease of use and attitudes was insignificant, this study suggests an indirect effect of perceived ease of use on attitudes and intentions based on the significance of all other path coefficients in the model. Thus, the results of this study reinforced the importance of informative and experiential elements on social media platforms to enhance behavioral intentions among young consumers (Yuksel et al., 2016).

Further structural model analysis revealed a direct, positive influence of perceived usefulness of social commerce on perceived enjoyment of social commerce, which has not been explored in prior studies. The impact of perceived usefulness was stronger than the impact of ease of use on perceived enjoyment. The findings imply that utilitarian and hedonic benefits are important to augment young consumers' positive attitudes and intentions to purchase apparel on social media. Aligned with Kim et al.'s (2009) study, enjoyment had a much stronger impact on attitudes compared to usefulness. The findings suggest that utilitarian benefits from an efficient, time saving experience may engender positive feelings (e.g., enjoyable, fun, and exciting), which are crucial to increase millennial shoppers' apparel purchasing on social media.

The findings from this study also suggest managerial implications for social commerce retailers and marketers. The impact of utilitarian benefits greatly influence hedonic benefits, which in turn leads to consumers' positive attitudes and intentions to use social commerce when

shopping for fashion products. Thus, marketers should design social commerce experiences to be easy to use and useful for consumers to access apparel product information or experience product features. For example, brands such as Kate Spade and Tory Burch have adopted shoppable photo tags on Instagram that offer consumers in-app details about a specific product's price and description and features a "Shop Now" button. This tool assists consumers with instant product information and enhances their shopping experience by allowing them to view product pages all within the app without ever leaving their Instagram feed (Constine, 2016).

## **CHAPTER 6. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

Chapter 6 summarizes limitations for this present study and recommendations for future research are discussed.

While this study contributes to extending the body of social media research, several limitations should be recognized. First, the sample was limited to college students at a Mid-Southern university; thus the results may not represent the U.S population in general. The majority of the sample consisted of primarily Caucasians or European Americans located in the Mid-South; therefore the results may not characterize individuals from diverse backgrounds and other specific regions of the country. Extending the study to other regions of the U.S would contribute greatly to understanding consumer intentions to use social commerce while shopping for fashion products.

Second, the present study focused on an investigation of millennial consumers' perceived ease of use of social commerce, usefulness, and enjoyment, which influenced their attitudes and intentions to use social commerce when shopping for fashion products. A majority of the participants were 18 to 24 years of age (97%). Over 95% of the participants in the study reported being active social media users and approximately 84% of the participants indicated visiting social media networking sites over four times a day. Thus, the lifestyle of the participants and their previous experiences with social media may affect the findings of this study.

Third, this study examined the relationships among perceived ease of use, usefulness, enjoyment, attitudes, and intentions to use social commerce in shopping for fashion products. The focus on shopping for fashion products affects the generalizability of the results to other product categories. To increase the validity of the model, future research should test the proposed

model for other product categories. Further investigation is needed to explore other factors (e.g., perceived risks and perceived value) that affect product purchase through social commerce.

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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: IRB APPROVAL



UNIVERSITY OF  
ARKANSAS

Office of Research Compliance  
Institutional Review Board

January 24, 2017

### MEMORANDUM

TO: Tiffany Bounkhong  
Eunjoo Cho

FROM: Ro Windwalker  
IRB Coordinator

RE: New Protocol Approval

IRB Protocol #: 16-12-358

Protocol Title: *Factors Affecting Intentions to Use Social Commerce in Shopping for Fashion Products*

Review Type:  EXEMPT  EXPEDITED  FULL IRB

Approved Project Period: Start Date: 01/23/2017 Expiration Date: 01/22/2018

Your protocol has been approved by the IRB. Protocols are approved for a maximum period of one year. If you wish to continue the project past the approved project period (see above), you must submit a request, using the form *Continuing Review for IRB Approved Projects*, prior to the expiration date. This form is available from the IRB Coordinator or on the Research Compliance website (<https://vpred.uark.edu/units/rscp/index.php>). As a courtesy, you will be sent a reminder two months in advance of that date. However, failure to receive a reminder does not negate your obligation to make the request in sufficient time for review and approval. Federal regulations prohibit retroactive approval of continuation. Failure to receive approval to continue the project prior to the expiration date will result in Termination of the protocol approval. The IRB Coordinator can give you guidance on submission times.

**This protocol has been approved for 2,000 participants.** If you wish to make any modifications in the approved protocol, including enrolling more than this number, you must seek approval *prior to* implementing those changes. All modifications should be requested in writing (email is acceptable) and must provide sufficient detail to assess the impact of the change.

If you have questions or need any assistance from the IRB, please contact me at 109 MLKG Building, 5-2208, or [irb@uark.edu](mailto:irb@uark.edu).

## APPENDIX B: EMAIL INVITATION

Dear Students,

The University of Arkansas is interested in learning more about shopping through social media. We are conducting a research study to better understand how college students perceive social media when it comes to shopping for apparel. Eligible participants will be individuals who are at least 18 years of age, with Internet access. Participation is voluntary.

Your answers will be anonymous, and you will be asked to provide your name and instructor's name at the end of the study ONLY if your instructor is providing extra credit for participation in this study. Participation is completely voluntary and all instructors who are offering extra credit for participation in this study will offer a comparable alternative extra credit assignment. Entering your information to receive extra credit is completely voluntary, and all personal information you provide will be deleted following the end of the recruitment process. All responses are kept confidential to the extent allowed by law and University policy, and participants' identity will be protected for all published work. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes. If you choose to participate, the survey is entirely online at

[http://uark.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_eeOJGlo0UoEMUjb](http://uark.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_eeOJGlo0UoEMUjb)

Please feel free to forward this information to fellow students who may be interested in learning more about this study. If you have additional questions about the study, please feel free to contact the co-researchers. Thank you for your time!

Best,  
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## APPENDIX C: CONSENT FORM

### Informed Consent Document

**Title of Study:** Factors affecting intentions to use social commerce in shopping for fashion products

**Investigators:** Tiffany Bounkhong and Dr. Eunjoo Cho

Tiffany Bounkhong will be conducting an online survey and will be responsible for obtaining informed consent through this online survey under the mentorship of Dr. Eunjoo Cho, faculty advisor. Tiffany is a Master's student in the School of Human Environmental Sciences at the University of Arkansas. Investigators appreciate your willingness to participate in this survey.

**Purpose:**

This is an academic research project. The purpose of this research is to examine factors affecting young consumers' intentions to use social commerce in shopping for fashion products. You are invited to participate in this research as young consumers.

**Procedures:**

You will be asked to complete an online survey that will take approximately 10 minutes or less. The questions will consist of four parts asking your opinions and experiences about shopping through social media. The last part will ask you to provide your general background information including age, gender, and ethnicity. All the questionnaires will use numeric codes for analytical purpose. You will indicate your response by clicking the number from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) that best describes your opinions and experiences for each question. There are no risks from participating in this study.

**Benefits:**

Participating in this research study will provide important knowledge on consumer shopping behavior in a social media environment. As compensation for participating in this study, participants will receive extra credit points (5 points) to their course grade. This research assists the university by reaching their goal of becoming a top 50 public research university by 2020.

**Confidentiality:**

Confidentiality of your responses will be maintained. Participants who choose to receive extra credit points will need to provide their names and course name. However, all responses will remain confidential to the extent allowed by law and University policy because the information will be separate from the surveys. There will be no direct association of completed surveys with the participant names and course names. The participant names and course names will be deleted from all files after the extra credit points are given. All survey data will be saved on password protected computers with access limited to the researchers. If results are published, summary of data will be reported rather than individual responses.

**Participant Rights:**

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you have the right to refuse to participate or leave the study at any time without any penalty. If you decide to not participate in the study or leave the study early, it is up to your discretion. You can skip any question if you do not feel comfortable answering. Participation is completely voluntary and all instructors who are offering extra credit for participation in this study will offer a comparable alternative extra credit assignment. Choosing to Participate or not participate will have no effect on students' grade or their relationship with the instructor(s).

**Contacts:**

The primary investigator may be contacted at (479) 575-5225; [bounkhon@uark.edu](mailto:bounkhon@uark.edu). The primary investigator's advisor may be contacted at (479) 545-4599; [ejcho@uark.edu](mailto:ejcho@uark.edu). For questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact Ro Windwalker, the University's IRB Coordinator, at (479) 575-2208 or by e-mail at [irb@uark.edu](mailto:irb@uark.edu).

By beginning the survey, you acknowledge that you have read this information and agree to participate in this research. You are free to withdraw participation at any time without penalty.

**Thank you for your time and participation.**

## APPENDIX D: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Part I. Please think of all *your experiences and opinions about social media* for a few seconds before looking at the questionnaire. Please click on the answer that best describes your opinions for each question.

1. Do you consider yourself to an active user of social media?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_No
2. What is your favorite social networking site that you most frequently use? Rank top three in order of frequency. 1-most used 3-least used  
Facebook \_\_\_\_\_ Twitter \_\_\_\_\_ Blogs \_\_\_\_\_ YouTube \_\_\_\_\_ Pinterest \_\_\_\_\_  
Instagram \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_ (Please specify) I do not use social media \_\_\_\_\_
3. How often do you use social media per day?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Once \_\_\_\_\_ 2-3 times \_\_\_\_\_ 4-5 times \_\_\_\_\_ 5+
4. Have you ever purchased fashion products using social media? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_No
5. If yes, how many fashion products you have purchased using social media?
6. Which channels do you most prefer when shopping for fashion products? Rank top three in order of preference. 1-most preferred, 2- secondly preferred, 3-thirdly preferred  
\_\_\_\_\_ Brick and mortar store \_\_\_\_\_ Online commerce \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile commerce  
\_\_\_\_\_ Shopping through social media

Part II. Please click on the number that best describes *your opinions about social media* for each question.

Strongly Disagree-Disagree-Neutral-Agree-Strongly Agree  
1 2 3 4 5

1. Using social media is fun.
2. Content of social media seems interesting.
3. Social media enables information-sharing with others.
4. Conversation or opinion exchange with others is possible through social media.
5. It is easy to provide my own opinion through social media.
6. Content of social media is the newest information.
7. Using social media is very trendy.
8. Social media offers a customized information search.
9. Social media provides customized service.
10. I would like to pass information on brand, product, or services from social media to my friends.
11. I would like to upload content from social media on my blog or microblog.



Part III. Please click on the number of that best describes your opinions about social commerce for each question.

Strongly Disagree-Disagree-Neutral-Agree-Strongly Agree  
1 2 3 4 5

Use of social commerce:

6. Increases my productivity in shopping for fashion products
7. Enhances my effectiveness in shopping for fashion products
8. Is useful in shopping for fashion products
9. Improves my shopping skills for fashion products
10. Enhances my shopping experience for fashion products
11. Is clear and understandable
12. Does not require a lot of mental effort
13. Is easy for me to become skillful at shopping for fashion products
14. Allows me to shop the way I want to
15. Is easy to learn

Shopping for fashion products through social commerce is:

1. Entertaining
2. Enjoyable
3. Interesting
4. Fun
5. Exciting
6. Appealing

When I shop for fashion products, social commerce is:

1. Appealing
2. Good
3. Pleasant
4. Favorable
5. Likeable

Part IV. Please click on the number of that best describes your opinions about your online shopping behaviors for each question.

Strongly Disagree-Disagree-Neutral-Agree-Strongly Agree  
1 2 3 4 5

1. I intend to buy fashion products through social commerce.
2. I would be willing to buy fashion products through social commerce.
3. I would be willing to recommend my friends to buy fashion products through social commerce.
4. I would visit social commerce to buy fashion products again.
5. In the future, I would be very likely to shop using social commerce for fashion products.

Part V. The questions below ask about *your general background information*. Please check the appropriate information.

1. What is your age?

18-24  25-29  30-34  35-39  40-44  
 45-49  50-54  55-59  60 or more

2. What is your gender?  Male  Female

3. What is your ethnicity? Please check one.

Native American  Black or African-American  Asian American   
Hispanic or Latino  Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander   
White or European  Two or more races  Other (Please specify \_\_\_\_\_)

4. What is your household income level? (If you are a dependent student, please list your parent's income.)

0-24,999  
 \$25,000-49,999  
 \$50,000-74,999  
 \$75,000-99,999  
 \$100,000-or more

5. What is the size of your hometown?

0-5,000  
 5,000-10,000  
 10,000-25,000  
 25,000-50,000  
 50,000 +

6. What is your major?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. If you would like to receive extra credit points, please provide the course number and name and your first and last name. (The participant names and course names will be deleted from all files after the extra credit points are given) \_\_\_\_\_